

SILENT VOICES

*Compilation of Young Poetic voices from
Nigeria and Zimbabwe in honour of the Late
Professor Chinua Achebe*



More Blessing Size Nwakanma Chika Chivimbiso Sava Dauda Muideen Lanre Ayo Oyeku
Marlon Macebo Magwaza Anthony Edmond John Dawan Favour Bakare Islamiyat Kemi
Joseph N'Fime Shingira Glen Chikaya Kope Aghahowa Eghonwachi Jacobs
Okun-ola Paul Abiola Scrah Ngoka Obioma Ruth Marisa Benson Jimoh Ibrahim
Oluoba David N. Ubio Daniel Obu Amarachi Udechukwu M. Ezechukwu Azuonye
Akpah Bartholomew Chizoba Bada Yusuf Amoo Peggie Shangwa Elopeth Chimedza
Andrew Kondosoo Labe Fubaraibi Anari Benstowe Rudorwashe Kanukamwe Maduchisom David

Nigeria/Zimbabwe Literary Exchange Project

Facilitated by:

Society of Young Nigerian Writers

&

Girl Child Creativity Concept, Zimbabwe

Compiled and Edited by:

Mbizo Chirasha and Wole Adedoyin

DEDICATION

**This publication is dedicated to the Late Professor
Chinua Achebe – Africa’s Best Story Teller**



CHINUA ACHEBE

Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe’s early works explore the effects of European influence on African cultures. In the early 1970s he turned his attention to the political strife in his country.

ZIMBABWE

1. If I was your lover by More Blessing Size
2. Bliss by Chivimbiso Gava
3. In the Name of Democracy and Revolution by
Marlon Macebo Magwaza
4. Garbage Farm – by More Blessing Size
5. I remember by Dawan Favour
6. Be Dominant Girlchild by Shingira Glen Chikaya
7. Where the Devil Lives – The Rain makers Call
by Scrah
8. Fiction by Marisa Benson
9. A Human Being Died Last Night by Rudorwashe
Kanukamwe
10. Tears of my Sentiments by Rudorwashe
Kanukamwe
11. Freedom Trapped by Peggie Shangwa
12. Bliss by Elspeth Chimedza
13. Rythms of Father's Drum by Fubaraibi Anari
Benstowe
14. Hope by Elspeth Chimedza
15. I Cry by Peggie Shangwa
16. Pregnant Babies by Furaraibi Anari Benstowe

17. Footnote to Marechra by Anesu Katerere
18. What Democracy by Marlon Macebo Magwaza
19. Poet by Anesu Katerere
20. This Generation of Genius by More Blessing
Size

NIGERIA

1. How come you are African? By Nwakanma
Chika
2. Why Africa? By Dauda Muideen Lanre
3. The Re-emergence by Anthony Edmond John
4. Buy me Heaven by Bakare Islamiyat Kemi
5. Cavity Wall by Joseph N'Time
6. Nkiruka, the Maid by Hope Aghahowa
7. Chaotic Dance by Egbonwachi Oluchukwu
Jacobs
8. A Stolen Gain by Okun-ola Paul Abiola
9. A Champion by Ngoka Obioma Ruth
10. Good People.... Arise by Jimoh Ibrahim
11. Our Treasure Pot by Ovuoba David N.
12. Voice of Africa by Ubio Daniel Obu
13. Whisper Not Much by Amarachi Udechukwu M.

14. No More Fears, No More Extortions by
Ezechukwu Azuonye
15. Haram by Akpah Bartholomew Chizoba
16. Ngelenge by Fubaraibi Anari Benstowe
17. Mother Black, Scented Woman by Maduchisom
Kingdavid
18. Reeds on the Rivers by Ayo Oyeku
19. Voice in the Sun by Andrew Aondosoo Labe
20. Poverty by Bada Yusuf Amoo

FORWARD

The frothing pot of talent Silent Voices reflect the successes , roses , thorns ,love , delay , freedom and disfreedom by Young African Voices with some yearning for delayed freedom , decayed democracy ,forgotten histories , romance and political crap in the heaps , anthills , corners and pastures of African Continent . There is more of the richness of the black African Continent shared by the writing enthusiasm of great sons and daughters of the West/South of the motherland.

“When your mind in loneliness staid

Your stomach virgin of food since morning

And the bones of your manuscript

Broken anew

Married to your calling you remained”

These three verses by Anesu Katerere , a young vibrant poet from Zimbabwe depict issues of social quandary and injustices which is common in present young

poets . The ability to display talent by Anesu and poets of his generation in this anthology is a true justification on how Africa is developing in creative writing endeavors. Such voices must be heard and felt hence the Silent Voices Anthology.

Madu Chisom Kingdavid

“Mother black, matron of the ten million hyenas and poplar!

*The strings of my two violins are asking that you should
Open your eyes, that i may pluck suns out to brighten
My future long hidden in the pant of the Western night”*

Dear reader this is just a teaser of the honey and ginger pasture of talent in this anthology of Young Voices from Nigeria and Zimbabwe. This explains the diverse approach of voices in this anthology Madu Chisom King David from Nigeria sing of the goodness and the beauty of motherhood and such tunes are african tunes for they are born and are common in valleys of mother Africa. The depiction of Afrocentricism in this poem and other poems are relevant to the cause of this project.

I want to believe that now our communities will be well-informed and satisfied by such glowing articulated voices of children of Africa in this Anthology

Viva

Mbizo Chirasha

International Performances Poet/Creative Projects Specialist

Founder-GirlChildCreativity Project Zimbabwe

Co-coordinator- Zim-Nigeria Literary Exchange-Zimbabwe

INTRODUCTION

The pursuit to exchange in a literary way, the desire to collaborate for the promotion of young poets between our two countries resulted in this project “**SILENT VOICES**”. A project coordinated by the Society of Young Nigerian Writers in Nigeria and the Girl Child Creativity Project in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe and Nigeria are countries endowed with affluent and vast with creative writing prowess. Everyone have a desire to see her/his literary voice being articulated in form of a book, video or audio format. Every young writer/ poet have a burning passion to see his /her own work being published (either in printed or E-book format) read, appreciated by readers or fellow writers.

Writers and Poets of various regions, communities and institutions need to share, exchange, promote, enhance their dialogue using their creative writing talent. The Zimbabwe Nigeria Literary Exchange that brought by this project seeks to promote the creative, cultural

exchange among young writers of the Southern African Country of Zimbabwe and the Western African Country of Nigeria. The long distance between these two countries is amazing but there is one thing that glued together these two talented and literary endowed countries and that is their literary works.

This project in form of an anthology seeks to promote and motivate literacy and readership culture and understanding of the two countries literary techniques and endowment (Nigeria and Zimbabwe). A country that lacks creative writing is an underdeveloped country and needs resurrection from slumber. Besides their social experiences, writers reflect societal issues, political and cultural colors of any society, which the young poets from the two countries had expressed in this online anthology. We will see in this book as we read through the pastures of talent that a lot of issues are expressed.

The hard working strides performed by the Society of Young Writers of Nigeria and their ability to bring to fruition of this idea is something that needs a plausible touch and experience.

The most important factor is that this project (anthology) introduces a new generation of poets with fresh and exuberant talents and techniques. Our motto is that more talents have to be motivated, enhanced, honed, developed and projected.

Both these organizations are driven by the quest of promoting creativity , building talent and readership culture development.

Bravo.

Mbizo Chirasha and Wole Adedoyin

May 2013.

