

# **Ọfọ and Ogu in Nkpor Speech Community: A Conceptual Explication**

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## **Abstract:**

*Worship is an imperative urge in man. Its beginning may be traced back to the basic instinct invoked in man when he came in contact with the power whom he believed to be the determiner of his destiny. It is generally believed in Igbo land and in Nkpor that the universe was created by God. To an Nkpor man, the universe which consists of both visible and invisible, is made and controlled by God; thus the name **Chineke** - „the God that creates“. They believe that (Chi na Eke) this God is the creator of all things and under him come other small gods like Ana – the earth deity, Ọfọ and Ogu to help in the supervision of the universe. Their belief in Ọfọ and Ogu symbols in Nkpor religious beliefs cannot be over emphasized. They are potent tools in the hands of the chief priest and other designated people in maintaining law and order in the Nkpor community. This paper examines the concept of Ọfọ and Ogu and their significance in the control of social, political, religious, and cultural life of Nkpor people, despite the introduction of western civilization by the Europeans.*

## **Introduction:**

The Igbo people can be said to be the same because of their belief in ọfọ and ọgu. Uwalaka (1996:4) supporting this claim says that –perhaps one of the most important circumstantial evidences of the homogeneity of all the Igbo people is the general belief and reverence paid to ọfọ and ọgu all through Igboland. The special significance of ọfọ and ọgu in any Igbo community is that it is the chief dispenser of justice and consequently the chief coercive power which ensures that rules and customs of the village are observed. On the other hand, ọgu

has practically no different function from qfq but rather traces, as it were, the footsteps of qfq in its efforts to maintain peace and order; thus in the event of dispute, ugu's business is to accuse the culprit and charge him with falling short of the expectations of qfq. The significance of qfq and ugu in Nkpor speech community religiously, socially, and politically cannot be over emphasized. Qfq and ugu form the backbone of Nkpor man's cultural and moral life even in the face of westernization.

### **About Nkpor Town:**

Nkpor is a town located at about six kilometers East of Onitsha with Ogidi to the North, Obosi to the South East and Xmxoji to the East. Nkpor is at the South Western part of Idemili-North local government area of Anambra state of Nigeria. There are five villages in Nkpor, namely Xmxsiome, Isingwu, Xbxbba, Amafq and Mgbachx; arranged according to seniority.

Nkpor people believe in the Supreme Being, *Chukwu*, with minor deities like *Ana*, and the ancestors as principal officers in charge of the universe. *Qfq* and ugu are at the centre of Nkpor traditional thought and they help them to maintain justice and fair play in the town.

## **Qfq in Nkpor**

### **The Nature of Qfq:**

Qfq is made from a branch of *Detarium Senegalense* tree. The qfq tree has small fruits and is usually identified by its compound leaves with seven to ten leaflets, white on the underside. One of the special features of this tree is that its trunks have joints and the branches fall off from the parent trunk when they are fully grown. Uwalaka (1996:3) is also of the same opinion when she says that according to our elders that the "...branches of qfq tree is never plucked and never sown by mortals. It falls off when ripe and gets itself planted without human hands. || Ejizu (1986:32) says that when closely examined, a typical qfq tree shows signs of nodes as though the timber had joints. Actual joining is in fact revealed in the fallen twigs which snap at the joints. The rounded joints could be likened to the end of the long cones of the human skeleton. It is believed by the Igbos that God created this tree to be sacred, and the branch is not cut. The length of Qfq is about one foot and five inches thick. It can be smaller or bigger depending on the usage. The appearance is un-attractive and common but the importance lies in its symbolism.

### **The Meaning of Qfq:**

Qfq is a cardinal ritual symbol in Nkpor as it is generally in Igbo traditional religion. According to Onyema (199:21) qfq is a little piece of wood about one foot long. It connects naturally the living with the ancestral fathers. In the words of Edeh (1983:17) qfq is a symbolic power and authority and it is employed as a law and order enforcement agency. Qfq is a type of staff of judgment that the qkpara (first son in the family) holds when arbitrating in disputes in the Xmxnna circle (kindred circle). Horton (1956:43), referring to the Ibagwa Igbo in Nsukka, observes that the qfq is a sort of official stamp, which validates the existence of the cult, social groups and individuals with whom it is associated by linking them to Chukwu, the ultimate source of life. Ejizu (1986:125) notes that –primarily, qfq represents the relationship of man in general to the supernatural order of reality. Hence, it functions principally as the medium of communication with the transcendent.|| Onyeocha (1992:22) agrees with Ejizu in saying that

–it is with qfq that he approaches and communicates with the ancestors.|| Furthermore, he notes that qfq is the sacred symbol of truth, justice, law, and authority among the Igbos. It is used principally in sacrificial rituals during which it is painted with animal blood. In essence, qfq embodies the norm of behaviour which ought to regulate social intercourse.

