

Periodization of Igbo Written Literature: Problems and Prospects

Matthias Odo Agugu

matagugu@gmail.com

Department of Igbo, Federal College of Education
Eha-Amufu, Enugu State, Nigeria

Abstract

This paper attempts a survey of the development of Igbo written Literature: from pre-colonial times, through colonial and to the post-colonial. Igbo written literature is defined as 'literature of and from Igbo'. The foundations of Igbo written literature are traced back to the middle of the 18th century. Precolonial literature showcases the traditional and cultural life pattern of the Igbo people. Modern Igbo literature emerged as enactment of Igbo contemporary life, instrument of struggle against oppression, corruption and exploitation by the colonial masters. Unfortunately, more than a couple of centuries on, Igbo literature is still faced with formidable challenges. Even though a great deal of achievement has been recorded since its inception in the 18th century, Igbo literature still has a long way to go in the struggle to fulfill its mission to foster socio-political justice and true liberty for the common Igbo people. In our textual analysis, we adopted the opinions of the three schools (the libertarian, the authoritative and the rationalist) on the debate on definition of Igbo literature.

Introduction

Periodization is the process or study of categorizing the past into discrete, quantified named blocks of time in order to make the study and analysis of literary history easier and workable. The result is descriptive abstractions that provide convenient terms for periods of time with relatively stable characteristics. However, determining the precise beginning and ending to any "period" is often arbitrary. To the extent that history is continuous and ungeneralizable, all systems of periodization are more or less arbitrary. Yet without named periods, however clumsy or imprecise, past time would be nothing more than scattered events without a framework to help us understand them. Some events or short periods of change have such a drastic effect on the cultures they affect that they form a natural break in literary history. These are often marked by the widespread use of both "pre-" and "post-" phrases centered on the event, as in "pre-Reformation" and "post-Reformation", or "pre-colonial" and "post-colonial". Both pre-war and post-war are still understood to refer to World War I and World War II, though at some future point the phrases will need to be altered to make that clear. It is because of the arbitrary nature of the concept of periodization that we have chosen our preferred criteria for classifying Igbo literature into three categories using the brand 'colonial' viz: Pre-colonial Literature, Colonial Literature and Post-colonial Literature.

Definition of Igbo written literature

The development and growth of Igbo literature was not one night's activity. It did not just emerge for it underwent a rigorous journey to arrive. It started with derivative literature that is translations from foreign literatures such as *Arabian Nights*, *Tales From Shakespeare*, *Pilgrims Progress*, Grimm's *Fairy Tales*, etc. Added to these were those religious texts written for the sole purpose of educating Christian adherents in morals and biblical injunctions. Such works were: Ndụ Dinwenụ Anyị, Meri Nne Jesu, Katekizim Nke Okwukwe and some folkloric works. With these, the Igbo were introduced to the reading culture of literature.

According to Nwadike (2008), Igbo written literature is a 20th century-born literature; in fact, it is only 75 years old compared with older European, American or Asian literatures, some of which dated from the 15th, 16th, 17th, or 18th, centuries. It was shaken by the bitterest and the most awful orthography controversy in literary history (1929-1961) which no other literature or language had witnessed. From

1978-1995, Igbo literature underwent a crisis of definition of existence. What is Igbo literature? This academic exercise and acid test triggered off after the publication of Professor Ernest Emenyonu's *The Rise of the Igbo Novel* (1978), an explication de text in which he grouped together novels written in Igbo and those written in English, and called all of them 'Igbo Novels'. Like the Igbo say, what resembles yam is not yam. So, scholars and watchdogs of Igbo Studies reacted and objected to this, and wrote to deny the illegitimate child. In this, three schools of thought emerged: the Libertarian/Emenyonu School; the Authoritative/Ugonna School, and the Rationalist/Nwadike School. The Libertarian School is made up of foreign literature scholars of Igbo nativity, and who argue that the Igbo novel is that novel which carries with it the mark of nationality and traditionalism irrespective of the medium of expression. This means that any literature piece that is written by an Igbo, provided it touches on Igbo culture, that piece, is automatically Igbo literature whether written in Igbo, French, English or German etc. So, in the thought of this group, all the novels of Achebe, Ekwensi, Munonye, Nwapa, Amadi, Nwankwo etc are all Igbo novels. The Authoritative School led by Ugonna is made up of scholars of Igbo and others who argue that as long as any literary piece is not written in or translated into Igbo, that such work does not belong to the pool of Igbo literature irrespective of the nationality and the traditionalism.

The Rationalist School of Nwadike is a late comer into the debate. It emerged after his doctoral research in 1995, and he had to pull out from his former camp, and accused the other two schools of being right and wrong at the same time. He reasoned that for any piece of literature to be really Igbo, such a piece must be written in Igbo and carry the mark of Igbo traditionality. He emphasized that language alone cannot make a novel/drama Igbo when other elements like setting, characters and world view are foreign to Igbo. For the nationality of the author, he argued how, for example, Ekwensi's *Iska*, *Burning Grass*, *The Passport of Mallam Ili* can be called Igbo novels when their settings, characters and world-views are all foreign to Igbo. In the eyes of Nwadike, the nationality of the author does not count in determining the suitability of the Igbo novel. He contends that any national of any nation can write Igbo literature provided the piece so written carries the mark of Igbo language and Igbo tradition.

