

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
University of Mohammed Boudiaf M'sila
Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages
Department of English Language



Colonial Evils: Cultural and Ideological Conflicts in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*

**A Thesis Proposal Submitted to the Department of English in
Partial Fulfillment for the Requirement of Master Degree in
Literature and Civilisation**

Candidates

Miss. Ilhem DJAALAB

Miss. Safia FREDJ

Supervisor

Mr. Mohammed SENOUSI

2017/2018

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
University of Mohammed Boudiaf M'sila
Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages
Department of English Language



Colonial Evils: Cultural and Ideological Conflicts in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*

**A Thesis Proposal Submitted to the Department of English in
Partial Fulfillment for the Requirement of Master Degree in
Literature and Civilisation**

Candidates

Miss. Ilhem DJAALAB

Miss. Safia FREDJ

Supervisor

Mr. Mohammed SENOUSI

Board of Examiners

Ms. Rebbahi	University of M'sila	Chairperson
Mrs. Amirouche	University of M'sila	Examiner
Mr. Senoussi	University of M'sila	Supervisor

2017/2018

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our supervisor, **Mr. Mohammed SENOUSI** for his continuous support, patience, motivation, and immense knowledge. His guidance was of great value and his useful comments, remarks, and encouragement helped us through the whole course of our research.

We are also grateful for the members of the panel of examiners for their kind acceptance of reading our research and for the remarks they would provide.

We would like to thank our teachers at Mohamed Boudiaf University of M'sila for their invaluable guidance and support.

Last but not least, we would like to thank our families: our parents, our brothers, and our sisters for the moral support throughout writing this research and our years of study.

DEDICATION

We would like to dedicate this humble work to our dear mothers and fathers who have always been a constant source of unconditional love and of undying support and encouragement during our whole college life and its academic pursuits.

ABSTRACT

Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God* is a notable landmark in the African literary canon. It is met with global critical plaudits for moving the historical narrative of Achebe's trilogy forward. The novel dramatises the predicament of an Igbo tribe, namely Umuaro, caught amid the demands of two colliding cultures, and explores how the advent of Christianity to Eastern Nigeria destroys the infrastructure of the traditional faith. Therefore, the aim of this study is to cast light on the cultural and ideological conflicts and the evils brought upon the Igbos by the British colonialism. It examines Achebe's postcolonial discourse to account for the tragic experience of Umuaro clan and the downfall of its cultural life. Hence, the first chapter highlights the socio-historical realities that surround the writing of the novel, while the second chapter involves the application of postcolonial literary criticism to analyse the major themes of the work. Thus, the epilogue of Achebe's trilogy openly reveals the trauma that follows the coming of the white man, and the tragedy of the protagonist, Ezeulu, that implies the tragedy of the whole society of Umuaro in particular, and the plight of the African continent in general.

Key words: colonialism, postcolonial, cultures, ideological, conflicts.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE: SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT	7
1. Chinua Achebe: When the Lions Write History.....	7
2. The British Scramble for Africa.....	12.
2.1. Pervasiveness of the Christian Missionaries.....	15.
2.2. From Civilising to Exploiting.....	16
3. Colonial Tremor.....	18
3.1. Strangers in Their Own Land.....	20
3.2 Colonial Trauma.....	21
4. Tribalism: The Curse of Africa.....	23.
5. Contested Concepts of Culture and Ideology.....	26
CHAPTER TWO: SEEDS OF DISORDER AND DECLINE OF IGBO HERITAGE	31
1. Symbolism of <i>Arrow of God</i>	31
2. Colonial and Counter Colonial Discourse.....	33
2.1. Conrad and Cary's Clichés.....	37
2.2. Africanising and Decolonising Culture.....	43
3. The Occident versus Africa: the Inherence of Otherness.....	48.
3.1. Constructing Inferiority Complex.....	53
4. Hybridisation of the Igbo culture and Ideology.....	58
4.1. Linguistic Imperialism.....	66
4.2. A War Between the Gods.....	69
5. The Wretched of Africa.....	73
CONCLUSION	79.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	82

Introduction

When the Missionaries arrived, the Africans had the Land and the Missionaries had the Bible. They taught us how to pray with our eyes closed. When we opened them, they had the land and we had the Bible.

Jomo Kenyatta, reported in John Frederick Walker, *A Certain Curve of Horn: The Hundred-Year Quest for the Giant Sable Antelope of Angola* (2004), p. 144.

The white man is very clever. He came quietly with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart.

Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (London: Heinemann, 1958), p. 126-7.

Throughout the course of history, culture and ideology have been predisposed to winds of change and communities favour or resist change based on the circumstances in which it occur. For instance, colonised societies, and through collision with foreign peoples, cultures and ideologies, have to orientate away, through assimilation or acculturation, from their historically attached native ways. This is due to internal and external working forces, and most prominently is, the cultural and ideological conflicts. Such conflicts have always been a feature that conjoins most societies weighed under colonialism. In the nineteenth century, Africa becomes the magnificent cake the European colonial powers race to have a piece of. Therefore, it is, and still, a fertile ground for cultural, ethnic and political conflicts and disputes as a colonial legacy.

With regard to the fact that literature is the warehouse of societies' cultural and ideological aspects, it can unveil the futile dispute related to culture and ideology. Also, it has the capacity to reveal how these conflicts can change a given society in many ways, particularly, when this society is facing colonial advent with its strange, unfamiliar ways.

Africa, at a point of time, has to go through colonialism and to bare its resultant evils. It is obliged to host the stranger and then to get deprived of its own culture and identity. Thus, we cannot but relate to African literature in the pursuit of exploring the cultural and the ideological discords in question.

Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God* (1964) is universally ranked as the finest novel to depict the critical reality of an African nation, namely Nigeria, under the British colonial dominance. It is a major representative of African literature that furnishes an African culture in such an artistic flavour. It brings into life an ancient community, people, traditions, customs, ideology, and culture. All in a coloured, full of life, artistic piece of writing, draws back time to show how those people live, love, and laugh. More importantly, Achebe portrays "*the disrupting effect an externally imposed power system (the British) has on an internally imposed internal power system (African tradition and customs).*"¹

In *Arrow of God*, the main character, Ezeulu, is the headstrong chief priest of the god Ulu worshipped by the six villages of Umuaro. The people of Umuaro create Ulu to unite and secure the villages against the Abam slave raiders. Ezeulu safeguards the traditions and rituals of his people. He is increasingly under threat from rivals within his people, from his family members and from the colonial government. He seeks to assert and to maintain his position which furthers disputes with his people and with the colonial administration. Due to his stubbornness and his belief of being untouchable as the chief priest, he is ready to lead his people even towards their own destruction.

From the very first reading of *Arrow of God*, one gets the impression that Achebe has skilfully and foremost energetically carved his piece of writing. Possibly no other work of his captures the image of the collide between the Igbo society and the colonial system in its very first stages, and so vividly as this novel does.

¹ Lynette Grate, "Colonial and Post-colonial Literary Dialogues," *West Michigan Education* 02 February 2017, p. x. <https://wmich.edu/dialogues/texts/arrowofgod.html>, Accessed on 25.12.2017.

The other reason is that the work is a revival for Igbo past, traditions and rituals. Achebe makes life of his fellow men and women through literature. He paints a picture of a rich culture of his ancestors, distinguishable customs, rituals, and communal life of Igbo society. All of which his people fail to maintain, and the colonial system to appreciate. Instead, Achebe's ancestors give way to the colonisers. They cannot walk past their conflicts and maintain unison, they rather pave the way to the colonial presence. The colonisers come and settle in a land that is not theirs; they oppress its people, impose illegal laws, use power and spread their religion, customs, language, etc. Thus, the novel foreshadows the complex conflicts among the Igbo society on one hand, and with the colonial presence on the other.

The thesis is going to investigate the various external and internal conflicts as they occur in *Arrow of God*, and to identify to what extent have these conflicts been a major influence in the history of a nation.

Contemporary African fiction is, and continues to be, concerned with the cultural and ideological struggle between tradition and modernisation, old and new, continuity and change, acceptance and resistance of the ways forwarded by colonialism. Moreover, African fiction, in general, and sub-Saharan, in specific, portrays how such conflicts lead an African culture to its final burial.

Our aim, then, is to provide a close examination to the cacophony of the various intertwined conflicts within African culture in the grip of colonialism through the scope of traditional Igbo culture. This study will throw light on the African literary scene as an abundance of artistic and aesthetic masterpieces whence Achebe and his African trilogy glare prominently. Therefore, we shall seek to determine, with certainty, that Achebe's *Arrow of God* is a truly postcolonial piece of writing. The focal concern of this study is to examine the various conflicts throughout the novel, and how they give colonialism the upper hand to

subdue African people and to foster alien culture, and to identify the impact of colonialism on the traditional Igbo society.

We shall attempt to analyse how Ezeulu's attitudes are perceived by his people and by the colonial administration through a detailed examination of his questionable character. Also we shall examine the role of ideology and ideological instruments in furthering disputes among a colonised society and their everlasting effects on it. This study also seeks to ascertain, once again, that each colonial system, whatever its goals, methods or pretences, has not done more than disfiguring the unique face of the colonised's culture, history and identity.

Our motive behind choosing to work on a well-established African writer in the self of Achebe goes beyond the writer's own universal fame. We choose Achebe because, as a postcolonial writer, he does not ask us bluntly to judge, rather, he does force us to view his people's ceremonies with detachment and humour. He puts forth, with such simplicity, a picture of his ancestors, life, tradition, culture, and customs. Through this picture he corrects the one that has been distorted by Joseph Conrad and his fellow writers about nations their countries unrighteously subjugate.

The main quest in this research is to depict the evils that inher Nigeria, as a representative for all previously colonised countries all over the world, since the colonisers take over the land in the nineteenth century onwards. The research's focal question is concerned of Africans in the light of cultural and ideological turmoil. Therefore, what are the various conflicts in *Arrow of God*, and to what extent are they effective in wrecking the cultural and ideological infrastructure of the Igbos, and what is the role of ideology and its instruments in the Igbo community under colonialism?

This study additionally focuses on the psychological aspects of the main character in the novel. So to what extent is Ezeulu's personal conflict a reflection to the external conflict of his

people with the colonial system? And is Ezeulu's final downfall a representation of the fall of a whole culture, a whole nation?

Finally, how does Achebe portray and capture the fragmented nation, identity and individuals under the shadows of colonialism in a literary production through symbols, metaphors and figurative language in general?

The work will be structured into two chapters. The first chapter will tackle the socio-historical context. The second one will be devoted to the practical side of the study where we shall analyse the selected novel.

CHAPTER ONE: SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Generally speaking, literary works are strongly attached to the socio-historical context in which they are produced. It is highly important to relate to the historicity of the literary work since the latter is, inevitably, the product of the different social and political events of the time in which it is written.

CHAPTER TWO: SEEDS OF DISORDER AND DECLINE OF IGBO HERITAGE

In this part, we shall thoroughly analyse the selected novel. This analysis will be carried out in the light of the postcolonial theory appropriate to the topic of the study, and using books related to the same topic.

This thesis builds on postcolonial and psycho-analytical theories to approach the novel. The aim of this study is to reveal how the Nigerian advocate, Chinua Achebe, employs this novel as a significant artistic work replete with diverse internal disputes diagnosed through post-colonial characteristics. It will attempt to clarify the nature of the interaction between European colonisers and the societies they colonise in the modern period. Moreover, this study attempts to show how writers like Achebe respond to the colonial reality in their countries, how do they portray this reality, and how they can demolish the arsenal of false representations of them to the Europeans as a means of legitimising colonisation on all levels.

The work shall attempt, accordingly, to dig into the psyche of the colonised and the coloniser alike to show how the former receives colonialism, and how the latter is affected on the psychological level. It will also trace the traumatic effects of colonialism on a society that chooses to orientate to a foreign culture, and to abolish its own traditional heritage.

We will rely on a handful of literary works such as Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) to show the connection between culture and Imperialism. In other words, we shall depict the impact of mainstream culture, that of the British, on colonialism and imperialism in the Igbo land and how the British imperialists and colonialists employ culture to control these distant people and their land. In addition, we shall use Said's *Orientalism* (1978) to show how the Westerners view the Orientals, and how the Africans are thus treated by a similar token.

Following that, we shall use Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994) to examine how British colonisation attempts to assert power, and to create anglicised subjects lead to collisions and interchanges between Igbo native culture and that of the colonisers. These collisions and interchanges result in the emergence of Igbo, hybrid, in-between culture. We shall examine the fluctuation between the native culture and the one of the coloniser, namely, the ambivalence that results in the history of the culturally undetermined nation, and of the language used to construct this history, that is to say, the narrative.

Moreover, we use Albert Memmi's *The Coloniser and the Colonised* (1957) alongside Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), and *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), to draw the psychological effects of colonialism on the colonised and the coloniser alike through highlighting the relationship between the oppressed - the Igbos, and the oppressor - the British colonial system.

CHAPTER ONE: SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Fiction is history; human history; or it is nothing. But it is also more than that; it stands on firmer ground, being based on the reality of forms and the observation of social phenomena, whereas history is based on documents...Thus fiction is never truth...A historian may be an artist too, and a novelist is a historian, the preserver, the keeper, the expounder, of human experience.

Joseph Conrad, *Notes on Life and Letters*(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.19.

The historicity of any literary work often plays key role in digging out the different circumstances that lay its foundation. *Arrow of God*, a novel written by the prominent African literary figure, Chinua Achebe, arises at a crucial point in the history of, not only his mother land Nigeria, but Africa as a whole. The period during which the events of the story come to life is all about colonisation, and the resultant external and internal conflicts that characterise the era.

1. Chinua Achebe: When the Lions Write History

History is not based on facts, but it is based almost entirely on interpretations of the facts and the actions of people in the past. It is also said that the winners always write history, and those in power get to skew things their way to divert blame and to influence society in rather powerful ways. So "*how stories are told, who tells them, when they're told, how many stories are told, are really dependent on power*"². So once people allow only the winners to make those interpretations, it becomes easy to accept one view point and not to raise objections.

