

# The Igbo Concept of *Ojemba enweghi iro* in the Migration of the Igbo Indigenes

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**Abstract:** Migration is a common thing among the Igbo whose age long concept of *Ojemba enweghi iro* 'A traveller or a migrant does not have an enemy.' plays a central role in their belief that one must travel or migrate to survive. Achebe, in *No Longer at Ease* tells the story of Obi Okonkwo who travels to England and on his return, his people come with music and dance to welcome him at the Sea Port because it is a remarkable achievement that their son has travelled and returned from the white man's distant land. The Igbo migrants under an association, stay as a family knowing that a bunch of broom is more difficult to break than a stick of broom (a popular proverb in Igbo land). Technically, the Igbo see migration as a temporary self-exile knowing someday, they will return to their communities. Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* account of Okonkwo's exile to his maternal home for seven years after which he returns with his family to Umuofia is tantamount to the contemporary diasporic spirit of the Igbo nation. Simply put, migration for the Igbo nation is a culture; a culture that has been for centuries in view of the fact that the Igbo people are adventurous and believe in the belief of *Ojemba enweghi iro*. *Ojemba enweghi iro* preaches openness and uprightness so that the migrant and his hosts should be in peace for business to take place. The paper will therefore, build its argument on the present concept and arrive at conclusion after interrogating available literatures.

**Keywords:** *Ojemba enweghi iro*, Igbo Culture, Migration, Achebe

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## 1. Introduction

Achebe is most known for his numerous novels [1]. He also wrote a number of non-fictional works that address the social issues in his country. In one of these non-fictional works, Achebe sees the Igbo as a nation and not a tribe [2]. In his words, '...Igbo people might score poorly on the Oxford dictionary test for tribe...Now, to call them a nation...This may not be perfect for the Igbo, but it is close. 'On this rather cautious tone and notion by Achebe on what the Igbo are, one has a clear idea of the Igbo as a nation. Igbo language is the mother tongue of the five south-eastern states of Nigeria [10]. These states are: Anambra, Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo. Igbo language is also spoken in parts of Delta, Rivers, Edo, Benue, Cross River and Akwa Ibom States. It is spoken as first or second language by least 35 million people [10]. With this statistics, the Igbo world is a big nation with a large population that demand better economy for sustenance and may as a result, take to migration towards improving themselves.

Human Migration from one location to another has been the concern of International Organisation for Migration (IOM) since 1951 when it was established. As an inter-governmental organisation, it looks at the fate and wellbeing of migrants across the globe [14]. The Igbo nation, one of the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria is industrious and business oriented set of people who compete with one another for economic buoyance. One of the platforms for competition is on migrating to outside world other than the Igbo homeland for further studies and economic activities. The migrants remit money to their relatives to invest at home and take care of their social and economic needs.

In the early nineteen eighties in the old *Imo Broadcasting Service* (the then only radio station in the old Imo State now divided into Imo and Abia States in Nigeria), there was a very popular programme. It was called *Ojemba*. The programme entails a certain traveller from a particular part of Igbo land who moves from one community to the other in search of green pastures. That unique programme was a brilliant platform for the different cultures of the peoples of

the Igbo world to be showcased. Each week, Ojemba (the persona of the programme who metaphorically is called Ojemba 'The traveller' is found in a new community. He normally has a good rapport with his hosts but will eventually commit a cultural taboo which he will be made to appease the land after his struggles and arguments that he has done nothing bad. It was that educating programme that this researcher enjoyed when he was a child that has motivated this paper.