ZIMBABWE FACTS AND FIGURES



BASIC FACTS

Official name	Republic of Zimbabwe
Capital	Harare
Area	390,759 sq km 150,873 sq mi

PEOPLE

Population	12,382,920 (2008 estimate)
Population growth	
Population growth rate	0.57 percent (2008 estimate)
Projected population in 2025	12,915,433 (2025 estimate)
Projected population in 2050	12,221,257 (2050 estimate)
Population density	32 persons per sq km (2008 estimate) 83 persons per sq mi (2008 estimate)

Urban/rural distribution	
Share urban	36 percent (2005 estimate)
Share rural	64 percent (2005 estimate)
Largest cities, with population	
Harare	1,469,000 (2003 estimate)
Bulawayo	676,787 (2002)
Chitungwiza	321,782 (2002)
Mutare	153,000 (2002)
Gweru	137,000 (2002)
Ethnic groups	
Shona	71 percent
Ndebele	16 percent
Other	13 percent
Languages	
English (official), Shona, Ndebele	
Religious affiliations	
Syncretic (part Christian, part indigenous beliefs)	40 percent
Protestant	12 percent
Roman Catholic	10 percent

Ethnoreligionists or indigenous beliefs	30 percent
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Other (including Muslim and Hindu)	8 percent
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HEALTH AND EDUCATION

Life expectancy

Total	39.7 years (2008 estimate)
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Female	38.5 years (2008 estimate)
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Male	40.9 years (2008 estimate)
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Infant mortality rate	51 deaths per 1,000 live births (2008 estimate)
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Population per physician	6,199 people (2004)
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Population per hospital bed	1,959 people (1990)
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Literacy rate

Total	91.9 percent (2005 estimate)
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Female	88.7 percent (2005 estimate)
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Male	95.1 percent (2005 estimate)
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Education expenditure as a share of gross national product (GNP)	11.1 percent (1999-2000)
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Number of years of compulsory schooling	7 years (2002-2003)
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Number of students per teacher, primary school	39 students per teacher (2002-2003)
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GOVERNMENT

Form of government	Presidential republic
Head of state	President
Head of government	President
Legislature	Unicameral legislature
	House of Assembly: 150 members
Voting qualifications	Universal at age 18
Constitution	18 April 1980
Highest court	Supreme Court
Armed forces	Army, Air Force
Total number of military personnel	29,000 (2004)
Military expenditures as a share of gross domestic product (GDP)	1.7 percent (2003)
First-level political divisions	Ten provinces

ECONOMY

Gross domestic product (GDP, in U.S.\$)	\$3.4 billion (2005)
GDP per capita (U.S.\$)	\$259.20 (2005)
GDP by economic sector	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	18.1 percent (2005)
Industry	22.6 percent (2005)
Services	59.3 percent (2005)

Employment

Number of workers	5,994,657 (2006)
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Workforce share of economic sector

Agriculture, forestry, fishing	26 percent (1994)
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Industry	28 percent (1994)
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Services	47 percent (1994)
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Unemployment rate	8.2 percent (2002)
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National budget (U.S.\$)

Total revenue	\$2,834,017 million (1997)
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Total expenditure	\$2,483,947 million (1997)
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Monetary unit

1 Zimbabwe dollar (Z\$), consisting of 100 cents

Agriculture

Tobacco, cotton, maize, sugarcane, coffee, cassava, wheat, sorghum, millet, cattle

Mining

Chromium, gold, nickel, asbestos, copper, silver, emeralds, lithium, tin, iron ore, cobalt, coal, diamonds, kyanite, platinum, zinc, lead

Manufacturing

Food products, metals, chemicals, textiles

Major exports

Tobacco, ferrochrome, gold, nickel metal, cotton, steel, textiles

Major imports

Machinery and transportation equipment, basic manufactures, chemicals, fuels

Major trade partners for exports

United Kingdom, Germany, South Africa, Japan, and China

Major trade partners for imports

South Africa, Congo (DRC), Mozambique, United Kingdom, and Germany

ENERGY, COMMUNICATIONS, AND TRANSPORTATION**Electricity production**

Electricity from thermal sources	50.83 percent (2003 estimate)
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Electricity from hydroelectric sources	49.17 percent (2003 estimate)
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Electricity from nuclear sources	0 percent (2003 estimate)
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Electricity from geothermal, solar, and wind sources	0 percent (2003 estimate)
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Number of radios per 1,000 people	402 (1999 estimate)
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Number of telephones per 1,000 people	25 (2005)
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Number of televisions per 1,000 people	36 (2000 estimate)
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Number of Internet hosts per 10,000 people	3.8 (2003)
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Daily newspaper circulation per 1,000 people	18 (1996)
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Number of motor vehicles per 1,000 people	50 (2002)
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Paved road as a share of total roads	19 percent (2002)
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SOURCES

Basic Facts and People sections

Area data are from the statistical bureaus of individual countries. Population, population growth rate, and population projections are from the United States Census Bureau, International Programs Center, International Data Base (IDB) (www.census.gov). Urban and rural population data are from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN), FAOSTAT database (www.fao.org). Largest cities population data and political divisions data are from the statistical bureaus of individual countries. Ethnic divisions and religion data are largely from the latest Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) *World Factbook* and from various country censuses and reports. Language data are largely from the *Ethnologue, Languages of the World*, Summer Institute of Linguistics International (www.sil.org).

Health and Education section

Life expectancy and infant mortality data are from the United States Census Bureau, International Programs Center, International database (IDB) (www.census.gov). Population per physician and population per hospital bed data are from the World Health Organization (WHO) (www.who.int). Education data are from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) database (www.unesco.org).

Government section

Government, independence, legislature, constitution, highest court, and voting qualifications data are largely from various government Web sites, the latest *Europa World Yearbook*, and the latest Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) *World Factbook*.

The armed forces data is from *Military Balance*.

Economy section

Gross domestic product (GDP), GDP per capita, GDP by economic sectors, employment, and national budget data are from the World Bank database (www.worldbank.org). Monetary unit, agriculture, mining, manufacturing, exports, imports, and major trade partner information is from the statistical bureaus of individual countries, latest *Europa World Yearbook*, and various United Nations and International Monetary Fund (IMF) publications.

Energy, Communication, and Transportation section

Electricity information is from the Energy Information Administration (EIA) database (www.eia.doe.gov). Radio, telephone, television, and newspaper information is from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) database (www.unesco.org). Internet hosts, motor vehicles, and road data are from the World Bank database (www.worldbank.org).

Note

Figures may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

NIGERIA FACTS AND FIGURES



BASIC FACTS

Official name	Federal Republic of Nigeria
Capital	Abuja
Area	923,768 sq km 356,669 sq mi

PEOPLE

Population	138,283,240 (2008 estimate)
Population growth	
Population growth rate	2.38 percent (2008 estimate)
Projected population in 2025	206,165,946 (2025 estimate)
Projected population in 2050	356,523,597 (2050 estimate)
Population density	152 persons per sq km (2008 estimate) 393 persons per sq mi (2008 estimate)

Urban/rural distribution

Share urban	48 percent (2005 estimate)
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Share rural	52 percent (2005 estimate)
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Largest cities, with population

Lagos	11,100,000 (2005 estimate)
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Ibadan	3,570,000 (2007 estimate)
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Ogbomosho	861,300 (2007 estimate)
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Kano	3,630,000 (2007 estimate)
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Oshogbo	465,000 (1995 estimate)
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Ethnic groups

Hausa, Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbos	71 percent
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NOTE: The Hausa and Fulani live mostly in the north, the Yoruba in the southwest, and the Igbos in the southeast.

Other groups	29 percent
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Languages

English (official), Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, Fulfulde, other indigenous languages

Religious affiliations

Muslim	50 percent
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Christian	40 percent
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Indigenous beliefs	10 percent
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HEALTH AND EDUCATION

Life expectancy

Total	47.8 years (2008 estimate)
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Female	48.5 years (2008 estimate)
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Male	47.1 years (2008 estimate)
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Infant mortality rate	94 deaths per 1,000 live births (2008 estimate)
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Population per physician	3,715 people (2004)
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Population per hospital bed	599 people (1990)
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Literacy rate

Total	70.7 percent (2005 estimate)
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Female	63.8 percent (2005 estimate)
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Male	77.8 percent (2005 estimate)
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Education expenditure as a share of gross national product (GNP)	0.7 percent (1999-2000)
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Number of years of compulsory schooling	9 years (2002-2003)
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Number of students per teacher, primary school	42 students per teacher (2002-2003)
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GOVERNMENT

Form of government

Federal Republic; An elected president took office on 29 May 1999, ending 15 years of military rule in Nigeria.

