

ADAPTATION, PARADIGMS SHIFT AND THE TRANSLATION OF UKWUÁNÍTRADITIONAL ORAL PRAISE SONG-TEXTS

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Abstract

This paper expands translation in oral literary discourses. The focus is specifically on the adaptation of Ukwuá ní Praise Song-Texts, as practiced by bards in the diverse Communities within Ukwuá ní land. The adaptation so crafted by such griots gives rise to variants of the poetic praise song-texts as enacted in Ukwuá ní communities, invariably, the accompanying paradigm shifts associated with such song variants. The aspect of translation into English is to showcase the distinct thematic preoccupations of the variant poetic praise songs, the re-arrangement in poem lineations, the reversal of the style in song renditions, and the delimitations in translating the same poetic song-texts into English language. The theoretical framework is Cultural Theory of Translation, enunciated by Homi K. Bhabha and his contemporaries, while the research methodology encompasses the recording of the collected data, the use of questionnaires, oral interviews, the use of the library, the subsequent analyses of the same data and the resort to the internet for the purposes of extracting related online information and further clarification on the topic of discourse. The findings showcase that Ukwuá ní Traditional Oral Praise Song-texts undergo modifications, as a result of adaptation, thus resulting to paradigm shifts in the modelled variants, invariably, militating against the smooth translation of the same texts into English language and other languages.

Keyword: *Adaptation, Paradigm, Translation, Praise-Songs, Ukwuá ní*

Introduction

This paper examines the concept, "Translation" and its distinct types, as are applicable to the discourses on adaptation and paradigms, with a view to showing how translation ensues from material movements across hitherto established borders. Thereafter, the paper demonstrates that translation act is the sole responsibility of a translator, that hybridity reveals the position of translators, that migrations is a determinant of translation, and that materials so translated usually traversed borders of established communities, as portrayed in the analyses of the Ukwuá ní traditional oral poetic praise song-texts, "ỌjíNwá Eke" and its variants as used for this study.

The Concept, "Translation"

"Translation" as a concept, has no one concise and acceptable definition, as it is, "a complex and multidisciplinary field that [its scope] sits at the intersection of Science and Art" (Liraz, Postan, 2). This means that translation is applicable to distinct fields of human endeavours, like Language Communication Art, Literature, Linguistics, Law, Medicine, Engineering, and a host of other Art and Science subjects. Howbeit the application of translation into our daily engagements, it can be succinctly defined as the process of transferring the meaning of one written work into another newly written work, using entirely a new language that is quite distinct from the first one. In other words, translation is the act of converting the meaning of a written text or message (herein, the source language and text) into another written text or message (herein, the target language and text), while retaining the essence and intent of that source texts, and equally bridging the existing gap between the two concerned languages and cultures. For instance, the translation of Chinua

Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* into such languages as French, English and Spanish, among others; or the translation of Wole Soyinka's poetic piece, "*Abiku*" into the aforementioned languages. The "translator" is the expert that is skilled in the act of translation; and in the enterprise of translation, he must have the basic skills for a successful translation exercise, as in (a) being abreast with the workings of both the source and target languages (b) having an indept understanding of the cultures under consideration (c) being abreast with the subject matter of the discourse (d) having the knowledge of distinct registers and/or writing styles and (e) the ability to use Computer assisted translation tools and related technologies, among others (Ghosal Pamela,18-19).

Translation is of different types, ranging from the three contemporary translation types(viz:

Human, Machine and Post-Edited translations, respectively) to Business translation, Document translation, Legal translation, Literary translation, Medical translation, Marketing translation, E-commerce translation and Life Science translation, among others. In deciding which of the translation types to put to use, the three essential factors to consider are budget, time and accuracy.

The common translation techniques include: Direct translation techniques; Borrowing; Oblique; Modulation; Reformulation or Equivalent; Literal, and of course, the Adaptation or Cultural Substitution, which is the nucleus of this present discourse on *Ukwuáńí* oral poetic praise song texts (Postan Liraz 1-4 Ghosal Pamella,3-12).

The theory of translation involves the distinct approaches through which transliteral works are hatched out in the applicable fields of human endeavours. The enterprises involved in such theories go beyond the mere balancing of the linguistic equivalence of the source text with that of the target text, to ensure that the cultural nuances and context of the two languages and texts are balanced, also. That is to say that such known theories provide the usual frameworks through which meanings, contexts and cultures, invariably, structures and the inherent cultural adaptations, are transferred across various languages of diverse communities. The major theories of translation and their primary proponents include:

- (a) Skopos Theory-the proponents include Hans J. Vermeer; Katharina Reiss, and Christianne Nord;
- (b) Hermeneutic Approach- the major proponent is George Steiner;
- (c) Interpretative Theory (also known as the Communicative Approach)- the proponents are Danica Seleskovitch and Marianne Lederer;
- (d) The Manipulation School/Ideology- the proponents include André Lefevere and Lawrence Venuti;
- (e) Descriptive Translation Studies and Polysystem Theory- the proponents are Gideon Toury and Itamar Even-Zohar;
- (f) Linguistic Typology-the known proponent is Roman Jakobson;
- (g) The Equivalence Theory- the proponents are Eugene Nida; J.C. Catford, and Werner Koller;
- (h) The Cultural Translation- the proponents are Susan Bassnet; Homi K. Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak.

