Continuities and Discontinuities in Mba Clan of Etche World-View

By

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Abstract

The thrust of this paper is on the continuities and discontinuities in traditional Mba clan of Etche world-view. The paper posits that the Mba clan people order their spiritual world in such a way that each deity is saddled with a particular role that is descriptive of its nature, attribute and character. The paper argues that this departmentalization has enabled the deities to live and function cordially without friction. The study also posits that their world-view is akin to a lens through which the indigenous Mba clan not only predicts, interpret, but also control the world around them. The study adopts “No Change and Change” theories which argues that no change have occurred on African cosmology in spite of the forces of modern change. On the other hand, the paper argues that changes have occurred on African cosmology due to the presence of agents of modern change. The study also adopts phenomenological approach. With this, the researcher was able not only to describe how the people order their spiritual world, but also to interpret their interactions with the physical realms. However, the study revealed that there are changes on indigenous Mba clan world-view due to the presence of agents of modern change such as Christianity, urbanization, etc. One notable change in this regard is the perception of time in a more abstract fashion, in spite of these modern influences, some aspects of their world-view is still strong and relevant. For instance, the belief in re-incarnation is still in vogue. Findings from the study reveal that their world-view has helped the people not only to
control the world around them, but also to be in harmony with the two realms.

Introduction
Mba clan is one of the outstanding five clans that make up Etche Ethnic Nationality, a people living on the north-eastern margin of the Niger-Delta. The other clans are Igbo Agwuru Asa, Ulakwo Umuselem, Okehi and Ozuzu clan. The people of Mba clan speak a dialect of Etche, a language which they share with other communities of Etche. Mba clan in turn belongs to the Igboid or lower Niger Language group of which Igbo is among. The climate of the area follows a regular cycle. Since it is located within the tropical rain forest of Nigeria, it rains more or less heavily from March to October and it is relatively sunny and dry from November to February. The topography is fairly uniform. It consists of a flat plain, threaded with fresh water rivers and streams. Their economic activities include, farming, fishing, hunting, palm-wine tapping, distilling of local gin, etc (Amadi, 2015, p.2).

Two factors motivated the researcher’s interests in pursuing this study. The first was to examine how Mba clan orders their spiritual world, and to see how this has helped the deities to interact without friction. The second was to outline the changes which have taken place on indigenous Mba clan of Etche world-view, especially in this era of a rapidly changing world, where values are fast retrogressing.

Methodology and theoretical frame work adopted for this study
In this study I utilized one oral testimony; which is handed down tradition about belief and practices surrounding indigenous Mba clan world-view. The study adopts phenomenological approach which helped not only to describe how the people order their spiritual world, but also to interpret their interactions with the physical world. The study adopts “No Change and Change” theories as theoretical frame work. No Change theorist’s
exponents include, Mbiti (1969, P.28) and down (1973, P.48). These scholars have argued that there have been external influences on African cosmology due to the presence of agents of forces of change: Christianity, Western Education, urbanization, etc. In spite of this, Africans, as they further argued would prefer as it were that original unpolluted African society which has been in existence before the arrival of these agents of change (Zamani)

Change theorist include, Horton (1971, p. 98). For Horton, looking at the African cosmology, especially when faced with the challenges of social change: Christianity, Western Education, etc, have not only adaptive potential, but also have not been static but are dynamic and adaptive to changes and innovations, hence there are continuities in most of their beliefs and practices. Here, we noticed that our data on indigenous Mba clan world-view clearly falls between the two theories. In traditional Mba clan, no change has occurred in some aspects of the belief and practices surrounding their world-view. For instance, belief in re-incarnation is still strong among the people. The bearing of names like Enyinna (his father’s friend), Nnenna (father’s mother) affirms that fact. On the other hand, changes have occurred. For instance, there is a paradigm shift in the reckoning and measuring of time from non-abstract terms to a more abstract fashion.

