



Culture, Criminality and Violence in The Nsukka Area of Enugu State, in 21st Century

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ABSTRACT

Globally, culture is a universal phenomenon which distinguishes a particular race, tribe ethnic group from one another. The culture of a people defines them. People's culture is exhibited through masquerade, music, art works, dance, building patterns, marriage among others. In Igboland and Nsukka areas in particular the people's cultural exhibition is annually showcased mainly through masquerade such as Akatakpa, Oriokpa, Omabe, Odo, Ogede amongst others. However, criminality and violence have crept into the cultural exhibitions of the people of Nsukka and opinions are divided among the different stakeholders in the society on the appropriate measure to curb this menace of masquerade in the name of cultural exhibitions. The thrust of this chapter is to interrogate the correlations between cultural exhibitions, criminality and violence in Nsukka areas during their annual masquerade fiesta in this 21st century, Nigeria. The chapter also adopts qualitative research methodology and makes use of both primary and secondary sources such as relevant books, institutional publications, oral interviews among others. It was discovered in the course of the research that criminalities and violence perpetrated by the masquerades are not intractable and could be stamped out through a concerted effort of all the stakeholders in Nsukka.

KEYWORDS

Culture, criminality, violence, masquerades, Oriokpa

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INTRODUCTION

The life of man is progressively shaped by his culture. The cultural heritage of a people such as music, masquerade, building patterns, dance, foods, folklores, art works make them distinct from other ethnic groups.

In interview with Attamah (2020),

these cultural heritages of a people sometimes undergo changes or alterations in the course of exhibitions which may be detrimental to the people. Sometimes the people's culture could be manifested in negative way such as criminalities and violence through the exhibitions of people's culture. In view of the above, Igbo culture and Nsukka culture in particular is mainly showcased through masquerades. Masquerade in Nsukka since time immemorial serves as agent of social cohesion, which unites the people peacefully. It is also an agent for the maintenance of law and order as well as the entertainment of the people among other functions.

Masquerade, which literally implies *muo* (spirit being) has many names in Igbo cosmology. These meanings include *mmonwu*, *mmanwu*, *mmo*, *mmaw* and *mma*, depending on the dialects of the Igbo area in question. Be that as it may, masquerades are generally called *mmonwu* or *mmuo* in Igboland, meaning spirits in a visible form or simply, spirits. Different kinds of masquerade bear specific names in particular regions and localities of Nsukka land (Omeje, 2016, p. 390). These include: *Akatakpa*, *Oriokpa*, *Omabe*, *Ogede*, *Odo* masquerade. Masquerade, as a traditional cultural heritage is enclosed in a mask.

A mask is a disguising dress, which hides the personal identity of the one who wears it. Therefore, a masquerade is a public display and performance of a masked actor as he strives to present in his action the new identity which is created and expressed in the fashion of the mask dress adopted (Innocent, Yusoff & Eikojonwa, 2020; Suleman & Mohamed, 2019; Suleman, Mohamed & Ahmmed, 2020).

Be that as it may, it is important to note that the personal identity of the one who plays the masquerade is hidden and totally suppressed in secrecy. What comes to recognition is only the presentation of the new personality, which is believed to be a spirit being (*mmonwu* or *mmou*) (Omeje, 2016, p. 390). Onuh (2020), an interview, opines that:

it is a taboo or abomination to disclose or divulge the personal identity of the masquerade in Nsukka land. The people regarded the masquerades and recognized its exhibitions as part and parcel of their culture. However, with the passage of time as well as the passage of cultural heritages from one generation to

another, the people's culture was altered by the initiated male adult who display these masquerades through perpetrating crimes and violence.

The initiated male adults cause havoc, injure people, rape, steal and main as well as commit murder in the name of cultural exhibitions.

The youths who masked themselves in the name of masquerading unleash mayhem and terrorize the university town, Nsukka and environs.

According to Nnamene (2017):

the uses of masquerades have changed, and the system of masquerading has changed as well. Masquerading has become violent oriented and created more problems than the services they rendered in the past: For instance, for decades now, masquerades in Nsukka cultural zone kill and main innocent people. They waylay and rape women and girls. They rob and extort money and goods from road users (p. 05).

In view of the above, masquerading as a cultural exhibition in Nsukka has become a nightmare to the people in all ramification as they commit crimes and cause violence in the land. The instances of crimes and violence in the name of culture abound in this region.

