



## Symbols in the Shrine of *Ushi* Deity of Akpolu Etche in South-South Nigeria

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**Abstract.** This essay focuses on symbols in the shrine of *Ushi* deity of Akpoku Etche. The paper posits that symbols found in the shrine of *Ushi* deity are classified into the following groups: Artistic symbolism, symbolism of vegetable materials, symbolism of constructed images and objects, and communicative symbolism. The paper argues that symbols in the shrine of *Ushi* deity has helped to create a medium for communion and communication among the devotees on one hand, and between them and the object of worship on the other hand. The paper also contends that these symbols are like the hub which connect and link the devotees of *Ushi* deity to the supersensible world. The methodology adopted was oral interviews (reports of the devotees of *Ushi* deity and handed down tradition from the custodians of Akpoku custom and tradition) and secondary sources (published materials). The study adopts phenomenological approach to describe and interpret the symbolic interaction between the devotees and the object of worship. The study also adopts “symbolic interactionism” as theoretical frameworks. Finding reveals that through these symbols the devotees enter into a relationship with the supersensible world.

**Keywords:** Akpoku, *Ushi* deity and Symbols.

### 1. Introduction

In Akpoku Etche, *Ushi* deity occupies an important place in the life of the people. Among the deities, *Ushi* is regarded as the most influential and most powerful divinity. Thus, he is the only deity which people make use of the advantage of his omnipresence in moments of distress, injustice, accusations, difficulties and victimizations. In fact, his potentials always reflect in the people’s daily speeches. As a god of justice, he descends swiftly on moral offenders such as sorcerers, those who commit incest and those who kill and eat sacred

animals dedicated to him. In consequence of this, he is feared by all among the people.

Two factors motivated the researchers’ interest in pursuing this study. The first was to examine the functions of symbols in the shrine of *ushi* deity and the second was to see how this has helped to create the avenue for communion and communication between the devotees and the object of worship.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Akpoku is located at the North-margin of Niger-Delta having boundaries with Umuoye Etche and Unuekwuene Ngor-Okpala in Imo State. On the East with Mba clan of Etche, Okehi clan of Etche, Obite Etche, Opehi, Umuikoro and Orishieze Ngor-Okpala in Imo State. On the South with Odufor, Nihi, Opiro and Egwi Etche and the West with Ozuzu clan of Etche. The town itself is made up of six villages namely, Umuoria, Umuaghara, Ummekwuene, Umuorde, Umudim and Okomoko which are bounded by common ancestry. At present, Akpoku is one of the towns that make up Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State (Amadi, 2025, p. 416).

As for their economic life, the people of Akpoku are predominantly farmers. They engage in tapping of palm wine, fishing, hunting, but the most important are yam and cassava which are planted in large qualities.

As a people located within the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, they experience the normal Niger Delta climate condition with the two main seasons namely, the rainy season and dry season. They rainy season takes place between March and November, the dry season occurs between November and February.

As regards their spiritual life, Akpoku strongly believe in the existential reality of a Supreme Being

to which the people refer to as Chineke (The God who created everything in the universe). Akpoku, like other traditional African societies, do not approach Him directly, rather He is approached and worshipped through the pantheon of divinities (Amadi, 2025, p. 417).

### 1.2 Research Methodology

This study was carried out as an interview – based research. Two types of oral investigation procedures were utilized viz:

- Reports of devotees of *ushi* deity of Akpoku about role of symbols.
- Handed down tradition about meaning of role of symbols.

There were certain issues that were taken into account in selecting the interviewees and some of the considerations are: the position of the informant in the society; the cultural organization he/she belongs to and the position or title he/she holds; the level of the interviewee’s cultural affinity; education, social exposure, travel history, and so on. Those who were culturally rooted in the practices of the local community were found to be better versed in the tradition and cultural practices of the people.

