# UNDERSTANDING REPUBLICANISM IN IGBO PRE-COLONIAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE: THE VIEWPOINT TO IGBO ENWE EZE

By
**Kizito I. Okoli**
Department of Philosophy
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.
Izk.okoli@unizik.edu.ng
08133671967

**Abstract**
*Models and styles of governance, especially in Igbo traditional setting, have long attracted scholastic attention largely so, due to the prime acephalousness of the Igbo traditional community. Many scholars have tried relentlessly to unravel the content of leadership adopted by the Igbo people following their culture that frowned at methuselean, authoritarian or wheel chair romanticism as a style of leadership although something ideological was possible for them in practice. The popular maxim "Igbo Enwe Eze" (the Igbo have no kings), gives an understanding that the Igbo community of the pre-colonial era practiced republican system of governance which guaranteed the natives a fair say in community affairs through its delegated power to the leaders of social institutions. This belief has raised many questions as it means to many that the Igbo people had no kings at all, hence, the reason for this study to establish why the Igbo traditional community is often described as such. This paper adopting the method of content analysis further focuses on how the republican system worked for the Igbo then and how they managed themselves in governance. Thirdly, it intends to establish the findings that kingship existed in Igbo land. It will therefore serve as a relevant document to the people of Igbo origin to clarify the controversies surrounding the pre-colonial Igbo community. On the issue of Igbo enwe Eze, the study finds out that the axiom was a mere misconception to tarnish the excess of the Igbo Nation as a result of the inability of the white men to create a centralized king for their imperialist interest. Again, on Igbo republicanism, the research finds out that the Igbo are democratic and communalistic and manage their affairs through their traditional institutions led by elders; they never subscribe to one-man-for-all.*

**Keywords:** Community, Igbo, Republicanism, Leadership, Governance, Understanding, Cultural, Traditional.

## 1.0 Introduction

According to history, many call Igbo or Ibo regarding their understanding which still reflects our focus. The Igbo people are descendants of Eri; a divine figure who according to Igbo folklore, was sent from heaven to begin civilization. Another interesting account presents Eri as one of the sons of Gad (as mentioned in the book of Genesis in the Bible) who travelled to establish the present day Igbo land. In Eastern Nigeria, Igbo's inhabit an area referred to as Igbo land, which is divided into two sections along the lower river Niger. They live in most or all parts of five states: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo as well as minor parts of Delta, Rivers and Benue States. According to Ohadike (1996), they are one of the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria with a population of about 15 million. As a result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, Igbo's have migrated to other countries including Jamaica, Cuba, Barbados, and the United States among others. We saw in Adejoke ( 2018) that the Igbo culture have been found in Jamaican patois-for instance, the word "Unu" which means "you" is still used while "Red" Ibo" or "Red eboe" describes a black person with fairer skin.

For Ekpo and Chime (2016), the Igbo settled in autonomous villages and towns; their smallest social and political unit was the family usually made up of the man, wife and children. The highest unit was Umunna (kindred) which comprises of several Uno. The Igbo language has a host of dialects which developed because of the fact that the aggregation of self contained towns and villages, separated from each other by dense bush. Ohadike (1996).

The leadership style of the Igbo people was highly republican in nature. Ogbalu was right asserting that the Igbo setting then was republican in every aspect of the word. Their system frowns at every supposition whether legally or illegally that one man becomes the leader and controls others drastically to his wills and this forms the historic opinion that there has never existed before colonial era, a king for the Igbo's hence, the singular reason that fans the popular saying 'Igbo Enwe Eze'.

In Igbo Republican system, it is only the Oha (community) that has the powers to delegate laws to her members. This nonetheless implies that the powers that decides, makes or mar was vested on the community with strong reference to the Iwuala (laws of the land). Since the Igbo communities were purely democratic yet unyielding to centralized administration, many would ask, how then did they achieve the supposed democracy?

The Igbo's managed themselves by subscribing to direct participation principle in government; the entire social and political structures revolved around the

idea of cross-cutting ties. The relevant institutions were the village assembly, council of elders, age groups, council of chiefs, women's associations and secret societies. Without them, the Igbo society would be starved of its essence and would fundamentally disintegrate. Ohadike (1994).

