Sidonie Mache, Brindy Belinga Claude, "Entry on: Akwugo, the Gods of Our Land by Izechukwu John Ekeh", peer-reviewed by Daniel A. Nkemleke and Elizabeth Hale. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2021). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1345. Entry version as of November 11, 2026.

Izechukwu John Ekeh

Akwugo, the Gods of Our Land

Nigeria (2019)

TAGS: African Traditions





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Akwugo, the Gods of Our Land
Country of the First Edition	Nigeria
Country/countries of popularity	Nigeria
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2019
First Edition Details	*Akwugo, the Gods of Our Land*. Directed by John Ekeh Izechukwu, written by John Ekeh Izechukwu, 2019, 150 min.
Available Onllne	YouTube (accessed: September 1, 2021).
Genre	Motion picture
Target Audience	Crossover (Age restriction 16+)
Author of the Entry	Sidonie Mache, University of Yaoundé 1, machesidonie78@gmail.com Brindy Belinga Claude, University of Yaoundé 1, brindybc@yahoo.com
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This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Creators



Izechukwu John Ekeh (Director, Scriptwriter)

Izechukwu John Ekeh is a writer, script writer and a movie director.

Source:

Profile at the Nlist.ng (accessed: September 1, 2021)

Bio prepared by Sidonie Mache, University of Yaoundé 1, machesidonie78@gmail.com and Brindy Belinga Claude, University of Yaoundé 1, brindybc@yahoo.com

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Additional information

Summary

Lebechi was a beautiful girl with many unfortunate experiences, one of which was childlessness. These misfortunes continued even when she became pregnant with her husband, Ajulu. One day, Ugele, Lebechi's closest friend visited her and just when she was about to take her leave, Lebechi started labour. With the help of Ugele, Lebechi delivered a baby boy. Unfortunately, Lebechi collapsed. Shortly afterwards, Ugele met Ajulu and told him the news about his wife's putting to birth but Ajulu was not happy after learning that Lebechi was under a spell from the gods, (the reason why she had collapsed). Ajulu firmly believed that Lebechi's affliction resulted from her adulterous acts. Consequently, he refused to heed to his mother's advice to visit Ihono, the chief priest, in order to know the cause of Lebechi's plight and how to rescue her from her unconsciousness. Meanwhile, Ijene, another beautiful village girl, was in love with Anuka, a wealthy farmer. Unfortunately, Anuka did not love Ijene. Even when his mother took it upon herself to visit Ihono, the gods refused to speak unless Ajulu was present.

Rumours about Lebechi's situation had reached Akaiba, her father, who went straight away to Ajulu's compound to figure out how to save his daughter. While he was trying to persuade his son-in-law to consult the gods, Anuka, the wealthy farmer, walked into the compound carrying with him some game for Lebechi. Anuka's arrival and gift reinforced Ajulu's old suspicion that Anuka had an affair with his wife, Lebechi, and so he refused to follow Akaiba to the shrine. Some time afterwards, Akaiba, Ajulu, and Agbasi (Ajulu's friend) tried to inquire from Anuka if he was having an affair with Lebechi, but before Anuka could utter a word, Ajulu attempted to strangle him but Anuka succeeded to escape. Just when Anuka was catching his breath, Ijenu tried to help him but he refused her help.

That very night, Ajulu's mother paid Anuka a visit with the hope to find out the truth about the ongoing problem. Anuka told her that he was supposed to marry Lebechi but her father had done all his best to separate them, and even paid some boys to carry him into a forest in a faraway land, to keep him away from Lebechi. While in this forest, Anuka had met a hunter who taught him how to hunt. But on returning to their land, Lebechi was already married to Ajulu. Anuka equally told Ajulu's mother that he and Lebechi had met once but he was too drunk and could not remember what happened. To this end,

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Ajulu's mother told Anuka that the gods had sent Lebechi in his life to help him, though they would not end up together. She also advised him to go and apologize to Ajulu so that Lebechi should be free. This he did. After Anuka's apology, Ajulu performed the cleansing ritual but Lebechi's situation did not change. Consequently, Ajulu was left with no choice than to follow Akaiba to the chief priestess's shrine. In the meantime, Ijenu brought back Anuka's stolen gun and he apologized for his bad behavior towards her. At Ihono's shrine, Akaiba and Ajulu were told that the gods had afflicted Lebechi because her husband (Ajulu) had “symbolically” divorced her and did not bring her back. The chief priestess reminded Ajulu that the red bridal clay pot given to him by his in-laws signified that both his family-in-law and the gods were in support of their marriage and the day he brought it out of his house marked the end of their marriage. As such, he could only have her back after some rituals must have been performed. Ihono, the chief priestess, also told Ajulu that while he had been mistreating Lebechi for some time because she was unable to bear him a child, the real cause of their childlessness was a spell cast on him by his father. To salvage the situation, the chief priestess went to Ajulu's compound and performed a purification ritual. After this ritual, Lebechi was set free and her father took her back home immediately. On Anuka’s advice, Lebechi returned to her marital home with the baby boy. Meanwhile, Anuka who had been getting acquainted with Ijenu proposed to marry her.

Analysis

Childlessness has always been a great problem for women in African culture; as the source of the issue is generally laid on the woman. However, this story shows that the man can equally be the problem. In addition to this, the movie unravels the supreme nature of gods over humans. Supremeness which enables them to curse and set free, to render impotent or productive as is the case with Ajulu.

The sacred dimension of marriage is equally presented in this story. In the past, there only existed the traditional wedding during which sacred objects and important words were exchanged. They had a sacred meaning which called the intervention of the gods in a case of violation. In the story the marriage violation came as a result of the jealousy Ajulu had because he suspected that Lebechi had an affair with Anuka. He was then ready to let her die until the truth was revealed and apologies presented.

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Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	African Traditions
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Child, children Divorce Emotions Family Gaining understanding Reconciliation Tradition
Further Reading	Latifat, Ibisomi and Netsayi Noris Mudege, "Childlessness in Nigeria: perceptions and acceptability", *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 16 (2014): 61–75. Tolulope, Monisola Ola, "The Socio-Cultural Perception and Implications of Childlessness among Men and Women in an Urban Area, Southwest, Nigeria", *Journal of Social Sciences* 21 (2009): 205–209.
Addenda	**Cast:** Lebechi: Eve Esin, Akaiba: Nobart Ezeani, Ajulu: Kelvin Uvo, Anika: Di Moritz, Ihono: Phil Daniel Aniedo, Agbasi: Amechi Anekwo (Meche), Ugele: Ngozi Evuta, Olruka: Amadiani Gold Chioma,

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Uzendu: Juliet Ndudi,

Hunter: Jachike Okpala,

Ijenu: Chioma Chijioke Anosike.

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