In line with Nnamene (2017), quoting Bishop Onah, maintains that,

even though these infiltrated masquerade cultures have so dominated our original Nsukka culture to the point of obsession, they are not perfect, and as such, should be eradicated from Nsukka land. It is unfortunate that in this 21st century, some youths in Nsukka area will cover their faces, block the roads, beating and extorting money from people who are going about their legitimate businesses (p. 05).

It is obvious from Bishop Onah's words that the Nsukka culture has been altered by some youths who hide under the guise of masquerade as a culture to perpetrate crimes, harass and harm law-abiding citizens in the society.

However, the thrust of this chapter is to interrogate the correlation between culture, criminality and violence in Nsukka area through the examination of the historical evolution of Nsukka culture and instances of masquerade atrocities as well as impact of the masquerade culture on the economy of the people. It is pertinent to conceptualize the some of the terms in this work for proper understanding of the criminality and violence perpetrated in the name of culture in Nsukka.

Explication of the Subject Matter:

Culture:

Culture has different meanings to different scholars and people. Therefore, it has variously been defined by different scholars like J.V baldridge, V.N. Chibundu and E. Taylor in their works.

According to Omeje (2016), citing Chibundu, opines that culture is

“the totality of the way of life evolved by a people in their attempt to meet the challenges of living in their environment, which gives order and meaning to their social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious norms and modes of organization, thus distinguishing a people from their neighbours” (p. 389).

Omeje (2016) states that “*culture is concerned with knowledge and belief system*” (p. 389). Again, both Omeje and Baldridges give a classic definition of culture to mean a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, masquerades, moral laws, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society .Culture is seen as a learned behaviour abstraction from behaviour, something that exists only in the mind, and observable things and events in the external world.

Be that as it may, culture has been described by different scholars in their own perspectives. The above definitions, they all agree that culture is a technique adopted by a given people for their survival, which is the total way of life of the people.

Violence

Many scholars have viewed violence from different angles. Be that as it may, for the purpose of this work, we are looking at violence in terms of both violation of human rights and social injustice.

Egobueze and Ojirika (2017) states that “*violence implies the use of physical force to injure persons or property.*” (p. 4). According to Nwolise (2007), “*violence is the manifestation of hostility and rage through physical force directed against persons or property*” (pp.155-179). While Degenaar (1990) defines violence as “*the intentional application of extreme force against X in such a way that it is destructive of objects and physically injurious to animals and persons*” (p. 71). From the definitions offered by different scholars, they all have one thing in common which is the use of physical force against persons or objects.

Criminality:

In defining criminality, we shall first of all begin with the definition of crime, which is the act or omission forbidden by law that can be punished by imprisonment and/or fine. On the other hand, criminality is a certain personality profile that causes the most alarming sorts of crimes.

According to Gottfredson and Hirschi (1983), criminality is a style of strategic behaviour characterized by self-centeredness, indifference to the suffering and needs of others, and low self-control. Be that as it may, more impulsive individual is more likely to find criminality an attractive style of behaviour because it can provide immediate gratification through relatively easy or simple strategies.

In a nutshell, criminality involves all criminal behaviours that involve the use of force, fraud or stealth to obtain material or symbolic resources. These criminal activities include murder, robbery, burglary, rape etc.

The masquerades in Nsukka have resorted to the criminal activities mentioned above.

Background of Nsukka Masquerade Culture

In interview with Ozioko (2020),

Masquerade in ancient Igboland and Nsukka areas in particular performs several functions to the society. The first function is to serve as a form of recreational entertainment for the general well-being of the people. Other functions included the enforcement of village curfew and serving as village security guards in most communities in Nsukka. Masquerading activity is a festival that was aimed to foster peaceful co-existence among various communities. Masquerades are used to honour the dead especially the eldest son (*Onyishi*) and other custodians of culture. These masquerades differed from community to community and generally lasted for a few weeks during the cultural exhibition.