Translation is obviously different from "interpreting", the discourse which is beyond the scope of this paper.

Theoretical Framework

There are various theories of translation, and these theories includes: Skopos theory, Hermeneutic theory, Interpretative theory, the Manipulation school, Descriptive translation theory and Polysystem theory, Linguistic typology, the Equivalence theory and Cultural Theory of Translation, among others. Each of these distinct theories of translation can be conveniently employed in the discourse of one subject matter or the other in the field of Oral Literature translation. Based on the above premises, the theoretical framework for this discourse, *Adaptation, Paradigm Shifts and the Translation of Ukwuáńí Traditional Oral Praise Song-texts*" is Cultural

Theory of Translation. The choice of the "Cultural Theory of Translation" is hinged on the fact that the theory discusses the translation of texts, with special emphasis on the relationship between the same texts and the cultural practices prevalent in that same region. The "Cultural Theory of Translation" is that process of translation that is devoid of a 'start' text and usually without no 'fixed' target text. In other words, the Cultural Translation Theory is a kind of adaptation translation, whereby a translator substitutes the cultural references in the source text with the items that are more familiar to the target audience, in the course of translation. The major pre-occupation of this aspect of translation is basically cultural process, as opposed to the resultant end products. The domineering factor of cultural translation is the migrations or movements of people (herein, the subjects), rather than the movements or migrations of the concerned texts (herein, the objects). The assumption is that such migration types may have brought about the interrelated problems of language varieties, dialect clusters, communication nuances, cultural relativities, and other related linguistics discourses in our contemporary academic world. The above postulations inform the urgent needs for further coordinated studies on the cultural translation theory as an aspect of translation science. In the words of Anthony Pym: Cultural Translation can draw on several wide notions of translation, particularly as developed in (1) social anthropology, where the task of the ethnographer is to describe the foreign culture (2) actor-network theory("translation sociology"), where the interactions that form networks are adjudged as translations, and (3) sociologies that study communication between groups in complex fragmented societies, particularly those shaped by migrations. The paradigm [so created,] thus helps us think about globalizing world in which "start" and "target" sides are neither stable nor entirely separate (Pym,353). The "Cultural Translation Theory" as a concept should not be misconstrued for such other distinct make-ups or formulations, like, "Cultural Ethnography", "Cultural Turn", "Translation Culture", "Cultural Studies", "Cultural Research", and "Professional Cultures", among others. The inherent idea in the above assertion is that these mentioned formulations seem to be the same, or appear almost same as the cultural translation theory, but an in-depth study depicts them all as having distinct meanings. The Indian cultural theorist, Homi K. Bhabha, among other cultural translators, is regarded as the father of "Cultural Translation", the concept which he propagated and elaborated in, "How Newness Enters the World: Postmodern Space, Postcolonial Time" and "The Trials of Cultural Translation", two outstanding articles published in *The Location of Culture*, respectively. It is on this basis that Anthony Pym considers Cultural Translation as, "a set of discourses that enact hybridity by crossing cultural borders, revealing the intermediary positions of (figurative) translators [that bring about paradigms and their shifts in the discourses of adapted "start" and "target" texts (365-6).

Further on this mode, Pym asserts that the Cultural Translation Theory, as treated by Homi K. Bhabha, on a significant note, has succeeded in exposing certain facts about paradigms of translation, hitherto been neglected or underrated by other paradigms of translation studies. Such trivialized aspects of translation, according to Pym, are as follows: (a) The view that translation is from the perspective of a (figurative) translator, not translation [itself]. (b) The focus that hybridity has something to say is about the general position of translators, who know two languages and ...at least two cultures [also](363-4). In furtherance of this revelation, he says that the link between Bhabha's Cultural Translation Theory "with migration highlights the way translation ensues from material movements", [since] "translational movements traverse previously established borders and thereby questions them (Pym,364).