European and Western narratives that account for the scramble for Africa promote European and Western ethnocentrism, a racial status that elevates whiteness while debases

² Chimamanda Nguzi Adichie, "The Danger of a Single Story," *TED Talks*, 2009, p. x. <https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda-adichie-the-danger-of-a-single-story/discussion?referrer=playlist-how-to-tell-a-story>, Accessed on 10.01.2018.

the humanity of black people as colonial subjects³. From the European and Western perspective, the Africans are tarnished as being naturally barbarians, destitute of intelligence and having little or no humanity and no civilisation but the one forwarded by the colonisers who "*have not themselves demonstrated any clear superiority in sanity or more competence in coping with life*"⁴. The Africans are strongly associated with derogatory darkness and with the tribal. They are not properly portrayed in most of those narratives and, most of the time, they are not even given voice, but rather put in the periphery. These severe racialisations spur writers and intellectuals like Achebe to rise objection, to give the other side of the story, the one told by the Africans themselves. Achebe becomes aware of this fact for, as a boy, he reads the works of Robert Louis Stevenson, Charles Dickens, Joseph Conrad and W.B. Yeats and later comes to say: "*they were not about us or about people like us*"⁵. He and his African fellow writers are hit by the truth that they, their people, and their culture are of no intrigue to colonial writers, but rather are swept under the rug. In this concern Achebe says:

I began to read about adventures in which I didn't know that I was supposed to be on the side of those savages who were encountered by the good white man. I instinctively took sides with the white people. They were fine! They were excellent. They were intelligent. The others were not... they were stupid and ugly. That was the way I was introduced to the damage of not having your own stories⁶

Through his rereading of *Heart of Darkness* in particular, Achebe starts to read between the lines, and to ask questions. He feels alienated by the wrong, deflected and racist depictions of Africa and the Africans found in English novels, and he even identifies Conrad as "*a bloody racist*" in an essay entitled "*An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of*

³ Charles Mills, "Revisionist Ontologies: Theorising White Supremacy," *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 3, No.1(1994), pp. 105-134; p.105.

⁴ Chinua Achebe, *Hopes and Impediments: Selected Essays(1965-1987)*(London: Heinemann, 1988), p.13.

⁵ Chinua Achebe and Jerome Brooks, " The Art of Fiction," *The Paris Review*, Winter 1994, p. x.

<https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/1720/chinua-achebe-the-art-of-fiction-no-139-chinua-achebe>,

Accessed on 23.01.2018.

⁶Ibid., p. x.

Darkness". Achebe realises the danger of not having your own stories, of "*the Single Story*", as Chimamanda Nguzi Adichie argues, and the necessity to start telling stories removed from the frame of the colonial perspective to open eyes to Africa's true history and culture.

There is that great proverb-that until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter. That did not come to me until much later. Once I realised that, I had to be a writer. I had to be that historian. It's not one man's job. It's not one person's job. But it is something we have to do, so that the story of the hunt will also reflect the agony, the travail- the bravery, even, of the lions⁷

Achebe becomes the advocate and historian of the lions with his first and major novel *Things Fall Apart* and then *Arrow of God*, two of his prominent writings that tell the story of European colonialism in Nigeria from the point of view of the colonised. He is urged to intervene in the already existing colonial and Pan-African body of literature. He provides a thorough examination of the damage done to his people, and he shows how Igbo culture is completely demised by the arrival of Christian missionaries and the district commissioner. He portrays this in terms of the psychological and cultural implications on the individual and on the society.

Achebe recognises that writing for the Africans is a serious and urgent mission with cultural, political and philosophical dimensions. He sets out to restore the true image of Africa and to help his people rediscover the cultural heritage lost under the traumatic effects of colonisation. The two novels he sets in the past, before the advent of the white man deal with a fundamental theme according to Achebe who says:

This theme-put quite simply- is that African people did not hear of culture for the first time from Europeans; that their societies were not mindless but frequently had a philosophy of depth and value and beauty, that they had poetry and above all, they had dignity. It is this dignity

⁷ " The Art of Fiction," p. x.

that many African people all but lost during the colonial period, and it is this that they must now regain.⁸

Achebe's writings assert the cultural and human worth of the African societies they portray. They present an effort to destroy the shallow, antagonistic and false ideas which label Africa as the "*Dark Continent*", a gloomy landscape, a jungle with wild primitive creatures, the Africa of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Against this prejudiced background, Achebe's prose grows portraying people, real human beings who, regardless of their faults, weaknesses and imperfections, they embody the ethos of the Igbos and deservedly win respect as individuals whose life has dignity, significance, and value. "*The worst thing that can happen to any people is the loss of their dignity and self-respect. The writer's duty is to help them regain it by showing them... what happened to them, what they lost.*"⁹ Achebe uses his pen to draw back the ancientness of history that is denied by the egotistical, superior view point of the colonisers. Achebe takes on the mission, as a writer with a pivotal position, and a guide, to help his people regain their confidence and self-esteem through relating their present to their ancient past. He sets out to invert the European-conceived Africa as a mere jungle, dwelled by cannibals and savages with such a sense of duty and commitment, as he says: "*I believe it's impossible to write anything in Africa without some kind of commitment, some kind of message, some kind of protest.*"¹⁰ He makes it incontrovertible that Africa has all the traits of human community of culture, traditions, customs, language and daily life, things that are completely overlooked by many colonial writers. He protests the assertion of the barbariness of the Africans and the vulgar distortion of the image of Africa abroad.

⁸ Chinua Achebe, "The Role of the Writer in a New Nation," in *African Writers on African Writing*, ed. G. D. Kilam (Evanston: North Western University Press, 1973), p.158.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.64.

¹⁰ Bernth Lindfors and Chinua Achebe, *Conversations with Chinua Achebe* (Jackson: Mississippi University Press, 1997), p.30.

In his other novels, *No longer At Ease*, *A Man of the People* and *Anthills of the Savannah*, and many other works, Achebe reveals how colonialism has become associated with widening the gap between traditional Igbo life and the society under the invasion of modernisation. He goes further on expressing his bitterness over what his country has become, after the British left, in his collection of essays *There Was a Country*. Africa is severely westernised due to imposition of traits of capitalism, individualism and self-centrism. Social values are dramatically damaged and corruption, fraud and dictatorship come to rule. He bluntly speaks against such negative traits, "*we must seek the freedom to express our thoughts and our feelings, even against ourselves, without the anxiety that what we say might be taken as evidence against our race*"¹¹. In his writings, Achebe seeks to show the Africans, as the saying goes, "*where the rain began to beat them*"; from where their ghastly current state of suffering comes, and how to put an end to this inherited chaos. Achebe portrays how things fall apart by the coming of the white man to Africa; he sets out the pattern and provides the impulse for his other African writers to follow on his path and to continue this sacred mission. Achebe and the African intelligentsia are aware that having no vision of the past means having no vision of a future, and subsequently having no identity.¹²

Achebe, indeed, valorises the idea of culture in the thinking of African worlds and abroad the continent. His works stand eminently, in the African literary canon, as counterpoints to the colonial ones and he shifts the idea of Africa from romance and nostalgia, from alleged primitivism, to an affirmative culture, history and civilisation. It is in this sense

¹¹ Chinua Achebe, "The Black Writer's Burden," *Presence Africaine*, Vol. 31, No. 59(1966), pp .137-149 ; p. 139.

¹² Reed Way Dasenbrock, "Creating a Past: Achebe, Naipaul, Soyinka, Farah," *The Literary Imagination and the Sense of the Past*, No. 68/69(Fall 1985), pp. 312-332; p.312.

that Achebe might be said to have invented, or reinvented, the idea of African culture and brought it along Western culture to break kola.¹³

2. The British Scramble for Africa

The Conquest of earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much.

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*(Bejaia: TALANTIKIT, 2014), p.16.

Under the shades of new imperialism, Africa is almost entirely occupied by multiple European powers between 1881 and 1914. Only Ethiopia and Liberia remain independent nations. Tropical African regions are partitioned due to the so-called "The Mad Scramble for Africa". The Berlin Conference of 1884 is often referred to as the official starting point of European colonialism in the African continent. The splitting up of Africa accordingly marks how the European empires avert fighting with each other, and distribute European occupation and commerce¹⁴. Nevertheless, there is a sort of shrewdly long-standing rivalry between dominant poles including: Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Belgium. The escalated dispute leaves the Western arena in the lurch . Notwithstanding European countries set their sights to expand their spheres in Africa, the splendid cake each European state wants to have a larger slice of.

The contention started a hundred years ago when in 1884 the capitalist powers of Europe sat in Berlin and carved an entire continent with a multiplicity of peoples, cultures, and languages into different colonies. It seems it is the fate of Africa to have her destiny always decided around conference tables in the metropolises of the Western world: her submergence from self-governing communities into colonies was decided in Berlin; her more recent

¹³ Simon Gikandi, "Chinua Achebe and the Invention of Culture," *Research in African Literature*, Vol. 32, No. 3(Autumn 2001), pp. 3-8; p.8.

¹⁴ Patrick Brantlinger, "Victorians and Africans: The Genealogy of the Myth of the Dark Continent," *Critical Inquiry* Vol.12, No.3(Autumn 1985) , pp.166-203 ; p.168.

transition into neo-colonies along the same boundaries was negotiated around the same tables in London, Paris, Brussels and Lisbon.¹⁵

African territories are remarkably ranked among the last undiscovered regions of the world despite being on Europe's doorstep. The reasons for this have to do with the challenging geographical terrain. This seems harsh enough to curb the European efforts to penetrate Africa; Britain's are no exception. Once the British acquire ample maritime expertise, it is easier to dive into several parts of the continent. Also, they invest that expertise to run economic enterprises with foreign countries accessed by controlled waterways. Yet, Western Africa's coastline is fraught of danger, and irrevocably hard to securely navigate through. Identically, land passages are very enigmatic to the British explorers, traders and even missionaries, and the vast Northern area presents in particular difficult natural hindrance.

According to historians, the British presence in Africa traces its beginnings to the wake of the sixteenth century. At that time, the Portuguese dominantly hold the reins of slave trade which underpin the plantations in the New World. The British activity in West Africa is centered around the profitable slave trading. As a result, the colonial movement begins to further expand specifically in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The African regions emerge simultaneously as a prime location to enlarge colonial influence; that location is immensely plentiful of natural resources used to fuel the industrial upheaval. These resources include: gold, copper, rubber, platinum, gas, oil, coal, cotton, cocoa, palm oil...etc. Likewise, undeveloped economics ripe for exploitation are calculated as another basic impetus driven hegemony over Africa¹⁶. In the same vein, Britain's scramble for Africa extends more in a time when balance of trade witnesses elevating slump; It is usually due to the long period of

¹⁵ Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of the English Language in African Literature* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1986) ,p.4.

¹⁶ Suchitra Pramanik, "Igbo Culture as Colonial Resistance in *Arrow of God*," *The Criterion: An International Journal in English*, Vol.5, N.2 (April, 2014), pp.571-580 ; p.572.

depression that takes place in years between 1873-1896. Hence, Africa turns into an increasingly open market where surplus capital is lucratively invested¹⁷. As industrial revolution becomes a driving force to colonial race, Europe is in urgent need to raw materials to move the wheel of production, and subsequently of trade exchanges. Also, lack of competition makes it possible to augment larger progress.

From a military standpoint, the British authorities endeavour to obtain the Southern and Eastern coasts for a set of geo-strategic concerns. It aims at founding firm military and naval bases, so that it could serve imperial existence through controlling major routes to Asia¹⁸. Equally important, the African colonies become significant storehouse of military power. Large numbers of indigenous populations are conscripted in many of colonial Britain's wars.

To legitimise its invasion of Africa, Britain issues a handful of justifying causes concerned with humane and civilisational aspects. To begin, the chief justification is to convert the Africans to Christianity. This is strategically employed as a divisive imperialistic instrument. Civilising mission has been conducted to garner colonialists the upper hand over the natives; it is through a growing desire to spread English language and culture. This is not because of some noble reason; rather they want to widely pervade Western values and ideologies. Colonial greed then needs to be satiated by introducing claims related to democratic thoughts. Suppressing slavery in turn is high on the agenda of Berlin Conference ; notwithstanding the decision is never applied in reality¹⁹.

By the twentieth century, the British empire is deemed to have the lion's share in acquiring African colonies. It takes control over a densely populated countries with many various cultural components. Its holding includes Egypt, Sudan, Uganda, Somalia and Kenya in North and East Africa; Ghana, Sierra Leone and Nigeria in West Africa; and Zambia,

¹⁷ "Igbo Culture as Colonial Resistance in *Arrow of God*," p.572.

¹⁸ Lynn Hunt, *The Making of the West*(Bradford: University Press, December 2000) ,p.x.

¹⁹ Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa*(New York: Random House, 1991), p.65.

Zimbabwe, Botswana, Malawi and South Africa in the Southern part of the continent. Primarily, the colonial system is based solely on economic and military control, soon after it becomes a ruthless direct rule of imperialism.

In that case, colonisation shakes Africa to the core. As social and economic infrastructures are shaken, so too cultural mores. Africa's map is repainted arbitrarily, for colonial divisions refer to no existing political and geographical borders. The outcome is then bloody devastating feuds that beget heavy internal calamities within the Africans.

2.1. Pervasiveness of Christian Missionaries

Bearing the sword, and often the torch, messengers of the
might within the land, bearers of a spark from the sacred
fire.

Heart of Darkness, p.13

Throughout time, Equatorial Africa has dramatically been opened up to forces of change. Initially, these forces come from within, and then external ones are imported from without. Namely, Christianity seems to be the former, yet the most influential, force of change exerted on Africa. The commencement of missionary enterprise brings radical spiritual, mental, and perhaps material transformations to the pagan natives. As a matter of fact, religious officials flow steadily in a time when exploration of new territories become going momentum. Huge waves of them access gradually to the heart of Africa under the premise of going to spread the Christian faith, which becomes a basic concern. They come to teach the Gospel's messages to the heathens, for missionaries are honorifically viewed as "*visible saints, exemplars of ideal piety in a sea of persistent savagery*"²⁰. As some devote themselves to accomplish the divine duty they come for, others however work hand in glove with colonial authorities. They forsake the breaching of the Holy Scripture, ending up as colonisation's

²⁰ Edward E. Andrews, "Christian Missionaries and Colonial Empires Reconsidered: A Black Evangelist in West African, 1766-1816," *Journal of Church & State*, Vol.51, No.4 (2009), pp.633-691 ; p.655.

"agent, scribe and moral alibi"²¹. Thereupon, biblical texts are impurely misused in favour of colonisation. They fail to follow in footsteps of early missionaries whose core interest is to make Christ's word heard. It is, therefore, a fact that Africa's conquest is an inevitable result of latter missionaries' treachery, being mere "*ideological shock troops for colonial invasion whose zealatory blinded them*"²². In addition, those troops attempt to paste the notion of self-governance inadequacy in the minds of Africans. It is probably due to Western cultural values which they have little doubt about its superiority²³. In this context, J.D. Fage argues that the bulk of Europeans become enslaved to the idea that "*their Christian scientific, industrial society was intrinsically far superior to anything Africa has produced.*"²⁴

By the same token, religious officials endeavour to instigate local clans to rebel against the traditional social framework. It is essentially through educational curriculum provided to the people they lived with. Education is utilised to put slowly the African culture to extinction. Surprisingly, education and conversion go hand in hand²⁵. Nonetheless, the dawn of the eighteenth century witnesses the birth of an anti-colonial trend, labelling Christian missionaries as the religious weapon of government trinkets, and an anti-secular movement satirises the alliance signed between church and state. In a word, Christianisation turns to be intricately interwoven with colonial concerns.

2.2. From Civilising to Exploiting

In the course of history, Africa affords an example of expanding circles of colonial power. Imperialist expansion is to the point where everything could be done to reach the goals

²¹ Roy R. Grinker, Stephen C. Lubkemann and Christopher B. Steiner, *Perspectives on Africa: A Reader in Culture, History and Representations* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), p.32.