Be that as it may, some lasted more than one month, depending on the nature of the masquerade and the community involved. The exhibition of these masquerades in most communities in Nsukka is usually during the end of the harvesting season or the start of the planting season. On the origin of masquerade in Nsukka areas, (Nnamene: 2017:5) says that Bishop Onah said that masquerades were not originally of Nsukka culture. In other words, that *Odo*, *Omabe*, *Akatakpa*, *Ogede*, *Oriokpa* are borrowed robes. That came from *Igala* in present day Kogi State. They were introduced by *Atta Igala* whose power and influence reigned over Nsukka land prior to the influx of the western civilization. Be that as it may, the present writers believe that the people's culture exists with them with little alterations in the course of the practices of their culture. In line with

the above,(Omeje:2016:391) States that masquerade is believed to be as old as the community where it is practiced. Hence, most communities contend that they were born into a social system where the mask institution was already in existence. However, the existence of masquerade in Nsukka land has been part and parcel of the people's existence. Historically, Igbo masquerades are traditional performances acted out by exclusive secret societies within a community. These consist of adult male members who must be initiated, and their identity known to other members of the cult. These are various types of masquerade in Nsukka; *Oriokpa, Akatakpa, Odo, Omabe, Ogede*, etc. Some of these masquerades appear on particular events like new yam festivals and coronation of traditional rulers while others appear only during special event Ogili (2018, p. 15).

In Nsukka land, masquerades were of a very high reputation because of the vital roles they played in the maintenance of the cultural and traditional heritages of the people. They were highly celebrated by all: young and old, men and women who happily offer them gift items and money without being intimidated to do so.

Be that as it may, it is very unfortunate that masquerade festival is presently taking a drastic dimension in Nsukka as a result of adults who hide under the guise of culture to unleash criminal activities and violence to the law abiding citizens of Nsukka cultural zone.

Instances of Masquerade brutalities across Nsukka area

The myriad cases of masquerade atrocities across the various towns and communities in Nsukka culture area has assumed an alarming dimension, creating an atmosphere of fear, anxiety, insecurity, chaos and unrest in the area.

This discourse x-rays and analyzes many instances of gruesome attacks and brute force unleashed on the unsuspecting victims of masquerade cult in the area.

Ozioko and Akalonu (2019), discussed and examined a particular instance of masquerade onslaught and criminality in Nsukka culture zone. In what they described as 'retrogressive culture of impunity', Ozioko and Akalonu noted with a pang of horror and dismay how in 2007, Oriokpa Nsukka smashed the head of catholic Seminarian attached to the catholic Diocese of Nsukka. The victim was said to be going to pay power bills at Enugu State Electricity Distribution Company, EEDC, Nsukka on March 29th, 2017. The Seminarian whose name was Ezeugwu Lawrence was brutally and mercilessly beaten by a group of masquerades around Ugwuoye junction, Nsukka. His head was deeply cut that the medical Doctor at Bishop

Shanahan hospital, Nsukka, where he was first taken to had to refer him to Memfy's Specialist hospital, Enugu for proper treatment and care. In narrating his ordeal after regaining consciousness, he had this to say:

I was on my way to the Enugu State Electricity Distribution Company, Enugu road, Nsukka, when I noticed that Enugu road, near Ugwuoye junction, was blocked. No sooner had I paused to know and understand the reason for the blockage than a group of fierce looking masquerades appeared from different directions and started descending on me for no just cause. They were beating, kicking, pushing me with not so human strength for it appeared from the stench of alcoholism gushing out from their mouths that they had taken alcohol. As if the beating was not enough, one of them inflicted on my head a deep cut with a weapon which made me fell on the ground like a young banana stem at the stroke of a machet. I did not know what happened to me again until when I regained consciousness in the hospital (p. 10).

The Seminarian's case was reported to the Nsukka Divisional Police office, DPO, who mobilized his personnel to track down the guys in the mask who attempted murdering the Seminarian, The said masquerade was said to have been arrested and consequently arraigned at the Magistrate Court, Nsukka, on 3rd May,2017 and accused of causing deadly harm to the Seminarian, punishable under section 290 of the criminal code cap 30 vol 11, laws of Enugu State of Nigeria,2014. The Nsukka Catholic Secretariat, however, expressed her dissatisfaction for what the court termed 'inflicting harm' instead of terming it 'attempted murder' for the very fact that the Seminarian was heavily and deeply cut in his head that could have led to his untimely death.

In another similar development, Desmond Ogbonna, another senior Seminarian of the catholic Diocese of Nsukka, from Enugu narrowly met his death at Umuugwu, Orba, when a group of another masquerade called Ogede, brandishing some weapons of manslaughter, had a feast of their beating on the unsuspecting innocent Seminarian who could not defend himself against them. They have been known for notoriously mounting road block sort to say and collecting road pass at Umu ugwu junction, between Orba and Nsukka town, very close to University of Nigeria, Nsukka first gate.