Migration in Igbo land is a culture. The Igbo leave their villages and go and live in another which may be very near (in fact, a neighbouring one) for the simple reason of engaging in a new venture they will not ordinarily achieve in their own villages. In other words, migration to the Igbo man is life. The Igbo man travels around in order to become much richer and come back home as a better man for his people to respect and love. *Ojemba enweghi iro* 'A traveller or a migrant does not have an enemy' is therefore, a cultural coinage which encourages the Igbo man to migrate for positive empowerment but to be mindful of the cultures of his hosts. The concept is didactic in the sense that it does not encourage any Igbo migrant to go and break his hosts' customs and traditions; rather, it teaches the morality that the visitor and his host must live in peace and that the peacefulness must be planted by the migrant. Put it differently, *Ojemba enweghi iro* is a paradox which reminds the migrant that though you may face enemies in the course of your migration and stay, notwithstanding, all effort must be made not to allow conflict to arise and when it does arise, the migrant is reminded to be the one to seek quick resolution just as the Radio Programme *Ojemba* alluded to ever did.

From the foregoing, it is clear that the present discourse is historical, geographical and therefore, diasporic in perspective. As a result of this, the paper agrees in principle with Senayon (2019:14) sentiment on the cause of migration be it voluntary or involuntary [22]:

Whether the consideration is connected to the absence of peace, or abundance, or economic opportunities, or propelled by persecution or natural disasters, the dispersal of people is generally tied to the search for that which is absent at home. The hope to access in the diaspora that that which is absent at home is in this case a search for power, which underscores how the question of survival and success between diasporas and their hosts is closely connected to power struggle.

Whichever one looks at it, the socio-cultural concept of *Ojemba enweghi iro* implies a way of addressing what is absent at home, on one hand, and on the other hand, addresses the question of power struggle with the intention to eke out livelihood that translates a better life than what is at the homeland. However, it must be stated that this paper hinges on the voluntary aspect of migration against the involuntary occasioned by 'hostile homeland conditions ranging from war to persecution to natural disasters to economic hardship, among others' [22]. It is also important to note that in the course of the paper some allusion has been made to Achebe's novels. In this case, migration, for instance

that which concerns Okonkwo migrating to his maternal home after committing a taboo will not be situated under voluntary migration, rather, a cultural migration that must be observed for peace to rain between the living and the ancestors. Achebe, chronicling his Igbo cultural and traditional worldview in his trilogy, *Things Fall Apart*, *Arrow of God*, and *No Longer at Ease* throws some light on the culture of the Igbo as it relates to exile, marriage, and death. A woman leaving her parents for her husband's home amounts to migration. Again, when an Igbo dies and joins the ancestors, it is also a big migration from the present known world to the unknown. Achebe's treatment of migration as it relates to Okonkwo during and after his exile from his ancestral home of Umuofia to his maternal home of Mbaino in *Things Fall Apart*; the migration to England by Obi Okonkwo to study as well as his return in *No Longer at Ease*, the departure of Ezeulu from his shrine to see the white man at Okperi in *Arrow of God*; is basically cultural interpretation rather than socio-economic.

## 2. Ethnography and Igbo Culture in the Contemporary Diasporic Spirit of the Igbo Ethnography

Coined from the Greek compound word 'ethnos graphein' meaning 'folk/people' and 'writing', ethnography is a research stratagem often used in the social sciences, especially in anthropology and in some branches of sociology. According to Maynard and Purvis (1994), ethnography deals with the gathering of empirical data on human societies and cultures [18]. The data collection is often done through participant observations, interviews and questionnaire.

Ethnographic studies, therefore seek to study the place where the people live, the improvement they have made to that place. The questions of how the people provide food, housing, energy and water for themselves also form the studies. Marriage customs, and, of course, what language the people speak are not left out in ethnographic research methodology.

While ethnographic research is not evaluated in terms of philosophical points of view, positivism and emotionalism, for example, there is no consensus on evaluation standards. Richardson (2000) opines five criteria that might be helpful to ethnographers in their research [19]. These include: substantive contribution (that is, whether or not the research contributes to our understanding of social life), aesthetic merit (how successful the research is aesthetically) and reflectivity, (this answers the question on how the researcher came about his write up). By reflexivity, the researcher shows its level of self-awareness and self-exposure for the reader to make judgments about the point of view.