Scholars of African Literature will recall the decades (1960s and 1970s) of arguments and counter arguments on what should be the language of African literature, a debate raised by a young Nigerian author and critic, Dr. Obi Wali. It seemed that the Igbo spectacle took its cue from here and burned like a harmattan fire. The debate did not stop at the literary level; it went into the language, the variety of Igbo to be used in literary creations. The debate erupted between two academic giants: Emenanjo and Achebe. While the former advocates of Standard Igbo (SI) for all literary creations, books, schools and the media houses, the latter sees the standardization process as an effort in futility, and stresses that authors should be given free hand to write in whatever dialect they deem fit. Achebe (1979) argued thus: We must free our writers to write in whatever dialect they know and speak. Children in schools in particular must be encouraged to write in the dialect they speak. Achebe did not understand the implication of his advocacy, the production of dialect pieces of literature for Ndiigbo. So, we would have Ogidi literature, Asaba literature, Izii literature, Oguta literature, Afikpo literature, Umuahia literature, Owerri literature, Enugu-Ezike literature, etc? How could Achebe, who writes in Standard English advocate for non-standard writing for his people? Who would read them? How would the examination syndicates set their examination questions? It is to be noted that S.O. Mezu (1974) quoting Nwadike (2008) wrote his *Umu Ejima*, a drama in the Emekuku Owerri dialect but till today, the text was not read in schools, talk more of it becoming a recommended text for any examination syndicate. Any language that must be a literary language must submit itself for standardization otherwise, it will not make any headway academically.

Pre-colonial Igbo literature

Literature had existed in Africa and indeed the Igbo land before the coming of the Europeans to the African continent. This literature was basically oral and known as oral tradition. It consisted of materials transmitted by tradition either by word of mouth or by custom and practice. Oral tradition had a definite purpose to instruct the young in the principles of right and wrong. It was directed at the young and the adult alike, and all who moulded opinions and characters using the imagery of non-human, the values of

human etc. The foundation of all Igbo literature is the Igbo oral tradition, sometimes called or known as folklore but more necessary called oral performance. The Igbo oral literature embodies the literary aspects of Igbo oral performances such as folk sayings, folktales, riddles, proverbs, prayers including incantations, histories, legends, myths, drama, story and festivals. From this grows the roots of Igbo life, its culture and its world-view.

Nwadike (2002) in recognizing the oral nature of Igbo literature in the pre-colonial period has this to say “Before the advent of Christian missions and contact with western civilization through whose influence and effort Igbo language was reduced into writing, Igbo language was an unwritten one. Like the language, the rich corpus of Igbo literatures, folktales, myths, legends, anecdotes, riddles, drama, songs and poems were orally transmitted from generation to generation, from parents to child. Because the language, the literature and the culture of the people were one and same, no institution was set apart for teaching them to the young and the strangers.

Contemporary Igbo novels, poetry or drama is the extension of Igbo oral literature. A major source of inspiration and a model for the modern Igbo writer, is the Igbo traditional artist who was both a technician and a visionary. For the modern Igbo writer, with his languages from the past, cannot be oblivious of the deep sense of inviolability and commitment which characterised his predecessors, whether narrator, carver, sculptor, spokesman, orator, Chief priest, or drummer. Such men thought of themselves as dedicated to their craft and duties, and each bound, therefore to use his medium to express his restless sensibility to the utmost that his skill and energy would permit. He knew his society-its pace, its pulse, its dreams and its realities-and through his art, he sought to provide some fulfillment for his audience.

Let us at this juncture point out that the traditional Igbo society was not a literate society. Our people did not derive their entertainment from books or films. Imagination was developed through oral narratives. Logic was inculcated through proverbs and riddles. Good speaking habits were learnt from experienced practitioners who embellished their language with imagery, folk idiom and witticisms. Though these, the young had to learn to appreciate the basic ideas of life, their people’s fundamental values, their systems of personal relationship and their sense of humour.

The pre-colonial Igbo literature was dominated by folktales, its themes unlike the present Igbo written literatures were more rooted-in morals thereby having themes like: obedience, strength, truthfulness, wisdom, bravery, agility, seriousness. The traditional artists had a clear conception of his immediate society, its problems and its needs and when performing for his audience, he reflected these needs, and addressed himself to specific human problems. These were projected through the ethical formulas in his tales, a direction for his society and the individuals caught in the dilemmas of humanity. Virtually every knowledge appertaining to the Igbo traditional society were orally preserved within the period.

