

THE SYMBOLISM OF *ISI-AGU* ATTIRE: MONSIGNOR MARTIN MADUKA IN PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This paper focuses towards understanding *Isi-agu* cloth in the Igbo context through the examination of the dynamics of the cloth production, patronage, consumption and social significance of dress projecting high social status and political power. The proper underpinning of this symbol of lion on the indigenous cloth of the Igbo people will go a long way in the full integration of the Igbo people's life and their immediate cultural ecology with messages it disseminate. It must be noted also that despite the significance of this integration, it must be informed that such is evidently limited in their transmission of reality. This article will examine the Igbo attitude and understanding, using some ethnographic and library information methods, will try to analyse the concept of *Isi-agu* attire that projects African philosophy through the mediation of Msgr. Martin Maduka. This paper will also investigate how the symbol of lion on the *Isi-agu* attire basically plays significant roles in mediating and facilitating religious communication in Igbo Traditional Religion, giving rise to thought, interpretation, and symbolic meanings. In Igbo cosmology and leadership, the symbol of lion on the *Isi-agu* fabrics encapsulates so many things which are very distinctive thereby representing so many ideologies.

Keywords: Culture, Devoid, Evoke, Ideology, Symbols.

Introduction

This study investigates the meaning Igbo people of South-Eastern Nigeria attributes to *Isi-agu* attire. In the perception of the Igbo people, *Isi-agu* attire is an aspect of African indigenous cloth which they wear through the mediation of its symbolic functions in order to create meaning for life and general well-being (Kaplan, 2004:190). In this regard, the attire plays a significant role in nurturing, structuring and shaping of their society and culture (Olupona, 1991:1). However, the wearing of *Isi-agu* attire is restricted to only the titled Chiefs and as such it constitutes part of the essential tools through which the people understand who they are and maintain

Igbo identity. Yet, this indigenous institution continues to be relegated to the background especially as it concerns non acceptance and lack of understanding of its core tenets, and existence (Olupona, 1991:1). Samuel Johnson comments that “there are two objects of curiosity, the Christian world and the Mohammedian world – all the rest may be considered as barbarous” (Carpenter, 1913:24). Fanon (1967:42) asserts that as pesticides kill germs so, does Christianity destroy the traditions of the colonized peoples. Young (2003:140) affirms that such hasty conclusion and “translation becomes part of the process of domination, of achieving control, a violence carried out on the language, culture, and people being translated”.

Symbolism of *Isi-Agu* Attire

Clearly in behavioural of human psychology, it is a known fact that ideas simply emanate from experience or revelation (Nabofa, 1994:3). Man being what he is, is always eager or inquisitive to ascribe meanings to each of its experiences and it is this kind of attitude that actually stimulates man’s instinct of curiosity from the known to an unknown, especially as it has to do with his religious awareness (Nabofa, 1994:3). In other words, he uses such religious ideas to elaborate rituals that inculcate decrees and doctrines “concerning the Nature of God, the Universal Being, Fatherhood and Beneficence of God, Eternity and Immortality of the Soul” (Akintola, 1992:2). Nonetheless, among all the things God created, it is only man that possesses that natural tendency or proclivity for creative powers in mental and psychic forms to reflect on his experience and express it with symbols, upon the fact that animals and plants have that power to reproduce themselves through natural methods or otherwise (Nabofa, 1994:4). Nabofa again asserts that:

Man is not only a symbolizing and conceptualizing animal. He is also “meaning-seeking”, but meaning can only be stored in symbols. Hence symbols constitute power resources liable to use and misuse. A society and its religion can only be understood through an analysis of the symbols by which its members communicate, worship, express their faith, evangelize, and manipulate relationships especially those involving religious beliefs (1994:21).

Nonetheless, Nabofa (1994:21) went further again to argue that by studying and learning about symbols in their religious contexts, we can find a kind of back-door approach to a deeper theological understanding of what the Africans actually believe, actually practice and actually say about their faith. The symbols make you think, says Paul Ricoeur (1971:404f). According to the book of Genesis:

God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; man and female he created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth (Gen,1:27-28).

From the psychological point of view, Nabofa notes that:

Psychologists have often asserted that the only difference between man and the other animals, plants and minerals is that whereas man can engage in abstract thinking and attain to self-consciousness as well as engage in metaphysical analysis, animals follow their instincts and have not yet attained to that self-consciousness that gives rise to various forms of symbolization (1994:4).