**Meaning of World-View**

According to Ogbu Kalu (1980), world-view “is the unified picture of the cosmos explained by a system of concept which order the natural and social rhythm and the place of individuals and communities in them” (p.39). In much the same vein, Madu (1996) explains it to mean “how the world is conceived, contemplated and perceived by people who live in it especially within the ambit of human environment. It is a body of belief within the universe which are common among members of any society existentially demonstrated in their value system such as their philosophy of life, social
conduct and morality, norms, theologies, rituals, etc” (P.1). Metuh, (1987, p.50) describes it as the complex of a people’s beliefs and attitudes concerning the origin, the nature, structures, organization, and interaction of beings in the universe with particular reference to man.

For the indigenous Mba clan, the cosmos is divided into two, namely the physical, visible and the spiritual, invisible realms. In what follows, we shall first begin with the physical visible realm.

The Physical Realm:
In Mba clan of Etche cosmology, the physical realm denotes the abode of man, animals, plants, trees and other natural phenomena. These, they referred to as the inhabitants of the physical, visible world. For the indigenous Mba clan, their physical abode is divided into two parts namely, eshi or mbara-eshi and ime-ohia. Eshi or mbara-eshi often referred to as area of human settlement and could be further divided into obiochie, called old settlement area and obi-ohuru also known as new settlement area. On the other hand, ime-ohia itself is further divided into two parts namely, ime-oru (cultivated farm land) and imeokwu (uncultivated farmland).

As regards the rivers, there are two major rivers namely, the oge-ochie and otamiri-ochie. Oge-ochie river is more predominant in Umuaturu, Ndashi and Obite whereas otamiri-ochie is more common in Akpoku and Umuoye and in some cases as the access road to farmland. Because of their remarkable role in the life of the people, the streams and rivers are considered benevolent. It is on both rivers Mba clan primarily depends on as their source of water for fishing and fermenting of cassava, bathing, drinking, etc.

Next, is the Mba clan perception of time. According to Mba clan worldview, the terms such as oge and mgbe are alternatively used to make out clearly the general idea of time. Among the Mba clan, the term oge-garaga
Continuities and Discontinuities in Mba Clan of Etche World-View (in time past), oge-gboo (the olden days), oge-ta (in the present time), and oge-nabia-afia (in time coming or future time) clearly make out the idea of time in the past, present and future. In Mba clan of Etche, time is reckoned and measure in non-abstract terms such as oniyoro (human shadow), anumanu (animals), other natural phenomena and human activities. For instance, my informant, Amadi Alfred, said that “if an Mba clan man returns home and his kinsmen asked when he returned, he would say that he came during the last planting season”. Again, when asked when he would go back, he would say “by the second crow of the cock” (between 4:00 and 6:00am). In traditional Mba clan, it is never four o’clock in the evening rather it is time when the shadow becomes taller than the owner. Closely to this, is day to which the Mba clan often referred to as ubochi. For the Mba clan, the ubochi is made up of four different parts namely, ututu (morning), ehilam or ehinam (afternoon), anyasu (evening), and abali (night). Each of the above parts of the mentioned day is further classified thus: Ishi-ututu (early morning), etiti-ehilam or ehinam (mid after-noon), uhuru-chi (early evening) and etiti-abali (mid-night).

For the indigenous Mba clan, each of these periods of the day is symbolic. For instance, mid-night is believed to be the time when wicked spirits lurks about. Early in the morning that is, at the first crow of the cock is also believed to be the time when the spirit of a sick man departs him to join the ancestors. With regards to the traditional week to which the Mba clan often referred to as izu, is made up of four big days and four small days making eight. The first four big days are nkwo-ukwu, eke-ukwu, orie-ukwu, and afor-ukwu. The other four small days are addressed as: nkwo-nta, eke-nta, orie-nta, and afor-nta. In Mba clan cosmology, the first four days are significant in the sense that it is on such days that most of the deities are worshiped (Amadi, A, 10/10/2019, oral interview).