Because we have always understood the periodization of Igbo literature from the perspective of the discourse within the period rather than the year of publication, we have to consider the following Igbo literature texts as belonging to the Igbo pre-colonial literature, because they showcased the culture and pattern of life of the Igbo people in the pre-colonial era:

- Egudu’s *Calabash of Wisdom*
- Iroaganachi’s *Okamgba*
- D. N. Achara’s *Ala Bingo*
- Qgbalu’s *Obiefuna*, *Ebubedike*, *Uwaezuoke* and *Obiechina* on the growth and development of a traditional Igbo man
- Anelechi’s *Aku Fechaa* on the myth of Igbo deity
- Odunke’s *Ojaadili* on over ambition and a host of others as there are no traces of image of modernity in these literary texts.

These evidences lend credence to Uzochukwu’s view in his thesis that Igbo written literature is an extension of Igbo oral literature.

Colonial Igbo literature

Colonial literature is the writing concerned with the colonial perceptions and experiences, written mainly by indigenes during colonial times. The African works best known in the West from the period of colonization and the slave trades are primarily slave narratives.

Controversially, perhaps, colonial literature therefore includes literature written during the colonial period, even if it did not make direct reference to the colonial matters. Colonial literature is that literature reflecting a colonial ethos, usually lacks a precise definition. In general, texts described as colonial literature are taken to be those that exhibit a tinge of local colonial colour, or feature a colonial motif. *Ala Bingo* is also a colonial literature by period of publication. We are going to use only two texts: Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Nwana's *Omenuko* to give example of Igbo colonial literature.

In the settings of *Things Fall Apart* and *Omenuko*, there are two identifiable settings thus: A pre-colonial community free from any external influence and fully democratic and a colonial society dominated by European values. The theme of *Omenuko* is offence and expiation while that of *Things Fall Apart* is the disintegration of the traditional society resulting from the influence of the colonial religion and government. There are other sub-themes in *Things Fall Apart* like love, manliness, and survival. The sub-themes in *Omenuko* are recolonization, slavery, merchandizing, sojourn and return. The two works x-rayed to the reader the social changes in the traditional Igbo society brought about by colonization. The authors present protagonist that rose from a humble beginning. Okonkwo (*TFA*) and Omenuko (*OMK*) were ruled respectively by the same passion to become successful, powerful and rich. In the case of Achebe's the very gods whom Okonkwo strives to obey and serve drive him out of his father land because of the inadvertent killing of a clansman just when he is ready to acquire the highest title in the land, marry his daughters off to deserving suitors and initiate his sons into their first manhood groups, Okonkwo goes into exile in his maternal home called Mbanta. All the sins he committed were against the earth goddess - the killing of the son of Ogbuefi Ezeudu and a final abomination of taking his own life.

On the other hand, Nwana's *Omenuko* sells clansman into slavery for his own selfish interest. He goes into exile in Ndimgborogwu. Omenuko is made to suffer remorse for his crime then, appeases the gods, his land and people like the prodigal son, he realizes the enormity of his sin and goes home penitent. He is reconciled with his people and there is general jubilation.

A close observation of *Things Fall Apart* and Peter Nwana's *Omenuko* shows that their setting effectively promote the themes of transition. In these text, both authors deal with character who live in a native environment and culture both Achebe and Nwana have adopted a similar pattern in setting because both authors are concerned with the theme of transition. The two major setting identifiable are shown above.

Omenuko is set in Igbo land in well known places. All the towns mentioned are familiar and still exist uptill to day, for example Mgborogwu on the present day Aguata area in Anambra State. Emenyonu (1978: 34) is of the view that Omenuko is sett in Okigwi one of the densely populated areas in Imo State. Other towns mentioned where Omenuko passed and stayed for trading such as Umuduru Nso-oyo, Umulolo, Bende, Uzuakoli and Ezinachi are all familiar places in Abia and Imo States. Awka where Omenuko received his warrant of office is in Anambra State. So also *Things Fall Apart* as it is in equally set in Igbo land especially in Umuofia and Mbanta (unknown places). According wren (1980:1) *Things Fall Apart* is set in the land where the author was born raised and educate.

Both *Things Fall Apart* and Peter Nwana's *Omenuko* took place in what may be termed mixed periodization that is between the pre-colonial and colonial when the Igbo people were still in dark and when the white man with their religion and colonial government had just made their appearance. In *Things Fall Apart* for example, the white man's very existence and physical appearance still belong to the realms of rumour and grim of humour. This emerges clearly in the discussion of variation in customs during marriage of Obierika's daughter. Obierika compared the rumour of which mass existence to the story of white man who they say are white as this piece of chalk. And this white man they say have no toes (chapter 8:51-52) at this point no one from Umuofia had yet seen a white man. It could be safely

assumed that the events reported in both novels took place when Christianity was just appearing at the horizon because ritual murder, killing of twins and slave trade were still been practiced. At this point, Igbo custom and tradition had not been tainted to a large extent by European civilization and influence. About Omenuko (Emenyonu 1978:34) affirms “The novel is set in the last few decades of the nineteenth century, but the most important action took place in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Omenuko is said to have returned to his home town at the end of the novel in 1918. The