Qfq is a central part of Igbo traditional thought and cosmology and a symbolic physical presence of the ancestors among the living. The Nkpor man uses Qfq as a symbol of justice, righteousness and truth. Not only that, Qfq to him symbolizes fair-play, innocence, trust, good luck, peace, equity, sacredness, good moral conduct, good leadership, accountability and honesty. It is generally believed by elders that when an QzQ titled man kisses his Qfq stick it is a sign of most solemn protestation of the gravity or truthfulness of what he says. Qfq is a staff of authority and religion. It serves as a link between God and man, the living and the ancestors plus the unborn. Qfq establishes the link between the possessor and the spirit world directly and serves as the candidate's staff of office and authority in the society at large. Qfq performs three functions in Nkpor: social, political and religious functions, but the political and religious functions are most important in that no serious rite or ceremony is performed without making use of Qfq. What the Bible is to the Christians, Qfq is also to the Nkpor people. Just as the Christians make use of the Bible in taking oaths, in the same way the Nkpor people use Qfq in taking oaths.

-Whenever an Nkpor adult male in anger says that if he does something wrong his age mates

should break his Ọfọ, he has sworn the highest oath and his audience must be very cautious of their next action. ||<sup>1</sup>

Even the Europeans who brought Christianity to the Igbo people recognized the sacredness of Ọfọ no wonder they allowed the non Christian Igbo in the law courts to make use of Ọfọ in oath taking. The poor and the widows take consolation in Ọfọ especially in land cases for without the fear of the Ọfọ, they will be maltreated by the rich and people in power and from the name such as *Qfọbxike* – ‘Ọfọ is strength’, *Qfọmalx* – ‘Ọfọ knows’, you see that as long as Ọfọ is there, there is no fear of maltreatment or intimidation. Nkpor people also use qfq in proverbs like *ọfọ ka idide ji awa ana* – ‘It is with truth and justice that the earthworm burrows the land unhurt.’ *Oji ọfọ ga-ana*

– ‘He who has justice will be set free.’ *Oji ọfọ anagh[atq n“ije* – ‘He or she who has justice and truth will be safe in journey.’<sup>2</sup>

### **Significance of Qfq :**

Qfq is the keystone to the religious or social life of the Igbos. Qfq is a means of prayer to the gods. Its other uses include its use every morning at the traditional prayer by heads and elders of families and lineages and on all occasions when religious rites (of whatever rule) including libation are performed. The head of the family strikes his qfq on the ground as he prays to show to mother earth that his hands are clean and that he has no evil plans for anybody. So, –When the truth is difficult to be ascertained, they resort to [*gq qfq* – calling on the qfq nd[iche (qfq of the ancestors) to remove (wepx) or kill (weed) the culprit], (Emean 1998:8). Qfq is the medium by which petitions are sent to the ancestors. A man makes protest prayer with qfq, women (who are not dib[as) make their protest prayer while holding in their hand a piece of knotted palm frond. When the Nkpor man makes a bargain, he holds his qfq to show that he is responsible for the outcome of the bargain. Qfq is also considered to be a mediator between the spirits and man. Ejizu (1986:125) notes, –Primarily, qfq represents the relationship of man in the supernatural order of reality. Hence, it functions principally as the medium of communicating with the transcendent. || Onyeocha (1992:26) agrees with Ejizu in saying, –It is with qfq that he approaches and communicates with the ancestors. ||

### **Qfq asa tool of blessing:**

Qfq can, when it is asked, confer special blessings on the sons and daughters of the land; since the pre-occupation of qfq is to see to the welfare of its sons and daughters. In the socio-ethical context, the qfq is used for a sacred function in all important meetings of the group, attesting to the truth, punishment of offending members of the group through cursing, denial of rights, ostracizing, and explosion, coronation of Igwes (kings), nd[ichies, traditional naming ceremony, settlement of disputes. Ejizu (1986:18) supports the above assertion when he says that the use of qfq in all known meetings and in the trial of cases is paramount. In performing rituals, Ejizu (1986:61) says that sacrifices of all descriptions to either the household gods or the deities by cult priests, family heads and others authorized by customs to officiate in such acts of worship are in most cases throughout Igboland offered with the qfq. Furthermore, Ejizu says that qfq is primarily, a religious symbol and that the significance of its involvement in the traditional ritual life of the Igbos derives precisely from its ability to manifest the sacred.