Buttressing this further, Edwin Smith argues that:

Neglecting this fact, some writers make the mistake of supposing that the untutored Africa is incapable of abstract thinking. By changing *mu-ntu*, ‘human being’, into *bu-ntu* he expresses the ideas of ‘manliness, virtue, humanity’. Yet, while well able to think abstractly, he prefers to put his thought and feeling into vivid concrete terms (Smith, 1966:10-11).

Nonetheless, Nabofa (1994:3) in recognizing the significance of concrete terms as symbols of religions asserts that “the metaphysics of any religion cannot be fully and adequately studied, grasped and appreciated without a fair knowledge of its symbolic forms and processes which normally emerged out of the illumination”. Omijeh (1983:195) laments that “nowhere did early missionaries and Western writer’s misunderstand African cultures and societies as in the rituals and symbolism”. Sundermeier (1998:39) asserts that symbols relate to actual world and always have a material side; they can be heard, felt and imagined. He argues that because of their sensory character, they can speak to the emotional nature of human beings. They are satisfying; that is why it is in their nature to be accepted. They have to resonate with the feelings and value of the group and individual (Sundermeier, 1998:38-39). Nabofa (1994:77) argues that every scholar in the study of religion in Africa is aware of the fact that liturgical symbols, especially the non-physical ones, are enmeshed in the totality of African culture and that African Biblical scholarship really appreciates the benefits derivable from the use of appropriate African symbols in interpreting the Biblical message to mediate and suit the African situation. Samuel Abogunrin (1991) asserts in justifying the commentaries and importance of some scholars for the African culture opined that:

While God exists totally free from culture, human beings are totally immersed in culture. But God from beginning has used human culture as the milieu to reveal Himself to mankind. In communicating his revelation to man, God has often submitted to cultural limitations because human beings cannot comprehend supernatural truths outside his own cultural understanding. Therefore, God has always revealed himself (sic) in terms of human language and culture. African religion and culture which shaped the lives of our fathers have continued to exert great influence on life in Africa. It therefore, means that biblical interpretation in Africa must take cognizance of this particular spiritual, cultural and intellectual milieu (Abogunrin, 1991:vf).

However, before we start the discourse on the concept of symbols, Ekeke (2010:6) argues that it is of paramount significance that we align our discussion on the symbolism to a theoretical framework to help us assimilate and understand in full details the orientation we are set to examine and in this wise, one main theoretical view that would be considered very vital would be the symbolic interactionism of George Mead which is a theory synonymous with symbols in social institutions of human interaction. Ekeke (2010:6) again asserts that “once we have conceptualized an object we can now think of that object even when that object is no more invisible. Therefore, the object is thought of symbolically”. He argues further that symbolic conceptions and thought reduces this shortcoming of limited experience of human beings to what we actually see, hear, or fear, therefore concludes that almost all interactions between and among human beings are dimensions of exchange of symbols by presenting four primary and interrelated levels (Ekeke, 2010:6).

The first level is impulse and that “impulse which involves an immediate sensuous stimulation, the need to do something about it” (Ritzer, 2000:208). The second one is perception, and according to Ekeke (2010:6) “George Mead sees perception as involving incoming stimuli as well as the mental images they create. People do not simply respond immediately to stimuli but rather think about and assess them through mental imagery. They also actively select characteristics of a stimuli and release among sets of stimuli”. Ritzer (2000:208) argues that such a stimuli, may have several dimensions, and the actor is able to select among them. Buttressing this further, Ekeke (2010:6) asserts that George Mead calls the third level manipulation. He argues that sequel to the manifestation of the impulse with the object perceived, what follows immediately is action-taking with regard to the conceptualized symbol. The fourth and the last level according to George Mead is consummation and at this level that actor in symbolic interaction particularizes the specific objective of his choices of the many possible meanings or interpretations of the object, towards satisfying the original impulse (Ekeke, 2010:6).

In another development, Giddens (1997:565) defines symbols as something that stands for, represents a person, idea, letter, figure, or sign that expresses a sound, a number, a chemical substance. The implication here is that, one symbolic form may be capable of several meanings or interpretations and this made Radcliffe-Brown (1969:142) to argue that whatever has a meaning is a symbol and the meaning or interpretation is what is expressed by the symbol, that is to say, the “translation, explanation, meaning or conceptualization of the sign-object would be in relation with a subsequent sign representing the same object” (Partmentier, 1994:5).

