

**THE SIGNIFICANCE, VALIDITY AND
IMPEDIMENTS OF POETRY TO THE NATION**

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INTRODUCTION

Poetry has always been a part of humanity. In fact, it's the basis on which humans exist. It's the rudiment of life and everything present within. It's the custom we live by here and it's also the language they speak in the void world. Poetry is everything you'd ever think of. Poetry is nature. Nature is the definition of God. And God is everything you see when your eyes and mind are open.

This article will be stating and expatiating on the Importance of poetry to repairing the worn out tissues of the nation, the extent at which it is genuine and the hindrances it faces.

Before we slide down the plane, it's very necessary we explain the concept '*Nation*'.

According to the English dictionary, *A nation is an historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, ethnicity and/or psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.*

There has always been a misconception about this. In a nutshell, I'd say, for instance, *Nigeria is a country. Nigerians are the nation.* We are what we refer to when we talk about the nation. And when I say 'we', I mean you, I, and the person seated next to you.

CHAPTER ONE

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF POETRY:

When you walk the night without a searchlight, what do you see? When you look up to the sun on a very bright noon, what message does your brain interpret? When you shine a light on your shadow and it disappears, what do you derive from that? When you sojourn through the forest and at a point you begin to scream, what would you say you've seen?

Poetry is everything: *fear, joy, pain, darkness, lust, desire, anguish, victory, love...* The list is endless. And this is why I wonder how poets ever run out of muse. The world is complex and the more you explore, the more you're left with undefined mysteries to unravel.

The importance of poetry to the nation begins with its ability to govern how we think, the way our body works, our view of the world and the way we relate with everything around us. Poetry is what makes you look into the mirror and realise that the very first step needed to change the world is to fix the reflection before you. Poetry is what makes you see the flaws in the society and speak about healing. Poetry is what ignites you to rebuke, criticize and fight evil even when you're very well convinced your voice won't be heard. Poetry is what makes you never stop advocating for change even with death hovering over you.

Poetry is what makes you understand what a mad man feels or thinks even when you've never ran out of your senses. Poetry is what makes you write about places you have never been to and provide working solutions you have never experimented.

Poetry is a synthetic conscience. It's what checks you each and every time and make sure you're on the very right track.

The significance of poetry cannot be overemphasized. And on this note, I'd say everyone should be a poet. Not necessarily you write poems, but think like a poet. It's what makes the world a good place to be and makes us what we Nigerians call ourselves: *Good people Great nation.*

CHAPTER TWO

THE VALIDITY OF POETRY:

Using the present look of things as a benchmark, it's obvious that the validity of poetry has reduced so drastically that what we enjoy now is what we will keep fighting for. Poetry today has always been at the edge of going extinct.

Music, Photography, Theatre art, Comedy and every other form of art cannot be compared to poetry based on their relevance. The appreciation poetry receives worldwide is at present nothing to write home about. And this is why many young talented word weavers keep their burning flames high for a while and later fade out.

In an attempt to tackle this, I wrote a post yesterday 21st of March, 2018 which happened to be the *World International Poetry Day* and shared it with my Facebook audience. The post reads:

"I was chatting with one of my friends back then (and when I say back then, I mean when poetry was still blazing hot on this space. People don't relax now). He told me poetry isn't for everyone. I told him he is not 'everyone'.

He started being a poet for a reason, but just like many others we see around us, he's become one of these random Facebook guys. Seriously if likes could exchange for dollar, he'd be a millionaire by now. But sorry, Uncle Mark is not that generous.

How far we go in life is often determined by the motive behind what we do. You can't be a poet if you're obsessed with monetary gain. It's all about passion and appreciating the gift of art.

For people like me, poetry is a means of expressing me to the best kind of audience. Not every one of us will win prizes worth millions, at least not now. That's why growth is essential.

So when I say Happy world poetry day, I'm wishing only the ones who have stayed 'woke', even against all odds."

We have very few poetry promoting platforms and individuals ready to invest fortune in the art. And left to me, the only remedy to this is to keep fighting our ways through and keeping our head above water.

Nevertheless, we cannot disregard the fact that larger percent of these problems are as result of our own mistakes. We ourselves as poets are to blame for most of the setbacks we face today and this will lead us to the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

THE IMPEDIMENTS OF POETRY:

Like I said above, most of these problems are prices we have to pay for mistakes we have made consciously or otherwise.