Review of Related Literature

In the first instance, Liraz Postan, discussing the basic theory of translation, is of the opinion that the major pre-occupation of the translation theories has been the quest towards understanding the languages and subject matter of translation and the subsequent transfer of the concerned information to the target audience. Again, she posits that translation, though a complex act, is "one of the most misunderstood disciplines in the world", as evidence in the practices of the uninitiated

translators. Furthermore, she dwells on the basic translation precepts, and the adjoining theories of translation (1- 5). The paper in *Translation Renaissance* discusses the concept, "Translation" in relation to man's daily activities. In her opinion, translation is of three distinct types, viz: the Human Translation, the Machine Translation and the Post - Edited Translation, respectively; and the application of any one of these types are dependent on three essential factors: budget, time and accuracy (1- 5). Ghosal Pamela in his treaty, " What Is Translation? A Guide to Transferring Meaning Between Languages", discusses "translation" in tandem with activities of the business world. The major pre-occupations of this text encompass the meaning of translation, its distinct types, the key approaches to translation, the techniques involved in translation, translation technology, translation quality assessment, translation services (i.e., the link between businesses and the global marketplace), the challenges of translation and the opportunities involved, and how best translation technology can give boost to business outfits, among others (1- 21). Again, the views expressed in *Language Scientific* expands such areas as, " the difference between translation and interpreting", " the six distinct types of interpreting"- (viz: the consecutive ;the simultaneous; the escort/ travel; the whisper; the scheduled phone/over-the-phone, and the on- demand phone types of interpreting); "direct translation to interpreting correlation"- (as in such spoken and/or verbal languages, for instance, the Pisaha sign language use in America, and such other indigenous languages in the same clime, and even the about 250 Chinese dialects spoken in China, presently (Scientific, 4), and of course, instances of "translation versus interpreting", as are employed for business purposes in established commercial outfits. Furthermore, Burton Raffel makes a case for the preference of oral transmission of texts, using the oral medium, as against the total dependency on writing, based on the criterion of accuracy, integrity and stability that favour oral transmission for centuries. Arguing against the perceived weaknesses of oral transmission, he opines that the same is more effective, almost error-free, and has limited tendency towards "changes, deletions, accretions, and all manners and modes of other divergences from the original forms of the concerned texts (1). After some distinctive comparative scholarships on the views of Plato, Godfrey Chaucer, Richard Harmer, Crossley-Holland, Marc Slonim, Sydney Monas, Vladimir Nabokov, and of course, Judah Goldin, among others, he, citing Plato's argument in *Phaedrus* (as was quoted by Judah Golden), is of the conviction that, "writing, as opposed to oral transmission, tends to decrease rather than to increase understanding"(Raffel, 1). However, Burton Raffel still makes a strong case for the adoption of writing as a medium of translating texts (collected oral data, inclusive), because "at various stages of literary development it is essentially impossible to know which (if either) is primary" (Raffel,2). Sahdev Luhar and Dushyant Nimavet piece is on the "translation of the oral tradition of community literature"(Sahdev, L and Dushyant, N.,1) which centres on the study of the GādaliyāLuhār(wandering ironsmiths) Community, in Gujarat, one of the West Indian states. The paper is specifically a record of the experiences of the two author-translators as they recorded and translated the tradition of the concerned cultural group of wanderers that have lost touch with their ancestral roots of origin. For an in-depth analysis of the five selected tales, "the paper is divided into five parts: (i) Orality and translation in contemporary discourse, (ii) The Gādaliyā Luhār community (iii) Oral tradition of the Gādaliyā Luhār community, (iv) Translating the oral tales of the GādaliyāLuhār community, and (v) Problems of translating oral tradition. The findings of the paper is that the Gādaliyā Luhār community, an excellent example of such nomadic communities in India, which rich and diverse oral traditions are on the verge of extinction, can be redeemed through serious translation (Luhar and Nimavat,2). Furthermore, Isidore Okpehwo in his paper, " Towards a Faithful Record: On Transcribing and Translating the Oral Narrative Performance", makes a case for a proper establishment cum representation of the " peculiar poetics of"(Okpehwo,111) oral literature, so as to strike a balance with the age-long predominant interest of oral scholars in the aesthetics of orality and other inherent virtues of the same. This recommendation is informed by the dire need to establish the unique nature of literature that is oral, in contrast to that of the written. This feat becomes a mirage, if the concerned editors of oral literary texts remain indifferent to the reconciliation of the two media of cultural expression (Okpehwo,111), invariably, preserving