Following closely is Mba clan traditional month often referred to as onwa. Months generally are reckoned by the waxing and waning of the moon.
Continuities and Discontinuities in Mba Clan of Etche World-View (George Tasie, 2007, p.18). For the Mba clan, 11 month often referred to as onwairinotu make up a year, this in turn is referred to as otuáfor. According to oral testimonies, each of these months is significant in the socio-cultural life of the people especially for their agricultural activities. For instance, onwa- mbonafor (the first Mba clan month) is the time for the uzoubi ritual. Ikwa alaubi is the ritual cleansing and appeasing of the deity of the farm road and land. During onwa abo nafor (the second Mba clan months), the fallow land is shared among adults males and married women who claim descent through the male line from the lineage founder. Between onwa ato and onwa ano (the third and fourth Mba clan months), which mark the imminence of the first rains of the year, is the time for farmers to clear their farmlands and set fire on it. This period of the year is also when farmers start planting their crops. With the approach of the heavy rains between onwaise and onwaishi (the fifth and sixth Mba clan months), weeding of the farms starts. This is also the season for harvesting the new corn, and for stalking the yam tendrils.

Onwa asa and onwa asata nafor (the seventh and eight Mba clan months), is the time for planting of cassava between the yam mounds; within these months too, some of the yams are considered mature, a condition which is indicated by the withering of their previous luxuriant leaves. Between onwa asato and onwa itolu nafor (the eight and ninth Mba clan months), farmers begins okikeji mbo (initial selective harvesting of mature new yams. Onwa iri (the tenth of Mba clan month), is the time for the final weeding of cassava and first harvest of cassava. By ngwucha onwa (the eleventh Mba clan month), all the yams have completely shed their leaves and ready for harvest. This month is also associated with other socio-cultural activities such as wrestling and new yam festivals.

Among the Mba clan, discussion on the physical realms remains incomplete without bringing into focus the place of man believed to be at the centre of their cosmology. For the Mba clan, the word for man is manu (human
being). The Mba clan believe that man \((\text{manu})\) is composed of the material \((\text{ahu})\), i.e. body, and the spiritual \((\text{nkpuru-obi})\) or \(\text{ume}\), heart, spirit or breath (soul). For the Mba clan, man is a well integrated organism designed with both physical and spiritual elements. Thus, it is believed that the two cannot exist independent of the other. In traditional Mba clan society, man \((\text{manu})\) is held in high esteem and this is evident in their everyday expressions. For instance, an Mba clan man would always say \(\text{manu-dinso}\) (man is sacred), \(\text{obu-manu}\) (he is a human being), etc. All these expressions clearly affirms mans’ humanity, respect or worth and his sacredness among the clan. It is against this background that murder is considered the greatest crimes in traditional Mba clan society. But the most devastating is the murder of a kinsmen.

In Mba clan, the murder of a kinsman is regarded as the greatest offence against Ala (Earth goddess). According to oral testimonies, the penalty for such offence is that the murderer \((\text{onyeochu})\) shall be banished out of the land for seven years. He could return to the land after seven years; upon his return, the \(\text{onyeachu}\), as custom demands must perform a compulsory ritual know as \(\text{ikwala}\) (ritual cleansing and appeasing of Ala (Earth goddess). In tradition Mba clan of Etche, there are two classes of murder. The first is the \(\text{ochu-oghom}\) (accidental or unpremeditated murder). The other is \(\text{igbu-ochu}\) (premeditated or deliberate murder). In Mba clan, murder whether accidental or premeditated is as an infringement against Ala’s act of charity and justice (Amadi, Joshua. 15/10/2019, oral interview).

In much the same vein, Wotogbe-weneka (1988, p:20) has noted that in most African communities, one of the first ritual performed on the individual is that which is meant to unite him mystically to the earth goddess of his place of origin. Hence all those who hail from the same town or village will thus be linked to the earth which they jointly conceive as the mother from whose womb they all came from. This is indeed true because as he rightly observed, in the act of murder, the murderer has destabilized not only his
own psyche but also his own people, the chief priest and the entire community to which he belongs; since all these are mystically united under the motherhood of the earth-goddess. He further explains that if it is accidental murder (*ochu-oghom*) of a kinsman by a fellow kinsman, the murderer must go on self-exile; the offence is made public and at the place he has taken refuge he will be lying on the floor on *okwukwu-okirimaovara* (red plantain leaf) until the earth-goddess is placated.