### 1.3 Theoretical Framework

The study adopted “symbolic interactionism” theory. The proponents of this theory include, George Herbert Mead, Herbert Blumer and Roynolds (1995). According to these scholars, the interaction between people or a group of people in relation to things within their environments are based on the meanings attributed to those things. According to them, the things (whether, objects, images, etc.) which form the basis of interaction between people and their environments are the brain child of those who make use of them. According to them, the basis of this theory is that it helps people to communicate and interact with their environments (p. 245).

## 2. Symbols

Schmidt (1913) opined that there has not been a generally accepted definition of what a symbol is. Scholars, theologians, and leaders of thought in various spheres of life, offer and articulate their own theories about what they consider as a definition of symbol, and what each and every one of them offers in most cases is coloured by his religious experience and philosophical leaning (p. 121). A Cohen (1974) defines symbols as objects, acts, relationships and linguistic formations that stand ambiguously for a multiplicity of meaning. This definition indicates that there are different symbolic forms and that it is possible for one symbolic form to be given several

interpretations and these interpretations could be given at different levels, depending on the level of the interpreter’s consciousness and intelligence. According to him, what a particular object symbolizes for people “A” at time “A” may be different from that of people “B” in culture at time “B” and vice versa.

Benjamin Ray (1976) as cited in “*Ofo*”, Igbo Ritual Symbols, says that African traditional religious symbols are potent store house of information, and crucial factors in the activity field, the total of these ritual symbols, whether they be gods, ancestors, sacred actions or objects which make up the traditional universe, provide a network of symbolic forms uniting social, ecological and conceptual elements into locally bounded systems; to re-enact the deeds of the gods to become possessed by divinities to manipulate sacred worlds, is to conform experience to normative patterns of meaning, and thereby to control, and renew the shape and destiny of the world. For Kemdirim (1997) it means ritual symbol or sacred objects which are used for religious worship. According to him, as religious or sacred objects, symbols direct attention, awaken response and guide behaviour in dealing with realities too complex, intimate or otherwise in accessible to precise definition (p. 125). Similarly, symbol for Tasie (2013) is a word which has come to mean different things to different people and which for him is used in a wide variety of contexts. In the physical sciences, symbols according to Tasie are mere representations of ideas by the use of signs, in literature and art symbols are artistic inventions to express sensually ideas, emotions, attractions in place of realism (p.37). Webster’s Dictionary (2007) defines symbol as something concrete that represents or suggest another thing that cannot in itself be pictured (p.276). Thus, symbols are therefore, something presented to the senses which stand for something else. They are not the actual things but have the character of making people have full conceptualization of the reality through a conscious association. That is why Anyacho (1994) in Valency (1988) defines symbols as “something associated with something else that signifies or represents they not only serve as a uniting factor among members of a religious group but also it helps the members of a religious group to identify themselves easily and fight for their faith (pp. 22 – 23).

According to Ejizu, C.I. (1986), religious symbols have aroused the greatest interest on account of their unique ability to manifest the sacred, to encompass a multitude of structurally coherent meaning, and to reveal the continuity of human existence and cosmic structure. Nabofa, (1994), defines symbols as “an over expression of what is behind the veil of direct perception” According to him, it is quite usual for a

perceiver to express his inner experience, sight or visions and mystical or religious experience in symbols. Words, myths, proverbs, parables, icons-masks as he further noted are powerful and enduring symbols for conveying religious truth (p. 4). Otite (1979) sees symbol as “agents which are impregnated with messages and with invitation to conform and to act when decoded in their social and cultural context, they are found to have both cognitive and emotional meaning” (p.33). Symbol can be defined as a mark or character used as a conventional representation of an object, function or process, thing that represents or stands for something else, a material object representing abstract. A symbol is a mark, sign or word that indicates, signifies or represents an idea, object or relationship. Here, symbols allow people to go beyond what is known or seen by creating linkages between otherwise different concepts and experiences. Communication as a matter fact is achieved through the use of symbols. For instance, on maps, blue lines often represent rivers, while red rose often symbolizes love and compassion; numerals are symbols for numbers, as letters of an alphabet may be symbols for certain phonemes ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/symbol](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/symbol) retrieved 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 1pm).