In the light of the foregoing, this research attempts to analyze the popular belief that Igbo's have no kings which has been misunderstood to mean that the Igbo traditional community has no recognition of a king. This interpretation is debatable and questions emanates there from. What about the traditional recognition of an Eze especially as seen in ancient towns like Nri, Onitsha and Arochukwu? This returns curiosity to the mind as we discuss the words of Regina and Okoye (2016:8): It has become worrisome that even some of our Igbo intellectuals are accepting the expression Igbo Enwe Eze as reflecting traditional Igbo society. In Ahebi Ugabe, we understand that the Igbo people had and still have ruling bodies of royal and political leaders to which an individual can be recognized by the entire society as their king.

The words of Achebe (1983:47) that beyond any town or village, the Igbo have no compelling traditional loyalty can be regarded as a cushioning effect since his assertion here suggests succinctly that within each town or village, there is always a leader to whom manifestation of influence cannot stretch beyond the town.

This paper, therefore, would want to establish the primary reasons for this misconstrued thought which has basically identified the Igbo nation as having no kings; whether it is the Whiteman's attempt to diplomatically and tactfully speak on the refusal of the Igbo's to be subdued and ruled. It further opened many vistas of knowledge to see the level of their deep sense of republicanism, life-in-the people or life-in-the-community. One would therefore ascertain how they managed their affairs within the confines of their cultural precepts. The research will at all times, adopt analytic method in bringing to limelight, contextual framework, belief systems and contents of assumptions. Briefly, we shall take a look at the theoretical framework which is anchored on Republican system of governance and in the long run, look at how it was perfected pragmatically in the Igbo pre-colonial system of governance.

## 2.0 Literature Review

### 2.1 The View Of Republicanism

This concept has long been over flogged by an avalanche of scholars in the humanities. It is a vast one which means certain things to certain persons because it is spacious enough to accommodate all suppositions under its very

umbrella. This term has had diverse interpretations which maintains the point but vary significantly depending on the historical lens and an approach of methodology. To this scholastic problem, Alfred Adfask identified what he called the 'republican mystery' saying that the problem is actually what is republican form of government? He acknowledged the fact that he has been into this question or sort of certain semblance for years but a clear definition of the concept persistently eluded him. It is unarguable looking at this to side with the opinion that republicanism exists differently in meaning to different folks.

For William Graham (1877:2), in republican Government, the organs of authority are designed by the express selection of the people; the people directly signify whom they choose to have as their organs or agents; they express their confidence distinctly either by word of mouth or other convenient process. A Republican government therefore is a self government in which the authority of the community is conferred by the people; the only Republican way to find out what the people want is to allow their opinion count. The definition according to the 1st edition of black's law dictionary, states that a government in the Republican form is a government of the people and government by representatives chosen by the people.

Republicanism borrowing from Wikipedia, is a political ideology centered on citizenship. Historically, this term was coined of a Latin expression 'res public' which implies 'the public thing'. Before 17th century, this term designates any state without tyrannical regime. It emerged in the 6th century BCE following the expulsion of the kings from Rome by Lucius Brutin. It was in the 17th and 18th centuries that its meaning was shifted with the growing resistance to absolutist regimes in series of revolutions from the eighty years war. (1568-1648) to the American Revolution (1787-89). Shaped by those events, the term republic came to designate a form of government by which the leader is periodically appended in contrast to hereditary monarchies. It ranges from the rule of a representative minority or oligarchy to popular sovereignty.

Reed Amar (1994:74) considers a republican government as government of the people in their high sense of sovereignty. For him, they do not necessarily rule directly, day-to-day. Republican government probably(as some have claimed), prohibits all forms of direct democracy such as initiative and referendum, but neither does it require ordinary law making via these direct populist mechanisms. It only requires government- the constitution- be derived from 'the people' and be legally alterable by a 'majority' of them.