Head of state	President
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Head of government	President
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Legislature	Bicameral legislature
	House of Representatives: 360 members
	Senate: 109 senators
Voting qualifications	Universal at age 18
Constitution	5 May 1999
Highest court	Supreme Court
Armed forces	Army, Navy, Air Force
Total number of military personnel	78,500 (2004)
Military expenditures as a share of gross domestic product (GDP)	1.8 percent (2003)
First-level political divisions	36 states and 1 federal capital territory

ECONOMY

Gross domestic product (GDP, in U.S.\$)	\$115.3 billion (2006)
GDP per capita (U.S.\$)	\$797 (2006)
GDP by economic sector	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	23.3 percent (2005)
Industry	56.8 percent (2005)
Services	19.9 percent (2005)
Employment	
Number of workers	52,668,284 (2006)
Workforce share of economic sector	

Agriculture, forestry, fishing	3 percent (1995)
Industry	22 percent (1995)
Services	75 percent (1995)
Unemployment rate	3.2 percent (1997)

National budget (U.S.\$)

Total revenue	\$11,408 million (1995 estimate)
Total expenditure	\$11,722 million (1995 estimate)

Monetary unit	1 naira (N), consisting of 100 kobo
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Agriculture

Palm oil, peanut oil, rubber, cacao, cotton, sorghum, millet, maize (corn), yams, cassava, timber, and livestock

Mining

Petroleum, natural gas, coal, tin, columbite, limestone, iron ore, lead, zinc, gypsum, barite, kaolin

Manufacturing

Food products, brewed beverages, refined petroleum, iron and steel, motor vehicles, textiles, footwear, pulp and paper

Major exports

Petroleum, cacao beans, rubber, shrimp

Major imports

Machinery and transportation equipment, manufactured goods (mostly iron and steel, textiles, and paper products), chemicals, food products

Major trade partners for exports

United States, Spain, Brazil, France, and India

Major trade partners for imports

United Kingdom, United States, China, Germany, and France

**ENERGY, COMMUNICATIONS, AND
TRANSPORTATION****Electricity production**

Electricity from thermal sources	47.91 percent (2003 estimate)
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Electricity from hydroelectric sources	52.09 percent (2003 estimate)
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Electricity from nuclear sources	0 percent (2003 estimate)
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Electricity from geothermal, solar, and wind sources	0 percent (2003 estimate)
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Number of radios per 1,000 people	226 (1997)
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Number of telephones per 1,000 people	9 (2005)
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Number of televisions per 1,000 people	66 (2000 estimate)
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Number of Internet hosts per 10,000 people	0.09 (2003)
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Daily newspaper circulation per 1,000 people	24 (1996)
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Number of motor vehicles per 1,000 people	12 (1997)
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Paved road as a share of total roads	15 percent (2004)
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International Programs Center, International Data Base (IDB) (www.census.gov). Urban and rural population data are from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN), FAOSTAT database (www.fao.org). Largest cities population data and political divisions data are from the statistical bureaus of individual countries. Ethnic divisions and religion data are largely from the latest Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) *World Factbook* and from various country censuses and reports. Language data are largely from the *Ethnologue, Languages of the World*, Summer Institute of Linguistics International (www.sil.org).

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Note

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ZIMBABWE

THIS GENERATION OF GENIUS

Scattered our pride and hope
Frozen change has suck sap of our maturity

This generation of genius

All and sundry from abroad
To trace for free substantial
And economical edification
Most like cowards ran
When heavens pour anguish and plague

On return, many spoke in novel tongues from other lands
This new generation of genius-,
Forging forth sanity to her newly milking breast
Timid and conflicting domestic policy threatens foreign
milk men

Moreblessing "Bluez" Size

BLISS

This infinite dream state
Has left me tossing and turning
The fantasies and tales of fiction
put me to rest
This psychosis conceals the existing
Captivated by a diabolical quest
Demons consume my every thought
I can't think, I can't function
My iris and the earthly aren't in focus
I want to clear my thoughts
Detox them-
To the time before the fall of Eden
Phantom of the night, he writes
scripts that illustrate my dreams
And he scratches my mental with
his nightmares
Keeping me in psychosomatic chains

This infinite dream state
Has left me tossing and turning

Back to reality?

A tale even more morbid

Than the sprite that strangles my thoughts

Back to reality?

I would write of aggressor and comrade

Drums beating beckoning the winds
of change

Illustrated by he of fare skin

Who welcomed the new era,

Simply because he could not control it

Drums beating, this time is mine

Empress I beat the drum

as the honey bees hum, to my drum

Arrows pierce my rhythmic melody

Streaks of lighting trying to awaken me

But I want this beat to resonate to all man

So they can know this fight is

not against I and you, nor him or her

Our long shadows should tell the tales
of our unity

And not this ridiculous impunity

Chivimbiso Gava

Note:

The poem is an illustration of how we often take our freedom for granted and the loss of our unity as a people.

IF I WAS YOUR LOVER

If i was your lover

I would move heaven and earth to see a smile cover your
face .

I would write with my own breath to make ma words a
part of me u can feel .

If i was your lover

I would trust you and forget of my own heart that has
been broken before

And damn did it hurt like hell.

If i was your lover i would love you like i have never
loved before .

I would make u my first love for your love would erase
the pain of yesteryears .

If i was your lover my heart would beat in rythm with
urs

Like lyrics go hand in hand with an artist's voice .

I would make each day our first day and butterlies would
still fly in my stomach .

I would fill your days with love true and tender

Our love would paint the most unique of potraits .

If i was your lover .

My every smile would pronounce your name

I would be the never-ending quote .

Words would fail to sum up your worth ,they would be meaningless.

Rather i would take your hand and take you dancing under the moonlight barefeet .

I would let you into my soul and you would drink from ma cup of love again and again.

If i was your lover i would you love inside out ,inside out .

Our love would show the power behind three little words "I LOVE YOU ".

I would kiss the pain away/my arms would offer you sweet comfort.

And if strife would ever visit you ,my words would soothe your soul gently .

And if you would fall ,i would pull you up and whisper softly "Lean on me my love and try again ".

For i would know you would do the same for me .
If you were mine
I would carry our love like a flower carries its scent
nomatter how much the wind blows .
Ours would be a solid fragrance .
You would find honesty in my every touch .
I would ignite and stir you unleashing the passion deep
within you .
Our love making would be explosive like fireworks yet
gentle and tender at certain intervals .
Your scent would be tatooed deep into ma skin .
If i was your lover i would find ways to make your days
brighter and better.
I would love you like i have never loved before.

Moreblessing"Bluez"Size

Note:

The above poem is based on a future lover .

IN THE NAME OF DEMOCRACY AND REVOLUTION

In the name of democracy and revolution
The government has played so many games
In the name of democracy and revolution
The government has killed so many people
In the name of democracy and revolution
The government has looted our resources
In the name of democracy and revolution
The government has abused our soldiers

In the name of democracy and revolution
The government has grabbed all farms
In the name of democracy and revolution
The government has kicked people out of office
In the name of democracy and revolution
The government has reject voters results
In the name of democracy and revolution
The government has oppressed the people

In the name of democracy and revolution

The government has failed to respect people
In the name of democracy and revolution
The government has failed to provide tap water for the
people
In the name of democracy and revolution
The government has failed to consulate people
In the name of democracy and revolution
The government has failed to collect cabbage
In the name of democracy and revolution
The government has failed to develop the country

In the name of democracy and revolution
The government has arrested writers
In the name of democracy and revolution
The government has arrested human rights defenders
In the name of democracy and revolution
The government has become the enemy of the people
In the name of democracy and revolution
Shoot all government officials

Marlon Macebo Magwaza

GARBAGE FARM

To every life there is death to feed the cemetery
And the entrepreneurs to mint a fortune
All souls swim in fortune of their choices
Copper, gold or platinum
Poor or rich all left with something,
For the better journey ahead
To an unknown place they left
Leaving the garbage farm gates unattended
Each night they go to sleep
Affluent the masonry villas stand erect.
In hallucination at night, rattling and banging
Bangles and neck chains shine and glitter like stars
In the rich yard
In another situate honorable snatch from the pitiable
Leaving filthy garbage yards

I REMEMBER

If only things were different

I remember waking up next to Mum and Dad every day

I was their only bundle of joy

I was treated with so much love and care

At night when I can't sleep my mum won't sleep

When I can't eat, she feeds me and promises me sweet
and chocolates

We were living like a happy family, Mum, Dad and I

Until dad started hitting Mum

Mum was always sad and crying and this made me very
sad as a child

Mum always wiped her tears when I was around but I
knew she had been crying

Dad lost his job and Mum became the sole provider of
the family

but he still used her as his punching bag

I started resenting dad and with time I began to hate him

I and Mum became closer like two peas in a pod

I remember coming back from school and found Mum
crying as Dad was hitting her

With tears in my eyes I tried to stop the fight with my
dainty hands

Mum carried me and we cried together later that night
From a happy family we became a sad family
One day Mum packed my things and she said

“Baby we have to go visit Granny”

I smiled but I knew it was the last time I was going to
see dad

I did not hesitate to follow her
Memories of childhood, I have no idea where dad is
All I remember is a figment of my imagination

I wish things were different

I wish we remained a happy family

But I have my Mum and she means the world to me

If I ever meet dad again I would say “I forgive you”