But in traditional Mba clan, the above assertion is not exactly the case. Like I said earlier, the penalty for *ochu-oghom* (murderer) be it unpremeditated or intentional is seven years banishment with compulsory placatory and expiatory rituals aimed at appeasing and cleansing the earth-goddess upon the return of the offender. The important of this is to enable the offender to associate and communicate freely with his fellow kinsmen.

It is on this note that we conclude discussion on the physical visible realm. We shall now turn to the spiritual underpinning the physical world.

**The Spiritual Realm:**
According to indigenous Mba clan, the spiritual realm denotes the above of the Supreme Being, the gods, the ancestors and other spirit beings. These, the people referred to as the inhabitants of the spiritual, invisible world. For Mba clan, the spiritual realm is called *alammuo* or *alagbara*. In the order of their hierarchy, the most important spirit being found in the Mba clan cosmology is Chineke (God, the creator of the universe). According to Amaele (2000, p. 10), Onyeweuwa (owner of the universe) is also another name attributed to Supreme Being not only in Mba clan, but also in other clans of Etche. Thus, Chineke or Onyeweuwa is believed to be the one that brought everything into being. All beings in the physical, visible world are said to own their existence to Him. The belief in Chineke and the knowledge of Him is aptly expressed in myths, proverbs, songs, names, pity-sayings, everyday speech, etc. Also, the names Mba clan gives to their children are
further proof to that fact. Such names include: Chikanka (God I thank you), Chinonso (God is nearby), Chigemezu (God will fulfill), Chimere (God made), Chukwuemeka (God has done well), Chibunna (God is father), etc. All these not only show His attributes and importance, but also affirm the people’s believe in His existence. Like many other African societies, the Mba clan do not approach Him directly. Rather, He is approached and worshiped through a network of intermediaries such as divinities and other spirit beings. In Mba clan and other clans of Etche, Chineke is conceived in masculine terms. This is because the indigenous Mba clan is a male dominated society. In other words, the society is completely patrilineal society. In such a patrilineal society, the Supreme Being is likely to be conceived as ‘Father’ (Amadi, 2016, p.93).

In what follows, we shall have a look at some of the divinities in the Mba clan pantheon.

**Ala Deity**

Outside the Supreme Being, the most important deity in the traditional Mba clan of Etche is Ala, the earth deity. Among the Mba clan, Ala is thought of not only as the mother of all ordinary Mba clan; but also as the oldest and most powerful of the deities. For instance, if a child accidentally slips from its mother’s hand and falls to the earth, she quickly reaches for the child, then touches the earth with her palm and rubs it on the baby’s head. As she does this, she addresses the earth: Ala *egbule, obunwagi* (“Earth, do not kill, this is your child”).

Ala is the sustainer of social groups at all levels, and is angered by anything that threatens the unity and harmony of such groups. Hence she is seen as the ultimate guardian of Mba clan moral code. In traditional Mba clan, offences relating to kingship ties such as incest, adultery, and those relating to human relationship such as murder, sorcery, stealing, etc. are considered as *aru* (abominations) against Ala, and the cleansing of the land for such
abominable offences generally involves cleansing or placating the earth deity in a ritual know as ikwala or ifoju ala.

In indigenous Mba clan, whether these offences are committed in public or are shrouded in secrecy, the earth is believed to be able to detect them. Hence, the saying: Ala ma onye ruru ya, onye ruru ala makwa oheya (“the earth knows the evil doer, the evil doer knows himself”). Thus, whether a sin against the earth is immediately followed by punishment or punishment is delayed for longer than expected, punishment is regarded as inevitable and in most cases it is followed by confessional statements.