The other two criteria are, impact and expresses of reality. The former focuses on the emotional and intellectual significance of the research on the ethnographer. The latter, however, seeks to address the credibility of cultural, social,

individual or communal sense of the reality of the people.

Ember and Ember (2006); and Heider (2001) see ethnography as being holistic. These include, a brief history of the culture in question, an analysis of the physical geography to include the climate, ethno botany and ethno zoology. Kinship and social structure-age grading, peer groups, gender, voluntary associations, clans and moieties, if they exist are also included. [9, 13]

Furthermore, according to Ember and Ember (2006), ethnography encompasses the study of languages spoken, dialects, and the history of language [9]; practices of childbearing; acculturation and emic views; as well as rites, rituals and other evidence of religion. This paper, being an ethnographic discourse to a good extend meets up with the standards spelt out for ethnographic discourse.

Culture is a strand of language; as both are in constant interplay [21]. For the Igbo, this is truth because the people have a lot to do with their proverbs dictating their way of life and thought. This is partially owing to the fact that culture is capable of having psychological impact on things people communicate about [23]. It is often argued that culture is the total way of a people. This old assertion is factual in the case of the Igbo and their migration instincts. Kovecses (2002) is of the view that no two cultures may view things the same way [16]. This is because the mental imagery experiments vary from one culture to the other. Kovecses supports his view and claim much later by positing that the possibility for metaphorical thought is relevant to an understanding of culture and society (Kovecses, 2005).

By Kovecses' positions, it becomes easier understanding the quiddity of our discourse of *Ojemba enweghi iro* which tries to explicate the worldview of the Igbo about migration being a partnership between the migrant and his host community. This is very important to note. The concept of *Ojemba enweghi iro* is a didactic instruction that the migrant must be of good behaviour so that he does not have conflict with his host community (which today may mean a whole

country and respecting its constitutional provisions for peace to reign).

David (2006:) seems to be reading the minds of the Igbo when he quotes the words of Aristotle in juxtaposing the connection between human emotions like love, fear, anger, envy, and shame as not being constant but depending on the cultural background. [8] In David's quotation, he writes '... according to Aristotle, it is not pain that is frightening us rather those things that portend it...' Put it straight, and in the case of the Igbo taking **fear** as a case study, the Igbo are fearless. They do not fear to migrate. It is just in their blood to migrate to make money, to meet people and return home as heroes. They are normally not ashamed to go outside their ancestral domain to work (no matter how degrading such jobs could be). In Lagos for example, one sees the Igbo hawking brooms, chewing sticks, mending clothes on the streets with their mobile sewing machine that they have been christened, *ndi obi oma* (the kind people). Outside the country too, the Igbo people take to menial jobs in order to survive. Taking to drugs and smuggling are not menial jobs and are not encouraged as of course, some overambitious Igbo as well as their counterparts from other parts of the world engage in such evil acts.

### 3. Peace Proverbs for the Advance of *Ojemba enweghi iro*

The following select peace proverbs, ten out of thirty generated in a fieldwork in the paper help in explaining cultural beliefs in the existence of migration and the power of being a host to a migrant [6]. The Igbo proverbs though meant for Igbo worldview have in this discourse been placed in the pedestrian of a foreign world where the Igbo are supposed to be in migration.

These proverbs have the imageries that are instructive in the discourse of *Ojemba enweghi iro*:

**Table 1.** Some Igbo Peace Proverbs and Their Meaning.

1. Okukọ nno nuhu anaghi aha mara, yabuo ne ezi, ya ha mara.	A home chicken does not produce fats at home, but does so when it is outside.
2. Nkpisi nwe eze, ma eze ya.	A toothpick knows the teeth that fit it.
3. Ogu anaghi avo anu.	The hoe does not dissect a dead animal.
4. Nku nno na mba neherewe ji.	A people use their local firewood to roast their yam.
5. Onye ozi anaghi atu ilu.	A messenger does not speak in proverbs.
6. Ndi nwe ala, ne eji ala.	Those that own the land, control the land.
7. Mbiara bia amaghi nga ala rurur.	A stranger does not know where an abomination occurred.
8. Onye ajuju anaghi efu uzo.	He that asks questions does not miss the way.
9. Nte otu ukwu ne site na otutu naa atu onu.	A one-legged cricket begins to make earlier move to make its hole for inhabitation.
10. Ugo eberule na ngbagbu.	The eagle has perched to be shot dead.