### **The Qfq Holder:**

—The special right to hold qfq falls to the eldest of each extended family unit||, (Uwalaka 1996:5). This is also the case in Nkpor. Women are never qfq holder. Qfq is held by the *Diana* (a true born member of the family unit, (Uwalaka 1996:5). This is also the case in Nkpor. Women are never qfq holder. An qfq holder cannot be an accomplice in a crime, nor can he harbour a criminal or else qfq will be angry. It is mandatory according to Uwalaka (1996:8) that the qfq holder, the eldest of the family or kindred, should be a man of reputable character.

To qualify as *oji qfq*, one must be known by the community as a person of probity, one who is impeccable, whose honesty glaringly is beyond dispute, one who is not easily bent to the whims and caprices of the time. Nobody abuses the qfq holder in Nkpor because doing so means abusing the ancestors. The gods are in direct union with the holders and they see to it that justice is maintained, (Onyema 1999:8). In Nkpor, each qfq holder usually attaches some rings, a piece of cloth or any other article by which he can easily recognize his sacred stick. The qfq holder cannot hold the qfq while his father lives. Ejizu (1986:17) affirms this when he says, –A man can have an qfq made and consecrated for him by the *Aka ji qfq* in the lifetime of his father.||

### **Qfq as a symbol of Authority:**

Qf̣q̣ has a great influence on the political life of Nkpor people. This is because it is a symbol of authority, which comes from the ancestors and acts as a guarantee of truth, justice, and fair-play. In Nkpor and other parts of Igbo land, qf̣q̣ is given to leaders as their staff of office. Every leader has the qf̣q̣ as a symbol to show his power over his subjects. We have the family qf̣q̣ that is held by the oldest man in the family. We have the clan qf̣q̣, held by the leader of the clan. The Igwe, who is the traditional ruler of Nkpor, has his own qf̣q̣ that is given to him by the kingmakers on the day of his coronation. The possession of qf̣q̣ by Igbo leaders is very significant; it is mark of respect and authority. The leaders are referred to as *Aka ji qf̣q̣* – ‘The hand that holds the qf̣q̣’; and if a leader does not live up to moral expectation, the qf̣q̣ is taken from him and given to another person that is better than him.

### **Types of Ọf̣Ọ:**

There are various types of Ọf̣Ọ and these are discussed below:  
**Ọf̣Ọ Ana** – This is the Ọf̣Ọ that is dedicated to the mother earth. It is held by the *Eze Ana*. In Nkpor, the shrine of Ana, called *Okwu Ana*, is at Xmxsiome village and the Ọf̣Ọ is placed at this shrine and used when taking oath – *{ta qj[ Ana* – eating the kola nut offered to the mother earth (swearing by Ana). It is also used for any ceremony concerning ala and issues concerning the whole town. The Ọf̣Ọ is painted by smearing it with the blood of slaughtered animals, nzu – white chalk, wine (during libation), chewed kola nut, and alligator pepper.

**Ọf̣Ọ Xmxnna** – Every xmxnna has its own Ọf̣Ọ which is held by the oldest man in an xmxnna. The Ọf̣Ọ gives him authority to officiate in any function concerning the xmxnna, to break kola nut or pour libation during any xmxnna gathering or festival.

**Ọf̣Ọ Ezinaxnq** – This is the Ọf̣Ọ of a family that is inherited by the first son of the family at the death of their father. He uses the Ọf̣Ọ in offering prayers for the family and making sacrifices.

**Ọf̣Ọ Qzq** – Before a man is initiated into the *Nze na Qzq* society, he acquires his personal Ọf̣Ọ from the *Eze Ana*. He uses this Ọf̣Ọ for personal matters and in settling household cases and problems.

**Qfq Alxs[** – This type of qfq is jointly prepared by the traditional native doctors and members of the concerned deity. However, the native doctor is the chief artisan of all qfq symbols. It is kept in the deity shrine or any appropriate place.