Strictly speaking, symbols vary among different class of people and worshippers and we should not forget the fact that the adherents of the diverse religions believe that they are not worshipping or rather venerating images associated with their religions, but invariably they are using them to stimulate the whims and caprices of their imagination to the proper act of worship (Okoye, 2011:52). This is why Wosien (1992:30) posits that “when a symbol is made to have finite meaning, as opposed to merely being a paraphrase of the mysterious, an approximation to reality, then it becomes an idol”. Those who are in the field of Psychology of Religion will be most concerned with how symbols are used to manipulate, and how they actually influence the mind and behaviour of the believer (Nabofa, 1994:5).

In fact, images, emblems or symbols are not end in themselves, but means to an end (Adelowo, 1990:162), no wonder all professions or religious bodies, be it traditional religion, Christianity, Islam and other secular bodies express their experiences through symbols, while these expressions could be articulated and mediated in religious emblems, ideograms, icons, rituals, songs, prayers, myths, incantations, vows, customary behaviour and personifications (Nabofa, 1994:4). In this wise, Ezeanya (1994:8) opines that “one of the important customs of the Igbo people of Nigeria in connection with the birth of a child, is the naming ceremony. For the Igbo people, for the Hebrews, a name is not just a personal label for the sake of identity. It means much”.

However, this concept of symbol is seen as, a recognition of one thing as standing or representing another thing (Firth, 1973:79). Tillich (1959:54) asserts that “symbols are similar to signs in one distinctive respect: both symbols and signs point beyond themselves to something else” when “it finds acceptance in the group consciousness” (Tovey, 2004:12). On a general note, symbol from the above definitions given would be seen as a hallmark of an idea, a logo, a sign, a ritual or perhaps a psycho-behavioural pattern that stands out as an overt representation of an inner experience or essence of the unconscious (Nabofa, 1994:7). Symbols themselves represent the continued role of tradition (Gibson & Dunbar-Hall, 2006:396). Symbols always contain something of them, sometimes strongly, sometimes faintly (Sundermeier, 1998:38). In one of his own contributions, to what symbols stands for, Carl Jung (1979:20) asserts that these are meaningless in themselves; they equally have acquired recognizable meanings through common usage or even deliberate intent. He further comments that:

What we call a symbol is a term, a name or even a picture that may be familiar in daily life, yet that possesses specific connotations in addition to its conventional and obvious meaning. It implies something vague, unknown or hidden from us... Thus a word or an image is symbolic when it implies something more than its obvious and immediate meaning. It has a wider “unconscious” aspect that is never precisely defined or fully explained. Nor can one hope to define or explain it. As the mind explores the symbol, it is led to ideas that lie beyond the grasp of reason (Jung, 1979:20).

No wonder Montgomery (2016: 17) asserts that “most Africans used the symbol of the master as a cloak for their own spirits”. To sum up this, in traditional religious practices and systems, *Isi-agu* attire for an Igbo man’s paradigm would be described as a “hallmark of symbol of dignity, royalty, respect” (NTI, 1990:86) in the tradition and hegemony of the people of Anambra State because of various symbolisms it carry. That is why Roberts (1993:65) affirms that the

symbolism in *Isi-agu* attire “implies a hierarchy of privilege and dependency”

The lion symbol printed on the *Isi-agu* attire did not become an Igbo man’s cultural symbology by mere chance but do to the mere singular reason that lion as a very strong and noble animal which typifies the authentic identity of the Igbo, therefore, the Igbo is built strong, bold and courageous and that is why the lion insignia is always ingrained in the Igbo aesthetics. (Eze, 2016:17). From my own interpretation, the symbolism is a complete reflection and representation of intrinsic endowment of the Igbo. According to Eze again:

The depictions of this animal span all ancient and medieval cultures in carvings, sculptures, paintings, national flags, contemporary films and literatures. Indeed, the lion iconography has enjoyed a tremendous depiction as king of the Jungle, The Lion King and King of the Beasts in various media. Ancient Egypt venerated the lioness as its war deity. Ancient Mesopotamia adopted the lion as a prominent symbol of royalty. The Marijata of the ancient Mali Empire was fondly called the “Lion of Mali”. In much the same way, most medieval warrior Kings who were reputed from their bravery were affectionately nicknamed “Lion”. Like King Richard of England (Richard the Lion Heart), King Henry of Germany (Henry the Lion) and the Duke of Saxony who was known as William the Lion (2017:17).