In the Masquerade Festival in Nsukka: from Culture to Terrorism, (Ogili: 2018:) posits , in what he calls , *'a harvest of terrorism'* by masquerades,

that in 2018, Police arrested 2 young men in masquerade costumes at Ovoko town, in Nsukka area for allegedly assaulting mr Chinonso Eze , a passenger on a

commercial motorcycle , stealing his #57,000 . When arrested, according to the Sherpherd, the 2 masquerades denied taking part in the robbery act. The incident took place at Nsukka/Obollo Afor road (p. 15).

Two catholic priests of the catholic Diocese of Nsukka, were given the worst embarrassment of their lives when they ran into a group of gregarious masquerades in Ogbodu Aba, while returning to their respective parishes from St. Charles parish, Eha Ndiagu. Their names –Rev Fr Daniel Tochukwu Akubue, the parish Priest of St, Mary’s parish, Ada Obollo and Rev Fr Peter Chikwado Udaya, the parish Priest of St. Patrick’s Catholic Church, Ibenda. They were said that have been roughly beaten and inflicted with various degrees of injuries. It was further revealed that Rev Peter Udaya was severely injured in his eyes that resulted in an operation and Rev Akubue was hospitalized in a hospital as a result of the beatings from those hopeless miscreants called masquerades they encountered on their way.

This has become a re-occurring decimal in Nsukka area. This is very serious and dangerous and the people appeared to be facing a crisis of almost inconceivably devastating magnitude.

Speaking in a condemnable tone on the ugly incidents caused by the marauding beasts that covered their faces in mask, (Ugwuoke: 2017), vividly captures the words of the catholic Bishop of Nsukka Diocese- Most Rev Prof Godfrey Igwebuike Onah who maintains that the menace and the atrocities perpetrated by the masked men who indulge in cultural outfit of masquerade to wreak havoc and inflict most harrowing pains on the innocent people of Nsukka is too bad.

He continues:

It is unfortunate that in this 21st century world, some youths in Nsukka area would cover their faces , blocked the roads, beat and extort money from people who go about their legitimate businesses in the name of culture; such people should be arrested and made to face the music (p. 14).

Fr Bishop, as he requests to be addressed, urged the law enforcement agencies to treat masquerades that block roads and extort money from road users as criminals, terrorists and cultists.

The researcher’s search light is shifted to Umuida , in Enugu Ezike town, where a Catechist of St. Theresa’s parish, Umuida, mr Hycinth Ogbuja, narrowly escaped death from one rampaging Omabe masquerade that almost murdered him on 5th July, 2012. The victim who spoke to the reporter , after having been discharged from the hospital on 19th July, 2012, narrates his ordeal:

the masquerade moved along with the Chief Priest along Ogrute-Umuida road in about 3pm when he was returning from his palm wine morning routine exercise. The masquerade's Chief Priest named Ugwuoke Omeke Abugu (Alias Ovebe Abugu) and the man in the mask , Ikechukwu Eze (Alias Osama Bi Laden). The masquerade pushed me out of my motorcycle as I fell on the ground; he started deep machet cut on my shoulder and fingers aimed at cutting my throat, but for the timely intervention of the good Samaritan, I was snatched from the jaw of death, an attempted murder from the masquerade (Ugwu, 2012, p. 6).

The victim , mr Oguja, stated that the matter was immediately reported to his parish Priest, Rev Fr Joseph Odo and to the Ogrute Police Command who promptly mobilized personnel and arrested the Chief Priest of the masquerade- Ugwuoke Omeke, but the said masquerade itself that caused the tragedy was already on the run.

On the other hand, in an open letter to the Governor of Enugu State, His Excellency Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi and the Enugu State Legislators (Nnanene, 2017, p. 5), outlined the disturbing menaces of masquerade cults across Nsukka cultural zones, particularly, Nsukka University town.

The Priest starts by recalling by recalling the Nimbo experience in 2016 during which Fulani herdsmen invaded the town and attacked the community, murdering and slaughtering many people in cold blood. That the walloping of the innocent citizens by the Fulani herdsmen was quickly condemned by everybody: indigenes, non-indigenes, religious bodies, private and public sectors , etc. The Nimbo experience was called violence, terrorism, bloodbath, massacre and so on.