Thus, symbol may be further defined as something that stands for or suggests something else by reason of relationship, association, convention or accidental resemblance especially a visible sign of something invisible, an arbitrary or conventional sign used in writing or printing relating to a particular field to represent operations, quantities, elements, relations or qualities, an object or act representing something in the unconscious mind that has been represented; an act, sound or object having cultural significance and the capacity to excite or objectify a response ([www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com) extracted 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 12am).

According to Onyeidu, (2001), symbols could be defined as something that represents something else. As for Ngozi (2005), symbols are representative concepts, objects, ideas or images which express and signify something else other than that which is perceived or observed in reality, mediums or channels which act on behalf of other things. As for its characteristics, symbol has a multiplicity of meaning in the sense that most symbols do not resemble the objects they are intended to symbolize, while some of them could express more than one idea at a time. While some symbols are visible and concrete and can be seen and handled, others are less visible. This explains why symbols are often difficult to decode and interpret whereas only those who make and use such symbols could know their value and meaning. The use of symbols is extensive in religion. This is mainly because religious

experience deals with two worlds at the same time, the world of space and time where we live and move, and the unseen world which cannot be easily located. Here, religious symbols serve as illustrations, pointers and bridges through which religious people participate simultaneously in both worlds. Also, religious beliefs and practices involve numerous no-concrete elements that cannot be empirically demonstrated. Such elements include God, gods, ancestors, angels, heaven and hell, ghosts, and so on. These elements are not visible and tangible, and so they are represented in religious symbols in order to create the avenue by which worshipers enter into a relationship with the supersensible world.

Symbolism varies from one religion to another. This also explains why important symbols in one religion could be meaningless to the adherents of another religion. For instance, in Christianity, the most significant symbols include the cross, baptisms, confirmation and the Lord’s Super. To non-Christians, all these do not mean much; but for Christians they mean a lot. Similarly, Muslims regard the Kaaba, the Crescent, and the performance of ritual ablutions before prayers as sacred symbols. In African Traditional Religion, symbolism is more pronounced because the religion is replete with symbols of numerous deities, the ancestors, and cults objects. These symbols range from sticks and stones to real works of art. They include images and irons of different descriptions, carved sticks, and drawings of walls, horns and bones of animals, feathers of rare birds, and leaves of some sacred trees. These forms (i.e. symbols) whether they are human, animal, vegetable, or mineral are not regarded as God; they are symbols to make the presence of God and the ancestors felt in the place of worship (p. 12).

Consequently, symbols, whether they are religious or not have the same basic characteristics and functions. They are like hub which connect and link up religious ideologies, experiences and focus of the group. Without the use of symbols, it would have been impossible for human beings to have a religion, to understand, or comprehend their beliefs. According to Beven (1940), religion cannot dispense without symbols for its apprehension and expression (p. 15). Take away the symbols and there would be no religion worthy of the name. Indeed, the whole process of comprehension and description of religion is possible because we employ religious symbols. In the remaining section of this essay we shall be examining the symbols in the shrine *ushi* deity. Symbols found in the shrine of *ushi* deity can be classified into the following groups: Artistic symbolism, symbolism of vegetable materials, symbolism of constructed images and objects, and communicative symbolism.

## 2.1 Artistic Symbolism

### *Ite-nja* (pot)

*Ite-nja* is small round pot made of clay. There are two of these miniature pots in the shrine of *ushi* deity. According to my interviewee, Anele Sabastine each of these pots is placed at the foot of *akwu* (silk cotton tree) and *uha* tree respectively. Each contains *mmangwo* (palm wine), *abii* (manila), *odo* (native yellow chalk), with strings of *omu nkwi* (palm fronds) tied round each of them. The wine in those pots according to Anele Sabastine is not ordinary. It is believed that wine taken from those pots has the potency of making the barren conceive and even heal those who are having severe stomach ache and head ache, etc. On *nwko* the sacred day of worship, offerings of kola-nuts, alligator pepper, etc are made to those pots. In the shrine of *ushi* deity each of these pots symbolically, represents the deities *Nwichi* and *Nwana ushi*. In the shrine of *ushi* deity the above-mentioned god/deities are believed to be *ushi* subordinates and invisible messengers.