Jean Bodin (1575), saw it as the rightly ordered government of a number of families and of those things which are their common concern, by a sovereign

power. We may go farther than this to capture the thoughts of Regina and victor (2016:5) that the republican idea recognizes individual worth and input. It also emphasizes a situation where people deliberate and take decisions that are of common interests.

From these opinion, we can deduce similarity in thought. Each of the scholars identified the people and their sovereign power to decide. It is a classical system of representation and active participation. A government of the self and community sovereignty. Another thing that is common in their definition here is that the people are placed as more important than the person upon to whom power is conferred hence, subscribing to the claim that the nucleus of existence and pillar of republican government is popular opinion, the people's right to altar or abolish; We shall therefore show in the sub-section of this work that republicanism was understood and domiciled to the Igbo pre-colonial era. It was a consensus philosophy of Igbo- kwenu!. (a philosophy of unanimity of affirmation) or unanimous affirmation.

## 2.2 The Rationale Behind The Term "Igbo Enwe Eze"

From antiquity times, this popular saying which translates into "the Igbo have no kings" or what Afigbo (2001) defined as the 'Ezelessness' of the Igbo people. The controversies on the truism of this singular assertion has generated heated arguments down to contemporary times which can be seen in the bitter debates from authorities in Igbo studies, O. Ahajioku and Onwuejeogwu. It has indeed altered more thematic discourses in most conferences and workshops.

Some scholars clamp down at those who would accept the aphorism in summary of Igbo traditional origin. Although many accept that the saying replicates the lifestyle of the Igbo people and their decentralized system, others argued strenuously rejecting such on the grounds that it was a coined colonial terminology of failure. Little wonder Nwalutu (2018:4) opines that Igbo enwe eze as an esoteric aphorism has confused the new dispensation of Igbo political thinkers and scholars that they try to fight of its ubiquitous phantom using weapons of colonial vestiges grounded in the country's academic.

This assertion as debatable as it is, has some multi-accentuality that those involved in its clarifications ought to recognize. Dons (2015), elaborates that it could be read as a declarative sentence (that the Igbo's have no kings) or as a nominal (the Igbo that have no kings). Both maybe used by the neighbours in ridiculing them or even by the Igbo's themselves as a form of self expression of regret as in the case of the name 'Igboamaeze' (the Igbo's have no regards for kings).

We discovered the need in revisiting this dictum and to that extent help in bringing the conception of Regina and Victor (2016) to limelight. They are aggressive in approach and opine that the Igbo expressions like:'Igbo-ama onye ukwu, Ịna-enyem nri, Igbo enwe-eze' were not in traditional Igbo thought. The Igbo expressions in the mouth of those who harbor envy, hatred and jealousy for others… people influenced by the Hebrew saying: "a prophet has no honour in his own community". They served a colonial interest of destabilizing Igbo unity. This point can be reconciled almost immediately with the words of Nwabufo (2008:9). He says: I often squirm in disagreement when people say, "the Igbo's are not united: they have no king, everyone is the king in Igbo land". True, the Igbo's are republican but they have always had a leadership ensconced in "abridged or fettered" monarchy. Absolute monarchy has never had sufficient reign.

For Ahebi Ugbabe, therefore, the Igbo people had and still have ruling bodies of royal and political leaders in which an individual can be recognized by the entire society as their king. Some Igbo communities have tried to overcome the problem of the confusion in the states of an Eze by making a distinction between a 'chief' and an 'Eze'. This sends us fast to such distinction from Obododinma (2009) that the Eze is reserved to refer to the community head chosen by consent or through direct blood decent from the holders of Ofo (symbol of authority). The title of 'chief' on the other hand is normally conferred on any deserving person by the Eze with the former being inferior and not in any entitlement, the holder to rulership in the community.

Dons (2015:9) states that a major distinguishing factor in the pre-colonial political organization between the Igbo people of Nigeria and their administration is that whereas the Hausa/Fulani and Yoruba's for instance, operated a centralized system of political administration with their Emir and Oba respectfully, the Igbo traditional organization prior to the arrival of the Europeans was a system operated through the collective participation of all the elders in the society.