story of *Things Fall Apart* starts when Igbo society is on soiled and virtually free from any external influence. The political structure is clearly defined and everybody is subject to the law of the land and impartially treated. Democracy was at its best in practice. On this, Wren (1980) has this to say: within the clan, the political organization is democratic, there are no Chiefs and Kings, important decision were made by clan assembly while major internal conflicts are dealt with the ancestral egwugwu thus: no one person has authority much in excess of his fellows. However, towards the end of the work there is marked erosion of this political structure by the colonial authority. Wren (1980:3) asserts that the stability of the order among Eastern Igbo was profoundly shaking by the coming of the European colonial power. The checks and balances which the communities had evolved over the centuries were rendered useless when the district commissioner and British protocol officers laid down the law without understanding the tradition and custom.

In Omenuko, the political life of the people is more or less organized in the same way as in *Things Fall Apart* with everybody, elders and priests participating in the art of governance. After the first few chapters in *Things Fall Apart*, European colonial administration ushered in with native courts, warrant chiefs, court clerks and court messengers interpreters actively participating in dispensing law and justice and maintaining order. For instance, it is the white district officer that issued the warrant of office to Omenuko at the death of Eze Mgborogwu on behalf of the young Obiefuna, the son and heir to Eze Mgborogwu. It is the same district commissioner (nwa dc) that warned the people of Orumba na isii of the dire consequences of attacking Omenuko and his people at Ikpa oyi. Below are the colonial images in the study texts: DC ukwu, DC nta, Paymaster, warrant, chief, Monday, morny Sir, pound, shilling, ulo mkporo

Post-colonial Igbo literature

Post-colonial literature is generally defined as that which critically or subversely scrutinizes the colonial relationship. It is a body of literary writing that responds to the interlectual discourse of European colonization in a given society, example ‘the Igbo nation’. Post-colonial literature addresses the problems and consequences of decolonization of a country, a nation, especially the political and cultural independence of formerly subjugated colonial people. Igbo post-colonial literature exist in prose, poetry and drama forms. According to Nwadike (2008), The beginning of Igbo written literature, started with Omenuko. In this epoch the Igbo through the instrumentality of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures (IILAC) took their fate into their own hands, and produced literature. Apart from Omenuko which falls in the realm of realism, the others that followed-Ala Bingo, Osondu, Elelia Na Ihe O mere, Ije Odumodu Jere were fantasies which could not adequately x-ray the social problems of the Igbo society and reveal and delineate human characters. During this era, there were not more than 10 pieces of literature and which all were in prose. He went further to lament on the effects of the Nigeria/Biafra war on Igbo written literature thus:

The Vacuum Period (1967-1972): This is a very short period to be called an epoch in the history of literature but it is unique and important. This was the War Period in Igbo life - the Nigeria/Biafra War - when no single book, literature and language alike appeared in the market. War periods in history are not friendly to the arts and to the people. The greatest concern here and now is the preservation of life. It is true that the War ended in 1970 but its effects lingered to 1972 during which time Igbo people engaged in the rehabilitation of themselves, the

reconstruction of their broken and damaged home 38 and social structures, and the reconciliation with their war-separated country men and women. Within these years, 1967 to 1972, Igbo education was dormant, and except those outside the Eastern Region, no one could have been engaged in academic pursuit.

It was after the war, that a good number of Igbo people swung into writing their own literature in all the genres, taking a world-guess of themes and subject matters, projecting Igbo world-view: their triumphs and failures, their experiences and expectations, their joys and sorrows, their beautiful and ugly, their beliefs and disbeliefs, their exploits and intrigues. Below are some post-colonial Igbo literatures:

- Ubesie's *Ukwa Ruu Oge Ya* on Nigerian/Biafran war experiences
- Ubesie's *Juo Obinna* on the above topic
- Nwadike's *Okwe Agbaala* on examination malpractice

Below are some of the works, their publishers and years of publication as culled from Nwadike (2002) and (2014).

