

# Documents Relating to Prophetess Ngozi in Igboland, Southeast Nigeria

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Edited by Johannes Harnischfeger

## The Prophetess Ngozi:

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Ngozika Ogbu was a native of Alor Uno, an association of villages, near the town of Nsukka. In February 1995, Ngozi and her followers destroyed the shrine of Adoro, a local deity. Adoro had served as an oracle that could be invoked by visitors from far and wide in order to decide disputes. In cases of intractable conflicts, an accused took an oath before the goddess, and when he died within a specific period time, he was deemed to have been guilty. All his movable property had to be brought to the Adoro shrine. In addition, the family of the deceased had to dedicate one of its members, normally a daughter, as a living sacrifice to the goddess. In former times, persons who had been handed over to Adoro had served as cult slaves (called 'Osu' in most Igbo areas).

<2>

Ngozi had been dedicated to the deity while a child, but she had rejected her Osu identity and fled from the house of the shrine priest. On her return to Alor Uno, a few years later, she destroyed the Adoro shrine and displayed its cult objects at the market. With her victory over the famous deity, she founded a church in which she performed spiritual healings. At the same time she continued her campaign against 'paganism' in other parts of Igboland, destroying charms and 'idols'. However, she died in 1999, barely 30 years old.

## Document 1: Scenes from Three Video Films, Produced in 1995 and 1996 for Ngozi Ogbu.

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The videos were sold, though only in a few copies, to people interested in Ngozi's church. The first video film, called 'The Abolition of Adoro in Alor Uno by Prophetess Ngozika Ogbu. February 11, 1995', was recorded at a festival, immediately after Ngozi and her followers had demolished the shrine of the Adoro deity. With a length of more than two hours, the film contains many interviews with the prophetess and people supporting her. The whole text of this documentary can be read, written in Igbo and in two different English translations, in Documents 2, 3 and 4. The film itself is presented here only in an abridged version (21 minutes out of a two-hour documentary), showing details of the 'pagan' charms and cult objects which Ngozi collected and destroyed during her cleansing campaign, followed by scenes of spirit possession, interspersed with interviews.

*Part 1: The Abolition of the Adoro Shrine*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFlckfkqY-0>

<4>

The second video film (of which 59 minutes are shown here) documents a 'Thanksgiving Festival' on 24 and 25 October 1995, when Ngozi's religious movement had turned into a church.

*Part 2: Thanksgiving Festival*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2dNBQ1VsgWw>

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The final scenes (45 minutes) are culled from a video that depicts some improvised rituals performed on an empty, sandy plain, recorded on 28 January 1996.

*Part 3: Rituals*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GelqZM4Adus>

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The three videos do not give information on how they were produced. The names of the cameramen and those cutting the material are not indicated. The technical quality of the recordings is poor, particularly at the beginning of the first video.

## **Document 2: The Abolition of Adoro in Alor Uno by Prophetess Ngozika Ogbu. February 11, 1995. Igbo Version. (Under Construction)**

Text of a two-hour video film, in the original Igbo version, transcribed by Prof. Philip Nwachukwu, Dept. of Linguistics and African Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

## **Document 3: The Abolition of Adoro in Alor Uno by Prophetess Ngozika Ogbu. February 11, 1995. First English Version.**

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Text of a two-hour video film, translated from Igbo into English by Daniel Agbu, who was familiar with the events in Alor Uno.

## **Document 4: The Abolition of Adoro in Alor Uno by Prophetess Ngozika Ogbu, February 11, 1995 Second English Version.**

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Text of a two-hour video film, translated from Igbo into English by Prof. Philip Nwachukwu, Dept. of Linguistics and African Languages, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

## **Document 5: Extracts from Nigerian Newspapers, Dealing with Ngozi Ogbu.**

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'Living in Bondage', from 'Tell' magazine, 23 August 2004.

'Citizens of a Strange Class' from 'Tell' magazine, 6 May 2002.