### *Ibechi nma* (cutlass)

The *Ibechinma* is another known symbolic object of *ushi* deity. The *Ibechi nma* is an old blunt cutlass. It is placed in the front of *anyanwu ushi* deity. *Anyanwu ushi* deity denotes a place in the shrine of *ushi* deity where offerings, prayers, sacrifices, etc are performed during worship and other rituals associated with the cult of *ushi* deity. It is also a place where *ushi* deity receives sacrifices and offerings during his annual festival. It is believed to be the most sacred. The cutlass is the manifestation of *ushi's* wrath and anger. Symbolically, it represents *ushi's* weapon of war and punishment. It is believed that *ushi's* cutlass offers spiritual protection for the devotees against danger and unseen evils. With the cutlass *ushi* deity swiftly descends on moral offenders such as sorcerers, and those who kill and eat sacred animals dedicated to him (Anele, S. 05/05/2025, oral interview).

### *Igwe Ushi* (Iron)

*Igwe ushi* deity, as it is often called, is another important symbolic object of *Ushi* deity. There are two of these iron in the shrine of *Ushi*. They are black and oblong in nature. usually the two irons are kept in the main house of *Ushi* deity due to their sacredness. They feature prominently during worship. Owing to their sacredness no one touches or holds them other than the priest of *Ushi*. On worship day, one is placed at the door step of the main house of *Ushi*, while the other is placed in the *obiri* (hut) of *Ushi* deity between the priest and the devotees of *Ushi* deity. The iron placed at the

doorstep of the main house *Ushi* deity symbolizes danger and no go area. Whereas the other one that is placed in the hut of *Ushi* deity between the priest and the devotees of *Ushi* deity symbolizes a demarcation between the spiritual, invisible realm and the physical, visible realm, it also symbolizes the demarcation between the sacred and the profane; a demarcation between *Ushi* and his devotees.

### *Oji* (Rattle)

*Oji*, (rattle) is another important symbolic object of *Ushi* deity. Usually, it is kept in the main house of *Ushi* deity due to its sacredness. Like the iron, no one touches or holds it other than the priest of *Ushi* deity. The coming of the priest of *Ushi* deity in most cases is usually heralded by the hitting of the rattle on the floor of the shrine of *Ushi* for three consecutive times. This immediately invokes solemn silence in the shrine of *Ushi*. But in actual sense this was a pre-ritual exercise to make the presence of *Ushi* deity felt in the shrine. Symbolically, the hitting of the rattle on the floor of the shrine is to bring about order and calmness among the devotees. On the other hand, it also symbolizes the staff of *Ushi* deity. Thus, it is believed to be imbued not only with spiritual powers, but also offers protection for the priest against danger and unseen evils.

### *Igbe-agbara*

*Igbe-agbara* is another important artistic symbol found in the shrine of *Ushi*. It is a sizeable wooden box. Because of its sacredness it is always kept in the main house of *Ushi* deity. The box contains most of the ritual objects of *Ushi* deity. For instance, in the box are *ofo*, wrapper, white saucer, feathers, kola-nuts, alligator pepper, *odo* (native yellow chalk) *npi* (drinking horn), etc. It symbolizes the store house of *Ushi* deity.

### *Ekwe* (wooden gong) and *Igbigbo* (metal gong):

They both serve the same purpose and function. They feature prominently during the *Ushi* annual festival. The two act as percussion instruments. During *Ushi* annual festival, they are beaten to notify the worshippers of *Ushi* deity for the date scheduled for the celebration of *Ushi* annual festival. Symbolically, they remind the worshippers of *Ushi* deity about the imminence of *Ushi* festival.

## 2.2 Symbolism of Vegetable Materials

### *Ofo* (staff of justice and authority)

This is another symbolic object of *Ushi* deity. It is a sacred piece of stick believed to be imbued with ancestral or spiritual powers. It is thus regarded as the most sacred because of its multiplicity of

functions. It is believed that it mediates between the spiritual and visible realms. It is regarded as a channel or medium of prayer by the priest during rituals, sacrifices, and offerings to the deity.