Igbo enwe eze does not negate the possibility of a leader in most Igbo societies. It simply affirms the reality that no leader chosen by his people is allowed by their socio-political principles to wield absolute authority over others. He must consult with heads of the various groups under him. Therefore, it should not be taken as total denial that any king ever existed within Igbo communities. Nwalutu (2018:7).

From the foregoing, the implication emanating in all discussions here clarifies that the Igbo pre-colonial system of government although was republican in

nature, does not imply that Igbo's have no kings. Scholars brought to center stage, a paradigm shift from 'what it is not' to 'what it is'. It is understood that the character of the Igbo man; their inability to speak in one voice in the national politics speaks volume but this not the focus. Maintaining the behavior of an Igbo person is still the semantics of the singular and does not reflect the Igbo worldview.

Another common thought found in the elucidated position of scholars here is that although the axiom is already rooted in Igbo land and explains some level of philosophical ingenuity, it does not erase the fact that it was an arrogant expression to discredit the Igbo nation. Igbo people could not have lived without a leader; it was simply the conscious efforts of the colonialists to create a centralized king in Igbo land so as to champion their imperialist ambition which failed woefully. If the Igbo's had no kings, what then constitutes the presence of the word "Eze" in the Igbo vocabulary makeup? It becomes an established fact that the traditional Igbo societies was highly republican in nature and as such, the development of the Igbo enwe eze ideology was because the constituted leaders perform their functions by falling back to the people; the structure of leadership gave no option of a centralized authority. Their modalities is summarized in the Ahiara declaration of Dim Chukwuemeka Odimegwu Ojukwu the former Biafran leader, that those who would want to lead others in Igbo land should bear in mind that they are just servants and cannot be greater than the people, their masters.

### 2.3 The Igbo Republican System Of Governance

The classifications given to the Igbo society by some anthropologists like Meek (1937), Green (1947) and a host of others is that of acephalous, segmentary and stateless. For Ibenekwu (2010:3), such classifications is based on the fact that the pre-colonial Igbo society consists of autonomous villages and groups ruled via diffused authority without any sort of formalized, permanent or hereditary leadership. To him, Igbo's were democratic and egalitarian to a significant extent. Their 'modus operandi' allowed wider participation in political administration by different political interest units; their existence is what Green saw as a polity characterized by dispersal rather than a concentration of authority. Accordingly, their style was exemplified in the politically organized structure to which the village heads presides over village assemblies. It is an Igwebuike (strength is might) concept of administration which is not seen in the light of autocracy in which one person becomes the lord or the grand commander of others. They had deep sense of community and aligned their belief to the dogma of live and let live. We understand rightly from Ibenekwu that it is a representative process where all adults especially the males took active participation in decision making. This probably resulted in

the submission of Regina and Victor (2016:4) that before taking any decision, the Igbo's have the tradition of gathering together to discuss matters of interest in order to arrive at unanimous agreement. This is called Igba izu (consultation).

For Ezenagu (2016:2), the absence of a central leader delegated administrative authority to the council of elders. This became cleare in the words of Dons (2015:11) that the traditional Igbo society consists of clusters of individual family units that make up the kindred with several of them making up a village or town. Every member of an Igbo village is related to each other one way or the other and this constitutes the network of beings such that what affects one equally affects the other. This made the traditional Igbo political society republican, with no institutionalized kingship system.

Furthermore, in Igbo republican system, it is only the Oha (community) that has the powers to delegate laws to its members. This nonetheless implies that the powers that decides, makes or mar was vested on the community with strong reference to Iwuala (laws of the land). Since the Igbo communities were known to be democratic yet had no centralized administration, many would ask, how them did they coordinated themselves? Replying this, the Igbo's managed their affairs by subscribing to direct participation principle. The entire social and political structures revolved around their practice of cross-cutting ties. For Regina et Victor (2016:4), in Igbo republicanism, individuals and groups up to the clan level aspired to relevance, had rights and responsibilities and worked hard to better their lots. It was hinged on peoples rights and founded on forthrightness and truth.