the integrity of the host culture where such data were harvested for study. Therefore, Okpehwo posits that for the scholars of Oral Literature to achieve a successful enterprise, cognizance should be taken on the following: a faithful recording and the documentation of the concerned oral texts; a careful, concerted, and creative translation of same; a proper selection and analysis of same; the wittiness and flexibility in handling issues of orthography, and the making of proper distinctions [at] the level of intonation (Okpehwo, 125), among others. Gordon Innes' piece is on the associated problems inherent in oral translation act, as evident in his study of the oral epic performances of selected bards of acclaimed status in the Mandinka region of the Gambia. For a proper discourse, with convenience not ruled out, such oral epic repertoires are classified into two distinct types, viz, the Sunjata epic (being the major one) and the epic of other warriors of the Mandinka decent (being the minor types). And in the course of this study, Innes established the facts that such problems of translating the Mandinka oral epic, include: being able to convey "the emotional overtones of the original" texts to the readers who may not be Mandinkans (Innes,110); how best to effectively accentuate the place of the formulae, praise names, by names and other direct speech lineations embedded in the oral epic renditions(105, 107); how best to put forth the emotional force of the same formulae, praise names and by- names, when translating such processes to the audience of English expression(108); the issues of language in use(herein, the plausible style or mode of renditions, such as the speech mode, recitation, or the song's)((105-7), and of course, the difficulty of conveying the feelings of the bard's enactment to the foreign audience (109), among others.

History of Origin of Ụkwụ́ání People

In every part of the world, invariably, Nigeria, the various groups of people have their traditions of origin, as claimed by them. In like manners, the Ndọkwa ethnic nationality, also known as the Ụkwụ́ani people, has its tradition or history of origin. The only concern is that such a tradition of origin is shrouded in controversies, as each of the clans in Ukwuani claims distinct traditions of origins, based on such oral narratives handed down from generation to generation. The Ụkwụ́ani People (also known and called the Ndọkwa Ethnic Nationality), refers to a group of people that dwell in the Western part of the Niger Delta region, in the southern part of Nigeria. This group of people are found in the Northern part of Delta state, designated the "Anioma" sub-region of this same state. They are also found in certain villages of the Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni local government Areas of River State, and in Orogun and Aragba communities of Ughelli North Local Government Area of Delta State, respectively. They also have their presence in villages located in Kogi and Ondo States, Nigeria. The Ndọkwa ethnic group inhabit the area enclosed between longitude 6° 6' and 6° 42' East and latitude 6° 3' and 5° 25' North of Delta State, Nigeria. The entire land mass is bordered in the North, by the Benin Division; on the South by the Ijaw Division; on the South-West, by the Isoko and Urhobo Divisions; on the Eastern part, by the River Niger; on the North-East, by the Asaba and Ika Divisions; and on the South-Eastern part by the Ahoada Divisions of Rivers State, Nigeria. This ethnic nationality encompasses the people who at present dwell in Ndọkwa-East, Ndọkwa- West and Ụkwụ́ani Local Government Areas, with the headquarters of such administrative structures, located in Aboh, Utagba-Ogbe, and Obiaruku, respectively. Distributed within these three local administrative units are thirty-six clans, with twenty-one in NDOSIMILI and fifteen in ỤKWỤ́ANI area. Among the twenty-one clans in Ndosimili are: Abara, Aboh, Adia, Afor, Akari, Ase, Ashaka, Asaba-Ase, Ọkpai, Ibrede, Inyi, Ibedeni, Ọnuabo, Ọnyia, Ossissa, Umuolu, Igbuku, Itchi, Ushie, Utuoku and Azagba; while the fifteen in Ụkwụ́ani area are: Abbi, Ebedei, Akoku, Amai, Emu, Ezhiokpọ, Ezhiọnum, Obiaruku, Ọnitcha- Ụkwụ́ani, Ogume, Umuebu, Umukwata, Umutu, Utagba-Ụnọ and Utagba-Ogbe, respectively. The language spoken by the people of these distinct communities in Ukwuaniland is known and called, Ụkwụ́ani.

Traditional Oral Expressions in Ụkwụáníland

The ỤkwụáníPeople have their cultural and traditional values, political and social structures, religious beliefs, and distinct traditional oral expressions that gave birth to the custom, music and other related arts in this same society. In Ụkwụáníland, two major genres of orality do exist, viz, the major and minor genres, respectively. The major genres include oral poetry, oral prose narratives, and oral dramaturgy. The minor genres encompass riddles and proverbs, among other unclassifiable utterances, like idioms and tongue twisters, among others. Ụkwụáníoral poetry (Egede) include oral expressions with poetic qualities. These utterances are distinct and varied, as in their length, contents, thematic preoccupations, methods and styles of rendition, among others. The sub-types of oral poetry in Ụkwụáníland include: War Songs (Ẹbụ-aghà); Dirges (Ẹbụ-ṅwụ); Epics (Ẹbụ-ínụ); Religious songs (Ẹbụ-ofufe); Satirical songs (Ẹbụ-íkpe-íte); Lullabies (Ẹbụ-ígugụ-nwà); Marriage songs (Ẹbụ-ínụ-onyenye), and Praise songs (Ẹbụ-íjámá), among others. The last of these oral expressions, the oral praise song-texts, is the focus of this paper.