In the shrine of *Ushi* deity, *ofo* always goes with *ogu* as its adjunct. It is believed that to hold *ofo* and *ogu* means to be complete on the side of justice. In the shrine of *Ushi* deity *ofo* is regarded as a ritual for oath-taking, used in cleansing of taboos and abominations, settlement of cases. Thus, *ofo* here features prominently during administering of oaths, settlement of cases, etc during the *Ushi* annual festival. Symbolically, it denotes justice and

authority. In the shrine of *Ushi* deity, hitting *ofo* on the ground of *anyanwu ushi* symbolizes the presence of *ushi* deity and other spiritual beings of the land. It also symbolizes sealing of prayers during worship. There are family or lineage *ofo* and personal *ofo*. There is another type of *ofo* used by the priests, medicine men and diviners. It is this type of *ofo* Ejizu described as professional *ofo*. *Ogu* on the other hand, is believed not only to compliment *ofo*, but also makes it to be more effective. This further explains why the two always go together. Below is an example of the rendition that goes with *ogu* as said by the priest during worship:

*Ushi Nn 'm Akpoku*  
*Ekelele 'm gi taa bu nkwo*

*Ushi* deity, the god of our fore fathers of Akpolu.  
I salute you today, being *nkwo* your sacred day of worship.

*Ta ana 'm ariogi ahu isike,*  
*Aku-nuba n' Chekwa, n, udo*

Today I ask that you grant us good health, wealth, protection and peace.

*We tuo ne etiti nyi, onye*  
*n 'shi, ogbumanu, onye oshe*  
*agii huru 'm bia kwa gi,*  
*gbu 'm m, nkwa la njo,*  
*chekw, m m, kwanma.*

Remove in our midst  
sorcerers, murderers, and criminals  
You have chosen me to be, your servant,  
strike me dead if I go the wrong way,  
but protect me when I am on the part of justice.

*Ngha la ugha gbuo 'm*  
*Nriale ngari gbuo 'm*

If I tell lies strike me dead  
If I take bribe strike me dead.

*Nkwocha nuru*  
*Onyika nuru*  
*Elu nuru ala nuru*

Let *Nkwoch* deity bear witness  
Let *Onyika* deity bear witness  
Let the sky bear witness, let the earth bear witness

*Nde nna anyi we larala nuru*

Let our departed ancestors bear witness

*Bia ta oji*

Come and eat kola

*Bia ta ose gi*

Come and eat your alligator pepper.

*Bia nuo ngwogi*

Come and drink palm-wine

*Bia kwa were okeokpa gi*

Come and take your cock

*Onye she heoma amasheya,*  
*gbukwaya, ihaa*

Anyone who abhors success  
and progress of his fellow, let  
the staff of justice and truth  
and its adjunct kill the fellow

(Amadi, J. 10/05/2025, oral interview).

### ***Oguruish* leaf (*Newbouldia laevis*)**

*Oguruish* leaf is another vegetable material found in the shrine of *Ushi* with rich symbolism. It features prominently during worship and in other rituals associated with *Ushi* deity.

It is placed on the ground during rituals. It is on this leaf that the *ofo* of *Ushi* deity is placed. According to my interviewee, Njoku Maurice, this is because considering the sacredness of *ofo* it is allowed not to touch the bare earth during rituals. Symbolically, *oguruish* leaf represents the wrapper of *Ushi* deity.

***Aboshi tree (Baphia nitida)***

This is another vegetable material noticeable in the shrine of *Ushi*. *Aboshi* tree, like the cutlass is the expression of *Ushi's* wrath and anger. It is regarded as *okpi Ushi* (that is *Ushi's* harmer). It is believed that *Ushi's* harmer offers protection for the worshippers against danger and unseen evils. With the harmer *Ushi* deity descends on moral offenders such as sorcerers, those who kill and eat sacred animals dedicated to him. It symbolizes *Ushi's* instrument of war and punishment.