For the entire thirty select proverbs and their extended hermeneutical analysis [6].

Let us attempt interpreting the above proverbs which meet up with Madu (1996:189) [17] that a proverb must be '...condensed wisdom drawn from experience...' Igbo language, according to (Akpobaro and Emovon 1994:165) is replete with proverbs [5]. The first proverb suggests that one is not regarded as having relevance till he or she has

travelled out of the community and returned. In other words, migration affords one the opportunity to go and acquire wealth and be respected. The second proverb does seem to side the host community as knowing what fits its culture so that the migrant should respect such cultural regulations. The third proverb is very apt. The hoe here is the migrant who should not dictate what happens in the host community, rather should respect the rules and regulations or better still,

the constitution of the community or country he or she has found himself or herself. The fourth proverb defends the host community or country's constitution as being supreme to the migrant. The firewood could mean the customs and traditions or constitution in a broad sense of it. The fifth clearly sees the migrant as a messenger who should not speak in proverbs but rather deliver his messenger and leave peacefully. That is to say, that a migrant is not to see himself or herself as being fully an elder in the community he or she has migrated to. The sixth and the seventh proverbs are in contrast. The sixth supports the host community as the one to dictate what goes on because they know what suits their community or country as the case may be. The seventh is an indictment that a migrant is at the mercy of his or her host community since he or she might not know the deep historiography and religion and cultural beliefs of his host. The ninth proverb suggests that every migrant should always ask questions in order not to err in the customs and traditions of the host community. Ignorance of the law, it is widely believed is not an excuse. No wonder many migrants are persecuted in foreign lands for going against the laws of the host country. In Igbo culture, the tenth proverb could be very ambivalent. In this context of the concept of *Ojemba enweghi iro*, the proverb could mean, it is time you the migrant aims at the eagle and shoot it dead. In other words, the proverb encourages one to do the needful and achieve a lasting achievement which in this context is working hard in the foreign land with the intention of becoming a better person economically.

## 4. A Brief Review of Achebe's Trilogy Against *Ojemba enweghi iro*

Achebe, historicises the Igbo culture and beliefs in his trilogy being briefly looked at as it relates to migration (exile as in the cases of Okonkwo and Ezeulu). Using these three books as a platform, the discourse under *Ojemba enweghi iro* is further explicated.

### 4.1. *Things Fall Apart*

Okonkwo, in *Things Fall Apart* is the tall and huge fearless, strong, impatient, best wrestler in the nine villages of Umuofia clan. He is the son of Unoka the lazy man who owes many people and refuses to pay. Okonkwo becomes a hero at 18 when he defeats Amalinze, known as the Cat in a clan's wrestling contest. Okonkwo is a man of faith and fate whose life ends in doom because he rejects the foreign religion and government and prefers his customs and traditions as well as his ancestral religion and superstitions.

In chapter thirteen, Achebe writes that the eldest man in Iguedo, Ogbuefi Ezeudu is dead. At Ezeudu's funeral, Okonkwo inadvertently kills Ezeudu's 16-year son when his gun explodes. As custom demands, Okonkwo and his entire family flee to Mbanta, his maternal ancestral home before dawn. At dawn, his house, animals and barn are burnt to cleans the land of the blood. Obierika had earlier with the help other helping hands moved a good number of yams from

Okonkwo's barn to safety.