²² Edward Andrews, "Christian Missionaries and Colonial Empires Reconsidered," p.656.

²³ Viera Pawliková Vilhanová, "Christian Missions in Africa and Their Role in the Transformation of African Societies," *Asian and African Studies*, Vol.16, No.2 (2007), pp.249-26 ; p.257.

²⁴ J.D. Fage, *A History of Africa* (London: New Fetter Lane, 1995), p.x.

²⁵ Viera Pawliková Vilhanová, "Christian Missions in Africa and Their Role in the Transformations of African Societies," p.256.

of colonisation. As there is no way to stop colonisation from happening, so too its toll in human terms.

Occasionally, when Great Britain sprawls across greater parts of the continent, onward march of civilisation has been taken up as a justifying principle to pull the backward Africans toward the "light"²⁶. African cultural mores are reckoned to be of no avail, purporting to be in need for help. Thus, civilising mission is launched with a new vigour to civilise the barbaric, and to reform what Westerners perceive as savage culture. Religious conventions are commonly stigmatised as witchcraft, devil worship, and heathenism, for colonial Britain feels it is its holy duty to bestow modern civilisation and Christianity to African societies. However, the undertaken attempt for enlightening is merely in accordance with colonial policies.

At a point, spreading civilisation is not solely related to religion, ethics and intellectuality, but to politics and administration. British authorities present imperial system to itself in a greatly idealised mode. So if the British subjugate an African territory, they make themselves believe that the people they colonise are lesser than they are. Also, all things African are viewed as incapable, primitive and culturally bankrupt. This wide variety of clichés touches different groups of subject peoples. Therefore, the British, whose Caucasian race fused of the best European blood, have to civilise the savages; to enlighten the pagans; and to modernise the primitive. These are erectly tacked together as a rationale identified as "la mission civilisatrice" in Africa, or to *"Take up the White man's burden, the savage wars of peace."*²⁷

Empire-building reveals traumatic realities when that noble mission is looked at from a different angle. It involves the most ruthless exploitation of the continent riches. Colonialists

²⁶ Ruyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden," *McClure's Magazine*, 1899. <http://historymuse.net/readings/KiplingWHITEMANSBURDEN1899.htm>, Accessed on 03.03.2018.

²⁷ Ibid.

pass a set of coercive measures, like forced labour, violence...etc, ultimately cripple Africa. Besides, their coming is firstly accompanied with the attitude of abolishing slavery; they want to make the indigenous peoples bewail their release from bondage ties²⁸. Nonetheless, profitable slave trade stimulates their interests, particularly when its outcomes are at their heights during the eighteenth century. Due to that, tens of thousands of Africans are yoked together and penned like cattle in the slave markets; entire tribes are invaded and turned into ashes. Furthermore, the self-appointed mission of civilising gives an access to forward many of Britain's economic interests. The potential for commerce becomes also another implicit inducement to legitimise colonisation. Taken as a fatal aspect of social evolutionism, civilising the non-white racial groups is postulated as a moral obligation to modernise the unmodernised, and civilise the uncivilised²⁹. In a Western thinking, adapting Europeanisation brings the traditional communities into spiritual and cultural progress.

As has been noticed, Africa faces a devastating colonial system both in scale and impact, all is under the slogan of spreading civilisation and Christianity. Unfamiliar with diverse traditional cultures, British invasion has destroyed the previous glory of culturally rich and self-sustained Africa. Colonial education and politics in turn quash gradually the harmony of Africans with their own culture and history. They become uncivilised more than civilised, simply because the true concept of civilisation is, and continues to be, the expression of one's culture.

3. Colonial Tremor

Arrow of God is set in a virtually epochal point in the history of the Igbo land, nowadays' Nigeria, in other words, the very prime initiations of British colonialism in the region around 1920. Pre-colonial Igbo states of Nigeria are not based on any kind of political

²⁸ " The White Man's Burden."

²⁹ Ibid.

institutions. The Igbo people live in small, self-contained groups of villages with no social stratification. There are no chiefs, the Igbos rather rely on priests, like Ezeulu in *Arrow of God*, who are chosen according to wisdom, age and experience, to maintain social order, settle disputes and perform religious rituals. Pre-colonial Igbo Society does not have centralised political institutions, yet it has a strong ethnic identity, one that encourages a considerably long time of communal stability regardless of predated skirmishes within the various tribes in a single area, which are acceptedly prone to settlement on the base of pre-foundend tribal conventions.

When we gather together in the moonlit village ground it is not because of the moon. Every man can see it in his own compound. We come together because it is good for kinsmen to do so. But I fear for you young people because you do not understand how strong is the bond of kinship. You do not know what it is to speak with one voice.³⁰

The British influence in the Niger area, including Igbo land, begins, more visibly, with the prohibition of slave trade in 1807, and in Berlin Conference 1884 the European powers acknowledge Britain's power over the area. The British merge Lagos colony (annexed in 1861) to the Southern Nigerian Protectorate, and in 1914 that are combined to the Northern Nigerian Protectorate to form the colony and protectorate of Nigeria³¹. However, the Colonial system, after merging these different traditional states to create the present day Nigeria, does not provide a political structure that is suitable to the socio-geographical conditions of Nigeria because "*it was not the intention of the British to practice their system in the colonies. They practiced a colonial system, a totalitarian system, whether in Africa or India or wherever*"³². Alongside nation-states of contemporary Africa, Nigeria's current boundaries are drawn at the Berlin Conference through an act of mapping and naming which is far and foremost

³⁰*Things Fall Apart*, p.118.

³¹ John M. Carland, *The Colonial Office and Nigeria*(London: Macmillan, 1985), p.1-2.

³² Jassawala Ferosa and Dasenbrock Keed, *Interview with Writers of the Postcolonial World*(Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1992), p. 66.

associated with the interest of these European powers. Consequently, the juridical authority of contemporary Nigeria, and the rest of the continent, derives not from "*historical or political logics internal to the continent itself, but, rather, from late nineteenth century Western European exigencies*"³³. Thereupon, the heralded Pan-African nation-building project since the waves of liberation of the 1950s can be clustered as a transcription of Western model, and is nonetheless aboriginally un-African.

3.1. Strangers in their Own Land

Colonisation in Nigeria indeed changes the course of the land's history. In addition to the fateful metamorphosing already discussed, colonialism is paralleled with a crucial change, that of the sweeping waves of modernisation in the colonised territories. Modernity is a "*total process associated with economic development in terms of preconditions, concomitants, and consequences of the later*."³⁴ The British aim at imposing the traits of the society of their origin in the land they control, speak of literacy, cultural, political, economic, and social respects. The infrastructure witnesses a quick expansion alongside health services, schools and industries. The Igbo society hence moves from being traditional, rural and agrarian into being secular, urban and industrial.

However, along the lines of colonialism, imperialism, modernisation, etc., and as accounted in *Arrow of God*, things go wrong in a previously ordered and harmonious society. The Igbo people prove to be open and adaptable to change that is at certain instances additive while at others, it is substitutive³⁵. On the one hand, this change renders the society dynamic and progressive. On the other hand, the society crawls into the dark and the problematic. This is evident in the pervasiveness of social problems, the disunification of the basic unit of the

³³ Olakunle George, "The Narrative of Conversion in Achebe's 'Arrow of God,'" *Comparative Literature Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 4(2005), pp. 344-362; p.344.

³⁴ Henry Bernstein, "Modernisation Theory and the Sociological Study of Development," *Journal of Development Studies*(1991), pp. 141-160; p.146.

³⁵ John O. Jordan, "Culture Conflict and Social Change in Achebe's Arrow of God," *Critique Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, Vol. 13, No. 1(1971), pp. 66-82; p.68.

community: the family, the harsh life-conditions, and the creation of class-based society. These degraded conditions resulting from colonialism, modernism, and the industrial system of production might be a quite adequate testimony of the dehumanisation of colonisation and its accompanying traits.³⁶

In the height of enthusiasm over retaining independence and the growing sense of nationalism, the emerging Nigeria inherits an undesirable legacy, a far corrupt political system that is, more or less, rooted back in the political competition between various ethnic groups instead of uniting and fighting the colonial presence. This consequently shakes the equilibrium of the country, splits it into warring factions and drags it into a bloody civil war, also known as the Biafra war, fought from 1967 to 1970 between the government of Nigeria and the secessionist state of Biafra. The conflict is mainly the consequence of political, economic, ethnic, cultural, and religious tensions while the immediate causes are a military coup, a counter coup and persecution of Igbos living in Northern Nigeria. While about two million Biafran civilians die out of starvation, the country is left traumatised by the years of fighting and the shadows of the war are still looming large over present-day Nigeria.

3.2. Cultural Trauma

At the center of the transformation engendered by the British colonisation, in the locales concerned with colonial interest, is a radical and a decisive cultural and ideological change on the level of religion, education, language, customs, etc. The coming of the white man into the heartland of Africa is ostensibly meant to spread and cement the word of God and to "*save the Man*". In Nigeria, the Igbos, at first, are not sure what to make of the new religion which begins to mellifluously take root amongst the Igbo people. The enforcement of faith in the colonised land results in a kind of religious fanaticism which, in its turn, leads to cultural

³⁶ " Culture Conflict and Social Change in Achebe's *Arrow of God*," p.69.

hostility between the colonisers and the colonised, and even amongst the Igbos themselves considering the various religious groups floating on the surface of the community³⁷.

In spite of resistance ushered towards the new faith, many people turn away from their ancestral religious beliefs and heartily embrace Christianity, while some even go on preaching their people to convert them to the white man's faith. In either case, few uphold, and with much tenacity, to their own religion and some still do till the present time. In *Arrow of God*, the transfer of faith is, in a way, the determinate action, the culmination of conflict between traditional gods. Ulu, the God of the Igbo, fails at performing his duties and paves the way for the white man's God presenting an augury of a new faith in Africa. European Christian Missions are the key to religious changeover of the Igbos which are led by missionaries whom Achebe describes as: "A lot of effeminate men clucking like old hens"³⁸. However, by the twentieth century, "the missions became inseparable from the expanding western empires and their seemingly insatiable desire for profit."³⁹ In like manner, Ngugi wa Thiong'O describes the missions as part of the imperialist project:

Held the Bible in the left hand,
And the gun in the right hand.
The white man wanted us
To be drunk with religion
While he,
In the meantime,
Was mapping and grabbing our land
And starting factories and businesses
On our sweat.⁴⁰

Important to mention that religion is not the only cultural and ideological component that is diseased by colonialism, but it might be looked at as the direct affected since it is the

³⁷ Robert M. Wren, "From Ulu to Christ: The Transfer of Faith in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*," *Christianity Literature*, Vol. 27, No. 2(1978), pp. 28-40; p.36.

³⁸ *Things Fall Apart*, p.110.

³⁹ Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p.40.

⁴⁰ Ngugi Wa Thiong'O and Ngugi Wa Marii, *I Will Marry When I Want*(London: Heinemann, 1982), p. 110.

pillar upon which the whole traditional Igbo community stands. The colonialists, out of ignorance, or unwillingness to understand their subjects, impose their own ways and beliefs, and not to forget, their own language, which is the first weapon they unleash and which Ngugi calls the Cultural Bomb. This language imposition results in class distinction as well as disintegration, and worst of all, in cultural alienation. On this background, Ngugi critiques the use of the coloniser's language and upholds the idea of linguistic decolonisation.

The English language supplants the native language and is highly regarded in teaching. Hence, the students are prevented and severely punished when using their mother tongue. Moreover, Achebe talks about the colonial system of education saying "*they weren't teaching us African literature. If we had relied on them to teach us how to become Africans we would never have got started. They taught us English literature; they taught us what they knew. And a good student could take off from there*"⁴¹. This linguistic hegemony of colonial language is meant to completely subjugate the Igbos, orientate them from their native cultural norms and to hold subservience upon them. The Igbos consequently stand at the crossroads of culture. They are torn between two extremes that will not meet but to collide- their ancestral ways and the imposed foreign Western culture. However, Achebe, in *Arrow of God* partially puts the blame on the colonial system for what his country has crawled into, he gives a share of it to his people themselves for, with much ease, permitting things to collapse.

4. Tribalism: The Curse of Africa

It is likely that no other term in the history of Africa is as peculiar as tribalism, the affixation of the latter becomes a pointer to several ethno-cultural disputes within African communities. Some argue that the continent has already mired in tribal scissions, centered around ethnic, religious, cultural, and linguistic considerations; whereas others tend to view

⁴¹ Robert M. Wren, *Achebe's World* (Washington D. C: Three Continents Press, 1998), p. x.

tribalism as an inevitable implication left by arbitrary divisions of post-colonial era. In this sense, the tribal past of Africa seems to have moved to the present solely to be esclavated more and more by colonial tenets. So, *"if tribalism is thought of as peculiarly African, then the ideology itself is particularly European in origin."*⁴²

Leaving aside any question of morality, the Africans are tribalistic by nature; fervour of fighting each other propels the manifoldly traditional societies to a multi-colonial dimension, left profound scars in the socio-political body as a whole. In fact, African societies are stepwise undone first from within, but then they "fall apart" under alien stimuli from without⁴³. In the first place, pugnacity for a certain ethnic grouping is often back in spotlight; the concern here is no longer related to ideological preferences that distinguishes each tribe, rather it is pivoted in stark about tribe members' ancestral origins, and how their tribal identities are calculated.

In the same vein, tribal allegiances are labeled to be suffice, even thought prejudicial, to determine one's identity. Such a prevailed judgment conceives with no doubt a strong sense of ethno-centrism among individuals, who usually belong to one autonomous country, but distinctive in terms of cultural, religious, political, and sometimes linguistic lines. For example, *"In Nigeria the various main ethnic communities, the Igbo, the Yoruba and the Hausa see themselves (and are seen) as separate, belonging to different traditions. Similarities in experience are perceived as dissimilarities in the context of traditions of ethnic origins."*⁴⁴

Furthermore, oneness of African societies has been artificially challenged by ethno-cultural convergences with regard to tripologists. They explain how tribal affiliations could

⁴² Archie Mafeji, " The Ideology of Tribalism," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol.9, No.2 (August 1971), pp.253-261 ; p.253.

⁴³*Things Fall Apart*, p.127.