Nonetheless, one school of thought believes that it was Chief Dr. Alex Ekwueme, the former Vice President in the first Republic of Nigeria and Rev. Fr. Maduka, a Catholic priest of South-eastern Nigeria that popularized the wearing of the *Isi-agu* attire in Igbo land since early 1970’s and as from that point it “became an integral part of civilized behaviour” that is projecting African philosophy (Renne, 1995:182). According to Salamone & Mbabuibe (1994:215) a Nigerian Catholic priest Rev. Fr. Maduka from Ekwuluobia in

particular has come to be regarded as the vanguard and pioneer of this local attire. He preached that Africans did not have to wear Western priestly garments. Asserting that these vestments were the result of the European climate, cultural as well as physical and there is nothing wrong with wearing an African wrapper and *Danshiki* all in trying to Africanize the church. It is very significant to mention here that during the beatification of Rev. Fr. Michael Cyprian Iwene Tansi, now Blessed Tansi, an Aguleri son, a deliberate attempt was made by the Catholic church to show that the church and traditions and culture are not always mutually antagonistic; that the *Isi-agu* – a traditional attire with head of lion design does not always make a traditional religious worshipper just as the hood does not make the monk as they always say (Abugu, 1998:15).

An Igbo man is highly fascinated with it and so fascinated that it comes in different broad categories. According to Peran & Wolf (1999:65) “Aro Igbo traders play a mediating role by functioning as contractors in the production of the cloth, thereby illustrating an overlapping relationship between ritual art patrons and traders’ art patrons”. Apparently, *Isi-agu* fabrics comes in diverse colours to assume or reflect the growth in taste and symbolic style among the Igbo people, it is used to be a creative blend of red, black and white. No matter what colours it comes in, the dominant motif is the head of a lion and sometimes we see the head of a roaring lion and the head is in a contemplative mode but the *Isi-agu* remains the same (Eze, 2016:16). No matter your social standing in the community, there is an *Isi-agu* fabric for an Igbo titled man in order to distinguish him from common people in a specific social, secular or religious convocation. There is the very expensive one that only the very wealthy members of society can afford to buy and there are fabrics of the same *Isi-agu* that are easily affordable to low income class.

Nevertheless, whether it is the high or low income fabric that one can afford, *Isi-agu* attire through the symbolism it utilizes “announces itself in dazzling sparkles” (Eze, 2016:17). Eze (2016:17) again affirms that “it is to the credit of the designers of the fabric that they were able to perfectly transfer the mythical glory of

the lion [*ebube agu*] to the *Isi-agu* fabric and endear the cloth to the *Ndigbo*". On this position, one vividly remembers an Igbo axiom or maxim that says that: "*ebube agu na eche agu*" meaning that the glory of the lion fends off its enemies. In Igbo cosmology, it is believed that one's name speaks volume for a person. This is the more reason why people bear "lion" as a name. For example, the title "*Ogbu-agu*" that is lion killer is conferred on warriors in absolute reverence to their individual exploits in war or otherwise. It is also very significant to mention here that it is a truism in Igbo paradigm that when a person performs or distinguishes himself exceptionally in any area of endeavours, he is referred to as a "lion". Politically, that is why (Odipko, 2017) described the Executive Governor of Anambra State, Willie Maduaburochukwu Obiano as the lion of the East due to his maverick and wonderful performances in the political terrain of Nigeria. This is to buttress how passionate the relationship between the Igbo and this special animal called lion is.

