

## **INITIATION AND BURIAL RITES OF OZO TITLED MEN IN IGBOLAND; A STUDY OF AWKA, 1950-1970**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The quest for recognition is an age long phenomenon as man himself. Among the Igbo generally and the Awka people in particular, title was usually bestowed on indigenes of the society as an act of honour and recognition of various efforts or acts of services rendered to develop and advance the society. Among various titles which were available in Awka, the Ozo title taking stands out. Ozo title taking was an expensive ceremony which probably grew out of the need for priests who would preside at extended family and lineage worship, supervise the cult of the ancestors and keep the family of staff among other reasons. In the pre-colonial period, an Ozo titled man performed the role of the arbiter in matters of justice. Today, members of the society who are dissatisfied with the settlement of the Ozo titled men go to court. With the advent of Christianity, various fetish practices which usually characterized the initiation process of new entrants into the Ozo title institution have been excised. This made a mess of the institution as new entrants had nothing to fear anymore; such fetish initiation practices made the Ozo titled men directly responsible to the gods of the land which met out instant punishment to offenders. Over the years since the advent of Christianity, slow albeit steady, the once revered institution has today become a scorn, the honesty, truth and justice once associated with the institution has become a thing of the past. It is so sad that the effect of Christianity has eaten so deep into the fabrics of this age long institution. While it still wobbles so weakly, there is a daring need to revamp this institution before it dies off completely.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Title institutions have been in existence all over the world from time immemorial. The Europeans have their Lords, Earls, and Counts. Here in Africa, many ethnic groups have their own institutions; the Yoruba of Nigeria have the Ogboni, the Nbiosakon in Northern Edo of the former Bendel State Nigeria have theirs in various names<sup>1</sup>. In Bini, the titled men are divided into the peoples and palace nobles. But among all the title constitutions that exist among the Igbo people the most prominent is the Ozo<sup>2</sup>. In certain parts of Igbo land, there are other titles that could be taken by full-fledged citizen like the dune and the emume. But the Ozo titled man stands out clearly from the crowd by his regalia, his behaviour and the dignified way he moves about. He is gorgeously dressed, carries his elephant tusk and adorns his red cap with one or two eagles feathers stuck on it.

The Ozo title is a religious cum social association into which men of wealth are initiated in various stages with religious ceremonies<sup>3</sup>. By his initiation rites, the Ozo officiates in religious functions, or other functions with religious undertones when he is in the midst of non-titled men, should there be two or more titled men, precedence as among titled men in Etsako tribe of Edo depends on the various individual ranks and the date of their initiation into those ranks<sup>4</sup>. He also leads his village in social functions being a titled man, who has “a say” in the town affairs, he can therefore represent them effectively and protect their interest. As in many other communities, wealth is a prerequisite for the taking of Ozo title so it is even in Awka. Among the Iname in Edo state a man must have married an “Amoya” wife and

completed the funeral rites of his father before he takes a title. The funeral rites involve feeding the whole village and making presents to important individuals<sup>5</sup>. This is almost similar to the prerequisite conditions which must be met by an Ozo aspirant in Awka before full title is bestowed on such a one. For instance, he is normally expected to be a man of wealth; if not, he definitely cannot be able to fulfill or meet all the necessary conditions. Moreover, he is expected to have completed his father's funeral rites if he is late. If his father is still living, he must make sure his father is an Ozo. In essence, he will initiate the process of his father's entrance into the Ozo institution first of all before he can now be permitted to take his own Ozo title. The Awka people, before A.D. 1905 (when the British came), were great people, resourceful, inventive and courageous. They were a race of specialists, working in iron, copper, brass and bronze; skilled in the carving of household wooden implements and ornaments. They are good in farming; in the practice of traditional medicine, and in the pursuit of wisdom. They did not belong to any known clan in Igbo land, neither had they any known relatives. They referred to themselves simply as "Ebe Anyi" – our stock<sup>6</sup>.

Awka is one of the oldest settlements in Igbo land established at the centre of Nri civilization which produced the earliest documented bronze works in sub-Saharan Africa around 800AD, Awka lies below 300 meters above sea in a valley on the plains of the Mame River. Two ridges both lying in a North-South direction from the major topographical features of the area. The ridges reach the highest point at Ngulu just outside the capital territory of Anambra State Nigeria<sup>7</sup> (Awka). Awka is sited in a fertile tropical valley but most of the original rain forest has been lost due to clearing for farming and human settlement. A few examples of the original rain forest remains at places like Ime Oka shrine<sup>8</sup>. The basic religion of the Awka people during this period of study is ancestral worship, though minorities of the people were Christians. There is a lively belief in magic of some sort and both the chief priest and the medicine men had esteemed position in the society. Many superstitions are found with the people especially with non Christians. Such superstition included belief in Ogbanje (Amusu) medicine (Ogwu) and witchcraft.<sup>9</sup>

### **Origin and Development of Ozo Title in Awka (References for This Is From Chapter Three)**

Title names are appellations bestowed on individuals as a mark of distinction, rank and dignity and in some cases imply office or vocation. Titles may be official, honorary, civil, military, temporal or ecclesiastical. The use of titles is as old as civilization itself and seems to have arisen from the desire of the society to reward and publicly express its appreciation of men or women who have done well in advancing and developing their society. Titles or honours could be for life or equally hereditary especially in the case of monarchies. The Igbo people of Awka had various title institutions among which the Ozo title stands out<sup>10</sup>. The origin of Ozo title institution is difficult to trace. However, it is safer to say that it grew out of the need for priests who would preside at extended family and lineage worships and supervise the cult of the ancestors and keep the family Ofo staff<sup>11</sup>.

Secondly, it might have grown out of the economic need of the peasant society in which young men invested their agricultural wealth in the form of crops and livestock into the taking of the title from which they expected to derive much dividend from the new entrants.<sup>12</sup> In this way, the people secure for themselves means of livelihood at old age when they cannot do active work. Neither this sort of old pension aspect nor the priestly or political importance conferred by the Ozo title is accepted by the initiated to be the primary reason for the existence of the institution. The majority of the older initiates insist on the

purely religious origin of the title as the most important reason for their taking it. They argue that the continuity of the lineage, clan or village depends on the existence of God-fearing men who share in the spirit of the land through their relationship with the earth goddess (Ala)<sup>13</sup> They also desire to know how to please the spirit of dead ancestors and uphold the ordinance of the land. The Ozo title is said to be the religious means of achieving these ends. Therefore, the individual who has taken an Ozo title must live a holy life, uphold publicly and privately the morality of the land and observe all the taboos, religious and rituals of all the gods and goddesses of the community. The Ozo institution has many features. The meaning and main features of Ozo title can be summarized as a religious cum social organization into which men are initiated (with their wives sometimes) in various stages with religious ceremonies. It is not a cult. It has no seasonal or annual religious celebration or a chief priest to supervise its doctrine as there is none<sup>14</sup>. The members meet when there is someone to be initiated and the Onyeisi Ozo (the leader) functions at such times or at the burial ceremonies of one of their members.

One of the features is “Ibu Aku Ozo” that is presentation of the appropriate Ozo wealth to the member in the form of goats, cock, rams, fishes, stout, various kinds of palm wine and other drinks (cloths in some places.) The presentation is done in various stages and at various occasions, sometimes spreading over a year. Another feature of Ozo title is the various sacrifices given to various gods at various shrines. This is followed by the planting of Ozo trees such like Oha, Oginisi or the installation of the ancestral shrine called Chi, where the panel doors can be built in the Iba of the newly initiated man. Another feature is the giving of an Ozo titled man praise worthy names chosen by the initiates and his close relatives to convey the thought upper most in his or her family’s history at the time the title is being taken.<sup>15</sup> The Ozo title can be taken only by a free-born of the village. In some areas, the Ozo title is inherited by the relations after the death of their Ozo titled brother like in Aku town<sup>16</sup>. In Awka during the pre-colonial era, this was not so.

The Ozo title was not hereditary. Moreover, since this is a very revered title in Igbo land, the holders play important roles in matters of law and order. Again this is not only because political authority is inherent in the title but because, the general tendency in Igbo society is for power to fall to anyone that has prestige or organizational zeal both by reason of wealth and the religious beam of the title to yield some influence.<sup>17</sup> A titled man of great reputation in Awka, could make adequate arrangement for his young son to take the title in his life time or after his death.<sup>18</sup> In this later case, all arrangements short of the final indication rites can be made in order that when the young boy is of age, he needs only to pass through short final rites before he is accepted as a full member of the Ozo title group. A man could also take the title for his absent son, in the case of the absent son, the fact that the fees have been paid and the rites observed, entitles the son when he is back to the village to carry Insignia and receive associated salutation as a full titled person.<sup>19</sup> A very young son for whom the preliminary rites have been performed does not receive any of the title tributes until he is of age and undergoes the final rites.

## **INITIATION OF OZO TITLED MEN IN AWKA (before 1950 to early 60’s)**

### **A) Requisite Qualifications into OZO Title Membership**

Before the initiation into the Ozo title institution is fully dealt with, it is also very important to discuss briefly basic qualifications into the institution. There are many expectations from an aspirant before he is admitted into Ozo title institution. These according to Okoroji

Nwankwocha include; ‘Amanwulu or Omenwulu Title: This is to identify free born. It is open only to sons of the soil. No stranger is allowed to take it.

**Chi Ceremony:** The man will then perform the Chi ceremony which qualifies him to be a family head or village head. He can then occupy Obi if it is his town.