Chapter fourteen: Okonkwo and his family are now in Mbanta to begin the 7-year exile. His mother's younger brother warmly welcomes them, gives them a piece of land to build a house, and yams to plant in the plots of lands given to him and his three wives and eleven children.

Chapter fifteen: Obierika accompanied by two young men visits Okonkwo in his second year at Mbanta. He exhibits good friendliness by delivering to Okonkwo two bags of cowries being proceeds of Okonkwo's big yams Obierika sold for him. Okonkwo is grateful; his uncle is impressed.

Chapter sixteen: In the fourth year of Okonkwo's exile, Obierika visits again over the ugly discovery by him that Nwoye is now Christian – one of those who came to Umuofia to evangelise. Okonkwo is sorrowful. The missionaries had been to Mbanta where they converted Nwoye while Okonkwo sees them as mad people for condemning his own traditional worshipping.

Chapter Seventeen: A flashback on how the missionaries had requested a piece of land to build a church and how Uchendu, Okonkwo's maternal uncle suggested the Evil Forest so that the gods would kill the missionaries. They built the church and prospered with new converts – including Nwoye who denounced his father and would return to Umuofia to become a full-fledged Christian.

Chapter nineteen: In exile, Okonkwo bears two children – Nneka (Mother is supreme) for his respite in his mother's place, p. 130, and Nwofia (Begotten from wilderness) the metaphor representing the shameful exile. Okonkwo sends Obierika money to build him two huts in his destroyed compound as the seven years nears to the end. Before Okonkwo's household leaves for Umuofia he hosts his mother's people for their hospitality and to show appreciation, pp. 132 – 4.

In part three of the novel, chapter twenty: Okonkwo is back to Umuofia from exile and mourns the ruins brought by Christianity and foreign government. He sarcastically addresses his other five sons to join Nwoye whom he has disowned now he (Okonkwo) is alive or never to do so as he would deal with them even in his grave if they eventually do join the Christian faith, p. 138. He still regrets that Ezinma were not a boy for the girl understands him most. Obierika's submission is instructive of the title, 'He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart.' p. 141.

### 4.2. *No Longer at Ease*

The novel is about the travails of Obi Michael Okonkwo who does not believe in taking bribery but eventually falls in the net of bribery which consumes him. Fate has it rough with Obi Okonkwo. Poverty of his family, his paying back the loan his people used to train him abroad; and again his entangling with Clara Okeke, an *osu* (outcast) are some of Obi's burdens that make taking bribery inevitable. The story is based on Nigeria's pre Independence bribery and corruption saga both by the educated and uneducated Nigerians and the colonial masters.

As a link to *Things Fall Apart*, it is important to note that Obi's father and catechist, Isaac Okonkwo is 'Nwoye' in *Things Fall Apart*. He had changed his name to 'Isaac' to conform with his new Christian faith. So, Isaac Okonkwo is the son, the rejected son of the great wrestler and hero, Okonkwo, the son of Unuka. The protagonist of this present novel is the direct grandson of the legendary Okonkwo of Umuofia.

Okonkwo, Michael Obi, the amiable and generous 25-year son of Isaac Okonkwo and also the ground son of the protagonist of *Things Fall Apart*, Ogbuefi Okonkwo who fought the white men and hanged himself to avoid being arrested for killing a white man's messenger. Obi is fiancé to Clara Okeke, and *osu* or an outcast based on Igbo culture. Obi is the first Umuofia son to travel to England to study. He studied English instead of Law his benefactors, the Umuofia Progressive Union had in mind in order to have the community to fight their enemies. The Union taxed themselves to sponsor Obi with the agreement he will pay back the loan in installment of 20 pounds a month upon return. Obi Okonkwo upon return to Nigeria secures a job as Secretary in the Scholarship Board where he faces plethora of requests to aid applications for a price or bribe. Obi's resilience against bribery eventually comes to an end and he is caught red handed after a set up and taken to court to the disappointment of his people and his boss, Mr Greene,