As a point of emphasis, it is very paramount to mention here that *Isi-agu* dress is put on to match with Igbo native red cap and where necessary with eagle feathers and beads portraying royalty and Chieftaincy in Igbo cosmology. No wonder Bosah (1973:36) cited in Hahn-Waanders (1990:88) asserts that the symbology of "the red caps worn by other chiefs was introduced by Obi Okosi [1901-1931] in order to differentiate the members of the native courts from other title holders and from ordinary citizens". He affirms that "these red caps are called *okpu ododo*. *Ododo* is a Bini word and it means red. Later on, these red caps were worn by the *Ozo* members all over Igbo land" (Hahn-Waanders, 1990:89). Felix Abugu (1998), in his description and illustration of an event in order to bring out the significance of this attire, writes that:

The *Okanga* Royal band of Aguleri came into the scene in measured and articulated steps swaying gently to the sombre rhythms of the traditional sacred drums and the deep bass sound of the accompanying long elephant tusks being carried by one of them. The traditional chiefs wore long red

caps and long sleeveless red gowns upon George wrappers, the latter's expertly-tied thick knots pushed to the left hand side of each wear. The long caps care with the all-familiar eagle feathers stuck into their bottom folds to keep the feathers in place'' (Abugu, 1998:15).

No wonder why traditional red cap popularly called *Okpu Ododo* in Igbo language serves "as the most distinctive symbols of the political elite to identity membership in a royal family or a connection to the aristocracy" Perani & Wolff (1991:135). Perani & Wolff (1999:125) again affirms that "the visual brilliance and textual complexity is enriched by scintillating surface, sparkling and shining in a kaleidoscope of color and light in the appearance of the mounted ruler under an impressive twirling state umbrella". McMullen (1987:217) asserts that the colour combination of the *Isi-agu* material portrays the symbolism and "the benevolence of the cosmic order and of its own role in mediating between it and the human hierarchy". Kaplan (2000:117-118) argues that insofar as the King wears the *Isi-agu* cloth and "seats on his throne, he is awe-inspiring. He alone possesses the royal coral-bead regalia—the crown, the staff, and the royal coral bead shirt and strip wrapper combined with different colours which have symbolic meanings. He is a living proof of the cogency of Kingship. Nonetheless, he has the ability to control the beneficent and destructive forces of the earth".

Symbolism of the *Isi-agu* Cloth and Projection of African Philosophy

However, the colours of the *Isi-agu* regalia may be combined in significant ways, but their meaning/symbolism is situational and can never be read automatically; one cannot write dictionaries of symbolism in African art (MacGaffey, 2000:233). The *Isi-agu* attire to the worldview of an Igbo man reflects the African artistic design and embroideries which unmistakably retains their African character. In fact, in Igbo cosmology, the *Isi-agu* attire worn by some designated people especially the titled men in the society expresses "value of identity and incorporation" (Smith, 1987a: 28).

This is why Schneider (1987:412) affirms that in terms of leadership context, the communicative significance and symbolism of clothes like that of *Isi-agu* attire which “act as tracers of rank and bolster the visual hierarchy cannot be over emphasized”. He therefore concludes that “indigenous cloth types and clothing are often used in the performance of sacred rituals of continuity and reaffirmation” (Schneider, 1987:415).

As it pertains to the promotion of African philosophy, Kaplan (2004:190) argues that in Igbo cosmology *Isi-agu* attire as one of the “the clothing the king chooses to wear each day is traditional and symbolic with meanings. It is a statement of occasion, intent, mood, power and all have meanings and evoke memory”. Through, the symbolism it utilizes and the cultural ethos it invokes, however, the *Isi-agu* attire retains the power to influence the spiritual state of its wearer and to play a role in the socio-religious consciousness of the person by whom or for whom it is worn. This is why Susanne Langers (1942:195) describes object based symbols like the *Isi-agu* attire as an “unconsummated symbol, a significant form without conventional significance”. This is why Hall (1928:136) argues that “the regalia must be worn correctly and must not be worn profanely”, because it is classified as a “robe of honor” or “coronation cloth” (Perani & Wolff, 1999:124 & 166). This royal ceremonial regalia create also a symbolic distinction between what Vansina (1978:185) axiomatically refers to as “the elite from the commoner”. Bayero (1981) attested that “to wear these gowns is to be different from other people. When you see them, you know this person is of the royal family”. This cloth called *Isi-agu* attire is more than a book and it is a fundamental institution if studied. Consequently, with the philosophy and ideology of boycott – the boycotable, Mbonu Ojike (1948:2) would not dress in any Western-patterned dress... According to Ojike again:



Figure 1: HRH Late Eze Alphonsus Ezeudu Idigo III (1914-1995) Igwe Ezennia of Aguleri Eze Aguleri conferring Chieftaincy title on late Chief Lord Palmer George Akwali Madukasi Ezekwesili Aguleri during an Ovala Festival in 1986. Note the Isi-agu attire, the george wrapper & oche mgbo stool as a mark of royalty, prestige and hegemony. (Courtesy of Francis Chuks Madukasi).