**Obele Emume:** After the Chi, the man performs the Obele Emume, which is three in one title. All these ceremonies are in preparatory to the Ozo ceremony. The Obele Emume comprises the Aghajioku, Ajama and Ajamuada.

**Aghajioku:** This is associated with the harvest (in Awka). It is taken to ensure beautiful harvest yearly.

**Ajama:** This is the travel blessing; Awka people travel a lot and have to take this title to ensure their safety.

**Ajanwada:** This is performed when the first daughter is getting married. The ceremony is done to wish her happy married life.

**Ajalija:** This is a distinguished and respectable title which every Awka man aspires to take. Unless a man takes the Ajalija title, he cannot stand to speak on important issues concerning the affairs of Awka. It is a very expensive title. Ajalija indicates that somebody is of average wealth, responsible and can be reckoned with in the society. A wealthy man can initiate as many of his children as possible and if he initiates like five of his sons, he answers Omeise. A fully initiated person wears a red cap and carries a special stool. Before the main Ozo title ceremony can be performed, there are other ceremonies after Ajalija which qualifies the aspirant finally for the real Ozo title taking. These include:

Ozo Uno: Here the aspirant will cook and entertain his kinsmen.

Ekwulu Ozo: like in Ozo Uno, in ekwulu Ozo, the aspirant cooks for his village. They will feast and rejoice with him on his impending title. After the feasting, he will be qualified to take the Ozo title<sup>20</sup>.

## **B) Initiation Process into the OZO Title Institution**

The initiation rites into Ozo title institution in Awka are usually very costly. In many cases, the title holder might become impoverished after His initiation. This does not in any way mean much to the Awka man as he has achieved the loftiest ambition of any Igbo man. The Igbo view about such a situation is summarized in an Igbo proverb which says “Ubiam dalu onye ozo adarozi gboo maka na oke agbafego ilulo wee tochie”. This literally means that the poverty that visits the Ozo man is too late in coming, because the rat has fast crossed the field before the weed overgrew its path. Initiation in the Ozo institution is not a one day event; it’s very tasking and procedural. The various procedures would be explained in details below;

**Ima okwa:** (publicity) Just as its direct English interpretation implies, is a time in which the Ozo title aspirant takes information to various persons making them aware of his intent to take the Ozo title. An aspirant after informing his family and kinsmen about his intention also alerts the eldest Ozo title holder in his Umunna that he intends to take the title, he does this

with a calabash of wine, kola nuts and stipulated amount of money. He then makes sacrifices to different shrines of his kindred with kola nut and wine.

**Ika Ihe di N'Ozo:** Here, the eldest Ozo titled man would appoint a date usually on a particular market day (Eke) when the aspirant would come for the announcement. Naturally, he would not go there empty handedly. Kola nut and wine must be offered by the aspirant. This Ozo aspirant would then be told what he is required to do in order to go through the entire exercise. For instance, he would be told the cost in terms of money, palm wine, goats, fowls, yams etc. he generally does not tell him everything lest he frightens the aspirant away<sup>21</sup>.

**Izu Ndi Isi Nze:** The eldest Ozo title holder in his Umunna would take the aspirant to meet the Isi Nze (leader/Chairman of Ndi Nze Na Ozo). He told them about the wishes and proposal of his kinsmen. After this is done, there is the ceremony of "Igbasa Mgbasa Ndi Isi Ozo" in which members of Ndi Nze na Ozo are given their due payments by the new entrant which consists of items such as wine, goat, fowls, yams and kola nut. There are cases in which the aspirant would be required to meet several relations, Ndi Ikwunne most especially to collect the 'amuoku' <sup>22</sup> a symbol of approval from their mother's kinsmen, grand fathers and mothers to inform them that he would be performing the title. In each case, there is a large sum of money and sixteen yam tuber which would be given to the father of the candidate (if he is titled). If the father is not titled, he would only be given some amount of money. There is chalk for every goat killed and money for every titled man.

**Ana Eze:** This is the "Ibu Nze" ceremony involving sixteen yams, chalk, money (Ego Nza) which would be given to every titled man as required at this stage<sup>23</sup>.

**Isi Anu:** This is the head of the 'animal' ceremony. The aspirant provides a goat, sixteen tubers of yam and some money. After, the candidate would carry all the remnants of the meat, food etc and deposit them at the Odudo Aja (the place of the ancestors). This means reporting to the gods and ancestors of the candidate's intention to take the Ozo title. This ceremony takes place any time of the day and the candidate surrenders his old clothes and takes on new ones<sup>24</sup>.

**Iwunye Maya N'ofu:** This is the ceremony in which wine was poured on the Ofo shrine sixteen gallons of wine were required. The first part of wine was accompanied with 64 cowries, the second 48, the third with 32 and the rest 16 cowries, and half part of each goat killed was used to cook for the person conferring the title<sup>25</sup>.

**Iku Ozo:** The candidate went round the village with a metal gong and paid a huge sum of money, "Ogu ukwu iri" to them. In addition, he gave 600 yams, 2 she goats and 12 gallons of wine. These are done on the day he announced that he was taking the Ozo title, he was carried shoulder high and around the Ozo Shrine. Three able bodied young men normally carried him; if the eagle feather shifts its position on his head, it was a sad omen that the candidate would die. If the gun which must be shot in the process did not fire, the juju priest would seize it. If the candidate died at this stage, the title was conferred on him post-humorously<sup>26</sup>. After this, he returned to his house but would not enter until he was washed. It was after this ceremony that the candidate entered a sort of confinement (Akwu Ozo) and stayed there for four days before taking his title names on the fourth night (Iza afa Ozo). On the fulfillment of all entertainments and other conditions for initiation into the title system, the aspirant moved to a blacksmith with four kola nuts and two gallons of palm wine for the



preparation of his Alo or Ngwuagiliga (staff of office made of iron, copper or other materials). The blacksmith gives his conditions, produces it on fulfillment of the conditions and presents same to the candidate. After collection and at his own pace and convenience, he moved to the overall head of Ozo with four kola nuts and two gallons of palm wine to meet him and his wife to his house for an agreement on a day to be fixed for the final initiation rites. On arrival for the initiation, the head and his wife are entertained with Nni-ocha, goat meat, asa and loaja (fish) ncha and abacha. Before the entertainment, he was presented with kola nut and ife na asato. In the evening and like the case of ajalija title taking, the wife of the man returns home with rich and well prepared lump of Nni-ocha leaving her husband behind to return later in the evening. After her departure, both the head and the aspirant continues with eating of meat and drinking until they go into the details of fixing a date for the final initiation into a particular Ozo title group or Ijena Mkpu Ozo. As soon as this date (oye) is decided, the head of the Ozo title institution leaves for home to convey the messages to sectional heads (village Ozo head) who in turn makes this date known to all members of the different villages. The aspirant on his part invites Umu Okpu of his kindred through the Isi-Okpu (older daughter of the kindred) to his house. The Umu-okpu receives this joyful message with happiness.<sup>27</sup>

They on arrival, the invitees are profusely entertained with Nni-ocha, yam, meat, fish, ncha, abacha and drinks. At the end of the entertainment, he would tell them his reasons for inviting them and would tell them the date he would be moving to Mkpu-Ozo. They normally received such announcement with joy and prolonged ovation, praying that it materializes accordingly. In the evening of the Eke day, which is actually part of the Oye day fixed for initiation rites, the Umu-okpu would assemble at the candidate's house anxiously waiting for the event of the day. Later in the evening, the head of the Ozo titled men would join them in waiting for the events, the Umu-okpu and the head are generously entertained with foods and drinks all night. But on the previous Nkwo day, the aspirant would have moved to the village square to obtain a fresh Ofo after complying with their Mgoasa of ife na asato, eight kola nuts and two gallons of palm wine.

**Mkpu Ozo:** At about 3:30am on the oye morning. The head of the Ozo title, the aspirant, the okwa-nzu boy or girl and the umuokpu silently move 'en masse' to the particular mkpu Ozo shrine of the village involved. The head moves to the mkpu- through 'ogboli Ndi Nze' and not through an ordinary foot path. On getting to the Mkpu Ozo, the head moves straight on to the shrine, takes his position by standing erect on the Mkpu while the aspirant and his Okwa-nzu carrier are made to stand at a position near enough to the Mkpu Ozo. The umu Okpu would wait at a distance of about thirty meters from the zone of influence or the mkpu. While at his position, the head of the Ozo society holds his conventional ofo in readiness for the final initiation of the aspirant to consummate the initiation, he asks the titled man impatiently "Ichile gini" that is, (what is your title named) and he replies, "Echilim Nnayelugo" that is, my title name is Nnanyelugo.

The head then strikes his ofo on the candidate's forehead once, the head moves two steps backwards and stricks the ofo on the ground saying "Nnayelugo iga Aza kaya nka" meaning that he will live long to enjoy the fruits of the title. Since every titled man is identified by four titled name; the head must repeat this very operation three more times each time ascertaining his title names to accomplish the four names required by the initiation rites. After the formal initiation, the head collects the fresh ofo from the new Ozo man. Traditionally prays and consecrates it and then returns it to the new titled man as his own ofo.<sup>28</sup> How tender or how hard the head hits the forehead of an Ozo man in accordance with the ofo ceremony depends

on their personal relationship. If the relationship is cordial, it will be a mild hit, but if otherwise, the wound he sustains from the actions will last for days. The head picks the Okwa-nzu and gives it to the new titled man. This would be followed by a cannon fire marking the end of the initiation ceremonies, the head quietly returns to his home, while the new titled man and his okwa-nzu boy or girl happily moves directly to disclose his four title names to the Umuokpu. However prior to the *ichili gini* question by the *onye isi Ozo*, the prospective Ozo aspirant is made to enter the grave for about three days. This in essence is very symbolic. It signifies an oath or covenant between the prospective Ozo title holder and the spirits of the ancestors<sup>29</sup>. They thereafter stand as intermediaries between the ordinary Awka indigenes and the ancestors. They serve as beacon of justice and truth. As a result of the instant consequence that follows any misconduct on their part as representatives of the gods here on earth, they avoided doing evil of any sort like a plague.