Year	Author	Drama	Publishers
1974	A.B Chukuezi	<i>Udo Ka Mma</i>	Oxford
1974	S.O Mezu	<i>umu Ejima</i>	Black Academy Press
1977	B.I.N Osuagwu	<i>Nwa Ngwii Puo Eze</i>	UPC
1977	I.E Okoma	<i>Obidiya</i>	Oxford
1977	Odunke Artists	<i>ojaadili</i>	Oxford
1978	B.I.N Osuagwu	<i>Egwuregwu Igbo abuo</i>	Macmillan
1979	A.B Chukuezi	<i>Akwa Nwa</i>	AUP
1979	W. Eneore	<i>Echi Di Ime</i>	Macmillan
1979	C. Gbujie	<i>Oguamalam</i>	Macmillan
1979	J.C Maduekwe	<i>Otu Mkpisiaka</i>	Longman
1980	A.B Chukuezi	<i>Aku Fechara</i>	UPL
1980	G. Echibima	<i>Ugomma</i>	Evans
1980	K. Okpi	<i>Obi Nwanne</i>	Evans
1980	G.O Onyekaonwu	<i>Nwata Rie Awọ</i>	UPC
1981	M.J Okafo	<i>ukoji</i>	UPC
1982	G.O Onyekaonwu	<i>oku Xzx Daa Ibube</i>	Longman
1982	W. Eneore	<i>Oji Isi Kote Ebu</i>	Longman
1985	G.O Onyekaonwu	<i>Erii Mara Ngwugwu</i>	UPL
1986	G.O Onyekaonwu	<i>Uwa Nto</i>	Africana Fep
1986	Odunke Artists	<i>onukwube</i>	UPL
1986	M.U Anukwu	<i>Eziokwu bu Ndu</i>	Cecta
1987	T.O Okechukwu	<i>Onye Chi Kere Eze</i>	Cecta
1987	S.N Agomoh	<i>Uchenna</i>	UPC
1987	G.O Onyekaonwu	<i>oku Ghara Ite</i>	Iselberg
1988	O.D Ibe	<i>Uwa Di Ogbu</i>	Kawuriz & Manilas
1989	I.U Nwadike	<i>Onye Kpaa Nku Ahuhu</i>	Kawuriz & Manilas
1989	C. Anyasodo	<i>Ezinne</i>	Longman
1989	O.B Mogbogu	<i>Adaaku</i>	Pacific
1990	I.U Nwadike	<i>Omume Onye Na-Edu Ya</i>	Pacific
1991	I.U Nwadike	<i>Okwe Agbaala</i>	Macmillan
1991	G.I Nwaozuzu	<i>Ome Ihe Jide ofo</i>	Macmillan
1991	A. Ubani	<i>Ojimba</i>	UPL

1992	I.U Nwadike	<i>Nwata Bulie Nna Ya Elu</i>	Pacific
1993	C.N Chile	<i>A Gbachaa ọsọ A Guo Mailu</i>	Metropolitan
1995	L.N Okoro & D.N. Ekpuchie	<i>Oji Ihe Nwata</i>	Charismatic Forum
1995	B.N Igbokwe	<i>Ogbu Mmadu Ndu na-agu</i>	Ihem Davis
1996	G. Okeahialam	<i>Ihe Onye Metara</i>	Ihem Davis
1996	C.N. Chile	<i>Chi Bu ọgwu M</i>	Metropolitan
1998	P.J. Ezech (Otughari)	<i>Filamint Na Ndi Otu Ya</i>	Noble
1998	G.I Nwaozuzu	<i>Ajo Obi</i>	Format
1998	D.N Ekpuchie & B.N Igbokwe	<i>Akuebiowu</i>	Studioart
1999	O. Azubuike	<i>ihxnanya</i>	Joga
2001	Anozie & Igbeaku	<i>onwu Na –Egbu Nwa Nkita</i>	Filladu
2001	G.N Echebima	<i>Nkeiruka</i>	Heinemann
2002	N. Okediadi	<i>Ihe Onye Metere</i>	Unik Oriental Printers Ltd.
2003	S.N. Okafo	<i>Ndu Di Na Nti</i>	Hybrid Publishers Ltd
2003	J.C. Onuora	<i>oguguo</i>	Patnomic Printers& Publishers Ltd
2003	J.C. Onuora	<i>Qchq Ihe Ukwu</i>	Patnomic
2006	E.N. Chukwudile& I.G. Chukwudile	<i>Onye Chi Mere Eze</i>	Thonik Prints
2006	J.I. Obidiebube	<i>onodu Ugo Adighi Egbe Mma</i>	Lincel Producers
2006	J.C. Onuora	<i>Ihe Egbe Muru</i>	Patmonic Producers Ltd
2006	M.O.Agugu	<i>Ihe Agwo Muru</i>	Fidgina Global Books
2006	S.O. Agwuna	<i>Iko Onye Ije Ama...</i>	Lincel Publishers
2008	J.C. Obienyem	<i>Afere</i>	Samuels Publishing Co.
2008	O.C. Ihejirika	<i>Ndudo Nnete Na Azuanuka</i>	P.C.C.& P Ltd.
2009	C Okeke	<i>Nkita Nyara Akpa Nsi Agwu N'ohia</i>	Brystevand Publishers
2009	G.I. Nwaozuzu	<i>Eruru</i>	Format Publisher
2009	J.C.Okeke	<i>Amaghi Igbo Asu Oyibo</i>	Edumail Publications Ltd.
2009	J.I.Obidiebube	<i>Akpiri Richie uzọ...</i>	Auschaki Inter'l Publishers
2009	J.C. Okeke	<i>Ihe Chi Fotere</i>	Lincel
2010	S.N. Okafo	<i>Aka Ekpuchi Eziokwu</i>	Elites Publishers
2010	R.M. Ozoagu	<i>Agwo Bara N'unu</i>	Fidgina
2010	S.O. Agwuna	<i>Oyoyo Chi M</i>	Midfield
2011	J.J.C. Dike	<i>Mmiri Zochaa Anyanwu Awa</i>	Pacific Publishers
2011	I Ogochukwu	<i>A Karusia Ngene...</i>	Format
2011	A.I. Onyekere	<i>Azi Hu Aku</i>	Lincel
2012	J.I. Obiebube	<i>Onye ulo Egbughi Onye...</i>	Lincel
2012	N.B.Obodo	<i>Ukpana Nti Ike</i>	Format
2012	N.R.Ezejesi	<i>Nwadiugwu</i>	Pacific
2013	J.J.C. Dike	<i>Ukpana Nti Ike</i>	Pacific Publishers
2013	C.O. Ihejekwu	<i>Nku Onye Kpatara...</i>	Trumpeters Concept
Year	Author	Novels	Publishers
1960	I.C Maduekwe	<i>Omekam</i>	Ofomata Press
1963	Obi Wali	<i>Ngozi Dili Chukwu</i>	Osu Press
1964	J.U.T Nzeako	<i>okuko Agbasaa Okpesi</i>	Nelson