Ohadike (1994) explains that the relevant institutions were the village assembly, council of elders, age groups, council of chiefs, women's associations and secret societies. Without them, the Igbo society would be starved of its essence and would fundamentally disintegrate. From these claims, we draw the perception of an open and representative system operated through the participation of all in the society.

The councils and assemblies met at intervals and could be summoned urgently as the need arises. This was the very republican system of the Igbo pre-colonial era which was suspended by the colonial imperialists with the invention of foreign system such as the warrant chiefs. We shall hereby discuss briefly, the Igbo institutions of governance.

### 2.4 The Traditional Igbo Institutions Of Governance

Here, we are set to review the literature on the Igbo traditional institutions.

### 2.4.1 Council Of Elders

Matters here are very important as issues that affects lineage members are brought to table and discussed at the meeting of elders. (Indiichie). The inter-lineage disputes will see the oldest man presiding in the gathering with elders from the affected lineages seeking solutions. The council of elders according to Agodi (2002), enjoyed certain prerogatives on issues as burial rites, title taking and others. They served as a standing committee to the general assembly but it should not be forgotten that adoption of their decision is subject to a consensus approval of the general assembly. This implies that the authority of the lineage head is derived from the groups respect for him as the oldest living representative of the founding ancestors. No action will be taken until an issue had been fully agreed upon and some degrees of agreement reached.

For Obiekwe (2015), Izu ndi Ichie (council of elders) comprises majorly of titled and selected men of integrity. The governance of these men was established on the principles of truth, one of the virtues for membership into the council. In other words, members of this group are mostly title holders and men empowered by tradition to address issues in the community.

### 2.4.2 Age Grade

This organization popularly known as Otu Ogbo in Igbo land is made up of members of an acceptable age bracket. There is no universal finality here; it varies from community to another. Age grade refers to a group of persons that are related by age and they come together to perform certain political, social and traditional functions in the society. It is one of the associations that give individuals some sense of belonging and collective responsibility which in turn makes them contribute towards the general development of the society. They also played the role of guard-traditional role of policing the community and enforcing law and order. Ezenagu ( 2016).

We equally saw in Egbo (1987) that the sole objectives of the age grade groups is to develop the consciousness and a strong sense of membership of oneness among the Igbo community. The age grades therefore, are a highly placed body in the management and restoration of sanctity, sacredness and serenity of Igbo traditional systems.

### 2.4.3 Council of Chiefs

In Igbo culture, some men who made impacts in one way or another acquire titles to remain relevant, prestigious and noble in the land. This titles they obtain will now enable them to be acknowledged as great men or chiefs and this made formation of their councils possible to represent their communities to outsiders. The traditional Igbo society does not grant every request to title acquisition so

as to avoid abuse of it. The very historic instance that title brings fame and decorates a man into a full being alongside marriage and wealth would ordinarily make every man seek for one and advance socially. According to Ohadike(1994), until a man is initiated into certain titles, he cannot dress in certain ways or wear hats of certain colours, or shake hands in certain ways, or take a piece of kola nut before other people.

Titles cost money; only men with exceptional abilities and good luck ever bought all the available titles. There are higher titles also which demands payment of some sorts of expensive initiation fees coupled with some days of feasting, dancing and merrymaking. Titles are very important in Igbo land for regardless of the age of people and experience, failure to acquire it or progress beyond the most junior ones; such fellow remains a boy suitable for errands.

### 2.4.4 Women Associations

In Igbo land, women are equally regarded as powerful in their own nature. Setting up and controlling their own clubs and title associations that complement that of man. The women had complete closeness to deities and they are perceived to posses superior spiritual well being and thus, they head many traditional cults and shrines.

This is relevantly seen in Achebe's work that the oracle is served by a priestess. An average Igbo woman is not lazy; they amass wealth in certain endeavors through trading, farming, weaving and lots more which makes them wealthy according to what they represent in return and the level of their wealth. Their lives starts as young people who assist their mothers while growing up developing certain abilities domesticated and characterized of women and at adult, she has already learnt from experience that hard work, marriage and membership of certain associations would just as men, enable them to advance socially.