**Ila atu and Sojourn in akwu Ozo:** Following the announcement, the enthusiastic umuokpu greet him with loud ovation and from the spot, they lead him back home shouting his four title names in different tunes saying “*anyi echie*” (we have made it) as they move homewards triumphantly the group returned to the new titled man’s compound, he would be welcomed and heralded by Okwopu (piper) and Okwufie (wooden gong player). This is later followed at about 8:00am by the arrival of the head of Ozo and his wife for the wearing of his ankle cords (*akiri okpa*), and the ceremonial arrangement of the new entrant with the Ozo cap with an eagle feather. This is followed by gun shots and much jubilation marking the end of the Ila Atu rite.

**Ngugu Ozo;** In this particular ceremony, the new titled man will be told the rules and regulations guiding the Ozo title institution, they do this by drawing figures on the ground with their staff of office. The head of the Ozo title holders, some senior Ozo title holders and the new entrant are normally involved in the Ngugu Ozo. The head of the Ozo title and the rest of his colleagues take their appropriate positions in order of title seniority along a single file with the head seating next to the new Ozo man. The head is presented with sufficient kola nuts for each of the title men to collect two. This ceremony is followed by traditional breaking of the kola nut by the head of the Ozo title of that particular group. The titled men except the head would move in order of seniority in title to congratulate their new colleague one after the other. The title men next to the head would get up with his staff of office (*ngwuogiliga*) and move straight to the new colleague and ask him again ‘*Ichili gini*’ (what are your title names) he replies to them “*Echilim nnanyelugo*” and the other three names. The title man salutes him four times with his *ngwuogiliga* and then returns to his seat. The other titled men would take their turns to salute him in the same manner.

At the end of the congratulations from colleagues, the head and his wife would dance to the *ufie* music and after that each of the rest of the titled men would dance with his wife in order of seniority in title one after the other. The new titled man and his wife would be expected to dance last, after which he and a girl underage would move into the Akwu-Ozo where she continues to serve the man. The end of the dancing to the *Ufie* tune is marked by extravagant entertainment for the title colleagues as well as for other relations throughout. The title men are provided with a special accommodation and are served with all kinds of food items including *nni-cha* (pounded yam) thick *egwusi/onugbu* soup, plenty of goat meat or dried meats, *asa* and/or *aja* fish, *ncha* and *abacha*. Non- titled visitors or the general public are also provided with food and drinks according to the aspirants’ wealth. After the first oye day, the Ozo men are to be visiting him periodically for similar entertainment until the new titled man completes his tenure of office of *izu-na-ese* (twenty days).<sup>30</sup> During the period, the new Ozo

man stays at Akwu-Ozo, it is the responsibility of the small girl to prepare Ufie (cam wood) and Uli which are profusely used to beautify his body. He is very well fed while in confinement. Before the new title man takes his breakfast each morning and other meals, the small girl moves out first to dance to Ufie music after which the man gets out of the Akwu-Ozo to also dance with the Ufie player using the wooden musical instrument to call him by his title names and at the same time showering praises on him. As he ends with the Ufie, he is served with breakfast, lunch or supper as the case may be by the girl taking care of him<sup>31</sup>. Each time he stops dancing, it is a free dancing for all visitors who may have been anxiously waiting for an opportunity to do so.

**Iru Omu:** The Iru-Omu (thanksgiving ceremony) for a newly titled Ozo man commences twelve (Izu n'ato) after his entering the akwu-Ozo. A traditional medicine man (dibia) charged with performing sacrifices (aja) is invited in advance to prepare Ogu using Omu (young palm frond). These are arranged on bundles and carried by young men to all routes to be used by the new Ozo man. The Iru Omu covers ritual courtesy calls to prominent shrines/idols, etc in the town and the Ibu- Ozo of his Ozo title group dropping the palm frond (Omu) at each place visited. The long and jubilant tributes would commence at the man's village and end at the last village. Henceforth, it is the responsibility of the young men who carry the bundles of omu to throw or litter them along the foot paths through which they pass, as Ikwe-aku (mortar for processing palm oil) Ngwu tree and so on. As they move on into village roads, the Okwa-opu calls the head and the new Ozo man by their title names.

He calls the head first and he answers o-o-o interjecting iga ezelue na nka (you will live long to enjoy the fruits of the title). The Okwa opu then calls the new Ozo man and he replies in those words o-o-odeee i arize nna nma nnem, arize chi kelu mni ejiom nke mmadu wee chi Ozo a asirom nwata sie ji n'oku wee koo, asi rom ogoli nwanya ekwena na di ya (thanks for my parents and God for making it possible for him to take the title and also denounces evil things). He repeats these and makes more pronouncements as they move from one corner of the fun to another. The young men would ensure that bundles of omu are made available at all points during the iru-omu ceremony. As the journey progresses, the young men would continue to drop them in earnest while in transit, the head and his wife are not to take any food until the end of the exercise when they would return to their homes, people who have drinks for them would bring them out at ama for them and their entourage to take when they have the urge to drink. The movement which started at about 6.00am or 7.00am is continued until around 6.00pm. The left over bundles of Omu are carried by the young men and are discarded at the village shrine.

**Izu Afia Ozo:** The end of iru omu is followed by preparations for izu Afia Ozo (first appearance at the market after taking the title) which takes place on Afo market day after the twenty-eight days sojourn at the various villages. The new Ozo man invites different groups such as Ozo titled men, Ogbo orulo (his age grade) umu-okpu and ndi-iom including those of his wife for information and entertainments in respect of the Afo day fixed for the Izu Afia ceremony. After the entertainment and in the evening of the Oye day before the Afor day, the okwa ufie and okwa-opu would move to the titled man's home and entertain guests all night with the flute. Around 12.00noon the following Afo day, all groups would assembly at the host's premises well dressed. The titled men appear in their full regalia while their wives use all types of traditional cosmetics as ufie, uli, uгаа-alo or nkasiana or uli ogbu to adorn and beautify themselves thus exhibiting enviable decorum.<sup>32</sup> On arrival, the various groups are lavishly entertained. Towards the end of the last entertainment, the Okwa-ufie/okwa-opu and umuokpu move in advance to the Ama-afor before others to pave grounds for the titled man's



triumphant entry into the Afo square. At Afo, the umuokpu display melodious tunes to chant the four title names of the new Ozo man being expected with others into songs, whereas the okwa ufie and okwa opu would be busy with their own kind of amusements. Through the songs of the umuokpu, the enthusiastic and anxious spectators would know the title names of the new Ozo man in advance. As the new Ozo titled man and his group approach the Afor market, the umuokpu would sing loudly to usher them in the Ama-afo. The titled men enter the Afor in this procession, the head of the Ozo with his ngwuogiliga (staff of office) also on his left shoulder. The other titled men in like manner would queue in order of seniority in the title-taking. Their wives would also queue up in like manner, following their husband's immediately behind. At the oma-afor, the titled men would also take their seats in order of seniority for a while at the market place. After they are seated and the atmosphere would have quietened, the new Ozo holder together with some of his kindred (umunna) women (umuokpu) his sons and daughters would move directly to ngene shrine with a cock, yams, cocoyam's eight kola nuts and one gallon of raffia or palm wine.

The Eze ngene (chief priest) would be already there expecting them. While carrying on with the sacrifices he tells ngene that there is a new titled man who has come to pay a maiden tribute to him (he calls the man by his title names). The chief priest traditionally prays the ngene to help the man in all respect and concludes by "O ga ezelue na nka" (may he live long to enjoy the fruits of his labour) he repeats this statement three times disclosing to ngene all his four title names. After this solemn prayer, the Eze-ngene is presented with a cock, yams, cocoyams, kola nuts and one gallon of wine. He kills the cock, drops its blood on his ofo, sprinkling and spreading the cocks' feather on the ngene praying for the Ozo man's protection, long life and well being of himself and family and then move to the female shrine. The chief priest drops part of the items given to him for ngene reserving the remainder for him. He picks his cup half filled with wine and throws it to the altar of Ngene and kisses the cup. The cup is then filled with wine and returned to the chief priest who empties the cup. The cup would be filled a third and fourth time and given to the women who carried the wine and the man who serves it respectively. Others are then served wine and when the wine is eventually finished, the dregs is passed to Eze ngene who throws it on the altar of the Ngene shrine and concludes in this word Odonigwugwu (i.e, it is so).