Chapter eight: Obi attends Umuofia Progressive Union (UPU) meeting where he thanks them for the lavish reception and sending him to England. He however seeks four months' grace before repaying the 800 Pounds sponsor loan on monthly installment, p. 215. It is approved by the president though such request is not expected by virtue of what Obi earns (50 pounds a month). Obi leaves the meeting unceremoniously because the president makes allusion to Obi's intention to marry 'a girl of doubtful ancestry' p. 216. Obi tells his driver to zoom off leaving Joseph whom he came with behind. Obi knows Joseph gossiped with the president on Clara's 'osu' background and their intended marriage.

What Achebe put down as it relates to Umuofia Progressive Union still applies till date in reality. The Igbo migrants believe in the concept of *Umunna b'ike* (the kinsmen are power) so that the migrants meet regularly to discuss themselves as how the community back home can be improved. See Green (1964), Isichei (1977) and Afigbo (1981) for more insights on Igbo history and culture [4, 12, 15]. Any migrant that fails to belong to the common association which could be termed a union too is seen as irresponsible. The essence of the Union is to monitor each other and work as a team of migrants away from home. The Igbo migrants have the belief that it is difficult to bend a bunch of broom (the community union or association) than a stick of broom (an individual on his own). No matter how influential a migrant is in the host community or country, the *umunna b'ike* belief is supreme. That is to say, that nobody is greater than the union. Given the example of Obi and UPU, it is clear that even though Obi is a returnee from England, the UPU still see him as an individual that should be directed to

do the right thing (this time advising him against cultural taboo of wishing to marry an *osu*).

While Obi undergoes the court trials, it is imperative to note that his people in Lagos under the umbrella of UPU were there in the court and supported him even though Obi still has not completed paying the money they spent on him to enable him travel to England to study. Unlike Okonkwo and Ezeulu's migrations, Obi Okonkwo's migration is for economic power. He succeeds in going to England and we see the warm reception he gets on his return as a hero. A lot is expected of him from his people who expect him to repay the money they spent on him to travel to England to study.

### 4.3. Arrow of God

This nineteen-chapter novel is a story about an ambitious High Priest of Ulu, the deity Umuaro people believe in. Ezeulu, the protagonist literally means 'The Priest of Ulu'. The story is one of fate and tragedy. It is a story of conflicts: Ezeulu is at the centre of the conflicts. He struggles to please Ulu, the white man's government and religion, his people and even God in heaven. Ezeulu is merely an arrow in the hands of Ulu. Ulu controls him and directs him on what to do but cannot protect him from the forces of fate, tragedy of losing his great son, Obika who dies mysteriously when Umuaro people are questioning the relevance of Ulu and Ezeulu.

Chapter fourteen: Ezeulu is now in Okperi having been compelled to leave Umuaro and the Ulu deity back home to see the white man, Wintabota. That visit is the migration from Umuaro, a visit that has a lot of negative influence in his grasp of Ulu and the people of Umuaro. Later in the night, Ezeulu dreams of his grandfather addressing the same assembly he the present Ezeulu had addressed before setting for Okperi. In that dream or vision Nwaka questions the past Ezeulu and grandfather of the present one why should Umuaro rely on Ulu, that they should do away with Ulu as 'Aninta drove out and burnt Ogbu' p. 445.

Chapter sixteen: John accompanies Ezeulu to Umuaro. On the way, they are heavily wet by rain, p. 467. Getting home cold, his wives and Edogo quickly take care of him with camwood ointment, and a hot utazi soup. Ezeulu sends Nwafo to Akuebue and before he comes, visitors have converged at Ezeulu's. He only talks little or nods, wishing John had stayed to tell the story. The visitors marvel how a man from Umunneora, John could be kind to Ezeulu. They are suspicious. The visitors keep on coming till the third day – bringing palm wine and other things. Ogbuefi Ofoka's surprises Ezeulu on the third. He confesses boldly after welcoming Ezeulu that he was one of those who supported Nwaka that Ezeulu should go and answer the white man, p. 472. Ezeulu calls Oduche and tells him to continue being his eye where the white man is no matter what people say, p. 473. He wants Oduche to be so good at studying the white man's way that he could write with his left hand as Clark does, p. 474. As Ezeulu thinks of reconciliation, a spirit voice of Ulu warns him to leave the decision to him, Ulu. The voice tells him that the war between Ezidemili is not his (Ezeulu's) but his (Ulu's), p. 476.

