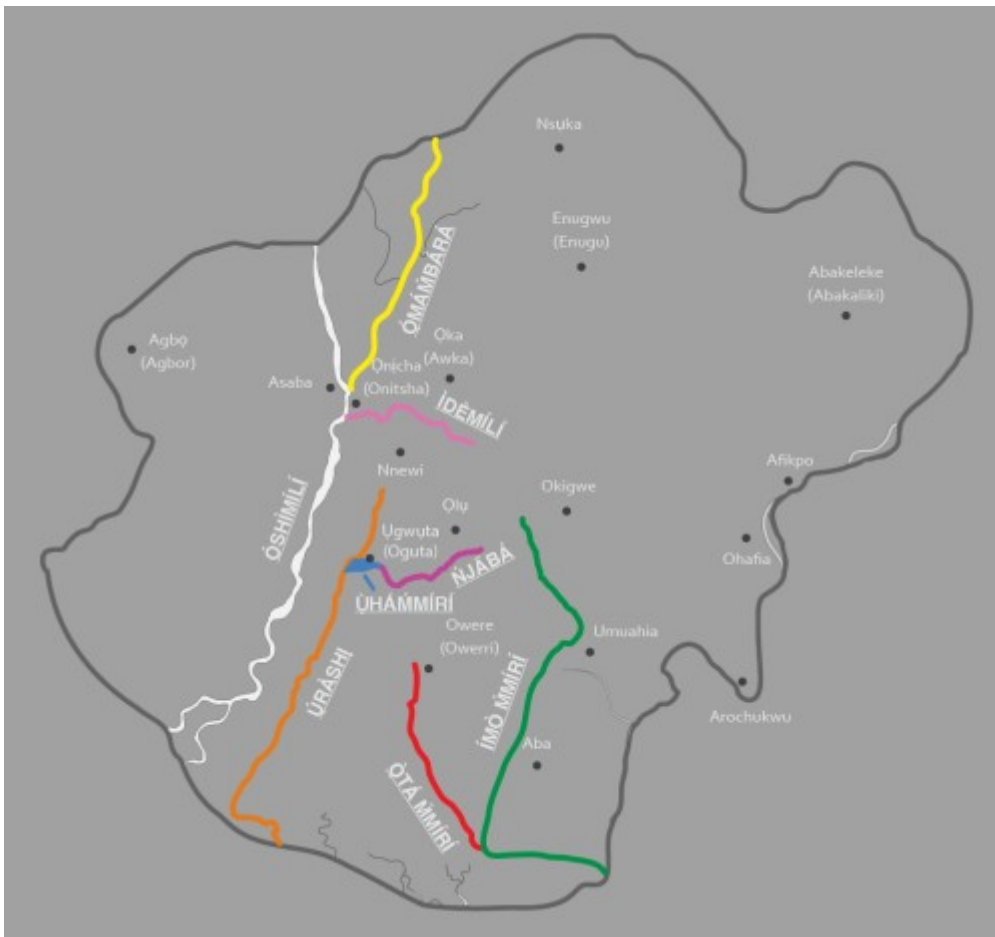


## Igbo Water Divinities {Úkpúrú website}

---

River gods and goddesses are found wherever a significant river or water body is found in Igbo land, some of the more powerful cults cover larger areas and command more respect and followers by the importance of the water bodies. Often of fluid gender, the water spirits are powerful ‘images’ of sexuality, fertility, beauty, and wealth and power. The most powerful water spirits are listed.



[Map of major rivers linked to divinities within Igboland]

## Njābá

*Njābá* is so powerful among southern and specifically southwestern Igbo communities that he outranks *Àlà*, the Earth Mother, in these communities. *Njābá* is usually male and is the guardian of the river

of the same name that is a major tributary of Ọgwúta (Oguta) Lake in Imo State, Nigeria. *Éké*, the royal python, is sacred to *Ọjābá* and surrounding communities consider them messengers and manifestations of *Ọjābá* and somewhat of a totem animal of which it is forbidden to harm or eat; serious fines and the responsibility of funding a human-sized burial for the snakes befalls anyone who harms pythons. [[Interview about Ọjābá+](#)]

---

## Ímò Ọmírí



*Ímò Ọmírí* is the spirit of the Imo River [pictured] which runs between present day Imo State (which is named after the river) and Abia State and runs into the Atlantic between a section of Rivers State and Akwa Ibom State in Nigeria. She is usually feminine and was associated with the *Ibinukpabi* oracle or “*Long Juju*” of Arochukwu, the most powerful oracle in southeastern Nigeria during the Atlantic Slave Trade, and she is considered as its female counterpart. *Ímò Ọmírí* is a largely benevolent fertility spirit. In myth, the Imo is the river that rushed between the Ngwa people of Abia State and their relatives in Imo State creating a permanent cut-off between them. [[More+](#)]

---

## Óshímírí

Also: *Ósímírí* / *Órímílí* / *Órímírí* / *Ósímílí* - the female spirit of the Niger River which is named after her in Igbo. As is usual to feminine water spirits she is a fertility goddess. *Èzù nà Ómámبالá*, the confluence of the Anambra and Niger Rivers, is the site where Èrì's band, the primogenitor of the Umuleri and Umunri Igbo people, migrated from the north to and settled.

---

## Ìdèmílí

*Ìdèmílí / Ìdèmírí* is the female spirit of the river of the same name that runs through the local government area of the same name in Anambra State, Nigeria. *Ìdèmílí* means ‘the pillar of waters’ referring to the spiritual force of the water spirit preventing rain-clouds in the sky from falling [*ídè* also means flood, and water spirit forces are known to punish through floods or other sorts of water-logging]. Like most water spirits *Ìdèmílí* is a fertility goddess. *Éké*, royal pythons, are also sacred to *Ìdèmílí* and to communities that depend on her and are also known as *Éké Ìdèmílí*. *Ìdèmílí*’s story also involves appearing to mortals as a maiden. [[The Ìdèmílí story+](#)] [[Priest of the Ìdèmílí shrine+](#)]

---

## Ụhámírí

Also: *Ụhámírí* - The ambivalent feminine spirit of Ụgwútá Lake of which she owns, she is paired with *Njábá* and she is also known as **Ògbúidè** meaning ‘deep floodwater’ and her husband is *Okita*. *Ụhámírí* roughly translates from Igbo as ‘the shining beauty of the waters’; *Ụhámírí* is beautiful and wealthy and happy and childless. She is a powerful spirit among women in Ụgwútá and is considered as somewhat of a spirit of achievement among women; successful women in Ụgwútá especially were said to mostly be devotees of *Ụhámírí*.

---

## Ụràshì

Also: *Ụlàsì / Ụràsì* - The spirit of the Ụràshì (Orashi) River which runs through Imo State and Rivers State. A male, *Ụràshì*’s sacred grove, like *Ògbúidè*’s, was marked primarily by the red and white pieces of cloth.

---

## Ọmámbará

Also: *Ọmámbalá* - The spirit of the Ọmámbará (Anambra) River which runs through northern Anambra State in Anam-Igbo land and then into the Niger River.

---

## Ọtá Mmírí

Of the Ọtá Mmírí (Otamiri) River which runs through Imo State and particularly Ụràtà-Igbo communities where the *Mbárí* votive shrines are dedicated to his mother, Àlà the Earth Mother, and where he plays a significant role.

[Igbo spirituality](#)