At this point, I will like to cite one instance to buttress this fact. Between 1979 and 1982, a story was told of a middle aged woman in her prime who hereafter will be addressed to as ‘Mrs. Y’ went to Arochukwu in Abia State to procure a poison prepared for her from one popular medicine man to kill her husband, who hereafter will be referred to as ‘Mr. Z’. When she returned to the house, she carefully applied the concoction into her husband’s food as she was instructed. Four weeks later, Mr. Z fell ill and died thereafter. (Here, it should be noted that murder is considered an abomination against the earth which requires elaborate placatory ritual).

Perhaps realizing the grievous nature of the offence she had committed and the attendant humiliation she would receive from relations and friends alike, she eloped with her wealthy concubine to Lagos State. However, sometime in 1982, Mrs. Y took ill and was inflicted with strange boils all over her body. She became seriously ill that all medicine men and herbalists in Lagos were invited, yet none could proffer solution to her illness. Eventually, Mrs. Y died, just before she gave up the ghost, she had shamelessly confessed of how she poisoned Mr. Z. For the clan, this case proved beyond reasonable doubt the super-human power and knowledge of the earth deity.
Next to Ala are the ancestors. The Mba clan names for the ancestors are *Ndi-ochie* (those of old), *Ndinnayiwe* (our fathers), *Ndingbaka* (the people of the old). Thus, in Mba clan religious thought, these names are preserved only for those deceased elders who lived exemplary lives, left behind wives, children (male and female), lived to a ripe old age and died a ‘good death’; and more importantly were accorded full burial rites that ushers them into the ancestral bliss.

Thus, they are regarded as the benevolent forefathers; the nearest and closets to man. Among the Mba clan, *Ndi-ochie* are considered to have keen interest in the affairs of their living descendents which is why they are regarded as the watchdog of their lineages. In most cases, the ancestors not only warn the people of an impending doom, but also have power to influence the life of their living kith and kin for good or bad.

In indigenous Mba clan, the preferred custodian of *Ndi-ochie* cult is the oldest male member of the family (*okwara*) who qualifies as *Nwadiala* or *Nwafor*. In Mba clan, reckoning, an individual is considered *diala* or *Nwadiala* or *Nwafor* (i.e. full member of the lineage) If he can trace his descent in an unbroken paternal line to the progenitor of his lineage, and more importantly, if his father had paid the bride price. *Nwohu* (slave), *umunwaosula* (outcasts), *nwa ala eshi* or *nwa amuru na eshi* (bastard or born out of wedlock) are not eligible to assume the custodian of ancestral cult. The okwara (most senior person in the family) whose authority emanates from *ndi-ochie* is vested on *ofo*, a symbol of ancestral presence and authority. With this staff of justice and authority, the okwara approaches the *ndi-ochie* at the ancestral shrine on behalf of his household for good health, fertility and bountiful harvest, etc.

The deity most closely associated with the existence and fortunes of the individual is *Chi*. Among the Mba clan, *Chi* has two split entities namely, *ekere-uwa* or *ekem* (personal god of destiny), and *chiuwa* (the personal or
individual god that protects and controls individual’s life). Although, each individual has his or her chi deity even at that a person is supposed to attain certain level of maturity before he or she sets up its shrine. In Mba clan, it is believed that the shrine of one’s chi is not meant to be exposed before the public. This also explains why it is not always publicly known when one placates his chi. The items used to sacrifice to chi usually include, cock, and goat. Significantly, it creates the harmony between the individual and their chi; to forestall unpleasant life experiences such as death, illness and general ill-luck emanating from activities of ubiquitous evil spirit and angry gods. Thus, it is a means of energizing and making one’s chi efficacious and active. The individual depends primarily on his chi for protection, good health, favour and fortune. He thanks his chi for achievements and successes, and it is equally his chi that he blames for his failures. Chi, underpins and dominates the life of the individual. For instance, if an individual intends to embark upon a new venture he must first consult his chi and seek its consent. Thus, if he wished to embark on a more strenuous journey, he first goes to the shrine of his chi and pray thus:

*Chim durum je ije iya*  
My chi guide me on this journey  

*Nchoro ijeni*  
I intend to embark upon  

*Wepu rum he ojoo*  
Remove all impediments  

*Kega ino shirim uzo*  
that may impede my way  

*Njelo nahu ishike*  
If I go and come back in good health  

*Ejim oke okpa bi ikelegi*  
I will thank you with a cock  

This underscore the place of chi in the individual in Mba clan religious thought (Anaele, Emmanuel, 20/10/2019, oral interview).