⁴⁴ Clara .A.B. Joseph, " Nation Because of Differences," *Research in African Literature*, Vol.32, No.3, Nationalism (Autumn 2001), pp.57-70 ; p.60.

bring entire nations to the brink of civil wars; a mix of outward pressures direct ethnic groups to the extent to which genocides are committed in broad daylight. Exemplaries of ethnic clashes are what happened in Rwanda between the Hutus and the Tutsis; in Nigeria between the Hausas and the Beroms, and which harvests tens of thousands of lives. To put it differently, *"Nigeria with so many ethnic, religious, sectional groups paints the picture of a potentially vulnerable society to conflicts."*⁴⁵

When scrutinising things from a non-tribal perspective, a cluster of vexed issues emerge on the surface to show how tribalism is Africa's deep-rooted nefariousness. What Africans truly seem to lack is unity, their tribal integration aborts nearly all the attempts aimed at promoting national unification. Probably, the most compelling evidence is the independently political management of separate tribes; the quest for autonomy and separatism, which hijacks each democratic process has enthusiastically been introduced. Consequently, political tribalism fuels antagonistic relations, xenophobia, suppression, exclusion, and confrontation⁴⁶. It is within this that lies the deficit of ethnic orientations in the continent where *"the failure of leadership, indiscipline, corruption..."*⁴⁷ rekindles undecipherable clashes. In this context, *"Tribalism is the clash between peace and unrest, the clash between unity and division, the divide between tribe and nation, the clash between tradition and change, the bane between the fact and aspiration, and indeed it is the clash between politics and rationality."*⁴⁸

Given these points, it becomes evident that ethnic inimical practices or clashes destabilise Africa nearly in every sinew and every limb. That is, destabilising process intricately meshes together with the non-readiness of the Africans to adhere to pluralistically democratic principles, based on enhancing ethno-cultural as well as socio-political harmony.

⁴⁵ Shettima Kashim, "North as Hotbed for Conflicts," in Nsemba Edward lenshie "Ties that Bind and Differences that Divide: Exploring the Resurgence of Ethno-Cultural Identity in Nigeria," *Africa Development*, Vol.39, No.2 (2014), PP.153-212 ; p.154.

⁴⁶ "Ties that Bind and Differences that Divide," p.178.

⁴⁷ Chinua Achebe, *The Trouble With Nigeria*(London: Heinemann, 1984), p.1.

⁴⁸ Reason Wafawarova, "Tribalism: The Scourage of Africa," *The Herald*, 14 May 2015, <https://www.herald.co.zw/tribalism-the-scourage-of-africa-ii/> , Accessed on 20.03.2018.

This is undoubtedly the missing link in the continent's governing systems, not the prevalence of ethnic diversity as it has widely been thought. In a word, the only panacea for all absurd tribal ailments is , and always will be, none other than the unification and celebration of the culturally rich, self-sustained Africa.

5. Contested Concepts of Culture and Ideology

The issue of culture is very absorbing, it has engendered controversial debate over the years regarding the way the term should be defined or, at least, closely described. The difficulty encountered in defining culture shows irrevocably why it is ranked as a contested concept. It is due to this debate, an interesting field of research has responsively been borne, attempted to quench the scientific thirst of scholars and experts to dissolve culture's definitional problem. Nonetheless, disagreement on describing the concept in a certain shape is still under constant discussion up to this moment, for it is too hard, in every sense of the word, to attribute such an elastic term. This notion is embedded deep in Kroeber and Klukhohn's following comment: "*The history of the concept of culture as used today in science is the story of the emergence of an idea that was gradually strained out of the several connotations of an existing word.*"⁴⁹

Culture is used in general sense as the characteristic features of everyday existence shared by a group of people; it includes in principle two main parts: visible and invisible. The former embodies concrete aspects representing solely the tip of the iceberg like traditions, rituals, language, arts, food, architecture, and social habits. All these form what has been described as surface culture. The latter, namely deep culture, on the other hand, is very problematic to be communicated or understood especially by outsiders and foreigners; it is notably because of its abstraction and invisibility. Values, beliefs, morals, and assumptions

⁴⁹ Alfred Louis Kroeber and Clyde Klukhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), p.145.

are but core segments, underpinned the concrete parts of culture. To clarify, "*Culture embodies those moral, ethical and aesthetic values, the set of spiritual eyeglasses, through which they came to view themselves and their place in the universe. Values are the basis of a people's identity, their sense of particularity as members of human race.*"⁵⁰

But what is striking about culture's problem is by and large its flexibility which culminates in the existence of at least 164 definitions, and probably will continue to be on increase. Indeed, this indicates the failure of those who study the topic to tame it, or to espouse a widely accepted definition for the concept. Cristina De Rossi, an anthropologist at Barnet and Southgate College in London, asserts that culture is variable, dynamic, alive; and that cultural patterns are in progressive change in accordance with people's needs.

A myriad of experts, in a variety of disciplines, are still wrestling with expressing the true nature of culture; they have yet to agree on a consensus description, and some even contest the concept itself- a concept used so freely and with aforethought now. Eliot, an author of an international repute, is amongst the most remarkable personalities who devoted some share of their attention to determine the complex, more flexible expression of culture. His *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* highlights a cluster of insightful observations on how culture influences, and is influenced by religious, political, educational, and colonial circumstances. What formerly focuses on is anatomising the cultural body through a sociological scalpel. More deeply, culture is socially constructed, it is therefore nigh impossible to live only within the border of the individual. Basically because the contribution to advance any cultural entity differs from one person to another⁵¹. Notwithstanding the process of building culture is collectively cooperative, an influx of passive exchange might be recorded, particularly when allegedly homogeneous communities collide with one another - caring little about the detrimental aftereffects followed. Then, examination of culture's

⁵⁰*Decolonising the Mind*, p.14-15.

⁵¹ Thomas Stearns Eliot, *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*(New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1949), p.58.

relation with religion is another thought that is worth mulling over as Eliot claims. In his view, both are intricately interwoven and dependent to each other despite of being dissimilar. In other words, culture grows out of, and to a point ought to be an expression of, religion; and all values, beliefs, behaviours are deemed to be religious in essence.

Kroeber and Klockhohn state that specifying the essence of the term culture could be attainable if a suitable theory is founded for it. Apart from that, there is no theory, as there was none before, in which culture plays a part. Nevertheless, they introduce a widely notable and frequently used definition of culture:

Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, and on the other as conditioning elements of further action.⁵²

On the other hand, what does the word Ideology mean? A lot of definitions circulate within the field of social sciences that reveal the extent to which ideology is a flexible concept. Ideology has been invented by Count Antoine Destutt De Tracy writer of *Elements d'Ideologie* in 1817. The term has been controversial almost from its birth where a number of definitions occasionally meet with contradictions. Some see ideology as dogmatic, while others relate it to political sophistication; to some it refers to dominant modes of thought; and to others, it refers to revolutionary movements or to parties⁵³. Samuel Huntington stipulated

⁵²*Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, p.357.

⁵³ John Gerring, "Ideology: A Definitional Analysis" *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 4(Dec1997),pp.957-994; p. 957.

that "by ideology I mean a system of ideas concerned with the distribution of political and social values acquiesced in by significant social groups."⁵⁴

As far as such a flexible term as Ideology is concerned, a range of references exist that give a variety of definitions to the word. A category of these references define ideology in relation to particular individuals and politicians including Hitler, Stalin, Khrushchev, Mao, Ronald Regan, and others. The next category refers to ideology as characteristics of a group and as an element of national character. Another category of defining references conceptualises ideology as implying contrast or conflict between a set of beliefs and another. This includes descriptions of parties as ideological and a reference to the idea of an abstract political tendency, most commonly communism, liberalism, or nationalism⁵⁵. In a broader sense, ideology can be defined as the way a system-a single individual or even a whole society- rationalises itself and many usages of the word refer also to a definition implying a set of ideas of individuals or groups⁵⁶. In addition, the Merriam Webster dictionary defines ideology as the set of ideas and beliefs of a group, a religious institution or a political party, visionary theorising, a systematic body of concepts especially about human life or culture, a manner or the content of thinking characteristic of an individual, group, or culture; or the integrated assertions, theories and aims that constitute a sociopolitical program⁵⁷. Hence, ideologies are foundational social beliefs of a rather general and abstract nature. One of their cognitive functions is to provide coherence to the beliefs of a group, and thus facilitate their acquisition and use in everyday situations.

⁵⁴ Samuel Huntington."Conservatism as an Ideology" *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 51_ No. 2(June 1957), pp.454-473;p.459.

⁵⁵ Kathleen Knight," Transformations of the Concept of Ideology in the Twentieth Century," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 3, No. 1(November 2006), pp. 620-630; p. 624.

⁵⁶"Ibid., p.625.

⁵⁷ Merriam Webster Dictionary.

<https://www.google.dz/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ideology&ve>. Accessed on 15.03.2018.

Teun A. Van Dijk describes ideology as "*the core definition of the... self-identity of groups and how they view their relation to other groups.*"⁵⁸ He defines ideology as the basis of the social representation of groups, therefore, as the cognitive core of identity. Such a definition seems to have strong relevance in the context of colonialism allowing to make connection between the concept of ideology and the collide between the coloniser and the colonised. For one thing, ideology stands in the limelight of the resultant conflict between the two sides for one is trying to impose his own set of ideas while the other is struggling to maintain his own ones. This is the case of British colonialism in Nigeria and this is what Achebe depicts in *Arrow of God*, an ideological conflict, or to say, an ideological war.

The terms culture and ideology have been in common use for a long time now, yet, that does not imply they are universally understood. This is attributed, by and large, to the terms' characterising flexibility and broadness in meaning, which does not allow scholars by any means to reach a one particular sense for either.

⁵⁸ Teun A. Van Dijk, *Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach*(London: Sage, 1998), p.x.

CHAPTER TWO: SEEDS OF DISORDER AND DECLINE OF IGBO

HERITAGE

Postcolonialism starts not with the first waves of independence, rather with the very beginning of colonialism. So, African postcolonial literature displays the onset of the contact and the resultant tension between African traditions and Western influences. This contact leaves permanent vestiges on the cultural and ideological components of the native communities. *Arrow of God* is the typical literary work that revolves around this matter. The standard Achebean ending, that is coherent in both *Arrow of God* and *Things Fall Apart*, implies that the destruction of an individual is, by synecdoche, the downfall of the community. In this second chapter, this is scrutinised in the light of postcolonial theory and depending on several crucial works that are related to the topic of this study. This will be tackled once the significance of the title of the selected work is discussed.

1. Symbolism of *Arrow of God*:

There are artificial symbols which a man or a group of men may create to represent notions of their own. Such artificial symbols or devices will be related to their own particular experiences and may mean nothing to any other group of person.

Ralph M. Louis, *Behold the Sign: Ancient Symbolism*(
Supreme and Grand Lodge of the Ancient and Mystical
Order Rosac Crucis, 1994), p.8.

Symbolism is a pivotal landmark that authors cannot sidestep while inking their literary works. They employ symbols in the form of persons, objects, animals, etc, to convey a latent meaning which the readers construct diversely; the meaning interpreted is by and large edified on the basis of the individual experiences. As a writer is able to generate an immensity of symbols, readers in turn can attach symbolism to elements intended as non-symbolic. Thus, a relativity of meaning denotes the significance of symbols.

The title, *Arrow of God*, is open to several interpretations. It has a symbolic value originated in the traditional Nigerian tongue. In fact, it is as such an Igbo dictum said to describe a person or sometimes an occurrent incarnated the god's image. Similarly, it is basically a referent to Ezeulu, the Chief Priest of Ulu, as being "*no more than an arrow in the bow of his god.*"⁵⁹ With a hint of sarcasm, he is also implemented by the Christian god to destruct his deity. Besides, other insinuations are given to enlarge the semantic ambit of the title phrase. They foreshadow that the function of Oduche is similar to his father's, he is a mere arrow by which Ulu and the Christian god shoot one another.

As Ulu's messenger, Ezeulu occupies a central position in Umuaro's religious and social life. He is accountable for announcing the day of the New Yam Festival, so that the villagers can harvest their crops. Yet he is a mere watchman whose authority is "*no more than the power of a child over a goat that was said to be his;*"⁶⁰ he becomes, so to speak, a puppet in the glove of his deity to destroy his clan, and ultimately himself. This is due to his stubborn pride that results in receiving much criticism and little respect. After being detained by the British, several things begin turning up side down in Ezeulu's mind. He prepares in a complete silence to chastise his people because they do no reaction to help him. For this reason, he refuses to break the tradition, and to announce the day of the harvest feast. By doing so, Ezeulu becomes "*the whip with which Ulu flogs Umuaro*"⁶¹ harshly. Ezeulu says:

I am the Chief Priest of Ulu and what I have told you is his will not mine. Do not forget that I too have yam-fields and that my children, my kinsmen and my friends- yourselves among them- have also planted yam. It could not be my wish to ruin all these people. It could not be my wish to make the smallest man in Umuaro suffer. But this is not my doing. The Gods sometimes use us as a whip.⁶²

⁵⁹Chinua Achebe. *Arrow of God*(London: Penguin, 2010) p.128.

⁶⁰Ibid., p.3.

⁶¹ Ibid., p.139.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p.128.

Before that, however, Ezeulu sends his son, Oduche, to spy on the white man's religion. Ezeulu apparently sacrifices his own son because of his ambivalence towards the white man's ways, his desire of acquiring the colonisers' supposed wisdom, and his pursuit of securing his and his god's status in the face of Christianity. Therefore, it can be said that Oduche is used by his father, and on behalf of their god, as an arrow against the new faith.

However, Once Oduche joins the Christians, he dives into the depth of this new religion and becomes one of the Catechist, Mr. Goodcountry's most flattered converts for he starts to glow with biblical knowledge. Oduche then is asked to kill the royal python, in other words, to commit an abomination, and he tries to but fails. Anyway, what is significant at this point is that Oduche ironically turns into an arrow in the bow of Christ after that of Ulu. In other words, "*Why had Oduche imprisoned a python in his box? It had been blamed on the white man's religion; but was that the true cause? What if the boy was also an arrow of the hand of Ulu?*"⁶³ Yet, here Ezeulu wonders if Ulu is not only using Oduche against the Christians, but perhaps against his equally fierce enemy, Ezedemili and his deity to whom the royal python belongs.

2. Colonial and Counter-Colonial Discourse

When Europe came to Africa and said, 'You have no culture, no civilization, no religion, no history', Africa was bound sooner or later to reply by displaying her own accomplishments. To do this, her writers and intellectuals – stepped back into what you might call the 'era of purity', before the coming of Europe. What they uncovered there they put into their books and poems, and this became known as their culture, their answer to Europe's arrogance.

Conversations with Chinua Achebe, p. 27

⁶³ Ibid.

Most modern day African countries have undergone the bitter experience of colonialism. The white colonisers proclaim that colonialism is a process of forming a refined community in the new land which means reforming or unforming the already existing communities⁶⁴. Colonialism is generally made possible using force in the form of technological superiority. But force alone is a temporary means of control. Colonialism also functions as a discourse, that is, as Foucault theorises, a system of statements in the form of the digressive devices of religion, Western education, and other means of social control that are employed together to legitimise the white superiority and the continuation of colonial presence.⁶⁵

So, colonisation is impelled by a fundamentally ideological idea about the centrality of Europe which implies that certain territories and people are bound to domination by other territories and people. In this sense, European colonisation of Africa is triggered by the assumption that Europe represents the only course of progress in the colonised lands⁶⁶. This assumption is highly present in colonial writing which is also characterised by its submissiveness to the imperialist ideology. Writers like Thomas Mofolo, Joyce Cary, Daniel Defoe, and Joseph Conrad are the promoters of the British colonial conception of Africa. They present this exotic Africa to the world. This image is employed by the British to impose hegemony over the African land and the African mind. An example of the ideological discourse is *The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of the Lower Niger* which Tony Clark is reading in *Arrow of God and* where the reader comes across these lines:

Our mothers do not draw us with nervous grip back to the fireside of boyhood, back into the home circle, back to the purposeless sports of middle life; it is our greatest pride that they do – albeit tearfully – send us fearless and erect, to lead the backward races into line. Surely we are the

⁶⁴ Anand Menon, *A postcolonial Insight to Chinua Achebe's African Trilogy*(Buzau: Bridge Center, 2015), p.11.

