

Africa Today

She is the blind bowl-bearing beggar
Sitting on a roadside mound of gold
Yawning all day, yawning all night

America arrives, cleaves a chunk of the gold,
Drops a coin and some affronts, and passes;
Asia arrives, cleaves a chunk of the gold,
Drops a coin and some contempt, and passes;
Australia arrives, cleaves a chunk of the gold,
Drops a coin and some chuckle, and passes;
Europe passes, cleaves a chunk of the gold,
Drops a coin and some insult, and retires;

Then hail her own one-eyed leader:
He clears the bowl of the dropped coins,
Blames her plight on her slothfulness, and passes,
Belching all the way as his beggar-land yawns.

JOSEPH USHIE