Adaptation in ỤkwụáníTraditional Oral Panergeric Song-texts

In the first instance, it should be known that Ụkwụánípeople is a group of people that have witnessed one form of migration or the others. In short, it is on records that the coming into existence of this group of people can be traced to the stories of migrations that swept through the region, in the early 9th century (E.O. Okolugbo, 3; K.B.C. Onwubiko, 107-112). According to Okolugbo, as was stated by D.G. Gegeri:

“what is today, is a near-acceptance of the Ndọkwa tradition of origin, is based on stories of migrations that swept through the region, in the early 9th century A.D. (Okolugbo, E. O. 3, K.O. Dike, 173). The first wave of migration has Umu-Akashiede, Akarai and Ebedei as representative clans and these groups of settlers claimed to have come from the famous Benin Kingdom in Edo State, Nigeria. The second group of migrants include, Onya, Akarai, Ndoni and Umu-Obarauchi; whom settled along the bank of River Niger. This second group of settlers is made up of expansionists from Nri Kingdom in Anambra state, Nigeria. The third wave of migration embodies the expansionist-conquerors from the ancient Benin Kingdom, a group that established the villages of Amai, Aboh, Ogbe-Ani, Ogume, and Umukwata (Gegeri, 6).”

Furthermore, he says that oral tradition has it that other groups of itinerants, also came and dwell among the earlier migrants of the three waves. These itinerant-settlers include the Igalas who were believed to have settled in Amai; the Edo indigenes acclaimed to have settled in Ogume, and the Igbos, assumed to have settled along the bank of River Niger, among the people of Akarai, Utshe and Aboh, respectively. It is probably this same group of people that Onwubiko, K.B.C., quoting K.O. Dike, refers to as members of the Ika Igbos, when he asserts that, “it is now [commonly] believed that some ancient Ibo people had earlier settled in this area [ie, the Ndọkwa ethnographical entity] earlier than the 9th century A.D.” (167). Inferring from the above discourses on migrations, there is the possibility that many of the bards of the Ụkwụáníregion must have also participated in the migration exercises, and that such items of folklore, like the oral praise songs, must have equally being exported by the same immigrant bards to the new environments they eventually found themselves, those same climes where the exported crafts and items of folkloristic became adapted and subsequently corrupted, in terms of their subject matters, thematic preoccupations, stylistic features, intonations, and methods of rendition, among others. This is succinctly put by Gordon Innes, when he says:

Bards are generally great travellers and it is common for [an Ụkwụání] bard to have plied his craft in [such places like Ogume, Aboh, Okpáí, Ábbí, Onitcha-Ụkwụání, among others, because] there are grounds for thinking that the

[praise songs have] been a factor in maintaining the cultural homogeneity of the [Úkwúání People] (Innes,101), hence alterations done to this group of Úkwúání poetry will not only do a great disservice to the same, but will go a long way to affect the people's culture and tradition.

An excellent example of a Úkwúání traditional oral praise poetry that experienced adaptations, invariably, changes, is that entitled, "Ojínwá Eke", which will inform the basis of our analysis, for the following reasons. Firstly, is the fact that it is a well-known praise poetry that is commonly sang to suit situations of diverse ceremonies, like marriage, naming and playing of toys by children. Secondly, is the fact that it has two synonymous versions as sang from the ancient days of the Úkwúání people Thirdly, is the fact that two other new versions have been discovered by this researcher, which will be of tremendous interest to the average researcher in Úkwúání cultural heritage.

The movements of the two prominent versions of the oral poetic praise song go thus:

Úkwúání:

English Version A

Ojínwá Eke	Ojí, Ojí
Eke's Child Ojío, Ojínwá Eke	
Ojí, Eke's Child	
O mání mmá ní ụdo	Beauty in
humility Ojío, Ójínwá	Eke
Ojí, Eke's Child	
O mání mmá ní ụdo	Beauty in humility
Ẹzízázá ụnọshí m kene Ojí	Broom for sweeping told me to
salute Ojí Áchíchá íchá ífe shí m kene Ojí	Sponge for washing utensils told
me to salute Ojí Ẹkoshí sụnlí shí m kene Ojí	Piston for pounding foods
told me to salute Ojí Ẹfẹlẹkẹkeye nlí shí m kene Ojí	Plate for dishing
foods told me to salute Ojí	
Okụkụlám mílí shí m kene Ojí	Cup for drinking water
Ẹkọtọíkụ ofe shí m kene Ojí	Ladder for dishing soups told me to salute Ojí
Ụgbụgbe íte ofe shí m kene Ojí	Clay pot for cooking soups asked me to
greet Ojí Ụte ídịyẹání shí m kene Ojí	Mat for sleeping asked me to
greet Ojí	
Ẹzụzụ íchụchụesụ shí m kene Ojí	Sponge for bathing asked me to greet Ojí
Íkwe (Odo) ísụ táláshí m kene Ojí	Mortar for pounding foods asked me to
greet Ojí Ndụdụ ígụlú íjísí shí m kene Ojí	The iron prong for yam asked me to
greet Ojí Ntítẹ íte ụnọshí m kene Ojí	Muddy rag for scrubbing asked me to
greet Ojí O mání mmá ní ụdo	Beauty in humility
Ojínwá Eke	Ojí, Eke's child
O mání mmá ní ụdo	Beauty in
humility. Ojínwá Eke	
Ojí, Eke's child	
O mání mmá ní ụdo	Beauty in
humility Ojínwá Eke	Ojí, Eke's
child	
O mání mmá ní ụdo	Beauty in humility