1965	J.U.T Nzeako	<i>Chi Ewere Ehihie Jie</i>	UPC
1965	C.N Ugochukwu	<i>Ebubedike na Igwekaala</i>	Daystar Press
1972	F.C Ogbalu	<i>Dimkpa Taa Akụ</i>	UPC
1973	T.U Ubesie	<i>ụkwa Ruo Oge Ya o daa</i>	Oxford
1973	T.U Ubesie	<i>Isi Akwụ Dara n'Ala</i>	Oxford
1973	J.U.T Nzeako	<i>Nkọlị</i>	Longman
1974	J.U.T Nzeako	<i>Aka Ji Akụ</i>	Longman
1974	T.U Ubesie	<i>Mmiri oku E Ji Egbu Mbe</i>	Longman
1974	P.N Munonye	<i>Aghiriigha</i>	UPC
1974	U. Odilora	<i>okpa Akụ Eri Eri</i>	UPC
1974	J.C Obienyem	<i>Udoka Nwa oquadimma</i>	UPC
1975	F.C Ogbalu	<i>Ebubedike</i>	UPC
1975	J.C Maduekwe	<i>Dinta</i>	Oxford
1975	L.N Oraka	<i>Ahubara Eze Ama</i>	Oxford
1975	T.U Ubesie	<i>Ukpaka Okpoko Buuru</i>	Oxford
1975	T.U Ubesie	<i>Ukpaka Miji Onye Ubiam</i>	Nwamife
1976	T.U Ubesie	<i>Juọ Obinna</i>	Oxford
1976	F.C Ogbalu	<i>uwaezuoke</i>	UPC
1978	J.C Maduekwe	<i>Uru Nwa</i>	Longman
1979	J. Onwuchekwa	<i>Chinaagorom</i>	Lantern Books
1980	N. Obodo	<i>Uwadiogwu</i>	Longman
1980	J.U.T Nzeako	<i>Emecheta</i>	Longman
1981	J.U.T Nzeako	<i>Juochi</i>	Macmillan
1981	F.A Ihentuge	<i>Isi Kote Ebu</i>	Macmillan
1983	N. Obodo	<i>Onye Chi Ya Kwu n'Azụ</i>	Evans
1984	D.C Maduelosi	<i>Okoromba</i>	Cecta
1986	C. Ogbonna	<i>Uchendu</i>	UPL
1988	R.C Anene	<i>Mkpuru Onye Kuru</i>	Etukoku
1990	Ezeilo & Maduelosi	<i>Apunnaanwu</i>	Kawuriz & Manilla
1990	C. Okoronkwo	<i>Agha Erila M</i>	Readon
1993	O.N Osuchukwu	<i>Ugochi</i>	Totan
1994	C.E Ofomata	<i>Anu Gbaa Ajo oso</i>	Format
1996	C.E Ofomata	<i>Ihe Onye Metere</i>	Format
1997	C.E Ofomata	<i>Achowwa Isi ochu</i>	Format
1997	I.Okorji	<i>Chukwukadihia</i>	Udac
1998	I.U Nwadike	<i>Adaeze</i>	Pacific
1999	C.E Ofomata	<i>Ihe ojoo Gbaa Afọ</i>	Format
1999	C. Ike	<i>Anu Ebu Nwa</i>	UPC
1999	Osuagwu & Nwana	<i>Omeokachie Omenuko</i>	Ark
2000	C.E Ofomata	<i>Dibia Na-Agwọ Otoro</i>	Format
2000	C.E Ofomata	<i>Onye Chi Ya Akwatughi</i>	Format
2001	Epuchie & Obiechere	<i>Chinenyeze</i>	Pacific
2001	B.I.N Osuagwu	<i>Nkem Ejee America</i>	Ark
2001	C.E Ofomata	<i>Ugonna</i>	Format
2002	L.C. Okoro	<i>Ndidi Amaka</i>	Oseprey Publication
2003	J.C. Onuora	<i>Chinasa</i>	Patmonic Printers & Publicers Ltd.
2005	N.Anierobi	<i>Uwa A Emika</i>	Holyfield Press