The new titled man after the ritual ceremonies at the Odo Ngene returns to take his position at the tail end of the queue followed by the titled men of honor. At this point in time, they are each served with wine in order of seniority. At the end of this exercise, the Okwa-Ufie and Okwa-Opu starts releasing different Ufie musical tunes for titled men. The first to dance (Ibu ufie) is the head of the Ozo title. The Okwa ufie and okwa opu call him by his title names and he replies o-o, gets up, moves directly to the Ufie players, drives his Ngwuogiliga into the ground. Behind the Ufie wooden gong, he deposits some money on top of the Ufie, also drops some amounts of Okwa nyo (rattler) and Okwa-opu and is then joined by his wife. The brand of Ufie music for titled men would be started and the head and his wife would move some distance backwards for enough spaces for ibu-Ufie. He dances four times, ending each round by quickly moving to grasp his Ngwuogiliga for a moment and then begins to dance again in a similar manner. At the end of his turn, the head removes his staff of office, fills a hole made by it by one of his toes and returns to his seat. The okwa-Ufie and Okwa opu would call the titled man as the next in status to the head. He then calls the others down the line for the Ibu-Ufie, each would perform the ceremonial dance with his Ngwuogiliga. The last to demonstrate is the new titled man with his Ngwuogiliga. The end of the Ibu-Ufie is immediately followed by showering of presents in cash and kind to the new Ozo titled man, his wife and mother. This is the last event of the Ozo title taking after which all groups

disperse to their respective places. The end of any Ozo title ceremony is followed by the new Ozo holder taking a tender stem of Ogirisi tree (*Neubouardia Laevis*) and planting same at his kindred's Nze-ma-nze (a family's sacred garden) centre. Every titled man of kindred has his own Ogirisi tree in the Nze-ma-nze centre of their kindred.<sup>33</sup>

### **Burial Rites of an OZO Titled Man**

When an Ozo Awka flies into eternity as they say when he dies, it is said that he has taken a flight into eternity and his life here on earth is celebrated by Ozo Awka and others. His first son goes with an uncle or a close relative, to the head of Ozo Awka to announce the bad news. He presents the customary hot drink and kola nuts, the Isi-Ozo laments the death of their colleague. The Isi-Ozo or Ozo head informs Ozo Awka at its next formal meeting of the death. The family of the deceased Ozo Awka goes ahead to prepare for the burial rites while keeping the Isi-Ozo abreast of all the arrangements. All the elaborate feasting ceremonies organized in the process of taking the title while the Ozo titled man was alive must be repeated all over again.<sup>34</sup> On the day of the burial proper; when the deceased is to be lowered into the grave, in Awka custom, it is the first son of the deceased who pours the sand first into the grave followed by other children. It is said that a parent has achieved greatly if he or she has children who pour sand into his or her grave at burial. An informant made it clear that a spouse does not pour sand into the late spouses' grave. According to him, it is an abomination to do that in Awka custom. He argued that this custom is consistent with the Christian bible; since both the husband and wife are one after marriage, it is practically not possible to bury your self.<sup>35</sup>

The late Ozo is buried lying on his back in an Osi Oji or a wood carved from the iroko tree which was the most reputable casket at that time. The only Ozo paraphenalia that goes down to the grave with the Ozo man is the akiri okpa or apali (anklet) of both himself and his living Ojefi.<sup>36</sup> All the Ozo titles which a man acquired may be in a period of time extending for over fifteen years, are removed from him in a very solemn religious ceremony which involves the sacrificial killing of some goats, cocks and cows. It is believed among most Igbo's that although the Ozo man must be buried with the rites, ceremonies and pageantry pertaining to his rank, yet the practice of removing the Ozo in symbolic religious rites is to teach people that no one should carry title or rank to the gods<sup>37</sup>. This is because it is believed that before the gods all men are equal and the only title or rank to be awarded in the land of the dead is what the gods themselves give, according to the quality of life a man has lived in this world.

### **Social Rights and Privileges of an Ozo Title Holder**

In most Igbo areas, only the Ozo men hold political offices and represent their families and lineages in the village group council or preside over settlement of cases, making covenants and the establishment of new cults. Socially, they belong to the noble man's rank. This is a social status marked out by the honor accorded to those holding that position. They also take precedence in all public entertainments and feast irrespective of their age.<sup>38</sup> For instance as Awka, the Ozo man however young is to be served first at public meals, he alone can carry and blow the elephant tusk, put eagle feathers on his cap, sit on a goat's skin, on the dais, pour libations of wine to the spirit of dead ancestor; be the Okpara or head of his extended family. It will be an insult for anyone to address him in public meetings other than in his title names. Only Ozo title men greet one another with the double handshake. The Ozo titled man would be the "banker" for his community because he is so trusted that people keep their

precious properties with him. He is exempted from menial manual labour.<sup>39</sup> At Nri, any titled man convicted of stealing, automatically forfeits his title.<sup>40</sup> Such is the great honour society bestows on the Ozo title holder that when he dies especially in old age, his burial assumes pious and sacred form which indicates the people's belief that his spirit has joined the gods and the ancestors and that he has become divine. The titled man is a very proud man which may at times appear to the stranger as arrogance. The wives are also affected because they automatically advance in social status with their husbands. Although titles can vary, there appears to be a very special regard for the Ozo title in particular. In addition to that, the Ozo titled man is safely guarded from all bodily assaults. He also has an almost limitless authority to inflict any punishment, short of outright murder on any one who meddles with any of his wives. He holds a private council and exercises jurisdiction over traditional civil and even criminal cases among kindred and occasionally in the towns<sup>41</sup>.

They also handle problems threatening the internal and external political social and economic securities of the towns. These include settling land and other cases considered inimical to maintenance of peace and order in the town. The judgment delivered over an issue by them is fierce and irrevocable. The council of Ozo effectively governed Awka during the pre-colonial era. When they promulgated a Decree prohibiting certain social evils, no one dared to violate the terms of the decree without being subjected to penalties commensurate with the offence committed. An extreme case of intransigence attracts a punishment of banishment or being sold into slavery. It is the prerogative of the Nze na Ozo to determine offense punishable by banishment or being sold into slavery<sup>42</sup>. The Ozo man reserves exclusive right of fixing dates for the celebrations of the annual traditional festivities of Imoka and Ngene. They also announce the dates for any other particular event at Imoka, when it is to be celebrated. However, Ozo titled men who failed to perform the second burial rites of their parents do not participate in the execution of this sacred exercise<sup>43</sup>.

### **OZO AWKA AS AT 1970: NEW TRENDS IN OZO TITLE TAKING SINCE 1970**

The Ozo title institution is the most important feature of Igbo social and cultural life. Men who acquired riches take the traditional title that confers the title of "Ozo" on them, thus, making them members of the Traditional Ruling Council (TRC), in their communities. Among the Igbos, Ozo title taking is a very prestigious ceremony and accords a man an exalted position in his family, kindred and the entire community. It is an aristocratic position. In every Igbo society, there is hierarchy and the Ozo title society is the highest level of the hierarchy. It is like the "college of cardinals," "the privy council" or the *crème de la crème* of the community<sup>44</sup>. The Igbos have an interesting saying; if you know what is required to take the Ozo title, you would opt to remain as you were; Ozo title-taking is not for the faint hearted men or men of limited means. It takes a heavy toll on one's resources.

Before a man is initiated into the Ozo society, his character, conduct and source of livelihood are checked or verified. This is the case because the Ozo society being prestigious and famous would not accept a person with questionable character or a man whose means of livelihood cannot be ascertained. The report of the screening committee which is put together for this purpose will determine the fate of the aspirant viz-a-viz becoming an Ozo titled man in the community. The screening committee will be looking for, among other things: Criminal records if any; how his wealth was made; if he is an ex-convict, if he has taken other titles; if he lives in his own house; if he is married and has children etc. If the report of the screening committee is positive, the Ozo title aspirant can now proceed further. He then gets the list of requirements for Ozo title taking from the secretary<sup>45</sup>. The Ozo aspirant must

know what he is getting into. He wishes to be regarded as a dispenser of justice without any fear or favor irrespective of who is involved. He is not bankrupt in character. He did not come to wealth through robbery and he is not a criminal or an ex-convict. Ozo is open to male indigenes with good reputation. This title taking is a very rigorous exercise which culminates in the aspirant becoming an Ichie Ukwu, a first class Ichie. As Ichie Ukwu, he has dedicated himself to what is good. He has to avoid what is evil. Membership has its privileges. He cannot be insulted because he never put himself in a compromising situation. He is respected and revered. In days gone by, an Ozo title holder had so many rules governing his existence; he did not eat food cooked by just about anyone; he drank from a special cup; he was entertained while he ate; he did not engage in arguments; he always spoke the truth or faced serious retributions from Ani, the Earth Deity; etc<sup>46</sup>. In the olden days, there were elaborate initiation rites such as the ritual cleansing of the initiates, the would-be Ozo, by an Nri emissary known as “aka Nri”, a midget from Nri Town. Through the ceremony all mistakes and missteps of the past were cleansed off and the initiate was then prepared for the new life of a peaceful person who would no longer tolerate injustice, overlook oppression or tell lies.

This aspect of cleansing is done these days with Nzu or white chalk. Nzu stands for purity and is used to draw lines on the mat while praying for the initiate. Ozo still maintains its mystique. It is believed that one who has taken the Ozo title has sworn to an oath of truthfulness. He has done Nka Nma Nile that means that his tongue has been sanctified to speak only the truth. He must be honest, where there is dispute; he is expected to provide the correct information. In the olden days, Ndi Ozo of the community were treated as saints. They led by example and protected the weak by speaking against injustice and the young ones were never misled into misdeed<sup>47</sup>. By 1970, gradually but steadily, various core aspects of the ozo title process began to be eroded. The prospective ozo initiate no longer performed some of the rites which were termed idolatrous by the Christian churches (Roman Catholic and the Anglican). In the modern Awka, it was decided at a meeting of Ozo Awka on 20th April 1970 that any Awka man who wished to take the Ozo title must give £300.0 (three hundred pounds sterling or N600) to Ozo Awka. One hundred and fifty pounds out of this sum will go to the full pledged Ozo Awka members while the remaining £150.0 will be shared by those who had not fully satisfied the requirements to be initiated.