*The *O mání mmá ní ụdo* is a response after the singing of each line of the praise rendition
The second version of this poem, "Ójínwá Eke" trends in the format, below:

Úkwúání:

English:

Version B

Ojínwá Eke	Ojí, Eke's Child
Ojío, Ojínwá Eke	Ojí, Ojí Eke's

child, O mání mmá ní údo	the humble
beauty Ojí I, Ojí Nwá Eke	Ojí, Ojí Eke's child
O mání mmá ní údo	the humble beauty
Ojí ázá unọ, we sesẹ Ojí	Ojí sweeps the home, Ojí gets scolded by them O mání
mmá ní údo	Beauty in humility
Ojí ẹshí íte, we sesẹ Ojí	Ojí cooks foods, Ojí gets scolded by them
O mání mmá ní údo	Beauty in humility
Ojí áchá ífé, we sesẹ Ojí	Ojí cleans the dishes, Ojí gets scolded by them
O mání mmá ní údo	Beauty in humility
Ojí ẹte unọ, we sesẹ Ojí	Ojí scrubs the home, Ojí gets scolded by them O mání
mmá ní údo	Beauty in humility
Ojí ẹkene mmádu, we sesẹ Ojí	Ojí greets people, Ojí gets scolded by them O mání
mmá ní údo	Beauty in humility
Ojí áwụ ẹsụ, we sesẹ Ojí	Ojí takes her bath, Ojí gets scolded by them. O mání
mmá ní údo	Beauty in humility
Ojí Nwá Eke	Ojí, Eke's child
O mání mmá ní údo	the humble beauty Ojí Nwá
Eke	Ojí, Eke's child
O mání mmá ní údo	the humble beauty

A cursory look at the two versions of the same praise song depicts the fact that one version (or either of the two versions) might have being in existence before the other one. This might have been the result of the first version (unknown at this point) adjusting to (a) specific environment (s), either through migrations or modifications, so as to adjust to new situations, or contexts, and/or habitats, among others. This evolutionary process whereby a population of migrated poems becomes suited to their new environments over successive periods of time, is nothing else but adaptation in its true meaning of the word in oral literary discourses. And for the fact that the practices of adapting of oral arts is central to its unending circle, it becomes pertinent to argue that adaptation is the nucleus of most creative ingenuity in Ukwuani; an idea that is supported by Bruno Cessac's theory of adaptation, that things (Ukwuani traditional oral praise songs, inclusive) can always change after staying so long in a particular environment as in the distinct communities in Ukwuani, where such items of folklore must have been migrated to (Cessac, 1-2). And it is in this vein that the coming into existence of the third and fourth versions of this same oral praise song-text became plausible, as in:

Ukwuani:

English Version C

Ojí Nwá Eke	
Ojí, Eke's child Ojí o, Ojí Nwá Eke	
Ojí, Eke's Child	
O mání mmá ní údo	Beauty in
humility Ojí o, Ojí Nwá	Eke
Ojí, Eke's Child	
O mání mmá ní údo	Beauty in humility
Okpáláo gọ mmọshíwẹkene Ojí o	Village oldest man mandated them to
greet Ojí O mání mmá ní údo	Beauty in humility
Ádáneche obodo shíwẹkene Ojí	Village oldest woman mandated them to
	greet Ojí
O mání mmá ní údo	Beauty in humility
Ndeochuntá shíwẹkene Ojí	Hunters guide mandated them to
greet Ojí O mání mmá ní údo	Beauty in humility
Isun ázuáfia shíwẹkene Ojí	Village traders mandated them to
greet Ojí O mání mmá ní údo	Beauty in humility
Otuńálugo shíwẹkene Ojí	Village farmers mandated them to greet Ojí

Ọ mání mmá ní ọdo

Beauty in humility

This third version of the praise song is supposedly woven around the images in the socio-political divides in Ụkwụání communities. The fourth and the final version is linked to the age grade cum groupings, cosmos and elements of nature, like the sun, the moon, the stars, water, air and fire, as in:

Ụkwụání:	Version D	English
ỌjíNwá Eke		
Ọjí, Eke's child	Ọjío, ỌjíNwá Eke	
Ọjí, Eke's Child		
Ọ mání mmá ní ọdo		Beauty
in humility	Ọjío, ỌjíNwá Eke	
Ọjí, Eke's Child		
Ọ mání mmá ní ọdo		Beauty in humility
Ènyánwun'awawa shí m kene	Ọjí	The rising sun asked me to greet
Ọnwá/Ífeñ etí ní ọ sá shí m kene	Ọjí	The bright moon asked me to
greet	Ọjí Ụmụkpákpándo di ní enụshí m kene	The shining stars
asked me to greet	Ọjí	
Osụmílín ebúogụshí m kene	Ọjí	The ravaging sea/ocean asked
me to greet	Ọjí Ebílínegbe egbe shí m kene	The devastating
wind asked me to greet	Ọjí	
Ọkụñ elele shí m kene	Ọjí	The consuming fire asked me to greet

Since justice has been rightly served to this section on adaptation, the focus, presently, is to take a drive to the next, which is on paradigms and paradigm shifts in the four versions of the praise song-text, "Ọjí Nwá Eke", being the major item of folklore under this study.

The Concept, "Paradigm"

"Paradigm", as a concept, denotes a typical framework, a usually accepted standard, or a sort of worldview that guides and governs how an individual perceives and/or interprets the workings of the world. That is to say that the term, "paradigm", expands such words as, "prototype", archetype", "model", "ideal", "gauge", cynosure", "pattern", "criterion", "paragon", and "example", among others. In all indications, these synonymous words so mentioned point to just one fact: that which serves to guide or direct, for instance, "the compassionate king" and "the brave hero", respectively. Invariably, paradigms shapen our assumptions, guide our behaviours, and dictate the distinct methodologies employed by us humans towards meeting up with life's exigencies and also resolving everyday problems.

"Paradigm" as a word and a concept, is often employed into diverse fields of human endeavours, all with an intent to explaining the ways and manners such systems operate on daily basis, as in the traditional grammar of English language, modern Linguistics science, and studies in Orality, among others. For instance, in the field of Modern Linguistics, S.H. Olu Tomori, quoting Nelson Francis, says that a paradigm is, "the system of morphemic variations which is correlated with a parallel system of variations in [an] environment" (21). Inferring from Francis' definition of a paradigm, Tomori concludes that, "paradigm [will therefore mean], "a series of changes in position", as in "the following words [that] constitute paradigms of verbal forms:

cook cooking
 cooked cooked walk
 walking walked

walked
see seeing saw
seen write writing
wrote written
and also, the words that constitute paradigms of noun forms, as in:
man, man's
men child
child's children
house house's houses
car car's cars (Tomori, 21).

Paradigm Shifts in Ụkwụání Traditional Oral Poetic Praise Song-texts

To borrow from the thoughts of Kudakwashe Tuwe, this paper, "focuses on the [place of] paradigms and paradigm shifts in the analysis of African oral performance, using [traditional oral poetic praise song-texts] as an aesthetic framework rooted" in Ụkwụáníland (1-4). Be this as it may, the fact remains that such paradigms are more or less reshaped by migrations and adaptation which usually determine how such items of orature remain effective and appropriate in Ụkwụánímilieu, and by extension, Africa. In situations of in-performance of traditional oral poetic praise songs in Ụkwụáníland, a paradigm becomes the metaphorical index through which the bard-singer measures how best to weaves his crafts, showcases his artistic prowess, and buttresses the beliefs, biases and the cultural values of his immediate community, invariably, bringing about realism in his performance. This can be seen in the selected song for this discourse, "Ọjínwá Eke", as discussed, subsequently. In truth, no one individual can lay claim to knowing which of the versions of the Song-text, "Ọjínwá Eke" came into existence, first. But suffice to state that the first two versions (versions A and B) are the well-known and original versions. In the first version (i.e., A), the thematic preoccupation is "salutations", or "greetings" that were passed unto Ọjí, the humble and beautiful daughter borne of the Eke lineage. The greetings emanated from household utensils (like the broom, plate, mortar, among others), and the poet persona, who eventually is the spokesman for such home items, is the first-person singular pronoun, "I". The doers of the actions still remain the same home properties that their felicitations passed through the "I" of a person. This version of the song-text is performed in every community in Ụkwụáníland. The reverse is the case in the second version of this same song-text, in terms of the subject matter and the doer of the concerned actions. There is a paradigm shift from the felicitations accorded to Ọjí, to that of scolding and insults on Ọjí, who also is the performer of the activities concerned. She is insulted for sweeping the home, washing the dishes, preparing food, and for even taking her bath, among others. Although the initial stanzaic opening and the call-response patterns (which are instances of formulae) in the two versions are the same, the contexts of situation differ, greatly: the first is on the occasion of praise, joy, and merriment, while the second is indicated in situations of sadness, unhappiness, and discomfort, as implied in by the word, "sosé", meaning, "to scold", or "to insult". This second version of the poetic song-text is associated with the people in the riverine communities of Ụkwụání for instance, the Aboh areas and its environs. There is no better explanation for the change in the themes, the doers of the actions (ie, Ọjí and the people), the moods and the contexts, than the issues of migrations and adaptations. Even at that, nobody is quite certain about the group of Ụkwụání people that migrated first into the Ụkwụání region, and the first village where the poetic piece must have been sang, in the first instance. The third version of this praise song-text has the same call-response pattern as in the first and second versions. But there is a paradigm shift that is distinct from the patterns of the previous two. Although the major concern is equally about the encomiums showered on Ọjí, the humble and beautiful, such respects became the hallmarks of the oldest man and woman, including the farmers, traders, in the village, among others. This usage lends credence to the arguments that the poet-singers of the third version of the song-text must have adopted it from the first version, so as to satisfy the demands of their