**2.3 Symbolism of Constructed Images and Objects**

***Ihi-agbara (shrine)***

*Ushi* shrine is known for its multiplicity of purpose. It is a place where *Ushi* receives its sacrifices, rituals, prayers, offerings. It is also a place where religious objects or emblems of *Ushi* deity are found. The shrine is a place where *Ushi* annual festival is organized and celebrated. It is a place for administering of oath and settlement of cases. Thus, it also denotes a place where supplicants usually come to show gratitude to *Ushi* deity for the blessings, favour, protection, they have received from him. Apart from this, the shrine is also a place where the priest of *Ushi* deity receives his training and orientation and consecration into priesthood. In other words, it is a place of contact, communication and communion between the spiritual and visible realms and between *Ushi* deity, and his devotees. It symbolizes a holy and a sacred place; a meeting point between man and his fellow man on one hand and man and the spiritual beings on the other hand (Njoku, M. 15/05/2025, oral interview).

**2.4 Communicative Symbolisms**

**Song**

Song is an important communicative symbol of *Ushi* deity. In the shrine of *Ushi* deity, different types of songs are sung at different occasions. According to my respondent. Akanwa Mary, songs are sung on *nkwo* the sacred day of worship of *Ushi* deity, during *Ushi* annual festival, during the consecration of the priest into priesthood in honour of the deity. One peculiar aspect of *Ushi's* songs is that they have no group of singers or instrumentals. The singing is entirely the affair of one person often referred to as *ada-agbara* (daughter of the deity) who is also chosen by the deity. The only thing she uses or holds while singing is a particular kind of powder called Morning Rose. As she sings, she pours the powder on her white dress, on the priest, and in the air respectively. She sings while sitting down on a chair at a place designated for her in the shrine. Sometimes, she sings moving about from one end of the shrine to the other.

From all indications he sings with all amount of seriousness and with discernable sign of enthusiasm. There is moment of order, calmness, and quietude in the shrine as she sings. The songs are not only important, but also symbolic. Important in the sense that they are used to invoke or make the presence of *Ushi* deity felt at the place of worship. They are used to eulogize the deity, to describe his attributes, nature and character. They are also used to install an avenue of order and calmness. Moreover, they are also used to reveal his likes and his dislikes, weaknesses and strengths, and responsibilities. On the other hand, they illustrate a symbolic relationship between the deity and the worshippers, they also symbolize a means of communication and communion between the spiritual, invisible realm and the physical, visible realm, and between the deity and the devotees. Below is an example of a song sang during worship:

<i>Ushi lee onye ikpe nkwo m 'tor,</i>	<i>Ushi</i> deity, the impartial god,
<i>Ekelel 'm gi-oo</i>	I greet you
<i>Ushi lee onye eshiokwu</i>	<i>Ushi</i> deity, the god of truth,
<i>Eekele 'm gi-oo</i>	I greet you.
<i>Ushi lee onye nahu naututu 'n ahu nabali</i>	<i>Ushi</i> deity, the god that sees in the day and at night
<i>Ekelel 'm gi-oo</i>	I greet you
<i>Ushi lee onye 'n che obodo</i>	<i>Ushi</i> deity, the god that protects,