⁶⁵ *postcolonial Insight to Chinua Achebe's African Trilogy* , p.12.

⁶⁶ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith, and Helen Tiffin, *The Postcolonial Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 1989), p.14.

people![...] The British race will take its place, the British blood will tell.⁶⁷

Thus, the colonial discourse outcasts Africa of culture and history, and its people of humanity. On the other hand, it enforces Europe as the centre of the world and the source of civilisation. Therefore Europe is to begin civilisation in the primitive land, and to bring out the heathens to the light of Christianity as one of the missionaries in Umuaro is teaching the native converts. That is, "*Goodcountry told the converts of Umuaro about the early Christians of the Niger Delta who fought the bad customs of their people, destroyed shrines, and killed the sacred iguana.*"⁶⁸ These words show how the notion of cultural superiority is permeated the mental construction of the Europeans; they cannot see behind their own ways and beliefs, and do not accept others because they simply think differently.

The colonial writing and portrayal of the colonised are the main drive behind the emergence of a generation of postcolonial writers who produce a kind of text that is classified as anti-colonial or counter discourse. Their writings oppose the colonial discourse, aimed at hiding Europe's intention behind claiming their lands, and correct the erroneous presentation of them. Writers like Achebe, Ngugi, and Soyinka are hostile towards the preceding generation and to the Western discourse as well⁶⁹. They use the historical, social or protest novel to bring about modern African literature. This literature targets black consciousness asserting that being black has values which are themselves good, contrary to European impression.⁷⁰

The postcolonial African literature counters the European ideological discourse through the act of rewriting. This particular notion of rewriting heralds an imagery of resurrection that

⁶⁷ *Arrow of God*, p.33.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.45.

⁶⁹ Abdelkader Nebbou, "The Colonial Discourse Versus the Anti-Colonial Discourse in West African Postcolonial Literature," *Scholars World*, Vol. 1, No. 3(November 2013), pp. 24-28; p.25.

⁷⁰ "The Colonial Discourse Versus the Anti-Colonial Discourse in West African Postcolonial Literature," p.27.

is apparent in how Achebe brings Ezeulu, Nwaka, Ezedemili, and the whole pre-colonial Igbo society into life. Rewriting composes the act of "*the empire writing back to the centre*". In a narrower sense, this refers to the idea of a resisting response of one text to another. In this concern, *Arrow of God* is a resisting response to *Heart of Darkness and Mister Johnson*, where in both colonial works the centre is Britain. Achebe goes further to suggest "*Empire Fights back*" in the aftermath of the encounter with colonialism. Thus, counter discourse, or rewriting, can be seen as a political warfare where Achebe, and his fellow postcolonial writers clash with Conrad, Cary and Brontë on an ideological ground. In this process of writing back, there is something rebellious about and within writing, a desire to change the old, and there is always an element of the new text disagreeing with something in the old text. It points towards the production of difference, not a mere copy of the prior text.

Achebe, though he uses the coloniser's language, goes back to the past, and offers a detailed representation of the Igbo culture with the purpose of challenging Eurocentric, socio-cultural evolutionism, and deconstructing colonial discourse. Henceforth, he opens the eyes of his people, and the world, to the truth that has been covered by the imperial discourse. He equally depicts the relationship of the natives with each other, and shows a highly ordered society that does not rely on any higher authority to lead it. Rather, it is bent to the consent of all its members. And so after reading a counter discourse like *Arrow of God*, the Europeans come to say that "*The African, whom we hardly credit with any deep feelings, is infinitely rich in fairy-tales...so like our own fairy-tales.*"⁷¹ Indeed, writers like Achebe present the colonised world through a different view point to the European readers and reviewers; those are astonished to learn that all this long they have been deceived by the colonial discourse that gives them a total distorted picture of Africa.

⁷¹ Oliver Coburn and Ursula Lehrburger, *History of Neo-African Literature*(London: Faber and Faber, 1985), p.55.

Gayatri Spivak points out that rewriting means speaking for or on behalf somebody. She adds that Achebe, for instance, "*represents Africans in such or such a way*"⁷². That is to say, he speaks for them since they are denied of voice in colonial literature, and thus gives an amended image of them. The representation given in the form of writing back stands for people's struggle in itself, for they are making a statement to their oppressor. This statement declares to the oppressor that "*that is neither the way you should view nor treat us. See, we are different thus treat us differently with all due respect*"⁷³. Therefore, the Subaltern answers Spivak's question that he can speak for himself. To put it differently, he proclaims difference from the metropolitan centre to assert that they are taken wrongly on the stage of history, and to pave the way for their liberation, not from colonialism only, but also from the shadows of Neo-colonialism.⁷⁴

2.1. Conrad and Cary's Clichés

Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people and distorts, disfigures and destroys it.

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963), p.210.

Joseph Conrad and Joyce Cary are two major colonial authors who immensely contribute to drawing the image of Africa in the mind of European readers, each from his own perspective. The existence of the coloniser is bound to images of the colonised. "*These images become excuses without which the presence and conduct of a coloniser...would seem shocking*

⁷² Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988), p.x.

⁷³ Bright Molande, "Politics of Rewriting: what did Achebe really do?" *Journal of Humanities*, No. 18(2004), pp. 38-54; p.43.

⁷⁴ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p.2.

and the favoured image becomes a myth"⁷⁵. Along the lines of his mythical portrait of the colonised, the coloniser claims that, in addition to being lazy, the colonised is "*wicked, backward with evil, thievish, somewhat sadistic instincts.*"⁷⁶ This, henceforth, draws the ultimate legitimacy of colonialism.

Conrad's novella, *Heart of Darkness*, is widely disputed of whether being anti-imperialistic or imperialistic in its assumptions. Said notes some strengths of the work in that it contextualises and illustrates the contingencies, violence, and waste of colonialism, and he also assumes that Conrad "*permits his later readers to imagine something other than an Africa carved up into dozens of European colonies.*"⁷⁷ However, despite Conrad's liberal anti-imperialistic inclinations, he is ultimately confined to his unconscious Eurocentrism, thus perpetuating colonialist discourse. In this concern, Said states that:

[Conrad] writes as a man whose Western view of the non-Western world is so ingrained as to blind him to other histories, other cultures, other aspirations. All Conrad can see is a world totally dominated by the Atlantic west, in which every opposition to the West only confirms the West's wicked power. What Conrad cannot see is an alternative to this cruel tautology.⁷⁸

The reader finds in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* a kind of 'Africanism', that is depicting a fake image of the Africans and their supposed primitiveness to justify the imperialistic mission. Africa, as depicted, in *Heart of Darkness*, is the centre of evil, the part of the world that is possessed with demonic darkness and barbarism, human sacrifice and cannibalism which it is the Europeans' duty to exorcise. This view results in the myth of the "*Dark*

⁷⁵ Albert Memmi, *The Colonised and the Coloniser* (London: Routledge, 2013), p.123.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

⁷⁷ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage, 1994), p. 26.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p18.

Continent"⁷⁹, so ideologically speaking, and through this colonial discourses, Africa is held inferior.

Heart of Darkness, Achebe claims, is a text which have put the black people's humanity into question⁸⁰. In this text, Conrad portrays the Congolese natives as black shapes or shadows to dehumanise them in some parts of the novel, in that, none of the natives has proper name, "*black shapes crouched, lay sat between the trees leaning against the trunks, clinging to the earth, half coming out, half effaced within the dim light, in all the attitudes of pain, abandonment, and despair... they were dying slowly.*"⁸¹Conrad aims at reminding his readers that the Europeans pay little or no attention to the natives as being cannibals and not humans. He portrays about two incidents, in the story, where cannibalism gets the best of the natives.⁸²

In contrary, Achebe represents an image of Africa that can help the West dispose its prejudices, distortions, and mystifications, and to start viewing Africa as a continent of people, not angels and neither demons, simply people with life and society, and more importantly, with dignity⁸³. Therefore, his characters strongly embody the human traits with all their complexities and contradictions. Ezeulu, the protagonist in *Arrow of God*, is a man with an immeasurable self-righteousness and obedience to his God. In accordance with his God's will, he refuses to endorse a war that is to be lashed on wrong claims, thus, diminishing the power of his word against that of his nemesis, Nwaka :

Everytime he prayed for Umuaro bitterness rose into his mouth, a great smoldering anger for the division which had come to the six villages and which his enemies sought

⁷⁹ Patrick Brantlinger, "Victorians and Africans: the Genealogy of the Myth of the Dark Continent," *Critical Inquiry*, No. 12(Autumn 1985), pp. 166-168; p.168.

⁸⁰ Chinua Achebe, "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*," *Massachusetts Review*, No.18(1977), pp. 1-10; p.7.

⁸¹ *Heart of Darkness*, p.18.

⁸² "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*," p. 4.

⁸³ Maya Jaggi, "Storyteller of the Savannah," *The Guardian*, 17 November 2000, p.x.

<https://www.google.dz/amp/s/amp.theguardian.com/books/2000/nov/18/fiction.chinuaachebe>, Accessed on 18.04.2018.

to lay on his head. And for what reason? Because he has spoken the truth before the white man. But how could a man who held the holy staff of Ulu know that a thing was a lie and speak it?⁸⁴

On the other hand, Ezeulu is not angel. He has his own evils including the kind of arrogance and stubbornness that border on hubris. He is a man in conflict with his own family, and at times in a strained relationship with his society. He also has his own human weaknesses. Ezeulu is possessed with fear of losing his status as long as he has no power on his people this leads him to plot against them and, eventually, to his self destruction.

Whenever Ezeulu considered the immensity of his power over the year and the crops and, therefore, over the people he wondered if it was real... He was merely a watchman. His power was no more than the power of a child over a goat that is said to be his... But the day it was slaughtered he would know soon enough who the real owner was.⁸⁵

Heart of Darkness draws a horrific picture of Africa and the Africans. For example when Marlow, the narrator, describes his journey, he says: "*This stillness of life did not in the least resemble a peace. It was an implacable force brooding over an inscrutable intention.*"⁸⁶ Conrad's text displays Africa as a place of negation, empty of civil life and completely chaotic. In *Arrow of God*, the reader is shown a community with regular customs that its members adhere to leaving aside their discords, and quarrels in outmost respect for their customs and traditions:

A stranger to this year's festival might go away thinking that Umuaro had never been more united in all its history. In the atmosphere of the present gathering the great hostility between Umuunneora and Umuachala seemed, momentarily, to lack significance. Yesterday if two men from the two villages had met they would have watched each other's movement with caution and suspicion, tomorrow they would do so again. But today they drank

⁸⁴*Arrow of God*, p. 6.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁸⁶*Heart of Darkness*, p.30.

palm wine freely together because no man in his right mind would carry poison to a ceremony of purification.⁸⁷

Achebe here makes it clear that conflicts and tribalistic hostility are features of the pre-colonial Igbo community, yet they never go above the governing traditional laws, and the system that orderly shapes life back then. Achebe refers to this point by saying he would be quite satisfied if his novels could teach his readers that their past with all its deficiencies is not a long dark night until the Europeans come.⁸⁸

Moreover, Achebe uses traditional proverbs and metaphorical language to show the expressive ability of the Igbo people. The colonial writers use incompetency as an excuse for the marginalisation of indigenous characters⁸⁹. To illustrate, Marlow states, "*A mass of hand clapping of feet stamping, of bodies swaying, of eyes rolling... A black incomprehensible frenzy.*"⁹⁰ Marlow, on behalf of Conrad, excuses himself for not giving the natives a space in the text. However, the reality is that colonial literature needs to show the Subaltern that way to justify colonisation. In contrast, Achebe's characters are competent in expressing themselves. For instance, "... *Nwaka was a great man and a great orator who was called Owner of Words by his friends.*"⁹¹ Nwaka can prove this throughout the novel each time defying Ezeulu's speech, and winning argument against him exactly like he does in the matter of war against Okperi, and he is that orator to the extent of gaining his people's consent on matters even when are wrong.

Joyce Cary, a writer who cites Conrad as one of his influences, has his own merits in navigating the British imperial mind's preconceptions of its Nigerian colony⁹². Cary

⁸⁷ *Arrow of God*, p.66.

⁸⁸ Chinua Achebe, *Morning Yet On Creation Day* (London: Heinemann, 1975), p. 44.

⁸⁹ Bakhtiar Rasheed, " Things Fall Apart as a Post-colonial Counter Discourse to English Canonical Literature," *Culture Project*, 7 January 2018, <http://cultureproject.org.uk/2018/01/07/things-fall-apart-as-post-colonial-counter-discourse-to-english-canonical-literature-2/>, Accessed on 12 December 2017, p.x.

⁹⁰ *Heart of Darkness*, p.107.

⁹¹ *Arrow of God*, p. 40.

⁹² Laura k. Tenpenny, " Nigerian Representations in Joyce Cary's *Mister Johnson*," *Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange*, No. 12(2001), pp. 1-41; p.1.

inadvertently justifies the British civilising mission presenting the novel's protagonist, Johnson, as the classic colonial stereotype. Cary laughs at his characters and exaggerates their qualities into comedy. Johnson is ridiculous, not because it is Cary's motivation to legitimise colonial rule, but to show that the European imperial idea of its colonies is flawed, blind, and silly⁹³. Cary might have meant this satirically, but Achebe takes it literally for he says: "*this book was not talking about a vague place called Africa but about Southern Nigeria. I said, wait, that means here, this is our story. It brought the whole thing home to me: this story is not true, so is it possible the others are not either? It opened a new way of looking at literature.*"⁹⁴

Cary's *Mister Johnson* bubbles with creativity, dislikes work, adores and worships his employer, sings, dances and is often foolish and childish in his enthusiasm and impulsiveness, just the perfect mythical stereotype as Memmi argues. On the other hand, Ezeulu counters this image as he reeks of wisdom, foresight, maturity, pride, and dignity. He is someone who, regardless of his hardheadedness, demands respect and gets it even from Captain Winterbottom. He refuses to adulate to the white man, and does not jump into the colonial administration's offer of becoming the Warrant Chief.

Achebe is dissatisfied with Joseph Conrad's limited vision of ambivalence towards imperialism⁹⁵. Thus, he writes a counter discourse interrogating the view that the pre-colonial Africans are savages. He shows that darkness in *Heart of Darkness* indicates the humans' failing to see one another, to understand other individuals and establish any sort of sympathetic communion with them. Achebe realises that Conrad's characters are stereotypes, and that he is giving a typical colonial view of the natives while Cary's novel strikes Achebe

⁹³ " Nigerian Representations in Joyce Cary's *Mister Johnson*," p. 4.