One of these problems is too much emphasis most poets place on ambiguity: lack of precision and accuracy. Most poets result to being ambiguous in an attempt to be deep. But the truth is there is a vast difference between these two. Depth has virtually nothing to do with being ambiguous. This has affected the rate at which poems are read and even understood by the audience. Your message can be clear, precise and yet, deep. This is why we have quite a number of figures of speech and poetics which you can artistically and brilliantly employ to stay aloft in your poems.

Another problem is our attempt at being grandiloquent just to show the audience how educated, exposed, enlightened and sagacious we are.

Here is an excerpt from my article titled *Poetry Is No Longer a Commercial Art*, published by *Tuck magazine* on June 28, 2016.

"If the total amount earned in a year by an experienced and acclaimed poet cannot commensurate with what an upcoming artist earns at a single musical show, then it should be unarguable that poetry is no longer a commercial art.

With such an evidential point above, we cannot completely disregard the widely known clause "Poets are poor". And at this particular juncture, there should not be any interference of doubt to this claim that poetry is now at loggerheads with the social market.

To begin with, poetry can be considered an old form of art. For instance, ninety-nine percent of the readers of poetry are poets themselves as you cannot possibly find the eyes of a neutral and average individual behind the verse of poetically weaved lines.

Most people prefer musical lyrics, riddle and jokes, even prose to poetry.

Why? It's impossible to say, the reason is far-fetched because poets themselves know the gravity of their grandiloquence."

(You can have access to the full content here <http://tuckmagazine.com/2016/06/28/poetry-no-commercial-art/>)

Moreover, there are certain restrictions harboured by most poets these days. I'm of the opinion that poetry is not only meant to right wrongs. Poetry is also meant for exploring various themes and styles ranging from lust, love, satire, humour, erotica etc.

Spoken word artists should take into consideration themes related to humour and lust. This will aid our effort at adapting poetry to the needs of social market. And the more poetry is accepted at events, radio programs, television shows and online channels, the more we'll be able to reach a larger audience.

CONCLUSION

It's high time we bridged the gap between poetry and the nation. The nation is us like it's has been earlier stated. The more we write away from the audience, the farther we are from achieving our primary aim which is maintaining good governance, peaceful environment and keeping the world a better place to live in.

To apprehend an enemy, you have to think like him because someday he will walk out of his shadow and that is when you'll be able to walk in through the loophole.

We cannot repair a fault from the distance. We cannot keep to using books as our only means of reaching out to people. This is why most magazines and journals have gone online. Internet is the language the world understands now. And the more the advancement of technology, the less people visit libraries and book stores.

The media is the tool we have to understand how it works so we can make the best use of it to achieve our aim.

Poetry is significant to the nation. This is why we have to restore its validity. And the only way to achieve this is to get rid of every impediment making it less appreciated, celebrated and accepted worldwide.

BIOGRAPHY OF THE WRITER



Oyedokun Micheal Adedotun Ace known as *Micheal Ace* is a poet, essayist and fiction/nonfiction writer from Osun State, currently living in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

His literary works have appeared & forthcoming on both local and foreign magazines and journals including *ACEworld Online Magazine*, *Praxis Magazine*, *Lunaris review*, *WRR*, *Kalahari Review*, *AFAS Review*, *Tuck Magazine*, *Expound Magazine*, *African Writer*, *Wildsound Review*, *Festival for poetry*, *Poets in Nigeria Quarterly Journal*, *Peregrine*, *Word Up 411*, *Black Pride Magazine*, *EGC*, *Pengician*, *Parousa Magazine*, *South African Diaspora*, *Ynaija*, *Naijaloaded* and many more.

His poem “*Do Not Come Home*” was selected as one of the best poems from around the world by *Wildsound review* in 2016.

He was a finalist of *Condolence.ng poetry competition* in 2017 with his poem “*Someone has written another poetry.*”

He was also appointed as the *Vice President, World Union of Poets- Nigeria* in 2016.

He has authored two poetry chapbooks titled “*Sermon From A Stammerer*”, and “*Scarlet Silk*”.

Micheal Ace is the founding editor of *ACEworld Online Magazine* and Chief publisher at *ACEworld Publishers*.

He is a poet who never stops learning and exploring. He believes so much in his own watchword, “*The world is too complex for a pen to remain idle*”