

zur Erde (als Merkmal chthonischer Wesenheit) zu beziehen. Der Ödipusmythos beansprucht als eine Form symbolischer Auseinandersetzung um das intrikate Problem der autochthonen Genesis des Menschen hierbei einen der vorderen Ränge – auch angesichts einer sehr umfangreichen wissenschaftlichen Rezeptionsgeschichte, wobei die unterschiedlichsten Interpretationen diverser Disziplinen zu diesem Thema immer wieder deutlich machen, daß der Ödipusmythos nicht monokausal auf den Aspekt eines inzestuösen Mutter-Sohn-Konfliktes zu reduzieren ist (vgl. dazu auch Bischof 1989: 412 ff.). Zu dieser Diskussion wesentliche Positionen von seiten der Ethnologie beigeleitet zu haben, stellt das bleibende Verdienst der Arbeiten von Claude Lévi-Strauss dar.

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Kwe-Names and the Complementary Dual Concepts in Igbo

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1 Introduction

The verb *kwe* has been noted to be prolific in the derivation of de-sentential personal names in Igbo. A pattern seems to be set in the derivation of these names: several of them involve the Igbo complementary dual concepts, with the full involvement of both member concepts in some cases and the involvement of only the second member concepts in the other cases.

This paper attempts to account for both the full involvement of both member concepts and the involvement of only the second member concepts (as the case may be) in *kwe*-names.

1.1 Kwe-Names in Igbo

The personal names associated with the verb *kwe* ("agree," "consent," "obey," "accept") are referred to here as *kwe*-names.¹ These names though relatively few, in number, are borne (more as surnames) by a good number of the contemporary Igbo. This suggests that in the past these names were as significant as those personal names associated with concepts like *Chi*, *Ekè*, deities, and cosmic forces, which are rooted in Igbo cosmology.

Most of the *kwe*-names are derived from "subjunctive" sentences while the rest are derived from "factive," "interrogative," and "negative" sentences. However, *kwe*-names within the scope of this paper are those that have the complementary dual concepts as "subjects," all of which are derived from "subjunctive" sentences.

1.2 Complementary Dualities in Igbo

In his discussion on the Igbo "worldview of complementary states of being," Nwoga (1984b: 22) observes that one thing that is easily decipherable in Igbo speech is the tendency to combine two elements, and that this goes straight into the nature of Igbo thought about the manifestation of reality.

¹ I am very grateful to Dr. A. N. Ebeogu for reading through the first version of this paper and making useful corrections. In this paper low tones (‘) and downstep tones (˘) are overtly represented while high tones are unmarked.