Politically, men are limited to participate in their town but this was never the case for women; they flexed their tendencies to belong with unlimited political participation not just in their home town but to the town they are married to as well. In trade, women were powerful and together, shuns that which does more harm than good to them. This is evident in Aba women riot on tax imposition. The popular and most influential association of women is the Umuada (daughters of the land) which stands for both married and the unmarried. The Umuada group plays an indispensable role in the preservation of Igbo cultural heritage. Agbasiere (2000), asserted that Umuada group is very powerful and the leadership style they adopted is that of consultative voice. They act like pressure groups and the decisions they reach is considered final to which the

Umunna respects also; enforcing laws and not relenting on sanctioning with fine, men and women who threatened their peace especially in their market place where they see more as a place of ritual functions. These women use their authority to protect and preserve the culture of the community from alternatives. Ezenagu (2016).

With the Umuadas, morality was kept at check for women who commit taboos (nso ala) like adultery, incest, stealing is heavily punished. To say but a few, they were very hardworking, useful and they held the center of gender balance and equity with little or no sense of impartiality. They do this not forgetting their families and the respect needed for the head. Isidienu (2015:3), captures this when she opined that in Igbo land, the man is the head of the family, all others depends on him.

## 3.0 Analysis of Objectives

In this section, we would be presenting the analysis of our objectives.

### 3.1 Analysis of The 'Igbo Enwe Eze' Aphrorism

Barrage of scholars this present day have tried to reconcile themselves in one camp and end the debate on this popular maxim identified with the Igbo traditional setting. Igbo enwe eze as we have seen and heard, implies that the traditional Igbo community had no kings. This was clearly a mis-information that fanned the false understanding and raised some philosophical question bothering on the history line of the Igbo's. A description to which Okoye and Okoye insisted it was a statement from those who frowns at the merits of the word 'Igbo' and was never true of the Igbo origin. The critique of Igbo enwe eze from many who had written about it, returns one thing in common which provides the salient implication that the rejection of absolute monarchy or the forceful imposture of a totalitarian leadership that failed during the colonial administration cannot in any supposition, mean that the Igbo's have no kings. Igbo history for scholars, do not start with the whites therefore, it remains arguable and lacking in merit that they will be defined from the spectacle of the colonial masters.

Be that as it may, the cardinal cultural pillars of the Igbo traditional setting may provide the epistemology that the Igbo's are difficult to rule and their culture as such, wears gloomy countenance at one man for all but this does not by either denotations or connotative standards imply that they had no traditional kings to which they consolidate their affairs on. It does not suffice to signify that there were no history of kingship. The bitter truth which scholars maintain is that those leaders in their quest to expand or better still, adopt a strategy to swing their wand of leadership, should instead not forget that in Igbo culture, they are

just servants of the people who still commands obedience generally on them. To lead therefore is commonly understand to serve.

The Eze for towns like Nri or Arochukwu that had the rulership of a king can be clamped down immediately when arrogance sets in exercising the powers of Emeaburonso, ogbu-onye-mgb-ndu-na-aso-ya with somewhat of a consequence akin to death. This is because of the Igbo belief that okwuru anaghi akari onye kuru ya.

### 3.2 Analysis On The Pragmatic Foundation of Igbo Republicanism

The Igbo's were communalistic, democratic and republican in managing their affairs. They governed themselves strongly and smoothly despite the garb of monarchic royalty they rejected. They operated a republican system of governance which to them, saw to the usefulness of an individual. The individual self was the center or the rallying point of relevance for a pragmatic and effective co-existence anchored on the freedom of every Igbo person. Concerning the general ways they governed themselves, we provide the words of Chikendu (2003:18) stating that :

> "The unit was the family, the most operative unit being the kindred, then the village and town. The village groups were not organized in kingdoms. The function of government was carried on by council of elders who shared power in various levels of intensity with various other groups-age grades, titled men, women, ritual priests etc"

The constitution of village assembly enables the voice of everyone to count. Operating with the council of elders signifies respect for elders; their decisions and the importance of value seen clearly in the title given in their culture. The women and the youths played a major role also; maintaining peace and order. It was just an egalitarian society where "I am because you are" was the canon to which existence was made possible. The symbol to which people gather is their consistent sense of republicanism which allows for full consultative and social formular of participation. The spirit of 'Igwebuike' or the 'Igboness' of any Igbo person depicts the core vital force that shapes their destiny. It is with this force that their actions in solidarity returns laudable.