Apart from this, reincarnation is another important indigenous beliefs and practices that consummate Mba clan religious world-view. Generally, Tasie, G.I.K (1999, p.213) defines re-incarnation as the belief that after physical death, the soul of the deceased returns to earth in successive new
forms or bodies. In much the same vein, re-incarnation, according to Tasie G.I.K and Amadi, Emmanuel Echezolochi (2013, p. 88), “is an important element of traditional African belief used especially to assert and deny death; and to explains what happens to the dead in hereafter”.

Similarly, the indigenous Mba clan also strongly believe that death is not the termination of life but rather a transition from physical to the spiritual world; and a continuation of life thereafter. Among the indigenous Mba Clan, it is believed that re-incarnation fulfills the law of cause and effect; meaning that life is all about sowing and reaping. Affirming this, Tasie, argues that the ethical character of a person’s actions determine his mode of existence in his next re-incarnation. According to him, whatever one does in this world, he will reap in equal measures in his next re-incarnation.

According to Okaba, B. (1997, p. 147), “re-incarnation is akin to the law of karma which may also be described as the law of cause and effect”. This is akin to an Indian proverb which says “who plants mangoes, mangoes shall he reap, who plants thorns and hushes shall wound his feet”

In Mba clan religious thought, a person can re-incarnate as many times as possible. It is also believed that everybody is entitled to re-incarnation. Here, the young and the old, the poor and the rich, the good and the bad can re-incarnate. They also believe in bad re-incarnation which is attributed to one’s evil misdeeds in his previous life. It is this type of re-incarnation that the people referred to as he heojouwa. Whereas good re-incarnation is one in which a cherished departed member of the family is reborn for the continuation of his good deeds. Here, it is believed that such a person must have been free from all disabilities, have lived an exemplary life and have died a good death.

Among the Mba Clan people, the belief in re-incarnation is very strong and is supported not only in the names the people give to their children such as
Enyinna (his father’s friend), Nnenna (father’s mother), Ogonna (his father’s in-law), but also in the people’s daily speeches and expressions such as a woman wishing to be a man, the poor wishing to be rich in their next re-incarnation, etc. Among the Mba clan people, the significance of re-incarnation cannot be over emphasized. It helps to mould people’s character. It also acts as check for people to live a morally accepted life. It is a source of comfort in the sense that it helps to ameliorate the pain and blow associated with death. Consequently, re-incarnation is an important vehicle through which the ancestors physically return to human world as a new born to perpetuate their linage.

Following closely to this is taboo. Among the Mba clan people, the word for taboo is nsoala. It encapsulates the dos and don’ts, the acceptable and unacceptable of the clan. There are different kinds of taboo among the Mba clan. Such taboos associated with the social life of the people, divinities, sacred specialists (priests, traditional medicine men), sacred places and things (shrines, animals or objects). Among the Mba clan, it is forbidden for a man to throw away the belongings of the wife outside, especially the ‘eki-igwe’ (tripod). Among the clan such act signifies divorce. Also killing and eating of animals such as eke (python), aturu (sheep), etc is forbidden while sexual act in the farm is forbidden. Eke, Orie, Afor and Nkwo are markets days and are believed to be associated with some divinities. For example, nkwo (the first day in Akpoku traditional week) is considered sacred and set aside for the worship of Ushi deity of Akpoku, Afor (the first day in Umuoye traditional week) is earmarked for the worship of Afor-ukwu deity of Umuoye, etc. Also, during these sacred days certain activities and occurrences such as death, fighting or farming are considered to be taboo. The essence of this is to ensure for the harmonious existence among the clan.