immediate communities. And such adoptions, with time, become permanent features of the people or the communities, who might have equally migrated alongside the concerned, text the latter that has endured the tests of time and human management, so as to attain its present shape and status. The shifts in paradigms are also noticeable in the representative use of the elements of nature (the sun, moon, stars, wind and oceans, among others) in furtherance of the praise to Ojí. The enactment of this praise-song text must have been informed by such necessities as situating the song-text in contexts of marriage, death, playing of toys, storytelling among others, as might have been influenced by climate change, migrations and adaptations, among others. The concurrent paradigm shifts in the four versions of "OjíNwá Eke" can also be seen in the deployment of grammatical-linguistics particles in the hatching of the distinct versions of the same poem. In the first poetic text, the lineations which are achieved through the employment of noun phrases (like, "ẹ́zínháízá ụ̀nọ̀-the broom(that sweeps), and, " áchíchá íchá ife" the sponge for washing, among others, are invariably used to coordinate the flow of the rhythms, thus, bringing about the appropriateness of the methodologies of indigenous paradigms in the rendition of Ụkwụ́ání praise song-texts. The same message is delivered to a new audience of the second version, with such adverbial clauses/noun clauses/ noun phrases (like, "Ojízá ụ̀nọ̀"((Whenever)Ojí(sweeps) (the home)), and "Ojíwụ̀ẹ̀sụ̀(Whenever)Ojí(takes) (her bath)), among others. Such linguistic particles serve as models and/or the ideals that guide the patterns of would-be enactments of such a praise-song. But the paradigms, or formulae, or patterns, or gauges to be used in the new milieu must be skillfully shifted by the concerned bards for them to achieve appropriate and effective performance delivery. Such other areas of paradigm shifts in the Ụkwụ́ání oral poetic praise songs include gestures, tones, intonations, repetitions, use of symbolisms, and the deployment of figures of speech, among others, which are all integral parts that shape the actualization of an efficient enterprise in orality.

Conclusion

This paper centers on orality as practiced by bards in the various communities in Ụkwụ́áníland. Its focus is specifically on adaptation of praise song-texts in these same communities in distinct Ụkwụ́áníland, the subsequent shifts in the indigenous paradigms employed for the performance in-situ; and the resultant emergence of distinct variants of same oral praise song-texts in the villages that share borders in the same clime. In the course of the subsequent analyses of the four versions of the traditional oral praise song-text, "OjíNwá Eke", it is established that the variation types of this concerned praise song might have come to existence as a result of the waves of migrations that swept through the Ụkwụ́áníregion, between the 5th and the 15th century (Okolugbo, 3) and the likely situations and adaptations that such uprooted items of Ụkwụ́áníorality must have experienced in their new found climes, so as to stay relevant as pieces of Ụkwụ́ánífolkloristic.

Findings

The findings of this paper include:

- 1) That Ụkwụ́ánías a community in Delta State possesses inexhaustible mines of oral culture and tradition that are yet to be tapped, especially in the area of oral poetry;
- 2) That the Ụkwụ́ánítraditional oral paradigms of praise songs renditions are effective methods of creativities, entertainment, and dissemination of information,
- 3) That migrations theories are also applicable to the discourses on Ụkwụ́áníoral literature, and that adaptations can bring about changes in the paradigms of oral literature of the same region.

Contributions to Knowledge

These include the following:

- 1) The creation of awareness that paradigms and the shifts in paradigms as examined in other fields

of human endeavours, can also be examined in the areas of Ụkwụ́ání Oral Literature

- 2) The exposition of related scholarships on Ụkwụ́ání people and their traditional and cultural heritage, most especially in the area of Ụkwụ́ání oral poetic genre;
- 3) The exposition of how migrations have affected the typologies of Ụkwụ́ání oral literature and the need for further studies on effects of migrations in Ụkwụ́ání land.

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