The council performed all judicial functions which includes land disputes and made all legislative interventions and this was what kept the society moving.

### 4.0 Summary of Findings And Conclusion

In this section, we intend to encapsulate our findings and conclude.

## 4.1 Summary of Findings

Historically, it is evidential that Igbo people bear names that connote kingship. Names like Eze-ji-ofor, Eze-na-agu, Eze-ako-n'obi as the case maybe; validates this. In Igbo land, one who holds the Ofor which doubles as the symbol of authority and that of truth and justice is regarded as an Eze. This nonetheless criticizes further, the Igbo enwe eze belief. This research in its mandate of opening the vistas surrounding the 'Igboness' in the Igbo nation, summarizes in a language more understanding that perturbing with the collaborative efforts of scholars who rejected the description of the Igbo traditional community as Ezeless that it was a mis-representation, a misnomer or a thoughtful lacuna which need be corrected.

We observed that the concept of Eze for the Igbo traditional society was perceived as a manifestation of absolutism; the chief custodian of culture and the people's behavioral pattern rightly or wrongly to his whims and caprices. This if so, is highly predicated on what has never and will not be.We equally observed that the description of the Igbo land as having no kings was solely on failure to classify the difference in Igbo nation, Igbo town or villages. It was holistic in approach to capture the entire Igbo world and summarize them as having no kings. This is because right inside some Igbo towns as we established in Onitsha, Nri and Aro, kings operated.

Looking at Nwalutu (2018:4), there is every need for Igbo people to deconstruct existing colonial narratives, the essentialized version on how they come to perceive themselves and critically reconstruct how they became who they are. This reconciles with our findings that it was creation of many artificial kingdoms in the various parts of Igbo land and the introduction of the warrant chiefs which met rejection was the foundation of the maxim.

Furthermore, it is already established that the concept for the primordial Igbo; hence, the Igbo nation and what they represents should be archived significantly for posterity.

## 4.2 Conclusion

The traditional pre-coronial Igbo community was not different to others who lived and pre occupied their minds to achieve an environment free from crime, sickness and tribalism. They had the mindset which was purely republican and communalistic in nature and to harmonize themselves with unseen higher forces and live in peace with themselves. Many will argue that the republican method they effectively adopted was primitive but then, which particular method of governance for a particular set of people can be said of lacking in primitive origination?

It is now surprising that the Igbo's despite serious attachment to their customs and traditions succumbed to European civilization. It took barely hundred years (1857-1960) for the British to tear apart, a society that had lived for thousands of years. The possibility of this could be explained giving that the Igbo people were quick to perceive the importance of Western Education.

In this research, we focused our lenses and examined the structure, leadership style and mechanisms of participation in the Igbo community. We evaluated their Ezelessness, what is republican in their system and the manner to which it was made pragmatic. We have now seen closely, the reasons for the saying that they have no kings and have evidently established that democracy was not foreign to Igbo Nation.

However, we saw certain advantages to their way of life to which a curious mind would agree that it was a good life where people respect themselves and serve as their brothers keepers. Their judicial system was transparent that an unjust and biased leader is exposing himself and family to repercussions.

Although Colonialism as we have seen in this paper, truncated the fundamentals and strength of the Igbo Republican system of governance, it is still possible for them to practice a perfect model of democracy worth giving attention by both domestic and international scholars. Today, we have elections bringing forth a representative, leader, governor or president who would hold unto much wealth than he can finish. Such behavior is not characteristic of the Igbo nation; just only if we could go back.

Finally, the pre-coronial republican system of Governance as we have seen from the foregoing made it possible for the Igbo culture to appear in the limelight. It maintained their heritage and way of life. We could not have imagined the level of destruction and cultural extinction for which autocracy and tyranny would have permitted. Therefore, the system was responsible for the preservation of the real essence of the Igbo people.

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