Ekele 'm gi-oo	I greet you
<i>Ushi lee onye ikpe nkwu 'm tor,</i>	<i>Ushi</i> deity, the impartial god,
<i>Ekele 'm gi-oo</i>	I greet you
Ushi lee onye eshiokwu	<i>Ushi</i> deity, the god of truth,
<i>Ekele 'm gi-oo</i>	I greet you
<i>Ushi lee onye nahu naututu 'n ahu nabali</i>	<i>Ushi</i> deity, the god that sees in the day and at night
Ekele 'm gi-oo	I greet you
<i>Ushi lee onye 'n che obodo</i>	<i>Ushi</i> deity, the god that protects,
<i>Ekele 'm gi-oo</i>	I greet you
<i>Ogbu Nwanna lee ee</i>	He who kill his brother,
<i>Ogbu Nwanna lee ee</i>	He who kill his sister,
<i>Chita kwa Ushi-oo</i>	should remember <i>Ushi</i> deity,
<i>Okpor nwanne ya Alagba ulor lee ee</i>	He who enters bed with his sister
<i>Chita kwa Ushi-oo</i>	should also remember <i>Ushi</i> deity
Onye omenshi, ordu, Isingbu lee ee	Sorcerer, who swore falsely
<i>Ya chita kaw Ushi-oo</i>	Should remember <i>Ushi</i> deity
<i>Ogbu nwanna lee ee</i>	He who kills his brother,
<i>Ogbu Nwanne lee ee</i>	He who kills his sister
<i>Chita kwa Ushi-oo</i>	Should remember <i>Ushi</i> deity,
<i>Okpor Nwanne ya</i>	He who enters bed with his sister
<i>Chita kwa Ushi-oo</i>	Should remember <i>Ushi</i> deity
<i>Onye omenshi, ordu, Isingbu lee ee</i>	Sorcerer, who swore falsely
<i>Ya chita kaw Ushi-oo</i>	should remember <i>Ushi</i> deity
<i>Ushi onwere enyi</i>	Does <i>Ushi</i> deity have a friend?
<i>Ordi-yoo</i>	No
<i>Ushi ewe enyi</i>	<i>Ushi</i> deity has no friend
<i>Ushi oma onye gburu manu, ee yoo</i>	Does <i>Ushi</i> deity know the one who kills? Yes

<i>Ushi ma onye gburu manu</i>	<i>Ushi</i> deity knows
<i>Ushio ma onye duru ishimkpu,</i>	Does <i>Ushi</i> deity know the one who swore falsely?
ee	yes
<i>Ushi ma onye duru,</i> <i>Ishi mkpu</i>	<i>Ushi</i> deity knows.
<i>Ushi ojieri ngari</i>	Does <i>Ushi</i> deity take bribe?
<i>Ordi-yoo</i>	No
<i>Ushi ana eri ngari</i>	<i>Ushi</i> deity does not take a bribe
<i>Ushi oji egbu neehwu</i>	Does <i>Ushi</i> deity strike without a cause?
<i>Ordi-yoo,</i>	No
<i>Ushi ana egbu Ehwu</i>	<i>Ushi</i> deity has no friend
<i>Ushi ewe enyi</i>	<i>Ushi</i> deity has no friend
<i>Ushio ma onye gburu manu,</i>	Does <i>Ushi</i> deity know the one who kills?
ee yoo	yes
<i>Ushi ma onye gburu manu</i>	<i>Ushi</i> deity knows
<i>Ushi oma onye duru ishimkpu,</i>	Does <i>Ushi</i> deity know the one who swore falsely?
ee	yes
<i>Ushi ma onye duru,</i> <i>Ishi mkpu</i>	<i>Ushi</i> deity knows.
<i>Ushi ojieri ngari</i>	Does <i>Ushi</i> deity take bribe?
Ordin-yoo	No
<i>Ushi ana eri ngari</i>	<i>Ushi</i> deity does not take a bribe
<i>Ushi oji egbu ne ehwu</i>	Does <i>Ushi</i> Deity strike without cause?
<i>Ordi-yoo, Ushi ana egbu ehwu</i>	No <i>Ushi</i> deity does strike without cause?

The above songs tell more of his attributes and responsibilities to the Akpoku people.

### 3. Conclusion

To re-assess the views of schools on “Symbolic Interactionism” theory, against the background of Akpoku with special reference to symbols in the shrine of *ushi* deity, we noticed that our date on symbols in the shrine of *ushi* deity of Akpoku, clearly falls in line with the theory. For instance, in the shrine of *ushi* of deity of Akpoku, the symbols has helped to create an avenue for communion and communication among the devotees on one hand,

and between them and the object of worship on the other hand. Therefore, in the shrine of *ushi*, the symbols which are like the hub has helped to connect the devotees of *ushi* deity to the other world.

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