Also 11 Atumas or 22 gallons of palm wine (Nkwu Enu) were brought by the initiate. If the palm wine was not good enough, the initiate will pay a price of £15 (fifteen pound sterling) per Atuma of wine. Other items included 1 goat which will be killed and the meat used for the rice which will be served to Ozo Awka. Hence, the waist and head of the goat will go to the initiate. Each Ozo will receive £5 (five pound sterling) for the washing of his hands (Nkwu aka), £5 (five pound sterling) to the head of Ozo Awka who will put the foot threads (anklets, owulu) on the ankles of the initiates; 8(eight) bottles of schnapps; 2 Atumas/kegs to be presented to Ozo Awka for solution as a new Ozo signaling the completion of the title taking ceremony. The recognized sections were Umuokpu, Agulu Awka, Amikwo, Amaenyi and Ezioka<sup>48</sup>. It was also decided that at all Ozo meetings, all Ozo Awka must wear their red caps at all times, failure to do so would attract a fine of £5(five sterling). Ozo Awka also decided that they will no longer eat before non-Ozo men and that the initiates will provide two men to serve them<sup>49</sup>. Most aspects of certain titles have been converted to cash payment. This monetization is very much welcome as it shows that after all, title-taking is about money. In distant past, title taking was intended to be a method of indirect saving as old members shared some money when a new member was admitted. The shares were taken according to seniority in the title group. Although, there are differences in the title fees, what



is paid or done for the title in the quarters or title groups in Awka, the recognition has been taken as universal.

## THE INITIATION AND BURIAL OF OZO AWKA SINCE 1970

### 1. Initiation

The day of initiation into Ozo Awka is very interesting to all parties. The occupants of the compound of the Ozo to be wake up early that day. They are joined by friends and well wishers to tidy up the premises. Generous food would be cooked, chairs and tables properly arranged. Every space was swept and cleaned. Life music played and Okwodu, the trumpet blower would be busy calling out the initiate, reminding him, that the day is his day! Around 9.00am, the Ozo title holders of Awka begin to arrive. By then the initiate has come to his canopy, acknowledging the arrival of Ozo Awka by greeting them, calling them by their Ozo titles, they arrive with their wives or Ojiefis. Every Ozo Awka turns up in the Ozo Awka regalia and is a royal figure to behold. The Ozo title holders have their seats, they sit according to seniority in taking the tile. The Ojiefis also have their own canopies where they sit. Unlike Ozo Awka, the Ojiefis wear a uniform and they look queenly in it. The wife of the president of Ozo Awka is the head of Ojiefi Ozo Awka. The initiation day is their day and they are set to enjoy it<sup>50</sup>.

At 10.00am, the president and the head of Ozo Awka, Ozo Obuora Essel, greets everybody and salutes the Ozo title holders in the usual way; “Ozo Awka Muo Nu, Ozo Awka Kacho Nu, Ozo Awka Bu Kweli Nu!!! Ozo Awka responds in a resounding “Iyo-a-a!!!” He tells Ozo Awka that the appointed day has arrived and thanks God and “Ife ne me li Awka ife” for the development. He tells the man who has invited Ozo Awka had arrived and was ready to go. He announced that a declared war does not claim a cripple and sits down<sup>51</sup>. As the president of Ozo Awka was speaking, the steward and messengers of the initiates could be seen taking trays of kolanuts, garden eggs (Afufa) and Ose Oji to the main table, that before him, the president who appeals to God Almighty to bless the initiate and give Ozo Awka more days like the one they were enjoying! He does all the talking in Igbo because the kola nut does not understand the English language! Ozo Awka responds; “Ise-ee!” He pours the libation too. Everybody settles down to eating the kola nuts and accompaniments<sup>52</sup>. Then Ozo Awka turns to looking after itself, Ozo is a title. It is the highest traditional title in Awka. It is therefore; Emume- there is money to be shared. The money, under various sub-heads is brought out in separate envelopes. The financial secretary and the warders of Ozo Awka take charge.

They give out “Ego Nkwo Aka” money for “washing hands which is ₦100 (one hundred naira) to each Ozo title holders alive, whether present or not.” They share out the title money, Ishi Ego Emume, to every member alive and Ego Mmia, money derived from the sale of some drinks presented to only members who are physically present. They share other sums of money which fall under various sub-heads to only those present. Finally, one hundred naira ₦100.00 is given to every Ozo Awka for pata nuu, the auction sale, which is held two days after the initiation some ₦1,800,000.00 (one million, eight hundred thousand naira) cash, is shared on initiation day<sup>53</sup>. The welfare officers of Ozo Awka also get busy. They share out the drinks, beer and minerals and malt. There is enough for every member. As money, kola nuts and drinks are presented to Ozo Awka, the same goes for ojiefi Ozo Awka that are well positioned in the compound of the Ozo Awka to be. They do their own sharing too and some ceremonies but not as much as Ozo Awka, the initiate comes out and presents one bottle of Hennessy Brandy, four Kola nuts and ₦100.00 to the last person who took the Ozo Awka title. This is called “Nkwoaka; ₦5, 000.00 and two bottles of malt. Progress is being made



satisfactorily. Some four Ozo Awka are appointed to dance the ufie music. The Ozo Awka whose hands have been “Washed” must dance; three others one from each sub-section and the fourth being the advance facilitator Ozo Awka, dance too. To dance, the Ozo goes to the Ufio music providers and offers them some money and then positions himself to start dancing. His Ojiefi is already behind him with her Akupe and is joined by other young Ojiefis. The Ozo Awka whose turn is to dance continues to dance all around the compound sprayed with naira notes and cheered on after some minutes of great displays, he returns to the Ufio music providers and breaks the dance, he is followed by the others and the Ozo Awka and great crowd that had gathered are well entertained to great dance rhythms.” The Ojiefis collect all the money that each Ozo Awka who danced made them count and report to him and he tells them to take all or give him a percentage. That way, the Ojiefies make extra money and only those present share it. The Ufio dance session warms up the premises<sup>54</sup>. The president and head of Ozo Awka then announce that Ozo Awka would go and congratulate the noble man about to join them and after that the initiation proper will take place. It is a fact that initiate is equal to the task. So, Ozo Awka moves to his canopy and he welcomes them by beating the Ogene gong and saying “Ozo Awka Ekenemu-o-o-o!” He is presented with a purse of ₦20, 000 (twenty thousand naira only) as “Ikpo iru Ozo”. He beats the Ogene gong again as the Ozo Awka moves to the canopy where the chairs and all that are needed for the initiation ceremony is kept<sup>55</sup>.

## IGBIA OWULU

The president of Ozo Awka begins the ceremony with traditional prayers. He calls on God to bless the initiate and his family, he prays for a restoration of the money used to perform the Ozo; and he prays that the new Ozo Awka will live for a long time; as he comes to the end of his prayers, he draws four lines on the mat and wishes the initiate well on the four market days; Nkwo, Eke, Oye and Afor and there is a resounding “Ise-o-o!”. The next Ozo Awka in seniority does as the president has done and again the people chorus “Ise-o-o!” when the last Ozo Awka among those seated has prayed for the initiate, the president breaks the kola nut, the entire ceremony being conducted in Igbo because of the inability of the kola nut to speak or hear English. The head of Ozo Awka then pours libation, when the kola nut is broken, one piece is given to the initiate, he chews off a bit gives to his wife who chews off a bit and passes the remainder on to the first born and the kola nut continues on the journey till the round is made. The shot of brandy is also made to go round, from the initiate to the last born of the family. This is a show of unity and togetherness. Some Ozo Awka takes some of the kola nut and brandy.

Now, everybody is excited. The president of Ozo Awka asks the question, “Are we to admit him into Ozo Awka?” Everybody roars E-ee-oo! The president turns to the crowd and asks the family if he has satisfied them and each group answers E-e-e-o-o-o. Then the initiate is asked to place his foot on the Ajaghija stool. He does so and the president of Ozo Awka places the ankle cord(akiri okpa) on it. He does so for the second foot. The same is done for his Ojiefi. Then the short red cap is removed from the head of the initiate and the long red cap with the four ugo feathers replaces it. Then the next Ozo Awka in seniority is asked to give him the staff of office and he does so with prayers and best wishes. He is also given the Akupe or fan. Finally, he is ready to be named! He is seated down and called three bad un-Ozo title names and he does not answer, beating the gong instead. The fourth name will be his Ozo Awka title and when the head Ozo Awka announces “Ejike Muoneme Igwe”, I call you “Ozo Chinemeze-o-o-o” the initiate answers “Eh-o-o-o!” and everybody shouts “Ochie-e-e!”<sup>56</sup> A brand new Ozo Awka has arrived! He is being congratulated by everybody. He has

to dance; he is being directed by an Ozo these days, Ozo Okpala, Dr. Aneze Chinwuba as to where to go; his Ojiefi is behind him fanning him happily; people are spraying money around him; he goes to Ozo Awka, and to Ojiefi Ozo Awka; he displays some great dance steps and finally is led to his main gate for yet another initiation ceremony, "Ina aka Ikenga"<sup>57</sup>. At his main gate, senior Ozo Awka engage him in "Ina Aka Ikenga", saying, one after the other, more prayers for him as they congratulate him and wish him well. When the youngest Ozo Awka is led back to the Ufio stand where he breaks the dance. He is escorted to his seat his wife in tow, by the designated Ozo Awka guide, Ozo Okpala, Dr. Aneze Chinwuba, the secretary of Ozo Awka. It is time for other people to congratulate the new Ozo Awka member. As this is happening, Ozo Awka retires to where they will be entertained because Ozo Awka do not eat in public. They eat well and each person drinks his brand. Every Ozo is happy. Finally, the gifts presented to Ozo Awka to commemorate the occasion are shared and the president Ozo Awka announces that "Izu Akan!" meaning that the day's function is over! Ozo Awka pull their Ngwu Ozos and "good byes" are said. Everybody is very happy and Ozo Awka has registered a new member<sup>58</sup>.