We must note the two migrations that ruined Okonkwo and Ezeulu are to their maternal homes of Mbanta and Okperi. It is instructive in that, even though they are at home in their maternal homes, back to their paternal homes, Okonkwo and Ezeulu see their doom. What Achebe seems to be implying is that cultural migration is capable of destroying status quo.

Senayon rightly links Achebe's exiles in his trilogy to the contemporary exiles and diaspora for the simple reason that to go into exile amounts to a movement from one space to another [21]. Adding his voice on the significance of the trilogy to the contemporary world, explicating *Arrow of God*, Garuba (2015:118-137) argues strongly that till date, what will be will be despite authorities' fault and fears. That is, that it is normal to fear, yet fears do not deter people from having alternatives. Garuba is trying to link the person of Ezeulu to the contemporary leaders and their followers. In *Arrow of God*, the Umuaro people are afraid of their lives, that Ulu may not be strong enough to be their guide and guard. So, the few days' migration of Ezeulu to Okperi heightened the fears and even Ezeulu himself is afraid of the consequences of his leaving his deity without feeding him as it were. Eventually, Ezeulu is disgraced without Ulu even protecting him. The people are the victors, not Ulu or his servant, Ezeulu. In other words, Garuba (2015) opines that fear is part of life yet, whatever would be cannot be prevented. [11]

The trilogy aspect of our discourse is now very clear. *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God* are basically on cultural, spiritual exile cum migration; while *No Longer at Ease* focuses on modern migration and therefore, much closer to the contemporary discourse of the Igbo being in love with migration for economic gains. A deep study of the entire book reveals that Obi Okonkwo on returning from England is faced with a plethora of economic challenges – upsetting the loan being owed to UPU, helping his parents and siblings in the village and of course battling the cultural issue with an *osu* which gulped him a lot of money.

In consonance with the title of the paper, it is evident that Achebe paints the concept of *Ojemba enweghi* iroin the characters and experiences of both Okonkwo and Ezeulu in their exiles at Mbanta and Okperi. Both are well taken care of. They behaved themselves so that their hosts (which coincidentally are their maternal kinsmen could take good care of them). Obi Okonkwo must have also behaved well in England for his to complete his studies before returning home to meet his Waterloo his economic and cultural problems are more than what he earns in office so that he falls to taking bribe!

## 5. Conclusion

It has been established that migration for the Igbo, whether the spiritual or economic is a way of life. Technically, leaving one's home voluntarily is different from leaving involuntarily. The latter, the involuntary migration, is the one Achebe explicates with his Okonkwo and Ezeulu's characters. The former, voluntary migration, he, Achebe uses

Obi Okonkwo to represent. The paper therefore has looked much more deeply in the aspect of the voluntary migration which is triggered by the need to move off home for greener pasture and economic empowerment.

It is evident that Igbo culture of migration within the Igbo land and to other parts of the world (within the Nigeria state and abroad) is propelled by the culture of competition for economic buoyance among themselves, on one hand. And on the other hand, that spirit of adventurousness in them to seek, to find, and to conquer is a very big factor! It is not uncommon to hear that an Igbo migrant has misbehaved in a foreign land duping the host of his hard earned money. Some Igbo migrants have also engaged in drug trafficking and other vices. The quiddity of the paper is that these vices will be unheard of with the practice of *Ojemba enweghi* iro!

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