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How Ogwezi Left Ubulu-Uku and Started Abbi

By Idenze Ezeme

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The story of Prince Ogwezi, who left Ubulu-Uku to create the settlement now called Abbi, is an important part of the history of the people in that area. This story has been told by many generations and explains how Ogwezi traveled far from his home and founded a new community. Today, Abbi is a peaceful town, and the name “Abbi” comes from the phrase “Kai-bili,” meaning “Let’s live together.” This article will explain who Ogwezi was, why he left Ubulu-Uku, and how he founded Abbi.

Prince Ogwezi came from a royal family in Ubulu-Uku. His ancestors were the Ekei family from Udo Quarters, one of the oldest and most respectable parts of the town. The community, Ubulu-Uku, is located in the Delta State region of Nigeria and has deep roots concerning leadership and tradition. Ogwezi grew up through it all, learning his heritage and what role he might play in leadership.

Ogwezi was determined and strong, but his migration to Ubulu-Uku was not at all easy. “Some people have said the problems were with other leaders in this town, disagreements that became unbearable for him, hence his migration”.

Why Did Ogwezi Leave Ubulu-Uku?

It is not clear for what reasons Ogwezi had to leave his home, but at the time, there was so much tension in Ubulu-Uku. Oral history has it that Ogwezi might have fallen out with his powerful community people, and some attribute this to political struggles, while others to a family problem. Whatever the reason, Ogwezi found himself in a tight corner, unable to continue staying in his hometown.



In most traditional societies, leadership is always in contention. Some would vie to get this power and influence, and at other times, the friction may escalate into very grave fissures. Ogwezi had to make the hard decision not to stay and fight but to move elsewhere to another place and start his life. The move was daring, for leaving one's homeland was to venture into the great unknown. Of course, there was no assurance of security or success. But Ogwezi was willing to take that risk.

Ogwezi started his journey-very, very long-journey, passing through unknown territories in search of a place to stay. In those days, it was very difficult to travel. There were no roads or means of transport. He had to walk through the forests and cross the rivers, avoiding dangerous animals in the process. He may also have been faced with challenges on his way from other tribes or communities, but Ogwezi did not give up. He was determined to find a place where he could start a new community.

After a long journey, Ogwezi finally arrived at a spot that he felt had all the great attributes required for his home. The land was fertile, with good soil to farm and enough resources to see a community grow.

The Founding of Abbi: "Kai-bili"-Let's Live Together

Ogwezi decided to settle down in the newly found land and constituted one community. The new settlement was named "Abbi" from "Kai-bili," meaning "let's live together." From this name, the vision for Ogwezi's new town is seen. He wanted Abbi to be that town where people would come, stay with one another, and live in peace.

The meaning of "Kai-bili" is significant because it shows that Ogwezi wanted the community to cement itself in unity and cooperation. He didn't want a new place just for himself, but he wanted to build a house for many people-a place where they could all live in harmony.

When Ogwezi finally settled in Abbi, the town began to grow. People from surrounding areas began to hear about the new settlement and



were drawn by its peaceful manner of life. The land was good for farming, thus helping the community prosper. With time going, more people moved into Abbi and the town expanded.

It became known as Abbi, a very accommodating place where the people could work and live together without conflicts. Coexistence that helped the Abbi people become strong and prosperous was dear to them. The leadership of descendants of Ogwezi was still upheld within the town, and they made sure that the values of unity and peace trickled down to generations.

Today, Abbi is a well-established community, and in the minds of the people, Ogwezi and his dream of the town are remembered. It is due to this that the name “Kai-bili” has remained symbolic of unity and peace that Ogwezi worked so hard to create.

The story of Ogwezi’s journey from Ubulu-Uku to Abbi is not a story of the travels of one man. It holds within it aplenty of lessons on leadership, survival, and strength of unity.

Ogwezi had proved to be a good leader when he made the painful decision to leave Ubulu-Uku. He did not want to stay in Ubulu-Uku and drag on the fight; he wanted to make a clean start elsewhere. He came out as being very brave, with a clear vision for the future. Founding Abbi gave Ogwezi the opportunity to build a society where individuals were in a better position to coexist peacefully.

Ogwezi’s journey to this land was not easy. On the way, he encountered so many problems that almost made him give up. But he struggled on, and such was his perseverance-to find a new home not only for himself but also for all others. It is for this reason that Ogwezi had the character of overcoming the strains of his journey and able to build up a successful community.

Abbi was named after “Kai-bili” to mean that Ogwezi believed in unity-that there should be a place where people could live together and be at peace with one another. Cooperation and togetherness were



basically his ideas underlying Abbi, and that has remained so to this date.

This migration of Ogwezi from Ubulu-Uku to Abbi is no small part of the history that the Abbi people do have. Ogwezi's decision to leave his native place and start a new community was not only bold but also reflected great leadership qualities. His journey was long and arduous, but he remained determined to find a place where he could create a peaceful settlement.

Abbi stands today to remind one of Ogwezi's dream of unity and cooperation. The town has grown and expanded, and the people continue to observe the peace and harmony established by Ogwezi.

The story of Ogwezi reminds one of the power of leadership, resilience, and unity. This shall be the manner in which the vision of one man creates a legacy that will take shape for generations to come.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Nze is an Igbo history and culture enthusiast with an in-depth passion for exploring the rich cultural heritage, traditions, and historical narratives of the Igbo people. His works are mostly focused on pre-colonial Igbo societies, traditional belief systems, leadership systems, and the impact of European colonialism.



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