He further asserts:

It is pertinent to point out that beyond this blazing act of terrorism by the Fulani herdsmen, hidden in what has become the very culture of Nsukka people, is deeply seated terrorism perpetrated by masquerades in Nsukka cultural zone. The masquerades being discussed here include : Odo, Omabe, Akatakpa (which has other names like Oriopka, Ogede,etc), other ones that are not mentioned here, (Nnamene, 2017, p. 5).

In his article, *Savagery and Violence, not our Culture*, (Iyidobi: 2017), out rightly and despicably condemns the herdsemanic and banditory nature of the masquerade activities in Nsukka area in the name of culture. He opines:

We wish to bring to the notice of the public and to our Christians in particular, that Oriokpa has come again. Within 24 hours of the commencement of Oriokpa season, Nsukka town has witnessed a speedy gush of banditry and mayhem. Many are already bearing various degrees of injuries and losses because of the presence

of Oriokpa in our land. A catholic Seminarian of this Diocese is already undergoing an advanced neurological examination at Memfy's hospital, Enugu, as a result of the masquerade attack and brutality (p. 6).

Clashes between Masquerade Cult and Christians in Nsukka Area

The Masquerade culture, as an age-long tradition, has been confronted with challenges over the years. Indeed, the advent of Christian missionary societies occasioned by colonial rule in Nsukka area in 1912, together with the presence of social change, have contributed in no small measure to impact and influence the masquerade cultural practice in the area.

Below are notable examples of masquerades invasion of church premises which almost resulted in bloodbath if not for intervention of God.

Joshua Ngwoke (2020), in an interview, states:

In 1996, I, Joshua Ngwoke, a senior Seminarian from Umude, Umuoyo, Nru Nsukka, was organizing a catholic Retreat for the youth on the exit day of the masquerade called (Ashua Ula). The retreat took place at Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, Nru Nsukka. The church situates at the epicenter of the community. At exactly 6 O'clock pm, when the different masquerades and their followers were returning to their bases, they decided to follow a shortcut path which is the church premises. This was considered an aberration by the Seminarian who sent some church wardens and youths to stop their trespasses. This could not solve it. I then left the pulpit to go and ward them off by pushing the masquerades with the support of the youths and they then followed the normal road instead of the church compound. I later found out that the reason those people I sent first to force them back could not deliver was because they knew those that wore the masquerades and feared that they might retaliate afterwards.

Similarly, in 1980, a conflict erupted at Ede Oballa, Nsukka, between Omabe masquerades and church assembly. This incident took place when the Omabe masquerades encroached on the church compound. In the ensuing crisis, the masquerade was allegedly unmasked in a desecrated manner which the masquerade cult considered a taboo or an abomination. A well-coordinated vendetta or reprisal was inflicted on the unsuspecting Christian church members, resulting in the destruction of their property and personal belongings. Furthermore, in 1983, at Idi Opi, Omabe society ransacked the home of a church member who was said to have defiled a masquerade that was parading on Sunday, causing distress and lack of free movement of the people in the area. Also, a serious effort was made by a catholic priest by reaching an agreement with the elders of the village on how to regulate the activities of Akatakpa masquerades that chase the church members and other innocent citizens that make use of their roads. In most cases, the victims of

the masquerade sustain injuries and sometimes died, by running into an oncoming motorcycles and vehicles in a bid to escape from the masquerade hot pursuit. When the spirits or the masquerade cult failed to abide by the said agreement, physical force was adopted and police protection was sought to defend the Christians, (Omeje: 2016:399).

Some measures used to control the masquerade activities in Nsukka Area

In light of the high level of brutalities and atrocities displayed by the masquerade cult in Nsukka, some measures have been articulated in order to curtail their excesses. During his interview, Ngwoke (2020), who acted as the Chairman of the Oriokpa masquerade in 2009, opines that:

During my tenure as the chairman, I ensured that every man in Oriokpa masquerade conducted himself well. I made sure that the principle of individual responsibilities played out prominently which allowed any masquerade to bear the responsibility of whatever offence he committed in the course of his outing. I also gave each masquerade a tag and number for easy identification and prosecution in case of any dastardly act committed. These measures contributed in no small measures in checkmating and controlling their excesses. But be it as it may, some of the masquerades, due to inordinate alcoholic consumption and drug, went out of control to inflict pains and losses on the innocent citizens by beating, stealing, snatching of mobile phones and pulse and other such likes which landed them in the police custody.