### **NDU OJIEFI, THE OJIEFI OZO AWKA**

The first wives of Ozo Awka have now joined their husbands. Ozo Awka members, as "Ojiefis" although "Ojiefi is not a title in the real sense. Ndu Ojiefi started singly. It was an Ozo Awka who asked his wife to accompany him to an Ozo Awka ceremony to collect all that he could not eat and could take home to eat later. Then a few others started to emulate him. Then Ozo Awka started to give the Ojiefis, food and drink's to share. Soon they, the Ojiefis, started to make demands of the initiate as a group, and became a group Ndu Ojiefi! They have since gained recognition and today, Ojiefi Ozo Awka are there, gracing every Ozo Awka initiation<sup>59</sup>. An Ojiefi is the head of first wife of a polygamous Ozo Awka or wife of an Ozo Awka. She wears the anklets at initiation, later, when it happened that the head or first wife was not liked by the husband, it used to be an Okpens (wooden representative of a god) that received the two anklets for the wife. Then Christianity came into Ozo Awka and the wife next in seniority received the anklets. For the Ozo Awka with one wife, there was no debate as to who will wear the anklets. An initiate was congratulated by family friends and relatives. Each person congratulated the new Ozo Awka as he or she wanted. What about the name Ojiefi? The name "Ojiefi" came about when a wife of an initiate congratulated her husband for taking the Ozo Awka title with a cow! "Ojiefi" means "using a cow to say congratulations or prepare the cream dressing with which the abacha is eaten".

Now she wears the anklets but why is she called Ojiefi? She has to congratulate her husband as she could. Thus, the average Ojiefi bought a cock and some garden eggs, oji (kola nuts) and ede ose (ose oji) and presented to her husband in a company of her fellow married women or anu anu. When the Ojiefis became organized, it was in the company of the senior Ojiefis. But there are Ojiefis who can really afford to do more in terms of congratulating the new Ozo Awka<sup>60</sup>. Such Ojiefis presented live cows thus were called "Ojiefi agba ncha" because it was said that such Ojiefis really tried in congratulating their husbands with live cows. They were also praised as "they used efi (cow) to dress up cassava (tapioca) salad". This notwithstanding, all Ojiefis are equal irrespective of the fact that one used a cock or a cow to say congratulations to the new Ozo Awka, her husband. It was at a meeting of Ozo Awka held on the 11th of August 1974 in the residence of Ozo Chief S.N. Madiebo, Ozo Omeokachie that the Ojiefis were recognized by Ozo Awka as a group. At that meeting, Ozo Awka decided that all Ojiefi Ozo Awka will receive the following "presents or gifts" from Ozo Awka when an initiate performs the Ozo title ceremony. The sum of twenty naira,

4gallons of Nkwu enu; 2bottles of native drink (hot) and a pan of cooked rice. During the burial ceremony (second) of an Ozo Awka, the Ojiefi will be given drink only. They will not be given any money. They will not receive any food. It is noted that it is Ozo Awka that gives these items and not the initiates. But on 21st march 1977, the Ojiefi Ozo Awka gained more recognition from their husbands when Ozo Awka decided to give them: ₦40.00 (forty naira only), 2 bottles of schnapps, 2Atuma Nkwu, 1 goat (mpi), 1 big pan of cooked rice. These days, these items presented after initiation are monetized and come to around ₦79, 500 (seventy-nine thousand, five hundred naira only)<sup>61</sup>

### **PATA NUO OR OZO AUCTION SALE**

On the Monday following the Saturday in which the Ozo Awka initiated its freshest member, Ozo Awka will gather again in the latest member's house for the pata Nuo ceremony. This is a type of auction sales but Ozo Awka only pay for the beef. They are offered some fifty yam tubers, some drinks, some kola nuts, garden eggs and ede ose, one bottle of Hennessy brandy, some palm wine, abacha ncha and mme anu. Each Ozo Awka buys one or two portions of beef at ₦500.00 (five hundred naira each portion). Every Ozo Awka present is served some pepper soup, according to seniority in the title group. The abacha ncha is shared out with the accompanying asazu (big dried fish) and fried meat. Drinks (beer, malt, mineral) are served and the raw meat is sold to Ozo Awka. Ozo Awka eats the abacha ncha and the pepper soup and drinks moderately. It is another feast two days after the initiation into Ozo Awka<sup>62</sup>.

With Pata Nuo, the aim is not to make money. The meat is not sold as it would go in the market. Again one does not pay for the pepper soup, abacha ncha etc. it is an Ozo Awka requirement that one does Pata Nuo. Without this, presently, the initiation is incomplete<sup>63</sup>.

### **IGBU EFI EGBO**

On the first Saturday following the initiation into Ozo Awka, the freshest Ozo Awka performs yet another ceremony, he presents a live cow to Ozo Awka to confirm that he is not exhausted entertaining Ozo Awka and the people. The cow, 'efi' is taken to the residence of the head of Ozo Awka. Ozo members gather and share the cow following their sharing method, now it is said that the new Ozo Awka has presented Efi Egbo to Ozo Awka and everybody is satisfied<sup>64</sup>.

### **NKPO IRU OZO CONGRATULATING THE NEW OZO**

People are happy that the Ozo title is being taken. They are happy that the initiate is their son-in-law. They are happy because he is from their village. Rejoicing with the new one or congratulating him is the order of the day. Once he is done with "Ina aka Ikenga" as his gate, he sits down to receive visitors and congratulations. Presently, in this stage, the wife of the initiate congratulates him for his achievement with either a cow or money that can buy a cow that she uses to congratulate her husband to become "Ojiefi Ozo Gidigbam Gidigbam"<sup>65</sup>.

Interestingly, an Ozo Awka initiate is not allowed to leave his residence following his initiation into Ozo Awka until twelve days three native (Igbo weeks or Izu n'ato). This mandatory twelve day period is known as "Akwu Ozo" or "Ozo's nest". It is usually "Ozo Retreat". He stays at home receiving visitors and entertaining them. He lives this way, in a nest for the period till he gets good rest. At the end of the 12 day period, the Akwu Ozo is "torn" or taken apart and the new Ozo Awka pays some money to the Ozo Awka for the "labour" Nseke Akwu Ozo. At Ozo Awka's first attendance at an Ozo Awka meeting or Izu Ozo Awka, the initiated or fresh Ozo Awka performs "Mgbandu" ceremony or "Nka nma

Nile after which he signs the declaration that he will abide by the Ozo Awka rules and regulations and the Ozo Awka”. The freshest Ozo Awka’s first outing is his first attendance at an Ozo Awka meeting or Izu Ozo Awka. This outing is made at the end of the twelve day stay in Akwu Ozo. It is at this meeting at Obu Ozo Awka, the residence of the head of Ozo Awka, that the freshest Ozo Awka performs the “Mgbandu ceremony” after which he signs the declaration that he will abide by the Ozo Awka rules and regulations and the Ozo Awka code of conduct and receives the certificate of membership of Ozo Awka. The president of Ozo Awka does the Nka Nma Nile (stroking of the tongue of the new Ozo Awka seven times with a knife assisted by the secretary)<sup>66</sup>.

## 2. BURIAL OF AN OZO

At the death of an Ozo Awka, his first son goes with an uncle or a close relative, to the head of Ozo Awka to announce the event. He presents the customary that drink and kola nuts. The president or head Ozo Awka laments because this is a loss but praises God Almighty for doing his will. God gives life and the same God has taken the Ozo titled man to eternity. Then the head informs Ozo Awka at its next formal meeting of the death<sup>67</sup>. The family of the deceased Ozo Awka goes ahead to prepare for the celebration of life, always keeping the Ozo Awka informed. Ozo Awka is given the dates and even though invitation cards are brought to the head and distributed, members and Ozo and an Ojiefi of the burial rites. Ozo Awka has been Christianized. All fetish or unchristian aspects of the title taking ceremony have been abolished. Thus, presently if the dead Ozo is a Roman Catholic adherent or a member of the Anglican Communion or a Pentecostal, it is the practice of his religious denomination that is followed. Ozo Awka is present at the church ceremony for the deceased and those who belong to the denomination participate in the ceremony. When it is over and the deceased is lowered into the grave, the traditional dust-to-dust rite follows<sup>68</sup>.

In Awka custom, it is the first son of the deceased who pours the sand into the grave first before the rest of the deceased children follow. It is said that a parent has achieved greatness of ho or she has children who pour sand into his or her grave at burial. A child is an “achievement”. A spouse does not pour sand into the late spouse’s grave. It is an abomination to do it that way. It was so before colonial rule, it was also the same system during colonial rule, and has remained so afterward<sup>69</sup>. After the performance of the dust-to-dust rite by the first son, he is then initiated into Ozo Awka for a period of three native weeks or twelve days by the head Ozo Awka and before all attending the funeral ceremony, for this, he wears his late father’s robe and presents himself looking regal. He presents agreed kola nuts, hot drinks, Nzu and his father’s Ozo paraphernalia except akiri okpa or apali which are thrown into the casket and buried along with the Ojiefis apali. The head of Ozo Awka prays for him and the family. The kola nut is then broken. He is given a lobe of it and he shares it with his siblings and wife, keeping according to the seniority system in the family.