**Qfo Dib[a** – This is the qfo of the medicine man. He uses it during divinations and in offering prayers and sacrificing to his *agwx*. Women do not have qfo except a woman who is a *Dib[a* (native doctor), who uses her qfo as male *Dib[a* does. There are different kinds of qfo that are minor for example *qfo ije* – for travelling; *qfo q b[alx egbu m gbuo onwe ya* – he who wants to kill me should kill himself (boomerang); *Qfo emelx m g[n[* – what did I do, (for innocence); *qfo nwadiana* – for grandsons and daughters; *qfo chi* – for one's personal god or luck; *qfo nwata* – for innocence in children; *qfo ajadu* – for widows; *qfo ogbenye*

– for the poor; *qfq onye qb[a* – for visitors; *qfo qmxmx* – for procreation; *qfo nwada* – for daughters of the family, very much respected and avoided; *qfq agadi* – for the aged, which are respected and feared.<sup>3</sup>

It is worthy of note that there are some types of qfq that are negative in use. For instance, in Enugwu-ukwu, they have *Qfq-Atx*. This type of qfq is used in killing, charming, and harming people. This type of qfq exists in different parts of Igbo land. Example: *Qfq Anxnxebe* in Nnewi; *Oke qfq* in Ideatq and *Qfq Mxq* in Nkpor, held by some dangerous masquerades.

### **Ogu in Nkpor:**

Ogu stands for innocence. Mxnonye (1966:15) defines ogu as –...the moral forces, that potent spur of righteousness which drives the innocent against the aggressor. Onyeqcha (1992:33) explains ogu as –...the solemn utterance one makes, the ideals and principles of good life he invokes are called ogu.|| Ogu can also be defined as the body of righteousness, the law of equity, or the sum total of justice, the moral power, bulwark of strength, the invisible moral protective, an antidote or amulet against all forms of evil including those of the spiritual enemy and a breast-plate of righteousness||, (Iwuagwu 1982:14). The above definitions of ogu show that ogu is a religious – cultural symbol of clear conscience, innocence and fair play that produces the moral force or moral power, which drives the innocent against his opponent without being hurt when he is considered right on his side.

Ogu is closely connected with ọfọ. It is also a measure of justice and fair-play. The Nkpor people always use *Qfọ* and *Ogu* together for

example *aji m ọfọ na ugu*. I have **ọfọ** (justice) and **ugu** (innocence). According to Uwalaka (1996:16), *qf* is given precedence as the first born. Yet whoever holds *qf* automatically holds *ugu*. Onyeocha (1992:34) shows the closeness of ọfọ and *ugu* thus, *-Qf* and *ugu* are so closely bound together that you could hardly talk of one without the other. || *Ogu* is more of a concept than of a physical object. No wonder, Uwalaka (1996:16) says that it is not established whether the power known as *ugu* has any visible shape like ọfọ or not. But it is represented with palm-frond tendril *qmx*. *Ogu* is usually smaller in size than ọfọ and in Nkpor, it is made out of *ogilisi* plant in rare occasions. *Ogu* symbolizes innocence. It is often placed on the *Ikenga*. *Ikenga* like the ọfọ is a sacred symbol that represents the genius of a man's strength and achievement. A typical *Ikenga* consists of a ram with two horns seated on a stool, carrying a knife in the right hand and a skull in the left. The placement of a knotted *qmx*, which represents *ugu* on the *Ikenga*, immediately conveys a sense of warning to show that the person who placed the *ugu* is saying that he is innocent and that his hands are clean.

Medicine man uses the stalk of the *ogilisi leaf* – a sacred plant – as *ugu* to find out an offender. *Ogilisi* stalks are given names of the suspects and the medicine man throws the *ugu* in such a way that from the way the stalks fall on the ground, he picks up the one that represents the offender. *Ogu* is also used during oath taking and the individual taking the oath points out specific issues involved in the oath to declare his innocence. It is also applied during the *{gba ndx* – (covenant) ceremony between individuals and parties.

*Ogu* can also be prayed with. This is called *{tx ugu*. Metuh (1985: 155-156) expresses *{tx ugu* in these words: –The Igbo prayer of a persecuted soul. It is offered by a person who is plagued by misfortunes inflicted by a spirit or fellow human being. In the former case, the offender would beg the spirits to leave him alone because he has done nothing wrong. In the later case, the protester prays the spirit to punish his persecutors because he has done them no wrong. || The above situation is seen in Nkpor.

### **Ogu as a Symbol of Warning:**

*Ogu* in Nkpor is sometimes represented with a palm frond tendril that is knotted in the shape of a cross. Edeh (1983:23) supports this assertion when he says that *Qmx ka e ji eme ugu* – –It is with knotted palm frond leaflet that *ugu* is made. || It serves as a warning for people to keep off, if a woman or any Nkpor man fetches

more fire

wood than he/she can carry, he keeps the ugu on top of the remaining ones to warn passers-by that the wood is owned by someone. If anybody sees the ugu on top of the wood, he will not dare to remove the wood because the ugu that is on it has warned him to keep off.