⁹⁴ Chinua Achebe, " Home Under Imperial Fire," in " Storyteller of the Savannah," *The Guardian*, 17 November 2000, p. x. <https://www.google.dz/amp/s/amp.theguardian.com/books/2000/nov/18/fiction.chinuaachebe>. Accessed on 18.04.2018.

⁹⁵" The Colonial Discourse versus the Anti-colonial Discourse in West African Postcolonial Literature," p. 28.

as "a most superficial picture of-not only of the country-but even of the Nigerian characters, and so I thought if this was famous, then perhaps someone ought to try and look at this from the inside"⁹⁶

Postcolonial writers, like Achebe, carry the burden of rewriting and representing through crossing boundaries and assaulting walls imposed by history upon the horizon of the continent⁹⁷. Thus, they are far successful in confronting the colonial discourse, and changing how the world perceived them, and also to show how the colonial invasion has robs their people of all vices and virtues in the course of colonisation. They represent the image of Africa and the Africans realistically without attempting to exaggerate or romanticise that image. Hence, Achebe ideologically dialogises both Conrad and Cary when he writes about the colonial experience from the inside, and about the current crisis engendered in the aftermath of colonialism. So, it can be said that Achebe meets but to clash with both Conrad and Cary, on an ideological ground, armed with a counter discourse to destroy what Achebe calls the "*comforting myths*" that Europe yields to round an image of Africa that is nothing but ugly, and that gives the higher hand to colonialism in the continent.

2.2. Decolonising and Africanising Culture:

As history records, in the wake of the second half of the twentieth century, the pendulum swings from one extreme to another, from colonisation to freedom era⁹⁸. The fever of liberation pervades swiftly all the colonies over the world; it leads to pulling the carpet from under the feet of colonial powers. Africa in particular joins that liberal chorus in order to achieve its independence, and subsequently its dignity. Its quest could eventually be fruitful despite of the countless hardships and trials attended. However, the African nations, after

⁹⁶ Catherine Lynette Innes, *Chinua Achebe*(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p.12.

⁹⁷ Ayobami Kehinde, " Postcolonial African Literature and Counter Discourse: J. M. Coetzee's Fiction and the Reworking of Canonical Works, " *A Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 3(1 January 2006), pp. 94-122; p. 94.

⁹⁸ Molefi Kete Asate, *The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony* (New York and London: Routledge, 2007), p.259.

being politically independent, find themselves caged within a cultural and intellectual fence erected gradually by ex-colonial centres. This blatantly thwarts to formulate standalone, purely African, cultural milieu as the one existed before the European advent. Cultural imperialism thus surfaces in a moment supposed to be vowed to celebrate national release. It turns many things upside down; and it extends to have colossal consequences in many directions.

On the one hand is imperialism in its colonial and neo-colonial phases continuously press-ganging the African hand to plough to turn the soil over, and putting blinkers on him to make view the bible and the sword. In other words, imperialism continues to control the economy, politics, and cultures of Africa. But on the other, and pitted against it, are the ceaseless struggles of African people to liberate their economy, politics, and culture from the Euro-American-based stranglehold to usher a new era of true communal self-regulation and self-determination.⁹⁹

At a time of revolutionary tide, a group of Pan-African and national liberalists urge to eradicate or, at least, to diminish the baldosing existence of alien cultures. They endeavour to free their peoples' memory from the shackles of neo-colonial realities replete with cultural vacillations. The mission of reconstruction raises several polemical questions for consideration in post-colonial Africa. And the need to resurrect traditional heritage turns to be at the acme of committed efforts to retrieve originality strayed under colonial grip.

The mantle of decolonisation is placed on the shoulders of nationalist authors who target to emancipate their native culture from Western dependency. All of a sudden, it becomes the trope of the time to locate localisation and originality of hybrid heritage. African writers try to aid their societies and peoples to liberate themselves culturally on one hand, and to put away the complexes of the years of self-contempt on the other. At inception, the Kenyan scholar and author, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, is probably the most dominating voice

⁹⁹*Decolonising the Mind*, p.4.

calling for decolonising culture and mind. In his seminal work, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (1986), he addresses a clamoured appeal to his African fellows to divorce colonial linguistic traditions as a part of their anti-imperialist battles.

We African writers are bound by our calling to do for our languages what Spencer, Milton and Shakespeare did for English; what Pushkin and Tolstoy did for Russian; indeed what all writers in world history have done for their languages by meeting the challenge of creating a literature in them, which process later opens the languages for philosophy, science, technology and all the other areas of human creative endeavours.¹⁰⁰

Furthermore, Ngugi talks in depth about how monolithic impact of colonisation is in constant progress as long as European codes are still adopted to "*carry the weight of our African experience*"¹⁰¹. Therefore, the revival of African tongues, traditions and ideologies is imperative to refresh the ailing body of the African culture. It is within this process of refreshment, the continent could preserve much of its copious, multi-coloured identities. As the return to native roots is prioritised, linguistic slavishness buttressed by Europe is called for to be uprooted decisively. Worth noting, however, is Ngugi's novel, namely *Matigari* (1986); it represents a great leap in his Pan-African, literary career as it describes his pride in writing in Gikuyu, a native Kenyan language, full of much of indigenous cultural components. As he puts it, "*But African languages refused to die. They would not simply go the way of Latin to become the fossils for linguistic archaeology to dig up, classify and argue about international conferences.*"¹⁰²

In calling for conveying genuine culture, he goes to the extent of calculating openly certain issues. There expressively seems a considerable heat in his work swirling around the

¹⁰⁰*Decolonising the Mind*, p.29.

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*, p.7.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, p.23.

matter of defining Africa in terms of European convention. Such a heat culminates in both exhortation to nativise art linguistically, and criticism to prominent African figures writing in non-African tongues like Achebe and Senghor. In this context, Ngugi says:

Unfortunately writers who should have been mapping paths out of that linguistic encirclement of their continent also came to be defined and to define themselves in terms of the languages of imperialist imposition. Even at their most radical and pro-African position in their sentiments and articulation of problems they still took it as axiomatic that the renaissance of African cultures lay in the languages of Europe. I should know!¹⁰³

Achebe, in turn, sets a different standard in his works to Africanise what was once pure African. His use of English language does not hurdle his stamina to take up the encumbrance of culture decolonisation. His artistic products slant to mirror the variable stages that Nigeria's culture goes through. Beginning from the colonial days, a sequential fictional body explores the diffused tumult attached to his ancestral culture, and by extension, the whole continent. Most compelling evidences are *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*. These two distinctive novels depict fragmentation and revert of Igbo culture, and the struggle of locals to restore their own values, traditions and practices.

Deterretorilisation, which is a stride in Africanising culture, emerges as a central subject in Achebe's literary pieces; the process of harness is successfully manipulated to bear the African experience in an understandable novel style, particularly within the stream of recording counter-narratives to Euro-centric images. Indeed, to Africanise a tongue is to subvert it, and to make it say what only an African can say. It is a replacement in an African cultural context. The usage of oratory, as proverbs, riddles, songs, symbols, metaphors, imagery, and folktales, plays a didactic role for instructing non-native audience African traditions and culture. In this way, "*Part of the greatness of Achebe, part of the pleasure we*

¹⁰³ *Decolonising the Mind*, p.5.

get from reading it, lies in the very fact that he has a sure and firm control of his English, exemplified particularly in his rendering of Igbo-language processes- idiom, imagery, syntax and so forth-into English."¹⁰⁴

In addition, the linguistic phenomenon, particularly in *Arrow of God*, is taken as a site of excellence in which artful integration of alien and local codes is applied. Such an application extends the borders of native realities to be heard and retold worldwide. As an illustration, the use of non-translated Igbo terms as *ofo*, *alusi*, *ikenga...etc* is functional strategy to spread the cultural patterns of Africans. Also, directly-translated sentences, like "we do not want Okperi to choose war; no body eats war"¹⁰⁵ show how they are displaced in the mouth of the native people, marking a revisit to the archives of original cultural realms.

Diving deep into colonial history discloses policies followed by Britain to subjugate its subjects. In the case of Nigeria, the British introduce deliberated, well-planned methods to de-Africanise and colonise the natives, not only militarily, but mentally as well. The focal objective is to blur the landscape of Nigerian culture. Programmes based on importing Western values are launched to make people relinquish what used to unite them; this results in, amongst others, the use of Christian faith. As conversion to Christianity finds a resonance in Nigerian heathen communities, colonial zeal elevates so highly to agitate for ideological amnesia within natives, and makes them embrace the so-called prestigious British culture. Traditions, customs and dialects are similarly set in a fixed tablet of prevention so as snubbing them to silence will be easier and faster. Hence, deculturalisation authorised by colonial Britain leads to destruct the glamorous mosaic of local cultures. Since it is a gradual process aimed at full replacement, deculturalisation becomes a curb on the colonised mindset and consciousness. Here goes an evidence: "*But its most important area of domination was the*

¹⁰⁴ B.I. Chukwukere, "The Problem of Language in African Creative Writing", *African Literature Today*, Vol. 3, No.2(1972), pp.10-25 ; p.19.

¹⁰⁵ *Arrow of God*, p.19.

mental universe of the colonised, the control, through culture of how people perceived themselves and their relationship to the world."¹⁰⁶

The depiction of cultural confrontation culminates in a disaster for the Igbo society. Disintegration under colonial forces re-orientate the native people to British manners and values. In response to this re-orientation, Achebe, Nigerian culture's mouthpiece, reclaims traditional heritage, and preserves rich coloured identities through photographing Nigerian customs and ideologies in an expressive mode. His role as a culture teacher portrays common concerns related to his country; it is for the purpose of decolonising and Africanising cultural framework.

Here is an adequate revolution for me to espouse- to help my society regain belief in itself and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-abasement. And it is essentially a question of education, in the best sense of the word.... I would be quite satisfied if my novels [especially those set in the past] did not more than teach my readers that their past- with its imperfections- was not one long right of savagery which the European acting on God's behalf delivered them.

In a nutshell, the condition of African culture after colonialism is one of the most vexed issues in African post colonial arena. Decolonisation and Africanisation turn to be a much harder process still in the making. Notably, attempts to point cultural context reveal how there still a handful of problems in the African social fabric, and how some of which are far from being solved.

3. The Occident versus Africa: The Inherence of Otherness

The existence of colonialism, as a system of subjugation demands that a distinction be drawn between the coloniser and the colonised¹⁰⁷. This distinction is firmly fixated through the ideological, colonial discourse, that is driven by notions of alterity, which are evinced

¹⁰⁶*Decolonising the Mind*, p.19.

¹⁰⁷*The Colonised and the Coloniser*, p. 123.

through the frequent construction of the European/non-European notions in the mental perception of both the colonised and the coloniser. In Orientalism, Said explains how Westerners view and present the Orient in contrast to them¹⁰⁸ The colonisers need to define themselves in relation to the natives to impose their superiority over perceived indigenous inferiority¹⁰⁹. Africa witnesses a similar process to which Achebe refers as a Western desire to negate Africa, and to show European grace in comparison to it¹¹⁰. The establishment of us, the self, and them, the other, allow a division into two groups: "*one that embodies the norm and whose identity is valued, and another that is defined by its faults, devalued and susceptible to discrimination.*"¹¹¹ This opposition between the two groups results in stereotypes that are, most of the time, stigmatising and too simplistic.¹¹²

The colonialists view the world they subject as the opposite of what is human, and of civilisation. They are unable or unwilling to look at it as a world with difference. The belief in Africa's backwardness in contrary to Europe's superiority has become deeply rooted in the colonisers's mental construction. They see that only when the native relates to them he can be delieverd from his primitiveness. That is what Captain Winterbottom sees about his own cook, "*He's a fine specimen, isn't he? He's been with me four years. He was a little boy of thirteen- by my own calculation- when I took him on. He was completely raw.*"¹¹³ Here is a European man conforming to his belief in this supposed superiority over other peoples, he implies that his native steward has become a fine man once he takes him under his banner.

¹⁰⁸ Hamadi Lutfi, "Edward Said: The Postcolonial Theory and the Literature of Decolonisation," *European Scientific Journal*, Vol. 2(June 2014), pp. 39-49; p.39.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰"An Image of Africa," p.1.

¹¹¹ Jean-François Staszak, "Other/Otherness," *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, Vol. 8(2008), pp. 1-7; p.1.

¹¹²Ibid., p.2.

¹¹³*Arrow of God*, p. 35.

Also, the colonisers, and here speaking of the British, look at their subjects as simple minded people whose behaviours can be interpreted and even predicted once the colonisers get to know them closely as Clarke states:

It is frustrating, said Clarke You know I was thinking the other day about our love of Commissions of Inquiry. That seems to me to be the real difference between us and the French. They know what they want and do it. We set out a commission to discover all the facts, as though facts meant anything. We imagine that the more facts we can obtain about our Africans the easier it will be to rule them.¹¹⁴

The white man has potentate in the form of military power, so he has the saying on who wages war and who does not as Achebe recounts, "*It is all due to the white man who says, like an elder to two fighting children: You will not fight while I am around. And so the younger and weaker of the two begins to swell himself up and starts to boast.*" The white man presents himself as stronger, and wiser, and as the elder brother who knows what is best for the younger children, the Igbos. As the colonisers present themselves as 'older', and, therefore they are more suitable to decide in important matters such as wars. In *Colonialist Criticism*, Achebe notes that to "*the colonialist mind it was always of the utmost importance to be able to say: 'I know my natives', a claim which implied [...] that the native was really quite simple*"¹¹⁵. While Bhabha argues that by labelling the native peoples as inferior, simple or backwards, discriminatory and authoritarian political control becomes legitimate and appropriate¹¹⁶. Thus, the binary relationship between coloniser and colonised is used to enforce the white man's right to watch and rule the simple minded Igbos. This hegemonic practice forces the Igbos to accept what is best for everyone according to the colonisers. Once again the Igbos are seen as inferior and even unfit to decide about war, or to carry arms on the contrary of the Europeans.

¹¹⁴ *Arrow of God*, p. 109.

¹¹⁵ Chinua Achebe, "Colonialist Criticism," in *Hopes and Impediments: Selected Essays 1965-1987* (London: Heinemann, 1988), p. 273.

¹¹⁶ Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 119.

Moreover, the colonisers are unwilling to accept the colonised as being simply different but rather as inferior. They do not appreciate the fact that the natives have their own ways of doing things. Here Winterbottom says: "*They have no idea of years... They understand seasons, I don't mean that. But ask a man how old is he and he doesn't begin to have an idea.*"¹¹⁷ The Igbo people do things differently when it comes to timing, yet they do in fact have a very ordered way of counting and of organising their lives, their society, and their rituals such as markets, festivals and so on. This clearly implies how, in colonial context, local culture is ignored or undervalued, denigrated or suppressed, in favour of the culture and religion of the coloniser, allegedly in the interest of everyone. Another sign of the colonised depersonalisation is what one might call the mark of the plural. The colonised is never characterised in an individual manner, he is entitled only to drown in an anonymous collectivity ("*They are this.*" "*They are all the same.*")¹¹⁸ Throughout *Arrow of God*, Winterbottom continuously refers to the Igbos as "they" and in rare occasions as the natives but never as the Igbos. If this could infer anything, it would be the depersonalisation, and the dehumanisation, of the colonised Igbos by the colonial administration.