He is also given the hot drink after the head pours the libation which he drinks and passes along as was done with the kola nut. The Ozo Awka around share the kola nut and drink. Then the first son is capped with his father’s long red cap with white Ugo feathers. Finally, he is given the fathers Ozo staff of office or Ngwu agaliga. At each juncture, he beats the ogene gong signaling agreement and acceptance of the deed. Then he gets up with his wife facing him, he is led around the fathers’ compound dancing to the ufie music and being hailed by Ozo Awka family and well wishers usually with his father Ozo title name<sup>70</sup>. He is led around the premises and to the gate of the compound and where he engages in another aspect of the funeral ceremony, Ina aka ikenga/ Ina akalor, for this, he stands in his



compound at the gate, facing a collection of Ozo Awka who are there to greet him and advice him on the future. The Ozo Awka does this according to seniority wishing him progress. Ozo Awka retires to a prepared compound to be entertained. They eat and are given souvenirs and invited to the Pata Nuo, it is exactly as it was done when the deceased took the Ozo title. A huge cow is slaughtered because there must be enough meat for the auction sale, the pepper soup, abacha ncha is plentiful and there is enough fried meat and asa azu to go with it. The drinks offered, beer, stout, malt and Nkwu are chilled<sup>71</sup>. The standard is maintained during initiation into Ozo Awka. Pata Nuo completes the burial ceremony of an Ozo Awka, the burial ceremony proper costs good money. On the day of burial, Ozo Awka and their Ojiefis are presented with some money and water only. The next day which is Akwamozu day, they are again presented with money and real drinks-an assortment of beers, stout beer, malt drink, minerals, kola nuts and Ede Ose, and good food and rich soup. They are richly entertained for poor people are not initiated into Ozo Awka.

### THE OZO SOCIETY AND CHRISTIANITY

Like everything that Christianity touches, the initiation rites have been Christianized, but some traditional elements are still preserved. Uche Ezechukwu states that Ndigbo accepted Christianity with ease and a great fervor. They believe that Christianity was custom-made for them. They find the Christian teachings and philosophy natural, rational and similar to their traditional world-view<sup>72</sup>. For Ndigbo which is part, Christian ethics and philosophies are identical and mere extensions of their own. Thus, the Christian missionaries were merely preaching to the already converted! Now, having accepted Christianity, Ndigbo have hardly ever regarded it as a foreign religion, because they find a natural accommodation with it. To that extent, many of their important traditional observances such as Ozo title taking have been modified without rancor, to make them easy to be assimilated by Christianity. Thus, In the past, the missionaries did not allow the taking of Ozo title by Christians, this is owing to the rituals and traditional ceremonies involved in the title taking which are believed to be conflicting with the Christian belief. The Ozo institution was therefore dominantly monopolized by non Christians. The Ozo institution since the colonial era lost some of the glory it had before. It was influenced by Christianity which also came with western education. People began to appreciate education more than Ozo title. Basden writes;

“Young educated men are maintaining in increasing numbers that money can be far more wisely spent than by using it to purchase a title which has little to commend it in these modern days other than a salutation... it is being realized that when an Ozo titled man dies, his rights and privileges perish with him”<sup>73</sup>.

Christianity therefore posed a great threat to Ozo institution. Christianity also made it that as long as the Ozo institution contained what had to do with idol worship Christians should not be members. Christians who were already members before conversion were asked to renounce their membership of Ozo title society. Many of them withdrew from being Christians instead of forfeiting the membership of Ozo institution and its advantages. Some Ozo title holders allowed their household to be members of the church while they themselves remain in Ozo institution. After some time, there were several attempts to introduce title taking to Christianity so that Christians would be able to take the title equally. At a church missionary society (CMS) conference held at Onitsha on Tuesday 12th of may 1974, where



the issue of the ozo title was deliberated upon. The consensus was that the ozo title was idolatrous and as a result, no Christian should have anything to do it. To this resolution, Rev. G. Anyaegbunam and some members of the conference replied; “Scarcely is there any custom in this country that has nothing to do with idolatrous or superstition in it! But what and where shall we be if we reject and throw all these customs out as quite unfit?”<sup>74</sup> One Mr. Nwejei who was a participant requested that plans be drawn up to enable Christians to take Ozo title. Though in later years, a conference was held, yet the former decision still remained unchanged. The Catholic Church saw early the role of the Ozo title holders in their communities and desired to have its adherents among such leaders. That was why Cardinal Francis Arinze and His Lordship, the Most Rev. A.K. Obiefuna and the other catholic hierarchy looked kindly on Ozo title holders and befriended them. With the Anglican Communion, it was quite a struggle<sup>75</sup>. The problem over the purity (or Christianity) of the Ozo Awka title was laid to rest on 12th August 1978. It was during the time of Bishop A.K Obiefuna Emeritus Archbishop of Onitsha.

The Catholic Church said there was idol worship in Ozo Awka title-taking. In order to clear the doubts, Ozo Awka initiate Ogbuefi Ekwunife Muottoh, on the day of his initiation, invited the Bishop. Bishop Obiefuna sent representatives to observe the initiation for possible approval by the church. The Ozo Awka title was taken in the new way, without the initiate having to go to the Udo shrine as before and without the cleansing services of the Nwakanri from Nri town. Thus Ozo Awka members, Awka community, and the Catholic Church, agreed that Ogbuefi Ekwunife Muottoh had been initiated into the famous and prestigious Ozo Awka on 12 August 1978. A report was sent to Bishop A.K. Obiefuna who approved and recognized the Ozo Awka title as being free of idolatry and accepted Ozo Ekwunife Muottoh as the first Ozo Awka in the new dispensation<sup>76</sup>. In the later years, the CMS followed suit. As could be seen presently, these developments have some effects on Ozo title taking in Awka. Many Christians are member of Ozo institution in Awka and acquired full membership (Ozo Chizulu echizu). Ozo title holders in Awka town now partake in church activities in both denominations on their own individual merits<sup>77</sup>. Originally, the Ozo title holders were charged with certain duties politically, judicially and otherwise. The coming of the white men relegated the Ozo institution to mere vestigial institution. The warrant chiefs who were mainly converts were used to run the political affairs of the societies. In fact with the influences of Christianity on the Ozo title institution, things have not been the same again<sup>78</sup>.

## **ASPECTS OF CHANGE AND MODIFICATIONS IN OZO TITLE TAKING IN AWKA**

Ozo title taking in Awka has undergone several modifications. There are conscious and unconscious modifications. There is a consensus that a Christian aspirant does not need to go through all the rites before he attains the position of a full Ozo title. They are no longer compelled to undergo all the religious stages which the man who took the Ozo title in a traditional was underwent. They are just made to feast the older Ozo members and pay the fees involved. However, their fees are higher. They also dedicate their Ozo insignia in special church services<sup>79</sup>. Areas of modifications include such areas as initiation, burial and taboos.

### **MODIFICATIONS IN INITIATION RITES**

The Christian initiates into Ozo title do not undergo the “Okuko Ozo Ofo”, which the candidate uses to wash his tongue in the course of his initiation. Similarly, Christians are not

required to visit any shrine during their initiation. Such initiation rites the Christian churches considered pagan, have been substituted or in most cases eliminated for the Christian Ozo initiates. The Christian candidates are not expected to consult the diviner but suspicious are high that some may secretly indulge in these. Rituals are no longer binding on them according to Fabian Ezeani who himself took the title some decades ago, the initiates requested the priest to offer the Holy sacrifice of the mass on them. The removal of the religious ritual is not restricted to Christians alone. Any non-Christian candidate who wishes to pay money in lieu of the actual ritual is free to do so<sup>80</sup>.

### **MODIFICATION IN BURIAL RITES OF A MEMBER OF OZO SOCIETY**

Burial rites of a deceased Ozo title holder have experienced some changes. Though both Christians and non-converts attend the funeral of such deceased members, traditional religious ceremonies are not observed. The Christian priest conducts the funeral service of a Christian Ozo initiate. The announcement of the death of the deceased Christian member is by the Ekwe- the traditional wooden drum. The eyes of the deceased are not smeared with the blood of ram slaughtered for that purpose. Christian members no longer perform Igwaka and removal of ankle cord rituals. The ankle cord is removed by members without any religious rites. In fact, some of the Christian Ozo title holders never wear the ankle cord. There is no cleansing of the land anymore. Besides, the relatives of the deceased are no longer expected to stay around the place the deceased lay in state before the interment. The deceased may be buried in his compound or in the church cemetery. Mourning rites and period have also been modified. The Christian widow no longer undergoes through all the hectic mourning rituals, which used to be inflicted on women as a form of discipline in the past she is not expected to take food to the grave of her husband every night. It is no longer compulsory for her to cry every morning as an honour to the dead husband<sup>81</sup>.

