



from I Dance Ala-Igbo

... I was born with a dance.
That's the dance of my heartbeat.
I love you when you dance your own dance.
Why will you not love me when I dance mine ?

Everyone is born with a dance.
And no one can dance the dance that is not his,
Except on borrowed feet.
How come other men dance their dances
But do not let me dance my dance ?

My dance is Ala-Igbo
The land where the Sun begins to smile
On Lugard's discordant notes.
Hoping that one day,
Men will know and uphold the difference
Between the face of the rising sun
And the face of the setting sun.

And I proclaim my dance day and night
For a city set on a hilltop cannot be hidden.
Dance what you like.
Dance to the gallery.

I dance Ala-Igbo.
The only dance that sets my life free.

Chikwendu Anyanwu (b. 1964)

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si na Egwu m bu Ala-Igbo

... E nwere m egwu ejiri mụọ m
Ọ na-adaba n'egwu obi m.
Ị na-agba egwu ị, ọ na-atọ m uto
Gịni mere m na-agba nkem, ọ naghị atọ ị uto?

Onye Ọbula nwere egwu ejiri mụọ ya
Ụkwu ańụ́tara ańụ́ta ka eji agba egwu onye ọzọ.
Gịni mediri ndi ọzọ na-agba egwu ha
Ha anaghị ekwe m ka m gbaa nke m?

Egwu m bu Ala-Igbo!
Ebe anwu si amalite
Na-achiri egwu agwara-ogwa Lugard ochi
N'olile anya na otu ubochi
Ndi mmadu ga-ahụ ihe di iche
N'ihu anwu na awara awara
N'ihu anwu na-ada ada.

Ma a na m ekwuputa egwu m ututu na abali
Makana obodo aruru n'elu ugwu, adighi ezo ya ezo.
Gbawa egwu nke soro gi
Gbawa ka ajawa gi

Ihe m na-agba bu Ala-Igbo
Egwu na-atoghapu m, ka m nwere onwe m!

*translated into his Igbo mother tongue
by the author*