Ikwan Favour

BE DOMINANT GIRLCHILD

Let domain prevail girl child
The simplicity and complexity of your heart
Let it flow like gushing water from the reservoir
Dominating to conquer the world
Revolution to change your destiny
Girl child extricate and exonerate your fellow captives
Free them from their bondage minds
For when a girl is born
There is a gleaming ray of light, a light to lead
There is a glimpse of hope
Grab that armour, amalgamate with others
On the battlefield fight for
Justice, equality, against violence and poverty
Above all let peace prevail
Let everywhere you go
Their fingers pointing at an amazing story
The story of a heroin written vividly on your life
The story of a victor standing bold to accomplish a
mission
A mission with a vision

Envisioned to emancipate women, act against violence
To eradicate poverty
Above all, be dominant Girl Child in your journey
For a better tomorrow

Shingirai glen Chikeya

Note:

*The poem is an illustration of how we often take our
freedom for granted and the loss of our unity as a
people.*

***DEDICATED TO ALL ZIMBABWEAN INMATES IN
SOUTH AFRICA – WHERE THE DEVIL LIVES.***

THE RAINMAKERS CALL

As I stand surrounded by concrete walls

I constantly wail, but I am witness to history

I speak of the unseen, the untold and the whispered

I speak for the voiceless, the powerless, and the so called
masses

My eyes bear testimony of the evils, the pains and the
oppressions

Of what the black mask has over hundreds of years been
exposed to

I am the oracle, the rainmaker

When speaking, rain in people eyes forms

The pains, the sufferings, the brutality, the gaols

Are all that my small and minute voice articulates

Deprived of my sense of self, my voice is what I hold

And my voice is the light, the optimism, the grace and
hope

My words are bullets
They penetrate many ears
They perforate social and political norms
My words are my worst tears, they are nightmares
Yet they motivate me to soldier onto untold lands of pain
Pains that we the people are driven to embrace with
many a smile

Since time immemorial
Black has been seen as darkness
As the ugliest form of the absence of color
Today darkness is given a voice, my dark voice
Without fear, black gains ululations, prestige and life
It is my duty to guard my voice with reverence and
truthfulness

Scrah.

FICTION

I was hungry

I was vulnerable

I wanted to read fiction

Fiction

I knew you were too good to be true

Fiction was each moment I spent with you

It was fiction

Fiction

I wanted to read

The whole book

I wanted to spend

The whole weekend

And share life with you

When I know we

Have nothing in common

Just beautiful spirits

Pained, Dazed, Confused

Content in moments

Frustrated in others

Part of me yearned
To be your lover
But it didn't make sense
I was putting in effort
Without expectations
Of return, later Saturday
I learned. I must not invest
In Fiction

Fiction

I knew you were too good to be true
Fiction was each moment I spent with you
It was fiction
Fiction

Marisa Benson

A HUMAN BEING DIED LAST NIGHT.

As I lie among a crowd of mourners
I stare into the destiny unknown
And prepare for the journey foretold
Then I realize,
Death is so awful when you are the dead.
For in the beginning I was
And in the end I will be.
Another life is another death.
My soul travels
On a path marked goodbye.
What are the writers reading now?
For a human being is dead.

I was, in plainer words,
A bundle of prejudice,
Made up of likes and dislikes.
As I lie in my grave,
Stone and bone will speak.

For in the end there will be silence,

And in the end I will be.

Rudorwashe Kanukamwe.

TEARS OF MY SENTIMENTS.

Even some repeated the Lord's prayer,
as if they could not see my anger,
while I struggled to hold an emotion.
I heard them in a new light,
a kind of divine administrator for my vengeance.
My tongue is full of fire,
while my teeth are full of stone.
This vengeance has turned me into a stone woman.
this naked vengeance,
where the bible that blessed today's birth,
is used to curse another life.
Yet some kept repeating the Lord's prayer,
as if they did not see,
they clearly said, 'Amen,'
'Amen,' while my daughter cries,
and her tears drop on the pastor's conscience.
Who clearly repeats the Lord's prayer,

as if he can't see or hear,
the tears of my sentiments.

Rudorwashe Kanukamwe.

FREEDOM TRAPPED

The core of my being
Where truth is bared
Mysteries unfolded
Time put to a standstill
My spirit knows this truth
Freedom was bought
Eternity ago
Walk free, walk out
You are freedom trapped

The epicentre of my mind
Where wars are waged
Deception weaved
He wills to lie to me
Bind my spirit in and out
Keep me a captive to his wiles
Bound by fetters of doubt
Eternity ago set free
Walk free, walk out

You are freedom trapped

In the intersection of my mind, body and soul

Where truth is engraved

Deception spray painted

To keep me disillusioned

In the valley of confusion

The valley of deceit

I have to realise

Freedom was bought

Eternity ago

Walk free, walk out

I am freedom trapped

Peggie Shangwa

BLISS-

My sunshine has come
I have blue skies again
If that was what it is everyday,
Maybe we could be a little happier
Like the fountain of youth with everlasting beauty
Like the warm feeling of a summer morning,
Introduced by a kiss by a cool breeze
And a splatter of the morning dew,
To wipe the dreamful sleep from my eyes
My love,
Pouring like rain showers
As it rises and sets like the sun
With the promise of a new day
Blooming like a flower, with the symbol of renewal
Reaching near and far like the wind
Like the evening twilight
And the rustling leaves sighing my name

Making an endless existence of my life,
With the cloudy pillars of heavenly bodies,
A distant place,whence my Creator is,
The joy I feel within the depths of my soul which I have
reached
Like the holy temples of the Himalayas
Is not that Bliss.

Elspeth Chimedza

PROPAGANDA CAFE

Villagers feed on new diet of slogans

Peasants imbibing the lyrical taste of ice-cold political alcohol,

Saved with roasted, salted propaganda nuts

Propaganda gods and goddesses smuggling new breeds of manifestos

Paparazzi snorting rumour nicotine for tomorrow editorials and opinions

Half baked news candy cakes and roughly cooked opinion chocolates

Vendetta – fodder for masses

Rumour- fodder for povo

Concrete streets blistered by hatred posters

City faces scarred by ballot graffiti

Dreams of toddler presidents frozen into tasteless ice cubes in state cold rooms

I see systems steaming away into abortion and condom republics

Revolutions burning away into banana and cassava republics.

Mbizo Chirasha

POET

The smell of emptiness

Paints the whole room

With the deft strokes of a master's touch

Blankets at a corner hunched

Only black pot standing still

Staring at the dirty walls

The rent is due.

Maidei has left for good

For to her hunger is a sin.

His mind reconstructs his school boy dreams

And the nightmare form they have become.

The rent is due

Cigarette stubs mount the floor like soldiers at battle
front

He finds a half smoked stub

Lights

thanks his ancestors

The rent is due

He calls out to neighbours child.

She brings him broken pencil end

He finds soiled paper.

Just one more poem will do no harm

Anesu Katerere

AN EYE INTO THE FUTURE.

Come my friend,
Let us reason together.
Let us unite against our enemy.
But who is our enemy?
I don't need to elaborate.
He who has ears
Let him consider what he hears.
He who has eyes
Let him consider what he sees.
We can take this to the beer-hall
and drink while we reason together.
To end up with two alcoholics.
The alcohol of hard liquor.
Let's rather reason together.
For the day will surely come
when if a maize cob falls to the ground
it will be split equally among us.

And our hearts will be lessened with worry because of the future of our children.

Rudorwashe Kanukamwe.

HOPE

My today filled with so much pain
With my yesterdays bringing me to shame
And tomorrow filled with so much uncertainty
And with nothing, trying to have some dignity
Searching for resurrection for my soul
Trying to find hope in hopelessness.

Hope.

Expectation that some good will happen
To find sanity in all the madness
To resurface after being submerged in a flood of tears
To conquer all fears
To find hope in hopelessness.

Trying to find hope in hopelessness
When loneliness has become the only friend that I know
Nobody else cares to share my sorrows.
Prayers return void,
Faith is in vain,
Perseverance proves futile.

When the only sounds I hear,are the echoes of silence
My heart,broken into pieces
Laying on the floor.
If only apologies could mend,
Wine could make me forget,
Thinking could open doors

A spirit may be crushed,
But passion never falters
Hope
That dream that still pushes to become a reality
With all the unfairness
Rooted with sadness
Still finding that place,
That place in your headspace
Your sweet escape into that moment
When you find hope in hopelessness.

