



## from I Dance Ala-Igbo

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

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

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

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

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

**Chikwendu Anyanwu (b. 1964)**

## si na Egwu m bu Ala-Igbo

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

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

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

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

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

*translated into Igbo  
by the author*

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*John Lewis Partnership*