Omeje (2016), maintains that the regulations of the masquerade activities in Nsukka area is an essential part of the institution. He states that:

In Nsukka culture area, masquerades such as Oriokpa are forbidden and barred from beating anyone who runs to an elderly man for refuge and safety. Again, if one runs to a yam farm, the masquerade is expected to retreat and leave the victim (p. 397).

On the other hand, Ishiwu (2020), during his interview, has this to say on the control measure of masquerade cult in Nsukka:

The unbearable dimension of the masquerade brutality on the innocent people of Nsukka has mandated the Nsukka Town Union to articulate ideas on how to curtail their excesses. The council of Elders came up with the decision that Oriokpa, Ogede and Akatakpa masquerades should desist from appearing on the major roads on Ori Market days so as to stop robbing, snatching, beating and mounting roadblocks on the roads. In addition to this, the elders equally considered three O'clock and six O'clock as the appearing and disappearing times of the masquerade group respectively.

Impact of the Masquerade Cult in Nsukka

There are quite some disturbing and tremendous impacts of masquerade activities in Nsukka area. It is very unfortunate that in this 21st century, some youth in Nsukka will cover their faces and block roads, beat, steal, rob, snatch and rape innocent citizens of the town. This is very serious and dangerous as these are people who cannot eat and hustle to eke out living without being on the roads for different business purposes.

In Ogili (2018), Bishop Godfrey Onah, postulates :

The State Police Commands Public Relation Officer, Ebere Amarizu, had some time in April warned that ‘anyone caught committing offence or wreaking havoc on members of the public under the guise of masquerade festivities should be promptly arrested and prosecuted, but that was not matched with action (p.15)

Bishop Onah continues:

Consequently, the masquerade involvement in the act of torture, robbery and extortion of money from their unsuspecting victims have once again hit Nsukka as the residents and visitors are again , running helter skelter, following the festival which is currently in force (p. 15)

Ugwuoke (2020), an interview, and being a graduate of University of Nigeria, Nsukka, has once called for the total abolishment of Oriokpa masquerade in Nsukka Local Government area of Enugu State over alleged attacks on innocent citizens. In his words:

I shall be leading a 6000-man protest over the total abolishment of the masquerade in the entire land. The government must ban this madness in the name of culture and never again to be allowed to return back to any part of our land. A lot of people have been maimed, robbed, killed and inflicted with various degrees of injury because of masquerade attacks; enough is enough.

Masquerade festival across Nsukka have become a thing to dread as masquerades have turned to terrorists on private homes, junctions, newsstand, roads, marketplaces, shops and other undesignated places for their appearance and activities. The masquerade activities have become unbearable, leaving unpleasant memories because of their nefarious activities by them and their followers or supporters. The group usually involve a long line of young boys and girls with bloodshot eyes, welding clubs, sticks and cudgels that reek of alcohol and smoking cigarette and marijuana. Motorists and motorcyclists that decline their demand for money had their vehicles and motorcycles vandalized and their passengers attacked, (Onah, 2020, pp. 21-22).

Apart from inflicting injuries on the road users, the masquerades go to the extent of looting goods from traders who have their shops located along the roads where they rampage during their activities. They equally collect illegal tolls from motorists, cyclists and unsuspecting pedestrian who make use of the public roads.

CONCLUSION

This work has analyzed and examined the masquerade cult in Nsukka culture in which their brutality, rascality, criminality and absurdity have been unveiled and revealed. The work demonstrates and asserts that it is absurd and very unfortunate development that in this 21st century world, when people in other climes are busy inventing, re-inventing, manufacturing, landing in the moon , developing their technological ingenuities, Nsukka cultural areas, despite the presence of the first indigenous University, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, have continued to indulge in all manner of criminality and violence in the name of masquerade as their culture. This is very serious and dangerous as this does not portray a good image of the town in the international communities that value the university town. This paper advocates that the custodian of Nsukka people's culture should endeavour to give the youth the much needed orientation and teaching that their culture is not meant and known for all the abnormalities, criminalities and absurdities for which it has been subjected to by those who practice it. Culture should be accommodating, appreciating, tolerating, as well as understanding and not intimidating, suffocating and liquidating peoples' values and resources as the case with Nsukka. Bishop Godfery Onah of Nsukka Catholic Diocese states that Nsukka masquerades, especially Oriokpa, is worse than SARS and, therefore, opines that there should be '#End Oriokpa' too.

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