### **MODIFICATIONS IN THE TABOOS**

There are also some changes in the taboos that guide the Ozo institution in Awka society, certain taboos associated with the Ozo institutions were very stringent and to some observers many appear so national for instance, previously it was considered a taboo for the Ozo Awka title holder to eat cassava, their chief food was yam, they were also forbidden from eating in public places but with the increase in the scope of economic and social activities, Ozo title holders can no longer be limited to activities in their homes. Those of them who travel out of their residence could even sleep in hotels and also eat in public places. This has a lot of implications for instance; they could eat food prepared by menstruating women which in times past was a taboo. Moreover, now that most Ozo title holders do marry one wife, such women must prepare their food regardless of their state.

In the past Olu or Oru- slave or Osu- outcast was not allowed to take Ozo title, but at this time, opinions have changed at least in favour of their taking the title. A slave can now take the title freely without any restriction but the title is nicknamed 'Ozo-obia' strangers Ozo title. The cult slaves are now given the right to take a type of Ozo which the people baptized Ozo arusi-Ozo title which is under the custody of a shrine. The cult slaves are allowed to perform this type of Ozo initiation among them. This does not in any way solve the problem of social discrimination they suffered. Most traditionalists see the participation of the "Obu" and "Osu" in any type of Ozo as a devaluation of the revered society. That is why Professor R.N. Egudu has remarked that; "When the slaves or outcasts are discriminated against with regard to Ozo title, the intention is not oppress them, it is simply an act of recognition of a

social disability which the individuals involved are not even reparable for and not to take such a disability into account is considered on the part of the elders of the community”<sup>82</sup>. The modifications of societal norms along this line have however been very difficult. Though some societies have destroyed the Osu cast system, other communities are still practicing it.

### **IMPACT OF THE MODIFICATION ON THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE OZO TITLE HOLDER**

In the past, the traditional Ozo title holders after initiation are given the full insignia of Ozo. The members initiated in recent times are not given the special stool, red cap, Egu feather and elephant tusk. Now, members are being addressed in the respected title of Ndi Nze with those who were members before them. The Christian Ozo members also enjoy church fellowship like communion, wedding and Christian burial rites. However, some of the cases reserved for the Ozo members in the past like land disputes, group quarrelling and other cases are today tried in low courts, thereby depriving them of the special power to executive traditional authority conferred on them. Occasionally, the privileges enjoyed by the ozo titled men were tampered with, for instance an ozo man according to tradition was not allowed to perform such functions as digging graves or clearing public places considered to be undignifying. Moreover, an ozo man under arrest should not be bound in chains. But the colonial administrator ignoring the peoples traditions arrested ozo men and handcuffed them under prison sentences where they perform such undignifying duties mentioned above. Moreover, as a result of various dreadful processes they are made to pass through during the process of initiation which has strong spiritual significances the ozo lived a pure and a transparent life. Today, with the erosion of these rites, an ozo now tells lies, steals, and does money rituals. The modern Ozo Awka man can no longer be trusted; ozo has lost its prestige!

### **DEVALUATIONS OF SOME ASPECTS OF OZO AS UNDERSTOOD BY THE PEOPLE IN THE PAST**

The modifications have however caused a lot of problems not only in the society itself but also in the whole clan. The traditional Ozo members believed that they derive certain powers from the gods and from the ancestors by performing the religious rites during their initiation. Such powers are denied new members who did not pass through the religious rituals. Consequently there is an intra-societal struggle between the older members and those who are joining a few years back. Sometime, it was reported that the traditional Ozo members did not invite some new members in discussing a vital issue in the village because the dispensation of justice and fair play is synonymous with Ofo and Ogu, which the modern Ozo members did not possess. Some new members ignore the traditional morality associated with Ozo, some of the informants complained that some values of Ozo institution are becoming extinct among the Christian members<sup>83</sup>.

For instance, there is a general impression that Christians who took the title by the payment of money do not care to observe the taboos that are inherent in the title. Some elders fear that if the members continue to pay scant to the rules and regulations of the society, the institution will no doubt die away. This is in conformity with Jill Okoye’s remark that “if “Isa-ire” in Ozo institution which requires religious rituals which ensures that Ozo members do not tell lies is neglected, there will be no more ‘trust’ on Ozo title holders, they tell lies because they have nothing to fear and when they tell lies, where does the prestige of Ozo lie? Is telling the truth not in Christian belief?”<sup>84</sup> Ozo title which was formerly looked upon as an embodiment of holiness and honour has now been politicized. It is now used as a means to achieve

political power in the society. Many young men who wear Ozo ankle and red caps as Ozo members do not show the amount of zeal in maintaining the integrity, truthfulness moral rectitude with which the Ozo is associated. They have to some extent debased the moral principle of Ozo by the way some of them live. Some rich traders have also used the society as a stepping stone to acquire a political power. Some modern Ozo members neglect their regalia and prefer wearing pairs of trousers, long shorts and gold anklets possibly as a way of shinning modern improvement on the traditional attire. Consequently, some non-members now dress in the traditional Ozo attire without being penalized unlike what prevailed in the past. Traditionally, only Ozo title holders used to greet each other with the back of their palm, but these days, members of social clubs practice it without being rebuked by members of the Ozo society<sup>85</sup>. Gradually, it is becoming a common pattern of greeting by non-member of the Ozo society. Moreover, the various modifications experienced in the institution have some few advantages. With the current modifications, the society has started to admit many men; those who could not have joined because of their church affiliation are now members. This has in effect enriched the older members who share in the proceeds realized from the initiation of a new member regularly. However, the growth in membership is restricted to a particular grade of Ozo society, i.e. the Ozo Uno. Besides new elite protects the system further. Moreover, the traditional regalia are now improved.

## CONCLUSION

Igbo society and culture emphasize considerable individualisms as well as communal solidarity. It is through the membership of the community that individuals assisted by the built in values such as bravery, justice and cooperation to aspire towards achievements in status and prestige as in Ozo title taking. Albeit, it is so sad to note that such an organized institution of traditional origin has been rather placed at the back burner. Frankly, with the solid foothold of Christianity in Igbo land, the Ozo has yielded some grounds to Christian missions, government and indeed other foreign influences thereby causing diminutions in its sacredness and sanctity. According to Chukwuemeka Nze “as a result of the break with the past, the sanctity virtues, indeed the spiritual contents of titles have been drained... the fate of traditional titles is jeopardized as it now depends very much on the mercy of the alternating effects of the marriage between the old and new influences”<sup>86</sup> The Christian missions exerted the most of the disastrous influences on the prestige and sanity of the Ozo institutions in Awka and indeed the whole of Igbo land. The Ozo society was inseparably bound with the traditional customs and religious beliefs of the people.

Unfortunately, it was these aspects of Igbo customs that were termed bad and superstitious by the missionaries that actually gave vigour and authority to Igbo customs and traditions like the Ozo institutions. Their revival has therefore left an indelible mark in the cultural life of the people. This has reduced the states of the Ozo in particular to a mere social club without any religious and ritualistic content that had constituted a sanctifying force on it. Therefore, the colonial administration also contributed to the decadence of the prestige of the Ozo society in Awka. Before the advent of the Europeans, the Ozo title holders were the wielders of important social political and economic power in Awka. When the Europeans came however, the situation appeared to have changed. The colonial government and their agents became the power in the villages, court clerks, messengers and interpreters, because they could speak English became all powerful, their social background notwithstanding the government now provided security which has formerly given by the Ozo society. There are new rules governing the conduct of every member. If anybody has cause or complaint, he takes it to the court. The Ozo institution has lost its prestige and revenue it formally derived

from the settlement of cases. It is no longer able to take action against any offender. There are now several government agencies for social control and maintenance of order. All these has culminated in the dishonorable way this revered traditional institute is handled today with their members of reduced respect and reputation when compared to the state of this institution in the pre-colonial period. The result is that within three decades of colonial rules, the Ozo institution has lost its position of prominence not only in Awka but all over Igboland where Ozo titleship is observed. Another extraneous influence that posed a formidable threat to the existence of the Ozo society was the social clubs. Though social associations like age grades, Umuada (a group of women married to different places from a family) existed in pre-colonial Awka, these social groups have bearing on native customs and traditions in a way interfered with the working and privileges of the Ozo Society. Moreover, the kind of social clubs that came with colonial impositions and western education is entirely new and without linkage to the traditional values of the people. Membership of one or more of the social clubs has become fashionable and the aim of every young man. This has made the Ozo society to lose in membership which is now common to the elderly men alone as it has become unfashionable to young men. These young men today finds it more prestigious to identify with social clubs like peoples club of Nigeria than to come home and take the Ozo title that is traditional to us<sup>87</sup>.

It is pertinent to note that Ozo society in Awka has been able to absorb the struck of all these extraneous influences and survived to the present day even though with modifications. The reason for this can be found in the fact that the society is deeply rooted in the traditional custom and the belief system of the Awka people. Any attempt at a total demolition of the society would have been to all intents and purposes unsuccessful. When the missionaries discovered that they could not put an end to it, they adopted it along with most of the customs of the people. According to rev. M. Mmaduka, "If we take necessary pains and interest to look into the mysterious labyrinth of our customs, we shall discover in their prescient precious germs that are not foreign to Christianity"<sup>88</sup>. This shows that despite in roads blazed by colonialism, modernity etc into the culture of Awka people and the Igbo race at large, the foundation has remained essentially intact. It is a glorious triumph over European influence and sincerely worthy of celebration. The Ozo institutions in spite of all influences have yet still remained to a towering extent dynamic, enlivened and treasured in Awka. Nze Chukwemeka commenting in one of his journals on Igbo culture stated categorically that "even dormant culture like dead games if not preserved will be eaten up by ants and worms or will simply decay and rot away"<sup>89</sup>.

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