Elsbeth Chimedza

I CRY

I cry because of the pictures I see in my mind

I cry today

For the serenity of my tomorrow

The assurance of my history

I cry today

For the unsung songs in my heart

The unwritten books in my belly

The unborn children of my womb

The children of the world that are mine

by virtue of my calling

I cry today

For the reality of my tomorrow

The safekeeping of what I birth today

For the solidity of the things in the inner recesses of my

being

I wail!

When I think of the obstacles still to come

Mountains and walls to be scaled

The pain, hurt, torment, rejection and despair still to be

felt

I cry!

So that my joy tomorrow may affect generations

I get rejected today so that my acceptance tomorrow may
embrace the rejected tomorrow

I lose today

So that my gain tomorrow may influence nations

I cry today

In the hope of shedding my last tear

For the joy of a legacy that is trans generational

I cry...

Anesu Katerere

FOOTNOTE TO MARECHERA

When your mind in loneliness staid
Your stomach virgin of food since morning
And the bones of your manuscript
Broken anew
Married to your calling you remained
To give prophecy with the visions of your pen
You knew the answers while we were still
Searching for the questions
May we forever be guided by the mournful
Staccato of your unoiled typewriter
Anesu Katerere

WHAT DEMOCRACY

What democracy do we speak of
Whose democracy and equal participation
At whose expense shall we chant democracy

Which level shall we speak of democracy

Is this the democracy is that democracy

In the name of change you chant democracy

In the name of revolution you chant democracy

But wear a T-shirt that is different from mine

You face brutal assault from that one

Chant a different slogan from those

You face your house brunt

One sticks and wonders

When you chant revolution

Is revolution burning houses

Is revolution harsh operations after operation

Operation where did you vote is it revolution

Operation been silent is it revolution

Agreeing to disagree is it democracy

Rubber stamping of national documents is it democracy

Artificial participation of the nation is it democracy

Signing national documents to disagree is it democracy

Pre-emptying each other in public meeting is it
democracy

What democracy do we speak of
Whose democracy and equal participation
At whose expense shall we chant democracy
Which level shall we speak of democracy
Is this the democracy is that democracy

The democracy of African leaders is their pockets
The revolution of African leaders is their benefits
Party democracy against peoples democracy
Party revolution against peoples revolution
Africa shall never test the waters of democracy
Africa shall never test the waters of revolution
Until or unless we deal with artificial national processes
Welcome to democracy welcome to revolution

Marlon Macebo Magwaza

NIGERIA

WHISPER NOT MUCH,

In fact whisper nevermore my friend
For it reminds me of lovers and pleasure
Just a short sweet euphoric moment
To swerve into a world of reverie
Much weightful than a naive thought could bear;
The lush memories and bashful expressions,
The Ghost romance of self and images,
The aches of distant love affair and
Enmeshed burden of dashing memories to keep.

Whisper Not My Friend!

For when I turn to cast upon the face of my lover
I see You smiling so naive of the pain you cause my
heart.

Speak, Laugh and Dine with me
Let drink, sing and merry these days away
Even work our tools to bluntness sunrise to twilight
So far I behold less the thought of the one I miss severely.
Whispers conjures your alluring scent to my senses
As pretty blossom to new mornings.

Let Whispers be principally Lovers'
And for swift soldiers at Battle.
If only thou could perceive through firm gestures
That the shatters of this heart still lie in ruins
With a feeble whiff of the fragrance of Hope
Sleeping deep in secret vanishing distant, Somewhere!
Most fair that abandonment of my fate to Time.
Cheers! Cheerful is he who dines This day with me
whisper not more My dear friend.

Amarachi Udechukwu M.

Note:

The poem is written to a dear friend- A man mourns in wait of his long lost lover, of his days of youth and the alluring memories of juvenile indulgences, as he tells his friend how much her whispers resurrects his painfully unforgetful memories of his lost love.

HOW COME YOU ARE AFRICAN (POEM)

You say you are African,
But you bear the names of the British and Americans.
Your fake hair looks fetish and is brazilian,
Or probably gotten from a monk's temple in India.
Your face is like an artist's canvas,
A colourful fracas.
Yet you claim to be African.

You have no regards for your brothers
You are fed and stringed by the voices of aliens
Using ethnic and linguistic differences to instigate
pogroms,
infanticides and murders.
How quick you forget when you were once trade
partners

Exchanging commodities across the Nile through barter

I doubt you are African

Because if you are, how come you glorify alien gods?

Whatever happened to Ifa, Sango and Horus?

Of course,

The new religions gave you an escape route for your
vices,

That's why swearing by Ofo would never suffice.

They said your gods are evil,

Their shrines you have destroyed and levelled.

But handsomely, in the name of tourism, you pay
without excuse,

Stories of your ancestry leaving you bemused.

Who is the greater devil?

I doubt you are African.

Nwakanma Chika

Note:

'How come you are African' is a poem about the fast eroding identity of the true African.

WHY AFRICA?

Why Africa why Africa?

Why the land stains with red-fluid

Like the war cloth on the body of the soil

That the grasses refuse to stay in unity

As the winds scattering it into pieces

Like matrimonial home disorderliness

That the cool air blows the trench of heat

And the favour of sky remits nothing

Like a soil without absorbent portent

Why Africa why Africa

That the expecting glory becomes din of doom

That tasty tongue becomes sour

In the mouth of young ones

Why Africa why Africa, why

The children bath the corpses of mothers

With flood of tears shedding

And that of fathers with fading glory

That millions mile walk before smattering

That all golds of land rear impotence

That every villages settled like boiling water

Why Africa why Africa, why

There're scared sapient every night

And the morning turns black

The simple tone sounds so heavy

Like leads on the hand of children

Why Africa why Africa

Dauda Muideen Lanre

Note:

*The poem is a crystal and physical portrait of Africa
problems that threaten the reign of its peace which is the
cause of its social, political, economical, cultural and
traditional perfection and stability, thereby call on all
Africa nations to sit down and found possible solution to
its weaken wall*

THE RE~EMERGENCE

To honour these faithful comrades of mine ink,
Quail and this page,
Let this free-verse ring forth,
Sing forth and hymn forth..
This comely daze,
Our solemn praise and to those who hold her sacred as
Their totemic chaste let this ode to
Mother Nature ring forth and hymn forth..
Aligned thus,
Let man desist from such wicked acts that
Degrades this priceless beauty of our
Sweet Mother,
Nature..
The ills that man have thus caused

Our great Mother has caused this much
Pain so unfathomable..
Man has taken joy in destroying his
God given natural habitat..
This shall cause him more harm than good,
For I Mother Natural shall avenge myself
To humble mankind and teach him the tenents of my
Beautiful life which the creator said was worth living,
Selah.

Anthony Edmond John

Note:

This poem is a dedication to the preservance, care and glorification of Nature in her purest form.

BUY ME HEAVEN

Ink me to your toughest time
Breathe my heart
To your saddest past
Rapidly, the missing sun you will find
In midst of terrible thunder sound.

Your swollen tears eyes
I will delete with the gift of second chance.
Even if you rain fire to my Vagina
Virgin I will remain
To the last drop of your hate
But, hate I know will never climb your heart
For even pistol can't lip our love as hate
June snow can't snow our rain.

Think me before you sip a sleep
Remember me before you blink
Paint me before you hand the paint
Write me before think of a word to steal
Make me your heart
I will river you my alms
For paradise to scene your next thought

And us in the tummy of poverty
Will not tear me into greed
Nor dine you insult to feed.
Scar me your trust
From the bleeding wound of our love

And I will buy you the Earth
Before the arrival of a new planet

But one question mark

I want to show you

Is

CAN YOU BUY ME HEAVEN?

Bakare Islamiya kemi

Note:

The poem ‘‘Buy me Heaven’’ depicts the sacrifice any woman who is truly in love can make and also raises a rhetorical question to the partner (Man) that, can he buy her Heaven as she is willing to risk everything to be with him.

CAVITY WALL

This life, this death
I try to believe
But in whom do I?
Both... light
Both... darkness
Neither,
Do I choose
Yet, the twin I prefer.

I
So long a life,
To live...
A short while
And full of shortcomings.

Left and right
Both lines so dim
Tidal waves too high to face,
In every corner lurks an owl
Predating even lion preys.

This strife so seem
A waste of breath,
The days behind
And nights to come,
All strength and toils
All wealth and fame,
A waste of time
And waste of chance.

II

A slave to dust
That ends the lust,
And bound to haunting
All the while
So much oblivion
Such a space,
But no stone to earth
is stone to dust.