In addition to this is oath taking. Among the Mba clan, the word for oath is iduishi. Oaths are taking by emblems or symbols of the ancestors, Ala (Earth
goddess), etc. Significantly, it is used to detect moral offenders (thieves, murderers, sorcerers,), etc. It is also used to seal agreements, pacify warring clans and inter-clans conflict. Deities such as *Ekiyi, Onyeka* (custodians of Mba clan public morality), *Ajokuji* and *Ikenga* (patron deities of farmers and men’s success have gone down the drain due to the presence of forces of agents of modern change)

**Modern Changes in World-view.**

Over the last hundred years, the forces of social change such as Christianity, western education, urbanization, western legal and judicial system, etcetera have had adverse impact on the world-view and religious life of Mba clan people. Starting with those aspects of the Mba clan world-view most closely tied to the visible, tangible world, we many observe that modern changes have given at least the Mba clan youths of present generation radically new concept of time as they are coming to see time in a more abstract fashion, as running in a continuous line from an immensely distant past, through the present into an infinite future.

Turning to the more spiritual aspect of the world-view, we have to highlight the influence of Christianity. In their evangelistic strategy, the Christian missionaries have succeeded to weakening not only the cults of *chi*, but also the cults of deities such as *Ajokuji, Ikenga* (the patron gods of farmers and man’s success and achievements), etc. The net result of this is that many deities have gone into extinct and some shrines such as that of *Ekiyi, Onyika*, etc have been overgrown by weeds. Apart from this, those who embraced the new religion have denounced the idea of giving names of their children after the gods such as Nwagwu, Nwagbara, Nwaushi, etc. For them, this is tantamount to their faith. Thus, the ancestral cult is hold in proxy. Those who are supposed to assume the office according to customs and tradition, have embraced the religion. Traditional instruments of social control such as oath-taking that was used to detect murderers, thieves, sorcerers, etc have been declared illegal by the modern courts and judicial system.
However, in spite of the devastating influence of these agents of modern change, some aspects of Mba clan world-view have remained intact with little change till modern time. Starting from the physical, visible world, we may observe that the Mba clan traditional months (*onwa*) are still observed by both the Christians and the traditionalists especially during the farming periods. They do not undermine the significance of each of these months in their socio-cultural life. For instance, the *onwu-mbo* and *onwa-abonafor* (the first and second Mba clan months), still remains the period when the fallowed land is shared among adults males and married women who claim descent through the male line from the lineage founder. In Mba clan world-view, man (*manu*) till date is still hold in high esteem and human life is still considered sacrosanct. More importantly, murder is still frowned at as Christians in their teachings and sermons uphold the sanctity of life and in strong terms condemns murder. Also, belief in recantation is still strong among the Mba clan. Both Mba clan Christians and traditionalists still bears names like Ogonna (his father’s in-law), Eyinna (his father’s friend), etc.

From the above, it is clear that in spite of the ravaging impact of Christianity with its concomitant features (western education, western legal and judicial system), etc some aspects of indigenous Mba clan world-view have remained resilient and continued to be relevant in the modern era.

**Conclusion**

This essay examined the continuities and discontinuities in traditional Mba clan of Etche world-view. In indigenous Mba clan world-view two things are worthy of note. First, we observed that Mba clan people order their spiritual world in such a way that each deity is occupied with a particular role that is descriptive of its nature, attribute and character. This departmentalization has enabled the deities to live and function cordially devoid of friction. Second, their world-view is akin to a lens through which they interpret and control the world around. More importantly, both the spiritual and the physical realms cannot exist or function independent of
the others. Though, changes have occurred in some aspects of Mba clan world-view due to the presence of agents of modern change: Christianity, western education, western legal and judicial system, etc. In spite of this, some aspects of indigenous Mba clan world-view is still strong and relevant.

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