2005	E.N.Chukwudile	<i>Nke Onye Metere O Na-Eche Ya</i>	Thonik Prints
2005	I.U. Nwadike	<i>Uwa Bu Agha</i>	Format
2006	I.U. Onyechi	<i>Onye Ije Awele</i>	Olitex
2006	J.C. Onuora	<i>Akaraka</i>	Patmonic Publicers Ltd
2006	A. Onoko	<i>Onye Kpara Nku Ahuhu</i>	Okehsun
2006	K.O. Uzochukwu	<i>Ekwe Ekwe Na-Ekwe N'Ute Ekwere</i>	Fidgina Global Books
2006	O. Ndubuisi	<i>Aturu Ga-Epu Mpi</i>	New Generation Books
2007	Kris Agbede	<i>Ogwu</i>	Fidgina Global Books
2007	J.I. Obidiebube	<i>Chukwu Kwuo</i>	Lincel Publishers
2007	C.Okeke	<i>o Di Egu</i>	Snap Press Ltd.
2008	J.I. Obidiebube	<i>onwu Egbughi Ji E Ji Chujo Aja</i>	Lincel
2008	Mgbaegbu Et Al	<i>Ezindu</i>	Beams Expression Ltd
2008	T. Nzeako	<i>A.Amadike</i>	Varsity Publishers
2008	C Okeke	<i>Ndi Nwuru Anw Na-Aga Ije</i>	Charisma Publishers
2008	C.U. Agbara	<i>Nwata Guzoro oto Gwujie Ji</i>	Pacific
2009	K Ngozi	<i>Uwa Adighi Ka E Chere</i>	Paschal Communications
2009	C.U. Agbara	<i>Mmanwu Kote Okwu</i>	Pacific
2009	C.U. Agbara	<i>Opi Dufuo Dike</i>	Pacific Publishers Ltd
2009	C.E. Ofomata	<i>Jide M Aka</i>	Format
2009	C.E. Ofomata	<i>Bia Be Anyi</i>	Format
2010	D.O. Onyejekwe	<i>Nwata Hu N'Anyia O Kwe</i>	Kawuriz &Manilas
2010	M.O.Agugu	<i>Eze Nnunu</i>	Matag Educational Resource
2010	A.I. Aguiyi	<i>Aka Ekpuchi onwa</i>	Midfield
2011	N.R. Ezejesi	<i>Omekiitoro</i>	Pacific Publishers
2011	I.S. Osondu	<i>A Chowa Ijide Oke Ehi...</i>	Fidgina
2011	I.S. Osondu	<i>Ukwu Kporo Izaga</i>	Fidgina Global Books
2011	J.U.Uzoala	<i>Agwa oma Na-Amata Mkpuru oma</i>	Varsity
2011	S.D.Agwuna	<i>Nwata Kpata Ego</i>	Midfield
2012	I.C. Nwankwo	<i>A Machie Uwa Jigji</i>	Re-Opech Nig.Ltd.
2012	L.O.Anyachochukwu	<i>Uzo Di Njo(A Gaa Ya Otu Ugboro)</i>	Fidgina Global Books
2012	C Okeke	<i>Mmadu Ka A Na-Arja</i>	UNN Press Ltd.
2012	N. Chukwumezie	<i>Onye Chi Mere Eze</i>	Victoria Press
2013	I.S. Osondu		Fidgina Books
2013	O.M. Ogbonnaya		Perfect Image Publishers

Year	Author	Poetry	Publishers
1971	Egudu & Nwoga	<i>Poetic Heritage: Igbo Tradition Verse</i>	Nwankwo-Ifejika
1975	R.M Ekechukwu	<i>Akpa Uche</i>	UPL
1978	F.C Ogbalu	<i>Mbem na Egu Igbo</i>	Macmillan
1979	J.C Maduekwe	<i>Nka Okwu</i>	Longman
1979	J.N Onwuchekwa	<i>Akpaala Okwu</i>	Lantern
1979	J.C Obienyem	<i>Mbem Igbo</i>	UPC
1980	N. Ugonna	<i>Abu na Egwuregwu dinaala Igbo</i>	Longman
1982	Achebe & Udechukwu	<i>Akaweta</i>	Okike
1984	J.A Umeh	<i>okponku Abu</i>	Cecta