Not only in fire wood, it is also used on other things to show that someone already owns them. If it is a communal land as soon as you put ugu on a part of it, others will keep off from that part of the land and know that someone had already taken that part to cultivate. This means that ugu serves as a peaceful gadget.

In Nkpor as we have already mentioned, the stalk of ogilisi leaf is also used as ugu. If one is quarrelling with somebody, one can give the stalk of ogilisi leaf to an elder relation of that person to give to him. This is to warn him to keep away from you because you do not want his association. Soothsayers also use ugu to find out an offender. If four people, for instance are being suspected of a crime, four *ogilisi* stalks are taken and given the names of the suspects. Then the soothsayer throws the *ogilisi* stalks on the ground. The way they fall will help the soothsayer pick out the offender(s). It is also used for finding out the person that reincarnated, *{gba Afa Agx}*. Names of suspected reincarnates are given to the *ogilisi* stalks. The medicine man throws them up. The way they fall will help him pick up the person that reincarnated.

### **The Relationship between Qfq and Ogu:**

According to Nwaorgu (2001:210), –Qfq and ugu in conceptual understanding signify truth, justice, purity, and faithfulness in Igbo custom. Just like qfq, ugu is also a messenger to the earth goddess – *Ala, Amadiqha*, and *Ogwugwu* deities. The traditional Igbo people strongly believe in the law of retributive justice and so everybody tries to absolve him or herself from evil doings through the agency of qfq and ugu.

### **Religious Importance of Qfq and Ogu:**

Qfq is an object of worship. It is used to honour and venerate spiritual beings. Nkpor people believe in the Supreme Being and they express it in their worship by glorifying the source, the sustainer, and the maker of all things. They cannot do this worship of the Supreme God without the use of Qfq, which is at the centre of their religion to show honesty and fair-play. What the Bible is to the Christians in their worship, Qfq is also to Nkpor people in their worship of the Supreme God.

Ọfọ plays a major role in prayer. The father or head of each family says his morning prayer with his Ọfọ before starting the day's work. The morning prayer takes place in his Obi. Before the prayer, a wash hand basin with water is brought to him, he washes his hand and face, takes his Ọfọ, Ikenga, kola nut, alligator pepper and nzu (white traditional chalk), arranges them, and starts to pray. He first of all greets Chineke, then the divinities (mmxq d[ be any]) and then the ancestors. After greeting them, he thanks them for their protection and invites them to come and have kola nut. Then, follows petition for help and protection *nye any[ ogonogo ndx na arx isi ike* – *Give us long life and good health.* He then curses his enemies and those who plan to harm him. *Ọ b[alx igbu m, ya gbuo onwe ya* – *He who wants to kill me should kill himself.* He concludes his prayer by inviting the supreme God to break the kola nut for him. *Chukwu Okike b[a were aka g[ waa ọj[ ka any[ taa*<sup>4</sup> – *God the creator come and break this kola nut for us to eat.*

Ọfọ is also used as a symbol of justice and fair-play. The Nkpor men try as much as possible to be just and fair in their dealings with their fellow men. They see the Ọfọ as symbolizing justice and fair-play, which is explained in their proverb *egbe belx Ugo belx nke si ibe ya ebena, nku kwaa ya* – *Let the eagle perch, let the kite perch, whichever says that the other will not perch, let its wing break off.* This Igbo proverb points to the concept of peaceful co-existence. Life is a tree on which everyone has the right to perch and should not be monopolized by a particular people. They also say *Ome ife jide ọfọ* – *Let justice prevail in whatever man does.* They have a lot of proverbs to show their belief in Ọfọ as a symbol of justice for example, *O megbu nwa ogbenye cheta kwa ọfọ* – *Let he who maltreats the poor remember Ọfọ.*

Ọfọ always makes people to speak the truth even if it means suffering for the truth. Ọfọ is always a symbol of peace and righteousness. It helps the Nkpor man to have trust and confidence in his fellow man and speak the truth always. No wonder Ọfọ is used during any serious talk in the traditional community. That explains why Ọfọ is used in all customary courts and even in magistrate courts and witnesses always swears by it before tendering their evidence. And if there is any foul-play of injustice, they believe that the spirits and the ancestors will intervene and the person will suffer a serious misfortune.