This sleep so deep
That steals the light
By walls beside
And walls beyond,
Diamond and gold
Spill all around
Yet, no stone to earth

is stone to dust.

How hardest to live
Than easier being dead.
I choose
But to easily die
...lest living hard.

Joseph Luka

Note:

In this poem, the speaker begins with an introduction of the travail of this contemporary life and death. He weighs them with their vanities, and is bemused. He then expresses his fear of living hard in the last stanza, and then prefers to die if it would ease his fear.

NKIRUKA THE MAID

A couple in flowing attire

Like the dark rich cocoyam leaf

Introduced as her proverbial uncle and aunt

Greased her parent's palms to trade her liberty

For the opportunity to patch up her family status

Living in the cave of the forest

Where civilization is still dark as night

But contentment illuminates like noon

They celebrate with black yam

In the old cracked calabash

On their naked table

With the usual unwanted guests at mealtime

The colors of a brighter tomorrow

Nkiruka spun her neck like the owl
Gazing at the beehive and colors of civilization
With glowing smile that was short lived
She was kept in the dark room
Developing all the errands in the house
She was on her toes
With her hands orchestrating endlessly
Her mouth was sealed
But greased with the oil of remnants

Nkiru ! Nkiru o!! Nkiruka eeh!!!
Her name was on all mouths like breath
Even their cat meowed her name
She became a vessel of abuse
As her prized dignity punctured by father and son

Her beauty broken by mother and daughter
She swallowed sorrows in silence
As her countenance dimmed like NEPA

Gazing at the sunset from her village
It was behind too many mountains
She called for her parents in the farm
They were shadowed by the thick forest
She beckoned on the gods of her ancestors
They were all snoozing.

Nkiruka! A voice summons in her dream
Nkem, sing the song of sorrow
Sing the song of abject bitterness
Sing a song of slavery for liberty
Sing and sing and sing

So the birds can carry it

To the father of your birth in the farm

So the wind can blow it

To the mother of your birth in the market

So the mountain can echo it

To the great beyond of your ancestors

Sing Nkiru, sing the song of sorrow

Hope Aghahowa

CHAOTIC DANCE

Like our fathers deceased

So long at ease

In this garden home

Life in peace slept

Hoes did plough

This land of treasure

Till that in the core

The serpent foresaw

Reap and grow wise!

Like fools though we're

If only you know

The endless flow

This help from strange gods

Like lost lads we cried

As naked now in shame

We dance to chaos.

Egbonwachi Oluchukwu

Chaotic Dance is a work that deals with issues of Crude oil and the devastating effects of uncontrolled resources in the Niger -Delta region of Nigeria and other nations in the developing world. It attempts to expose the unfulfilled promises made to the early settlers of the host community but never done over the years.

A STOLEN GAIN

They urged us to endure pain
That we may have gain
Which we won't be able to contain

So we continue to sustain
With the blood in our vein
And the hope to attain
Success before the season of rain

While they in their brain
Know how to strain
And drain our gain
Into the plane
Enroute European plain
As we languish in pain

For a stolen gain

Oku-ola Paul Abiola

Note:

A STOLEN GAIN is a poem describing the deception of our elected officers; how they steal our gain and make us suffer with hope for what is not there anymore.

A CHAMPION

A champion is creative not complacent
A champion is disciplined and responsible
Champions are optimistic not pessimistic
Champions are not ordinary but extraordinary people.
A champion has a future not misfortune
A champion lives to achieve not receive
Champions are those who leave worthy legacies behind
Champions are superior not inferior.
A champion is known for excellence not negligence
A champion possesses a dream not a mere desire
Champions are winners not losers
Champions make distinct and not blurred marks.
A champion does not swim in the ocean of mediocrity
A champion is not short-sighted cos his vision is clear
Champions strive for the best not the better
Champions keep moving when all hope is lost.
A champion sees the impossible as possible
A champion does not fear failure rather failure fears him
Champions aim at shooting the moons not the stars

Champions believe that failure is a stepping stone to success.

Ngoka Obioma Ruth

Note:

The poem titled A CHAMPION is a five stanza poem with each stanza bearing four lines. The poem is quite rhythmic and it emphasizes on who a champion is, therefore repetition as a figurative expression is used repeatedly. Some figurative expressions have been implored in the course of writing this poem. The major motive behind the writing of this poem is to motivate everyone to greatness, irrespective of the circumstances surrounding them.

GOOD PEOPLE... ARISE

Arise! O compatriot
Thy fatherland call obey
A land of bliss
And of serene surroundings
Peaceful as if a unicorn
And so many resources at her disposal

Thy fathers suffered a lot
For this blessed nation
In the hands of the white-faced men
Who enriched themselves with our resources
And in their den of slavery they endured
The tormenting fire of arduous tasks

Fifty-two years passed by
After our independence
From the *short-nickered* men
Who stealth our golden heritage
And replaced it with cheap beverages
So sad I couldn't help!

Now, it is time to stand
And throw away our wheeled-chair
This is the time to be awake from our long slumber
To revive our lost heritage
For the labour of our heroes past
Should never go in vain

The splendor of our cultural past
Should not be thrown to the dogs
While we jog hither and thither
On the surface of the globe
Our Art... Our Culture – Our pride
For this is indeed a great nation.

Jimoh Ibrahim

Note:

It centers on the selfless efforts our heroes past made to
wrestle this great nation from the colonial masters and

the need for her youth to work towards its
progressiveness.

OUR TREASURE POT

They ruled with mischief
And called them warrant chiefs
People of morbid background
Spoiling our land around
Intoxicated in power, they ran crazy
Dwelt in ruthless autocracy
Their mortality in our palms
Our elite perished in negligence
They use them never
For their worth they knew
Joint by joint we had grown
And behold we attained maturity
Discarding the worms of mediocrity
Barbarism ceased to be our own
Africa is our treasure pot
Allow it not to rot
Remember them anymore not
For there is a treasure
In our seemed empty pot
They gave us a low measure

They claimed superior
We are never inferior
They called us Negro
A reason everyone should grow
To subdue our challenges
And dip-dig our senses
To prosper changes
There it is, a way out
Out of their large old mount
That swallowed us
And still swallows us
Farewell to those mentalities
Of yellow origin
That trampled our indigene
Those totalities
That rubbed us our culture
And dropped for us a vulture
Black sense they say
The thinker may be black
The thoughts are as bright as the suns ray
They are in the dark
Our colour may be black

But our treasure is never dark

Ovuoba David. N

Note:

The poem tends to remember for Africans, the period of hegemony; those periods of exploitations, and dehumanization. To gear Africans towards creating an independent continent, that will enhance proper harnessing of our resources (treasure); to build a generation that will love our culture and mother Africa.

VOICE OF AFRICA

Voice of Africa!

Crying aloud from the savannah

Crying aloud for unity

Crying aloud for sanity

Crying aloud for justice

Crying aloud for peace

Voice of Africa is beckoning on you in Diaspora

Come home and contribute your quota

Come home together let us fight

For success is no more far from sight

Come let's make the future bright.

Voice of Africa is screaming on you politicians
Why count money as though you are mathematicians
While my people are singing tears as though musicians
And you get richer each day as though you are magicians
It says NO! Come let's build Africa together.
Take your people as your brothers and sisters

I hear Voice of Africa echoing in the desert
Echoing to you perpetrators of evil
It says drop your sword and let us move
Let us live our lives like dove
Putting the past away and living in love
Voice of Africa is calling on you.

Voice of Africa is talking to you workers
Dedicate thyself to thy work,

Favoritism, try to forsake

To bribery and corruption put a cork.

Voice of Africa says do your part.

Voice of Africa is begging you teachers

Do thy work in love and truth

Teach my children things that are cute,

Exam malpractice help persecute

For thy reward is with the father of truth.

Voice of Africa is calling on you clergies

Uphold the morals and ethics of my people

Debunk insanity for it is making them cripple

On the head of corruption thou must trample

But voice of Africa is asking

What happens when you support immorality

For money, you sell the message of sanity

You lack the great gift of brevity

And even posses the gift of laxity

Come back! Let's build Africa together.

Voice of Africa is talking to you the youths

You who are the leaders of tomorrow

Says clean your eyes for I have seen your sorrow

And the voice says

Tell the world you are tired to follow

Good traits from abroad try to borrow

Increase thy pace for you are too slow

For you are the ones to make Africa grow.

And finally a message to all Africans

Shun decadence and mediocrity

Pursue the cause of quality

Realize in you lies integrity

Africans it says

We will get there

But today is the day for we stay and pray

Uphold your splendor, oh Africans.