The human motive for... is one throughout the world. But just as no two human personalities are identical in all respects, so... of nations must be dissimilar one to another. Twenty active years at home, plus eight inquisitive years abroad, have collectively convinced me that our...is a legacy to love, a tradition to uphold, a heritage to revive. It needs no reform. It calls for no apology. It wants no

distortion. What our... culture wants is a new zest, a new devotion, a new patronage. It must be strengthened in order to be consolidated, promoted in order to be loved and patronized...[sic]. I have never in my entire Safari seen a country like mine....It is a nation of people who think of progress [and civilization] in terms of imbibing whatever is foreign. It is a people that have as it rejected its fashion... (1948:2).

Insofar as, this great and proud African nationalist saw and was highly disturbed by the ignorance coupled with insult which Westerners showed on the culture of Africans especially as it concerns indigenous attire, it did not stop many of the African indigenous communication outfits or systems which when used in producing scintillating impressions that are highly impregnated with symbolic meanings (Nabofa, 1994:36).

Mediating Functions of *Isi-agu* attire

From time immemorial, Igbo people have developed high level of interest in rich textile traditions and distinctive methods of dress to actually communicate and enhance cultural symbolism and meanings. In fact, in Igbo cultural context, dresses like the *Isi-agu* attire has become a visible symbol apparently signaling gender, social status, and political office, allegiance to a deity or personal prestige (Perani & Wolf, 1999:28). Buttressing further, Perani & Wolf again affirm that *Isi-agu* “cloth and clothing can also convey esoteric symbolic information understandable only to initiates. Whether sign or symbol, this ability to transmit information and mediate meaning through shared understandings in socio-cultural contexts is a primary characteristic of cloth” (1999:28). James Eze (2015:1) asserts that “beyond these totems and profound meanings lies another oasis of symbolisms and unspoken communication”. But beyond the basic functions in protection and warming the body, cloths like the *Isi-agu* attire have since over-lapping mediating symbolic functions which Perani & Wolf summarized thus:

(1). Expression of self and personal worth; (2). Indicator of occupation; (3). Measurement of social value; (4). Standard of economic value; (5). Identification of gender role; (6). Marker of progression through the life cycle; (7). Definition and negotiation of political powers; (8). Religious signifier and repository of supernatural powers; (9). Delineator of social space; and (10). Indicator of culture change (1999:29).

Conclusion

Tackling the study of *Isi-agu* attire from the viewpoint of art patronage recognizes that certain artifacts are to the expression of culture both as aesthetic products and as consumer goods. Nonetheless, beyond the initial production and consumption processes, *Isi-agu* attire gains symbolic meanings as part of culturally-constituted body make up of complete Igbo man. The clothed body make up is very paramount to the projection of social self by expanding the aristocratic and hegemonic vocabulary of the body and visually reinforcing social roles which invariably projects African philosophy and personality. By extension, *Isi-agu* attire draws close boundaries between the cultural and symbolic worlds in social and ritual contexts. So the lion printed on the *Isi-agu* cloth has been widely adopted by diverse cultures across the world as a symbol of bravery and valour projecting high social status and political power. It has been storified in different folklore. It is clear therefore that the fulsome adoption of the lion as an iconic totem is a heritage the Igbo race share with many advance cultures across the world. It however says a lot about the advancement of Igbo civilization that only few of these societies, if any, wear lion clothes (*Isi-agu* attire) to show this affinity as the Igbo do. I can say tersely that to every titled Igbo person, what is more profound is the fact that the colourful *Isi-agu* fabric popularized by Rev. Fr. Msgnr. Martin Maduka is one of the most revered pieces of clothing among the Igbo and there is a belief that there must be a communicative ritual synergy about the lion and *Ndi-Igbo* in diaspora. In affirming this assertion, Soludo (2017:9) comments that:

having an identity is not inconsistent with a global or national outlook. There are probably few who would question President Obasanjo's patriotism as a Nigerian. But that has not made him to wear *Isi-agu* dress or our red cap to prove that he is detribalized.

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