Ọfọ is a symbol of peace and righteousness. Nkpor people are very peaceful by nature and the Ọfọ holder is never aggressive. He sees ọfọ as a way of life for the survival of man. Ọfọ fosters peace and

unity

among the various families or clans for every one tries not to go against the ancestors by ignoring the Ọfọ and the fact that the family own one Ọfọ acts as a unifying factor and you dare not poison, harm or quarrel with someone with whom you have one Ọfọ. For the Nkpor man, Ọfọ also stands for righteousness. This explains the reason why men especially titled men, are regarded as righteous for all of them have the Ọfọ and in settlement of any dispute, any evidence given by a traditionally titled man is treated as authentic (especially in the olden days).

Every Nkpor man accepts ọfọ as a sacred object that emits power. Whether ọfọ has real power in it or not, is never a matter for argument, because it is a matter of belief and question of belief is based on conviction. They believe that ọfọ has the power to either kill or save as the case may be. They have a lot of proverbs that manifest in one way or the other their belief in the power of qfq and ogu such as *Oji ọfọ ga-ana* – ‘He who has ọfọ will be free’; *Ọfọ ka idide ji awa ana* – ‘with ọfọ the earthworm burrows the ground’; *Oji ọfọ nwe agamniru* – ‘He who has ọfọ progresses’; *Nwoke s[ na ya ji Ọfọ, nwany[ s[ na ji ọfọ, ma ọfọ ma onye ji ya* – ‘A man claims that he has the ọfọ and a woman claims that she has the ọfọ, but only ọfọ knows who has it’; *Ọfọ ka ns[* - ‘ọfọ is greater than poison’; *Ọfọ d[ ile* – ‘ọfọ is powerful’; *ọfọ bx ike* – ‘ọfọ is strength’; *Ogu amana m* – ‘Let me not be found guilty by ogu’.

A list of some Nkpor personal names connected with qfq and ogu symbols illustrate the rich conceptualization of qfq and ogu among the Nkpor people. The personal names deriving from the qfq and ogu concepts are at the same time personal affirmation of faith in the symbols. The full meaning and implications like most other Igbo traditional names are discovered in the context of individual experiences which gave birth to them. Example: *Qfqegbu* – ‘Qfq does not kill’; *Qfqeme* – ‘One who does things with his qfq’; *Qfqkans[* - ‘Qfq is greater than poison’; *Qfqma* – ‘Qfq knows’; *Nwaogu* – ‘Son of Ogu’.

Ogu serves a useful purpose in Nkpor traditional society in that it provides an effective means of peaceful settlement of disputes. You do not take action against someone who offended you without first of all sending him an ogu for at least three times, {*manye ogu* – ‘sending him a note of warning, through his relations or close friends.’ Ogu creates an atmosphere for peaceful settlement. At times people abuse

the use of ọfọ and ogu by preparing them with charms that can kill the innocent person or a rightful owner of the land. The ordinary ogu and

Ọfọ have psychological effect and work on the conscience of Nkpor man, but in some cases some wicked medicine men abuse their use, and use them to kill or disgrace an innocent person.

### **Conclusion:**

With the introduction of Christianity and Western culture in Igbo land most of Nkpor traditional religious concepts have lost their strong grip on the people. Many of the youths today do not know what is Ọfọ or ogu. Many of the family heads do not care for the family Ọfọ any longer. Parents do not give their children names connected with Ọfọ or ogu in the name of Christianity.

However, hope is not lost. The new cultural revival being experienced in the town of recent may stop the total collapse of the ancient religious practice of our fore fathers. The elites have mounted a campaign for cultural resurgence. Some are now recognizing the concepts of Ọfọ and ogu as the core of Igbo culture, the moral code of Igbo man and the dictate of his conscience.

There is a general belief by the traditionalists in Nkpor and beyond that the new Igbo generation should be taught the traditional Igbo religious link between the Supreme Being – *Chukwu* – the earth-goddess – *Ana*, *Ọfọ* and *ogu*, for this will help the Nkpor man to regain his lost identity and preserve the moral code of the society.

### **Notes:**

1. Mr. Qnxkwe Okafor, retired farmer, age 78 years.
2. Chief Nwazuluarx Enekwwa, retired farmer, aged 88 years.
3. Mr. Boniface Ogwugwu, a tipper driver, aged 62 yrs.
4. Chief John Erulu, retired farmer and palm wine taper, aged 87 years.

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