NO MORE FEARS, NO MORE EXTORTIONS

Under the biting sun,

Is a stop-and-snatch check point;

The Police officers with their guns and batons,

wearing stern and fierce looks on their faces,

with their naked eyes as red as scarlet,

waiting for the arrival of their preys;

waiting to order their preys with harsh tones.

Their preys are the ever timid and afraid drivers,

who try not to offend the police officers in any way,

obliging to their every demand and giving them a little
bribe

because of the fear that grips them,
the fear of being locked up or beaten,
it has always been a sweet dream for the police officers
and a beautiful night mare for the drivers.

The passengers always in a hurry to nowhere,
as they won't let the drivers be,
mounting pressure on them to always oblige to their
demands
they will not allow the drivers to fight for their rights,
to avoid delays on the road; no, not for the passengers
because they are always in a hurry,
as there is no time to waste or wait.

The drivers throwing away their fears,

looking bold and refusing to be intimidated,

embarked on a 'traffic jam plan', a priceless jewel, a
precious stone
just like gold is stuck in the traffic,

as their vehicles lined up bumper-to-bumper,

the post of a big wig is at stake,

as the drivers celebrate a well deserved victory.

There is a loud but silent pandemonium in the Police
force,
as fear grips the police officers,

in their check points there is absolute tranquility and

calmness just like the cool breeze from the sea side

No more extortions, no more harsh tones, no fierce
looks, no fears,
for the very first time power has shifted to the drivers.

Note:

The poem is set in Nigeria, It tries to depict bribery and corruption on the part of the police officers which is being enforced on the ever timid drivers, the poem ends in style when the drivers were fed up of being intimidated and finally stopped bribery and corruption on highways.

HARAM

Your sacrifice sings for our sorrows

As you truncate our tomorrows

In thy wilderness of futile hopes

Singing divisions in our homes

Eh eeh eeh eeh eh! boko haram.

You plant your choice

And breed our sorrows

In the dark corners

Of wailing trumpets

Eh eeh eeh eh! boko haram.

You kill in scores

And maim our diversities

You sacrifice your souls

In the vain hopes
Of celestial gains
Eh eeh eeh eh! boko haram.

Listen to the lyrics
Of our calls
One nation bound in freedom
Peace and Unity
And not the strikes
Of your thunder days
Eh eeh eeh eh! boko haram.

Akpah Bartholomew Chizoba

Note:

'Haram' is a poem indicting the infamous 'boko haram'

suicide bombings in Nigeria.

NGELENGE*

Thou rich African wooden mix
Of quality sound, of perfect note, of marvelous keys
Of tremendous rhythm more frantic than ethanol
What man or spirit can drink from thine stream?
Without getting drunk unknown?
What being can sip from thine rendition?
Without falling in deep trance of ecstasy?
Therefore, fill my calabash that I may drink
And be drunk brinkfully,
To be drunk in thee
That I take pride in.

Thou whose melody never fades,
Nor shrink in molten magma,
Nor go mute in rowdy citadel,
Nor reign away in transition,
Play on, play to our curious ears,
Let thy rhythm fill our insatiable souls,
Snatch away our beings from vile miasma,

And sooth our precious aura with sonorous beats

O! Lead me on, lead me to the sky

Were I can touch the cloud

Lead me to paradise

Were when peace and calm I shall be

When my breath no longer mine,

Hybrid of tears and sadness

Hybrid of smiles and blooming time

With voice sweeter than the bird's.

Thou shall play thy song, thy unique tone

When light shall flee off the king's eyes

Or crown be fitted on his head

When peace and still a chief shall be

Or hat be fitted for his service

Thou shall play thy evergreen melody

Thy happy tone, thy dirge, thy sweet melody

But scarcely are thy music heard

Ngelenge, sacred music of honor

The Ibani man's pride.

Fubaraibi Anari Benstowe

Note:

This poem is an encomium on a native music instrument called Ngelenge in Ibani dialect, a dialect of the Bonny and opubo people all in Rivers State Nigeria, it is popularly called African Zylophone and is usually played by two players during very great traditional occasions.

MOTHER BLACK, SCENTED WOMAN

Mother Black, Scented Woman

Matron of the ten million hyenas, whispers of the funnel
cloud,

The double refraction of light at the face of anisotropic
crystal

And the fingers of the icicles pounding on the flesh of
Aso rock.

Sweetest Woman,

I see your plaits of hair saluting the limbs of the trees -

Freely tapping waves from the loins of numberless
gazelles,

And the clear azure sky trading its fabric for your smiles.

Sweetest Woman,

you are the mother of seasonal winds nursing the crops
in the farm:

And you are the crude oil bleeding on the coitus of
Oloibiri.

Though you are dark like dusk's eyeball, but the stars
and the

Moon envy the brightness of the darkness of your skin...

You the harvest of timeless pulchritude, the green

Breeze from the wetlands - caressing the feet of Olokun,
and the

Reed-fringed beds of panhane river where catfish
romances the fins of the cichlids.

Your armpit is the district just below victoria falls where

coal

Can be found and where gold-bearing rocks are not
absent.

And its marvellous how occasional band of limestone
Crop out from your tongue in the dry season.

Are you not the Zambezi River that has its source in
Zambia?

You flow through eastern Angola, along the eastern of
Namibia

And the northern border of Botswana, then along the
border

Between Zambia and Zimbabwe to Mozambique where
you cross

To empty into the Indian Ocean and have a word with its
womb...

You the Succulent breaths of the ripe water-melon, fiery
roars

Of thiopic lions that tremble the muscles of the forest
And the mangrove massaged by early morning dews.

Mother black, matron of the ten million hyenas and
poplar!

The strings of my two violins are asking that you should
Open your eyes, that i may pluck suns out to brighten
My future long hidden in the pant of the Western
nights...

Madu Chisom Kingdavid

Note:

A poem that captures Africa's beauty.

REEDS ON THE RIVERS

Hollow stems

swaying gently over the waters,
clutching tenderly at the beds,
drifting quietly under the currents,
swaying, clutching, drifting.

Hairy footings on soft teguments,
clinging unto the tender roots,
mocking at the finagle of erosions,
hoping to sap its nutrients,
clinging, mocking, hoping.

Reeds of unanswered prayers
a torturing spirit for a broken heart,
distorting every countenance of expectations,
delaying hopes for tomorrow.

Reeds of hidden secrets
dried scabs of a wounded flesh,

silently renewing memories of regrets,
feasting upon the mind for reconciliation.

Reeds on the rivers
hollow stems with numbered leaves
feeble as it is
yet it rules over the waters.

Ayo Oyeku

VOICES IN THE SUN

Lost as we are, betrayed by kindred spirits

The scorching sun offers amazing grace

In empty vessels and fiery rays.

We are epitaphs of dead minstrels

Playing timbrels for mongrels

By the lonely rivers of hope.

We soar like maniac eagles

Inspired by distant musings

Flying with the wings of passing troubadours;

Bald in the palms

Musing balderdash on the ruins of Babel

Eating stones as mourning meals.

Andrew Aondosoo, Labe

Note:

This poem VOICES IN THE SUN, exposes the futility and frustration of living as a writer in Africa. It further illustrates how the writer thrives on hope as a beacon of success and survival.

ENTRANTS FROM NIGERIA

Amarachi Udechukwu M.

I'm a young female by the name Amarachi Udechukwu, studying English Language and Literature presently at Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Anambra State. I speak Igbo and English Language fluently. A reader and a young writer.

Nwakanma Chika

Is a writer and blogger. Heis works are geared toward the enlightenment of the African mind which has (in his opinion) been warped in psychological infancy. He currently writes for Baobab magazine and also blogs at

nubainscripts.blogspot.com. Presently he is undertaking graduate studies in the field of Anthropology in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Dauda Muideen Lanre

Dauda Muideen Lanre, born to family of Dauda, hailed from Iseyin. an endued writer, writing to him is like eating a pap, although did not discover himself early until after his secondary education which since then he has been writing.

Anthony Edmond John

Pen name The Sage, is a 27 year old prolific poet and versatile writer based in Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria. Who has been writing for 18years now and is compiling his first hardcover publication of his Poem Anthology Titled Ode from Black Afrika.. A geek who manages 3 groups

across Facebook including ArtHouse, Facebook Creative Consortium and Ima Jackson.

Bakare Islamiya kemi

A spoken word poet who currently resides in Lagos.