1984	F.C Ogbalu	<i>Igbo Ụyokọ Mbem</i>	UPC
1984	E.N Emenanjo	<i>Ogwumagala</i>	UPL
1985	C.O Acholonu	<i>Abu Ụmụ Primari</i>	UPL
1985	S. Uzochukwu	<i>Mbem Akwamozu</i>	UPC
1985	J. Ogu	<i>Uka Ndu</i>	UPC
1986	A.K Obieroze	<i>Ekpe Nna</i>	Pacific
1986	Ezeuko & Anowai	<i>Echiche</i>	Etukokwu
1988	A.B Chukuezi	<i>Ako bu Ndu</i>	Longman
1989	G.O Onyekaonwu	<i>Uche bu Afa</i>	UPL
1990	I.U Nwadike	<i>Nri Uche</i>	Totan
1992	I.U Nwadike	<i>Mbido Abu</i>	Pacific
1992	Ogbulogo & Okoro	<i>Omenka</i>	Logomedia
1992	S. Uzochukwu	<i>Abu Akwamozu</i>	Pacific
1996	Obike, Onuegbu & Nnabuihe	<i>Ekenegwuregwu</i>	Navic
1997	C.E Ofomata	<i>o di m N'obi</i>	Format
1999	C.E Ofomata	<i>Echiche M</i>	Format
1999	O.A Agu	<i>Nnunu Mgbama</i>	Cecta
2000	O.C Ihejirika	<i>Aka Tijie</i>	Onibonoje
2001	R.E Obakhena	<i>Olisa Amaka</i>	Claverianum
2001	C.E Ofomata	<i>Okwu Ndu</i>	Format
2004	C.E. Ofomata	<i>Arima</i>	Format
2004	S.O. Agwuna	<i>Echiche Amamihe</i>	Lincel Publishers
2005	C.C. Anozie	<i>Uche Bu Akpa</i>	Varsity Press
2005	E.N. Chukwudile	<i>Nke</i>	
2006	J.C. Onuora	<i>Nchikota Echiche M</i>	Patmonic P & P Ltd
2006	Sam Uzochukwkwu	<i>Abu odinala Igbo Maka omumunwa</i>	Samorient Publishers
2007	B.U Ezeibe	<i>ima Mma Chineke</i>	New Age Press Ltd.
2009	I Ogochukwu	<i>onatarara Chi</i>	Format Publishers
2009	C onyeji	<i>itu Agwa Ka Agu</i>	Fourth Dimension Publishers
2009	C.E. Ofomata	<i>Obi ocha Umuka</i>	Format
2009	E.S. Ikeokwe & M.C. Onyejiekwe	<i>Uche Bu Ahia</i>	Format
2010	C.G. Okoye	<i>Mbem Olu oma</i>	Kawuriz & Manilas
2010	D.O. Onyejebu	<i>Nwata Hu N'anya O Kwe</i>	Kawuriz & Manilas
2010	P.A. Ifeagwazi & G.N. Oranaekwu	<i>Abu Na Egwu Ndi Igbo</i>	Mid-Field Publicahers Ltd
2011	I.S. Osondu	<i>Ako Na Uche Uwa</i>	Fidgina Global Books
2012	I.S. Osondu	<i>odibendi Igbo</i>	Fidgina Global Books
2012	I.S. Osondu	<i>Muta Uwa</i>	Fidgina Global Books
2013	P.A. Ifeagwazi	<i>Nhazi Uche</i>	Casterman Nig.Ltd.

Problems and prospects

For Igbo literature to make giant strides it deserves, every Igbo scholar or person has to go into writing literature texts in Igbo, about the Igbo and for the Igbo.

With the current increase in the number of higher institutions, the study of Igbo is also on the increase, thereby turning out more Igbo experts that are expected to be writing Igbo literatures.

For Igbo literature to make the giant strides it deserves, let tertiary institutions in Igboland make the study of Igbo language and literature a compulsory course in their General Studies just as the Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, had done.

For Igbo literature to forge ahead, let the Igbo people buy and read their literature books so that these books do not become only school textbooks recommended solely for examinations.

For Igbo literature to make the giant stride it deserves, let Igbo literature be studied as a separate course especially in the secondary schools and at the colleges of education levels.

Summary

We have been able to explain with examples, the Igbo pre-colonial literature, colonial literature and post-colonial literature and have offered some useful suggestions on the problems and prospects of Igbo literatures. It was not easy to lay hand on some desired texts which should have helped for indepth analysis.

References

- Achebe, C. (1959). *Things fall apart*. London: Heinemann
- Bello, S.(nd). *Emerging Perspectives On The Origins, Functions And Consequences Of Ethnocentrism In African Affairs*. Kano: Arada
- Bentley, J. H. (1996). Cross-Cultural Interaction And Periodization In World History. *American Historical Review*
- Emenyonu, E. (1978). *The rise and fall of the Igbo novel*. Ibadan:Oxford University Press
- Lawrence, B. (1996) (Ed). *The Challenge Of Periodization: Old Paradigms And New Perspectives*
- Nwadike, I. U.(2008).*Igbo studies: From the plantations of west indies to the forestlands of West Africa, 1766-2008*. UNN
- Nwanna, P (1963). *Omenukọ*. Ibadan: Longman
- Palmer Eustace (1981). *An introduction to African Literature*.London: Zed books Ltd.
- Wren, R.M.(1980). *Notes On Things Fall Apart*. England: Longman