Furthermore, the colonisers perceive the colonial space in terms of "*binary oppositions*" as Fanon suggests, where all the colonialists who are white, beautiful, educated, masculine, civilised, Christian are opposite to the black, ugly, uneducated, savage, feminine and pagan. Fanon goes on to describe the colonial system as a "*Manichean world*"¹¹⁹ based on duality along the axes of coloniser/colonised, good/evil, white/black. He sees that the imperial discourse is what polarises culture, and the very being of the coloniser and the colonised into this Manichean world of good and evil. In the novel, Winterbottom attaches cruelty to the

¹¹⁷*Arrow of God*, p. 35.

¹¹⁸*The Colonised and the Coloniser*, p. 129.

¹¹⁹*The Wretched of the Earth*, p.31.

native Igbo as if it is a purely African peculiarity, while at the same time lessening that of the overseer, Wright, who savagely whips Obika, Ezeulu's son, and who happens to be British:

Thinking of the incident Captain Winterbottom could find some excuse for the overseer. He was a man from another clan; in the eyes of the natives, a foreigner. But what excuse could one offer for a man who was their blood brother and chief? Captain Winterbottom could only put it down to cruelty of a Kind which Africa alone produced. It was this elemental cruelty in the psychological make up of the native that the starry-eyed European found so difficult to understand.¹²⁰

The colonised Igbos themselves consider the colonisers as the "other", as inferior people with a different skin colour, 'white men', and strange ways. "*The ruling species is first and foremost the outsider from elsewhere, different from the indigenous population, the others.*"¹²¹ This is what the messenger that the white man sends to Ezeulu demonstrates when talking to the native Igbos: "*The white man has his own way of doing things. Before he does anything to you he will first ask you your name and the answer must come from your own lips... Yes the white man is not like black men. He does not waste his words.*" And it is this Otherness towards the colonisers that ignites infatuation of the colonised by this oddity that lead people, like Oduche and Moses Unuchukwu, to convert into the white man's self.

Closely tied to the binary way of dividing the world into coloniser/colonised is the practice of hegemony, that is, "*the power of the ruling class to convince other classes that their interests are the interests of all*"¹²². In a colonial context, the interests of the 'coloniser' and the 'civilised' are held higher than those of the 'colonised' and the 'primitive', and are promoted as the interests of all. Unless the colonised accept colonisation as a reality, like the people of Okperi do, they will have to endure even harsher conditions and exploitation similar to that of Umuaro workers, whose village has not yet been pacified, and who are compelled to

¹²⁰ *Arrow of God*, p 123.

¹²¹ *The Wretched of the Earth*, p.5.

¹²² *The postcolonial Studies Reader*, p. 106.

work on building a road by a British overseer without being paid in contrary to the Okperi workers. Next to working for free, the natives are called 'black monkeys' by the overseer who believes that they try to escape work due to laziness: *"as is supposed by the coloniser, 'the colonised, whatever he may undertake, whatever zeal he may apply, could never be anything but lazy."*¹²³ However, they do not resort to violence or riots to get their right. Rather, they do the work with a sense of enthusiasm, and decide to send one of them to talk to their employer.

In *Arrow of God*, the British government imposing imperial power on the natives, is contrasted to the native Igbo society, ravaged by internal conflict. This culture confrontation is also presented by the Christian missionaries encroaching and destroying the fabric of the indigenous religion, while the indigenous gods and their Chief Priests are in stiff rivalry against each other in a race for supremacy. As the two cultures struggle for supremacy, the indigenous culture falls prey for contention and differences from within. Achebe also portrays the oppositions and conflicts within Igbo society which carve a ready niche for invasion by both the colonial government and the Christian missionaries, and for the eventual decay of native culture. The latter is the consequence of the Igbos tossing away their own cultural self, and embracing a foreign one to ensure survival under colonial power.

3.1. Constructing Inferiority Complex

In a colonial context, binarism is crucial in constructing reality and the division into paired oppositions results in the marginalisation of the natives, and more dangerously, the inferiority complex that is, according to Fanon, *"the outcome of double process:-primarily economic; -subsequently; the internalisation- or better to say, the epidermalisation- of this inferiority,"*¹²⁴. On the psychological level, the colonised start to perceive themselves as lesser worthy than their oppressor, while the coloniser views them as the other¹²⁵. At this level,

¹²³*The Colonised and the Coloniser*, p.125.

¹²⁴ Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*(New York: Grove Press, 1967), p.4.

¹²⁵"A post-colonial Insight to Chinua Achebe's African Trilogy," p.14.

Fanon suggests, that as painful as it might sound, he finds himself bound to approve of one conclusion, that is the black man is destined for whiteness¹²⁶. And whiteness is the destiny of the Igbos, as blacks and inferior in accordance with the European assumption, they have to adopt the white mask, and to alienate the Igbo self. However, in the novel, the concern is not of skin, but rather of culture and ideology. Achebe shows how his people have contact with the colonisers, they change orientations, and try to appropriate and imitate those of the colonisers. The colonised Igbo give up their self in favour of the coloniser's self because *"they want to protect themselves from colonial alienation by going one step better with religious alienation with the ultimate end result of having accumulated two alienations, each of which reinforces the other."*¹²⁷ This is exactly what the Igbos do, they embrace Christianity and rebel against their old deity, and it all start when Ezeulu, rather insidiously, sends his son to the white man's church.

Once he comes into contact with the colonial administration in Okperi, Chief Priest Ezeulu sees a young white man writing with his left hand and tells his son:

When I was in Okperi I saw a young white man who was able to write his book with the left hand. From his actions I could see that he had very little sense. But he had power; he could shout in my face; he could do what he liked. Why? Because he could write with his left hand. That is why I have called you. I want you to learn and master this man's knowledge.¹²⁸

Ezeulu learns that even young men with 'very little sense' can gain power by learning to use the tools the white man, especially his language. The Chief Priest wishes for his son to learn the white man's knowledge to gain this power. The old knowledge of the Igbo leads nowhere, while the white man's language can grant status and opportunities, just like it does to the converted Moses Unachukwu who can gain respect when seen talking English with the

¹²⁶"A post-colonial Insight to Chinua Achebe's African Trilogy," p.14.

¹²⁷*The Wretched of the Earth*, p. 53.

¹²⁸*Arrow of God*, p.189.

white man. Thus, the English language is seen as a language of power and civilisation, while the Igbo tongue is inferior, primitive and backward. For that, it is common for the colonised to become interpreters of the coloniser's language, so as to "*acquire the power of the new language and culture...even whilst it assists the invaders in their overwhelming of that culture*"¹²⁹. As a result, knowing English becomes an important tool to both deal with the coloniser, and to rise above colonised peers.

In addition, the colonisers bring new goods and opportunities for wealth to the Igbo land as one man explains the recent prosperity of the Okperi village, "*Their market has grown because the white man took his merchandise there*"¹³⁰. Another man mentions the money that is to be gained through working for the white man, "*a man of sense does not go hunting little bush rodents when his age mates are after big game. [...] join in the race for the white man's money*"¹³¹. On the other hand, the Igbos offer no such thing and their goods can not create prosperity like the white man's, thus the Igbo goods are backward and inferior.

The colonisers also create new roads and infrastructure in the Igbo lands, such as the road that is built between the clans of Umuaro and Okperi, and that which Okperi clan heartily welcomes: "*The new road makes even a cripple hungry for a walk*"¹³² and they even consider it to be so much better than Igbo roads. The attitude towards the white man's new road endorses the superiority of the coloniser's infrastructure in contrast with the old roads of the Igbo, which are much slower and more outdated.

The colonial influence is much more evident in the churches of the colonisers' new religion. To the new converts, such as Moses Unachukwu and the Chief Priest's son, Oduche, it becomes an important part of their life, while the traditional Igbo religion remains questionable:

¹²⁹*The Empire Writes Back*, p.79.

¹³⁰*Arrow of God*, p.19.

¹³¹*Ibid.*, p.169.

¹³²*Ibid.*, p. 138.

Nwafo came back to the obi and asked his father whether he knew what the bell was saying. Ezeulu shook his head. 'It is saying: Leave your yam, leave your cocoyam and come to church. That is what Oduche says.' 'Yes', said Ezeulu thoughtfully. 'It tells them to leave their yam and their cocoyam, does it? Then it is singing the song of extermination.'¹³³

The converted Igbos are compelled to heed the call of the church bell, to go to church for they are convinced of the superiority of the Christian church, as they so readily leave the fields for they see the white man's civilisation as the wave of the future. To them, it is the way to progress and prosperity, the way to something better as one convert says, "*praying that the day would not be far when the priest and all his people would turn away from the worship of snakes and idols to the true religion*"¹³⁴. The convert expresses his disappointment over how the Igbo around him stay stubborn, instead of welcoming enlightenment. He and the other colonial missionaries present the white man's religion as the path to enlightenment, wisdom and civilisation. It is, according to the missionary teachers, in everyone's best interest to abandon the worship of snakes and idols to join the church to become wiser and more civilised adults, and thus to find salvation.

Chief Priest Ezeulu explains to Oduche that he must learn these new things, because he has realised that the white man's church could be an important part of the modern times. To the converts, this new church is a divine source of civilisation and future, while the traditional faith is profane and part of the old and primitive ways. As the Igbo converts leave their fields, they distance themselves from the rest of the Igbos because, in their view, the white man's god is prior to be obeyed than their traditions. The binary relationship between the Christian

¹³³ *Arrow of God*, p. 43.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.214.

church and the traditional faith enforces the divinity and superiority of the white man's religion in the Igbo land.¹³⁵

Towards the end of the novel when Chief Priest Ezeulu refuses to eat the Sacred Yam, and to announce the annual harvest festival, a Christian missionary induces the heathen Igbos to offer their yam to the Christian God¹³⁶. The people turn to the Christian god so they can avoid famine brought upon them by Ezeulu's stubbornness and his god's will, while the white man's god offers salvation to the desperate Igbo people. The colonisers impose cultural hegemony where the ways of the white man are the best for all, coercing the Igbo into consenting to the colonisers' domination and leaving them at the crossroads of culture. Doing so, and as Fanon suggests, one can suppose approval of colonialism through embodying the white self and rejecting the Igbo one¹³⁷. This assertiveness of culture by the colonist can be explained by what Achebe says: "*The white man, the new religion, the soldiers, the new road - they are all part of the same thing. The white man has a gun, a machet a bow and carries fire in his mouth. He does not fight with one weapon.*"¹³⁸ The colonisers, hence, employ an arsenal of cultural and ideological traits, which once they find little or no resistance, they take root and grow alongside colonial presence and during independence. This results in cultural alienation from the side of the colonised and, consequently, in identity crisis. This is what most colonised countries are suffering from in the aftermath of colonisation, they find it difficult to define themselves and their allegiances. Therefore, it results in a kind of a hybridised identity, that is a mixture of both the native culture and the coloniser's one. This is how Ezeulu begins to feel towards the closing of the novel: "*So even in his mother's village which he used to visit regularly as a boy and a young man and which next to Umuaro he knew*

¹³⁵ Robert M. Wren, "From Ulu to Christ: The Transfer of Faith in Chinua Achebe's Arrow of God," *Christianity Literature*, Vol.27, No.2(1978), pp. 28-40; p. 30.

¹³⁶ *Arrow of God*, p.115.

¹³⁷ *Black Skin, White Masks*, p.164.

¹³⁸ *Arrow of God*, p. 45.

better than any village – even here he was something of a stranger! It gave him a feeling of loss which was both painful and pleasant"¹³⁹. These words show the extent to which colonisation is culturally and ideologically cemented.

4. Hybridisation of the Igbo Culture and Ideology

Hybridity is the sign of the the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal.

The Location of Culture, p.122.

The study of post-colonial discourse brings out an array of theoretical postulations about the traumatic encounter of cultural realms. These postulations in turn are centered on key, experimental concepts, amongst them, hybridity, mimicry and ambivalence. The latter terms are basically associated and reinvigorated by the Indian theorist Homi Bhabha within the stream of post-colonialism during the early 1990's. In fact, they present his way of turning the tables on colonial theories and critiques decorated by distortion of realities.

In the outset, hybridity is one of the most disputed, yet widely used, in Bhabha's post-colonial concepts. He defines it as the fusion of two traditions or cultural identities culminating in the creation of new transcultural form¹⁴⁰. Such a merger practice manufactures a double culture that neither emulates the coloniser culture nor the colonised one. At large, it is an inflected, mixed-origin relied on mutual effectuality and adaptability. Hence, the formulation of hybridity focuses on the interaction between the new emerging poles of Western colonialism and the already founded, traditional societies they colonise.

Bhabha sheds light on the combination of original traits with those of colonial centres, without opting total abandonment or belonging to either. It is, in fact, like standing on the

¹³⁹Arrow of God, p.105-106.

¹⁴⁰*The Location of Culture* ,p.105.

crossroads, finding difficulties to attain a certain cultural identity. This in-betweenness condition epitomises to a certain extent how cultural attributes are negotiated together to exclude any assumption about cultures' fixity and purity¹⁴¹.

What is irremediably estranging in the presence of the hybrid- in the revaluation of the symbol of national authority as the sign of colonial difference- is that the difference of cultures can no longer be identified or evaluated as objects of epistemological or moral contemplation: cultural differences are not simply there to be seen or appropriated.¹⁴²

It is Bhabha's attempt to probe beneath the prevalent, yet slippery, themes of colonialism and post-colonialism. Analogously, theorists as Néstor Garcia Canclini, Gayatri C. Spivak, Paul Gilroy, Stuart Hall and others, all add their voices to advance the debate of hybridity theory. Based on a metaphor from biology, hybridity is successfully recycled to fit crucial actualities in a colonial and postcolonial settings.

Bhabha's salient work, *The Location of Culture*, which pieces a number of significant essays, offers a critical discussion to the concept of cultural hybridity. It is well-enhanced by going over a lot of various theoretical grounds related to Fanon, Said, Benjamin, Rushdie and many others. In Bhabha's thinking, culture is placed on the edges of tangency where new hybrid forms are brought into existence. As cultural placement is uncovered, he follows a theoretical direction skewed away from the stranglehold of binary oppositions; he picks apart the traditional classification of the coloniser and the colonised as separate entities, and that each entity defines itself independently. Given that, the notion of continual confrontation and exchange shapes cultural identity in a hybrid atmosphere linking the two entities.