Joseph Luka

Joseph Luka whose pen name is N'Time Joseph is a young writer, poet and critic, yet unpublished, a member of the Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA), Nigeria, mentor at Hilltop Art Foundation, Minna,

Nigeria, and editor-in-chief of 'The Future' maiden magazine. He holds a B. Tech in Building technology, and currently resides in Suleja, Nigeria.

Hope Aghahowa

An upcoming poet currently resides around Surulere in Lagos.

Egbonwachi Oluchukwu Jacobs

An uprising poet, a Nigerian and short story writer.

Oku-ola Paul Abiola

Is a Nigerian Engineer turned writer. His works had appeared in various journals and anthologies, both online and printed. His poem 'OUR MANDATE' won the 2nd prize at the maiden uMthwakazi review poetry competition 2012

Ngoka Obioma Ruth

Is a young prolific writer, who has written several poems. She attended Imo Model International School

Owerri (primary school) and Alvana Model Secondary School where she obtained her O'Level. She graduated from Doyen Academy Enugu state, where she obtained her A'Level Cambridge certificate. Currently, she lives in Owerri,

Imo-state.

This young dynamic youth is interested in motivating other youths to greatness, for she believes in the potentials that lie within our youths. This specialty of hers has earned her several awards.

Ibrahim

Is a 400l Electrical & Electronics Engineering student of University of Ilorin. He is a lover of poetry, a member of the Union of Campus Journalist Unilorin Chapter and the immediate Deputy Editor of 'ILLUMINANT MAGAZINE' – an annual publication of the National Association of Muslim Engineering and Technology Students (NAMETS) Unilorin.

Ovuoba David. N

The poet, a young writer born in an extended African family; a candidate Nigeria police academy, is ever determined to communicate to the world the worth of Africa through writing. A member UGREEN FOUNDATION. He lives in the hinter land of Nigeria but pushes hard with his pen, an effort which has to his credit: short stories, a manuscripts, and essays coming out soon. All embedded with the contents of Africa

Ubio Daniel Obu

I am a Christian writer with particular flair for poetry,
who wants to devote his time to the improvement of
Christian poetry.

Ezechukwu Azuonye

Is a graduate of Management from Abia State University, Uturu. Born on 26/11/1988 in Lagos, Nigeria but from Ikwuano LGA of Abia State. He has a flair and passion for writing both fictions and poems. This poem 'no more fears, no more extortions' has a full novel which he is working on and about concluding.

Akpah Bartholomew Chizoba

Studied Literature -in- English at the University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. He teaches English Language and Literature in English. He has interest in writing poems on post-colonial issues. The writer learnt about the Call for Entries on the net via Society of Young Nigerian Writers web page.

Fubaraibi Anari Benstowe

Is a poet currently resides in Rivers State of Nigeria.

Madu Chisom Kingdavid

Is a student of history and international studies.

Ayo Oyeku

Is an emerging Nigerian writer. He showed his early niche for writing during his teenage years when he published two children storybooks; *First among Equals* and *Noble Ambition* (Benevolence Publishers, 2004). Afterwards, his poems started appearing in various anthologies across the globe, including, *Illuminations* (Celestial Arts, 2006) and *Fingernails across the Chalkboard* (Third World Press, 2007). Likewise, his most recent short story, *Waiting for the Morning* was published in the Second Issue of Miracle Literary Magazine (Miracle e-zinr, 2012)

Andrew Aondosoo Labe

Poet, playwright and songwriter, was born on May 2, 1986 in Gboko, Benue State and hails from Kunav-Mbadede, Vandeikya LGA, Benue State, Nigeria. He

attended Gboko International Nursery & Primary School, Gboko (1993-1999), Mount Saint Gabriel's Secondary School, Makurdi (1999-2005) and proceeded to acquire a Bachelor of Science (Honours) degree in Psychology at the Benue State University, Makurdi in the 2009/2010 academic session. A member of Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA), Benue State Chapter, and winner (1st Position, Unrhymed Lines Category) of the 2010 Beautiful Lines Poetry Contest, he is the Founder/Initiator of Writers At Work (W.A.W), a creative writers community development group. His interests include Tiv Oral Poetry and Folklores, Asian Psychotherapies, Psychopathology, Consumer Buying Behaviour, Forensic Psychology, Oriental Religions, Caribbean Islands, Contemporary African Art, Black History, War History and Literature.

ENTRANTS FROM ZIMBABWE

Moreblessing "Bluez" Size

Poet /Afro futures Contributor /Writer /Librarian started performing poetry at the Vineyard for Wildfire events in 2010 and has performed at the Book Cafe at events such as Sistas Open Mic ,House of unger Poetry Slam Girl-child network Mini Festival Acoustic nights at the Zimbabwe German Society from 2010 .

Performed alongside Albert Nyathi at the ZIBF 2012 Indaba

Chivimbiso Gava

Is an aspiring writer from Zimbabwe. She is currently completing her Masters in Journalism with a focus on Afrocentric paradigms in the media. Her writing interests whether academic or literary often magnify the different facets of the African experience.

Marlon Macebo Magwaza

Is a Poet currently resides in Zimbabwe

Ikwan Favour

Writes from Zimbabwe

Marisa Benson

*Guest poet, who works in office of international relations
Princeton University*

Shingirai glen Chikeya

*currently studying psychology with Zimbabwe Open
University*

Scrah.

Also Writes from Zimbabwe

Kanukamwe Rudorwashe

is a Zimbabwean born and bred in Bulawayo. She is set to enhance her writing skills in a dynamic environment. This is her first poetry anthology and it gives a comprehensive basis on the norms that govern humanity and it shows that mankind around the world share a common ground in love, religion, politics and propaganda issues. She is not very old neither is she very young but she has lived a life and has travelled so much that at her age and in her given circumstances she has been through it all. She had a near death experience to realize how precious life is and she believes her poetry anthology might change, let alone touch someone's life.

Her poetry collection tries to explore to what an African writer should write about as she compiled it at different periods of her life. With this extract from her anthology titled A human being died last night she tries to summarize the point she clearly heard, as someone said, 'a writer is no longer a person first he has to die a death of the person to become a writer.'

Peggie Shangwa

Writes from Zimbabwe

Elspeth

Chimedza

Born Elspeth Chimedza in Harare on July 8 1987. Daughter of a diplomat, I spent my early years travelling abroad. Having lived in West Africa in Senegal and in the middle east in Kuwait. In those years I got exposed to different languages and cultures, which come out in some of my literature.

My writing skills were discovered during my Primary school level having managed to become a finalist in the World Press Photo competition in my seventh grade.

I continued with writing stories and lyrics in my high school, but it was in 2002 when I was form 3, that I discovered I had a knack for poetry. My first poem was entitled 'Infatuation', which paved way for many other poems to come. This was also the birth of Eloya Somaine, my pseudonym for my poetry.

I continued writing poetry interchangeably with writing

songs during my high school years, and into my adulthood. I am also currently writing blogs for an online magazine.

I am currently working as an Advertising Account Executive for an advertising company. However, writing and performing are very deep passions of mine. I began spoken word poetry this year after being encouraged by friends to attend the poetry sessions at the Book Cafe. I now use these sessions to expose my poetic skills .

Anesu Katerere

A renowned performances poet in Zimbabwe ,performed at Poetry slams ,universities and other poetry venues ,book fairs and Embassies.

Mbizo Chirasha

Is an internationally acclaimed performance poet, writer, and creative projects consultant. He is widely published in more than Seventy-five journals, magazines, and anthologies around the world. He was the poet-in-residence: from 2001-2004 for the Iranian embassy/UN Dialogue among civilizations project; the United Nations Information Centre - 2001-2008; Convener/Event Consultant THIS IS AFRICA POETRY NIGHT 2004 - 2006; official performance poet Zimbabwe International Travel Expo in 2007; Poet in Residence of the International conference of African culture and development/ ICACD 2009; and official Poet Sadc Poetry Festival, NAMIBIA 2009. A delegate to the Unesco photo novel writing project in Tanzania, Mbizo is the Official poet in residence for the ISOLA/ international conference of oral literature 2010 in Kenya. Mbizo Chirasha is widely profiled in both local and abroad media institutions. His poetry books Good Morning President is Published in UK and Whispering Woes of Ganges and Zambezi is published by an Indian/American Publisher Cyberwit Press. A lot of more anthologies are under review by other

*publishers.Mbizo Chirasha the Founder
/Operations/Creative Director of Girlchild Creativity
Project and the newly founded Urban Colleges Writers
Prize. Co-cordinator of the Zim-Nigeria Literary
Exchange program*