The examination of the concept conducts the attention to ambivalence since the latter is viewed as a syndrome to hybridity in multiculturalism. To define ambivalent world is to grasp

¹⁴¹*The Location of Culture*, p.122.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p.144.

the simultaneous fluctuation of repulsion and attraction that labels the colonised's personality. With this in mind, a sort of duality controls the psyche of hybrid members. Notwithstanding, the terms are quite different in sense and consequence, ambivalence is seen as a result of hybridity, whereas mimicry is the cause in rising both hybridity and ambivalence.

In its simplest words, Bhabha's third concept of mimicry involves copying the oppressor's culture, manners, values, behaviour, etc... by the colonial subjects, it compromises at once mockery and menace¹⁴³. However, the conqueror is also exposed to mimic the conquered's cultural habits, attire and values. This comes to be described as reverse mimicry that Kipling's *Kim* (1901) and Froster's *Passage to India* (1949) contain much of its segments. Froster's protagonist, for instance, wears quite easily as an English man without being abnormal; he is culturally hybrid, that is to say, an Indian without giving up entirely on what makes one uniquely Indian. This reflects a certain amount of cultural hybridity that is injected in the veins of the dominated people.

The phenomenon of hybridisation is a central question in *Arrow of God*, it serves as a major characteristic of colonial friction with the already established, native cultures. Certain episodes demonstrate the Igbo duality and syncretism of cultural identity, they describe, in a linear string, how the natives reject and accept, hate and admire the newly coming mores and customs.

The Igbo people face difficulties in adopting manners or cultural values from the British without in some sense stamping out their own way of being. They espouse the oppressor's tongue, faith, attire and other cultural traits, but still their traditional aspects impact their quotidian life. As a result, a mixed culture is founded, mingling both native attributes with Western terms. It explores the forked essence of colonial subjects' response to imperialistic control, it also poses how they interact with it religiously, culturally and linguistically.

¹⁴³*The Location of Culture*, p.85.

From a religious standpoint, the advent of Christianity to the Igboland is a watershed in the history of the Nigerian society. It plays a vital role in leading indigenous beliefs and practices into their final burial. Henceforth, religious displacement dominates the local scene as an implication of confrontation between alien and native beliefs. Missionaries change the religious milieu under the premise of spreading the Christian dogma, it is frequently through invoking the obtrusion of Christianity among the natives- an act that gives rise to the interaction of foreign beliefs with local indigenous frameworks. This reflects the spiritual fusion beset the colonial subjects in an imperialistic environment. In the first place, Ezeulu, the Chief Priest of Ulu, sends one of his sons, namely Oduche, to join the missionary school. His objective is to discover the secrets of the white man's wisdom. Many clansmen and women refuse Ezeulu's decision for the fear that Oduche will abandon his ancestors' faith to embrace the Christian religion.

It was all about Ezeulu's third son, Oduche, whom he had sent to learn the secrets of the white man's magic. Akuebue had doubted the sense in Ezeulu's action from the very first but Ezeulu had persuaded him of its wisdom.... people were asking: if the chief priest of Ulu could send his son among people who kill and eat the sacred python and commit other evils what did he expect ordinary men and women to do? The lizard who threw confusion into his mother's funeral rite did he expect outsiders to carry the burden of honouring his dead?¹⁴⁴

Ezeulu's determination to access the white man's zone explains much of his ambivalent character. He has a portion of attraction toward the culture of the colonialists, but he justifies so as a convoying with the surrounding environment where "*a man must dance the dance prevalent in his time.*"¹⁴⁵ That is, he recognises the inevitable change in the cultural patterns of the clan in the face of colonialism. In a proverbial-like language, Ezeulu says to Oduche that "*The world is changing...the world is like a Mask dancing. If you want to see it well you*

¹⁴⁴Arrow of God, p.86.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., p.127.

do not stand in one place. My spirit tells me that those who do not befriend the white man today will be saying had we known tomorrow."¹⁴⁶

Achebe centrally features the duality of the Igbo through the characters of Oduche, Moses Unachukwu, John Nwodika and others. Primarily, Oduche's behaviours start changing gradually after he joins the church. He is no longer as he was before, or acts as his clansmen. Significantly, Oduche refuses even to join his brother's wedding party "*so as not to offend the Catechist who preached against sacrifices.*"¹⁴⁷ He enters the world of the white man, and suddenly turns to appreciate what he encounters there; he practices whatever the missionaries demands. In this sense, his attempt to kill the royal python is seen as an example of his adoption of foreign cultural values. Needless to say, even his appearance resembles those working in the church, presented a hybridised image of an African wearing Western attire. In this context, "*Oduche came in there, saluted his father and Akuebue and sat with Nwafo on the mud-seat. Since he joined the white man's religion he always wore a loincloth of towelling material instead of the thin strip of cloth between the legs. Edogo filled the horn again and offered himn but did not drink.*"¹⁴⁸

In addition, John Nwodika, Winterbottom's steward, embraces a Europeanised way of clothes, he wears "*a thick brown shirt over a khaki trousers.*"¹⁴⁹ This is due to the adoption of the colonialists' norms by the native Igbos who, by being culturally hybrid, risk giving up a fundamental part of who they are.

The divide in traditional loyalties conducts huge waves of the Igbo to convert into Christianity, yet they remain in intimate contact with their ancestral traditions, and show respect towards the sacred rites and traditions. Thus, the way they practice their religious duties reflects an extreme sort of hybridity ignited in a colonial setting.

¹⁴⁶ *Arrow of God*, p.35.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.81.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.68.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.122.

Moses Unachukwu essentially exemplifies one sample of hybrid natives. His early Christian proselytism does not change the way he perceives the traditional religions. He deplores the act of the catechist of fomenting the converts to kill the python in spite of not occupying a space in the old religious horizon. Therefore, he is a religious hybrid whose cultural attitude is dimensionally forked. He goes through a firm adaptation of Western values, but certain explicit signs are shown to defend the old rites and practices. This evolves a new type still in communion with the native environment, but altered to suit colonial norms. In this context, Unachukwu says:

I have been the fountainhead of this religion and I want to tell you now that I will not be led astray by outsiders who chose to weep louder than the owners of the corpse. You are not the first teacher I have seen; you are not the second; you are not the third. If you are wise you will face the work they sent you to do here and take your hand off the python...No body has ever told you that the python has ever blocked his way as he came to church. If you want to do your work here you will heed what I have said, but if you want to be the lizard that ruined his own mother's funeral you may carry on as you are doing.¹⁵⁰

Linguistic hybridity refers to elements from English language that enter into traditional Igbo tongues or vice versa. It labels how two different forms are mingled together so as a new hybrid code of communication is brought into existence. De facto, It is within this that lies the unison or matrimony of various idiolects. To begin, the melange of raw, non-translated, African words with a colonial tongue is, with no doubt, a hybridised characteristic. Indeed, linguistic systems germinate in tandem specifically within colonial lines; the mutual friction of the coloniser and his subjects increases the influx of philologic exchange. In *Arrow of God*, an arsenal of Igbo expressions is creatively employed by the novelist to demonstrate how English integrates with the indigenous parlances. Here goes an example:

¹⁵⁰ *Arrow of God*, p.38.

Give me the Omu. Edogo passed the tender palm leaves to him. He tore out four leaflets and put away the rest. Let me have ego nano. She united a bunch of cowries from a corner of her cloth and gave them to him.¹⁵¹

Igbo society contains a number of semi-literate people who have learnt English on account of their proximity to the colonialists; they use broken language while communicating with the white man. Another key point is the birth of pidgin English which Unachukwu's dialogues with Mr. Wright, like "*Pardin*", "*Yessah*", "*Dat man wan axe master qeshon*"¹⁵² are evident instances of it. Additionally, the speech of the corporal with his companion provides much of non-standard linguistic formula. Both converse with each other through an amalgamated language replete with lack of formalised structure. This culminates in the emergence of a new form of English, known as Nigerian or West African English.

Sometine na dat two person we cross for road, said the corporal.
Sometine na dem, said his companion. But we no go return back jus like dat. All dis waka wey come here not fit go for nating.
Sometine na lie dem de lie. I no wan make dem put trouble for we head.¹⁵³

In the same fashion, the Igbo philosophy and wisdom are put within the linguistic mould of the oppressor. The latter is peppered with clever, yet facetious, translations of proverbs, songs, images, symbols, metaphors, and suchlike literary devices. All serve to identify and to explore uncharted territories in native memory albeit they merge the Igbo tongue with the one of the colonialists. In simplest words, the translated Igbo proverb that says: "*A disease that has never been seen before cannot be cured with everyday herbs*"¹⁵⁴, for example, melts the Nigerian oratory with English language. Likewise, translated songs

¹⁵¹ *Arrow of God*, p.82.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p.59.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.104-105.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p.133.

employed by the novelist present another hybrid side in which English is creatively adapted to typify African actualities in smooth manner.

Tell the mother her child is crying
And then prepare a stew of úzizá
And also a stew of úzizá
Make a watery pepper-soup
So the little birds who drink it
Will all perish from the hiccup
Mother's goat is in the barn
And the yams will not be safe
Father's goat is in the barn
And the yams will all be eaten.¹⁵⁵

The colonialists in turn are exposed to tap into the world of their subjects, to absorb much of the indigenous cultures, languages and ideas. They delve deeper into various aspects of the dominated cultural attributes; they affect the colonised and by whom they get affected. To put it differently, whenever mutual affectivity increases, cultural adaptivity does. This relational valence formulates complex entangles stressed the construction of interdependent subjectivities. Captain Winterbottom is an example of colonial adaptation of native patterns, particularly linguistic ones. He deliberately soaks up Igbo words in order to puzzle his British fellows.

I have today sent messengers to Umuaro to bring Ezeulu here for an preliminary discussion. Arising out of this discussion I shall fix an appropriate date in the future when the warrant of the office will be given to him in the presence of the elders and ndiche of his clan. Captain Winterbottom enjoyed mystifying other Europeans with words from the Ibo language which he claimed to speak fluently.¹⁵⁶

In the aggregate, the Igbo community becomes ultimately hybridised religiously, culturally and linguisticly. The encounter with the British produces a new, culturally-

¹⁵⁵ *Arrow of God*, p.125.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p.101-102.

amalgamated form that is dissimilar to the traditional, already existing realm nor to the imported, Western one. The Igbo society finds itself standing on the threshold located in-between the two realms, with no absolute giving up or belonging to neither.

4.1. Linguistic Imperialism

Language was the most important vehicle through that power fascinated and held the soul prisoner. The bullet was the means of the physical subjugation. Language was the means of the spiritual subjugation.

Decolonising the Mind, p.9.

Linguistic imperialism sets up a room for debate over subsequent years. A number of postcolonial scholars and authors detail the imposition of dominant languages onto the colonised peoples, and they qualify how native languages and idiolects get gradually suppressed and marginalised. The colonial tongues, however, are not always imposed, but demanded by colonial subjects who are fascinated by the Western civilisation and culture. Thus, the control exercised by the latter dwarfs the cultural forms on a wide scale; it also determines psychological ramifications on the colonised's mind. As discussed in more detail in Ngugi's text, colonial languages hold sway over the mental sphere of the colonised whose view to themselves and their surrounding is no longer standardised¹⁵⁷. Akin to Ngugi, a Fanonian perspective tackle the fine line between adapting imperialistic tradition, in this case, the Negro of the Antilles, and the arsenal of complexes they face when chewing the rules of non-native tongues. These complexes give rise to an extreme feeling of cultural alienation that creates "*a society of bodiless heads and headless bodies.*"¹⁵⁸

As a starting point, imperialism of language can be defined as a conveyance of foreign tongue to other peoples. It is both forcible and spontaneous process: the former involves

¹⁵⁷*Decolonising the Mind*, p.16.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.28.

squarely the subordination of the dominated languages by imperialistic centres, while the latter is structured on absorbing and adapting the language willingly. Such an adaption leads to identify the African continent in terms of European tradition although it has a mosaic of native, linguistic systems. In this vein, Ngugi asserts that "*African countries as colonies and even today as neo-colonies, came to be defined and to define themselves in terms of the languages of Europe: English-speaking, French-speaking, or Portuguese-speaking African countries.*"¹⁵⁹ It is therefore not just to be classified as an Anglophone, Francophone or Lusophone, but to point out how the natives lose control of their own tongues when alien languages are forcibly or spontaneously replaced in their mouths.

The African literature itself is linguistically dominated by European modes of expression. A myriad of writers cast their literary works in a mould of imperialistic languages. That is, the mother tongues of Africa become no longer the medium used to pack the African experience. In spite of undermining the efforts made to be culturally independent, writing in a foreign tradition is but a tool to make their voices heard worldwide as Achebe argues. In such a way, Leopold Senghor of Senegal pioneers the field through inking his texts in French. He employs the language used once to subjugate his people to challenge the oppressor. With a stroke of pen, he replies:

We express ourselves in French since French has a universal vacation and since our message is also addressed to the French and others. In our languages [i.e. African languages] the halo that surrounds the world is by nature merely that of sap and blood; French words send out thousands of rays like diamonds.¹⁶⁰

Hegemony of Europe's languages is vividly an outcome of colonial contact at the dawn of the twentieth century. At this time, colonial powers endeavour to plant their languages in the dominated soil to control the peoples they culturally colonise, because they come to the

¹⁵⁹ *Decolonising the Mind*, p.5.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p.19.

conclusion that political and economic dominance are not sufficient to gain total control over Africans. Thus, colonialism starts establishing colonies of the mind through cultural and ideological imperialism. In case of Nigeria, there is truly no distinction. The British authorities found a strong system of education to instruct the natives the English language and culture; the missionary nexus holds in principle the reins of acculturation task throughout the country. They aim ultimately at silencing the local tongues and idiolects by teaching the Nigerian converts their language. Sponsored by colonial administration, the missionaries succeed gradually in persuading the Igbo people to look at their customs and languages as inferior. Examples of such colonial subjects in *Arrow of God* are Moses Unchukwu, John Nwodika, Oduche, and many others. They all speak the English language on account of their contact with the British colonialists.

In the beginning, Oduche becomes enslaved by the notion of mastering the language like Unachukwu to be enlisted amongst the highly-ranked natives. Taken this into consideration, it is noticeable that Oduche, as many Nigerians, realises the power of language in a colonial setting. In reality, It is not a mere string of words learnt for the sake of communication, rather it is an imperialistic weapon invested skillfully to subjugate one's self.

He found that he could learn very quickly and he began to think of the day when he could speak the language of the white man, just as their teacher, Mr. Molokwu, had spoken with Mr. Holt when he had visited their church. But there was somebody else who had impressed Oduche even more. His name was Blackett, a West Indian missionary...Oduche thought that if he could get one-tenth of Blackett's knowledge he would be a great man in Umuaro.¹⁶¹

The system of colonial education disempowers the traditional languages, it encourages the spread of English that quietly steps in and thrives on the tombs of the mother tongues in

¹⁶¹*Arrow of God*, p.36.

the Igboland. The incursion of English basically ends up with the assimilation of the indigenous people who are instigated to despise their own linguistic modes. This, in its turn, results fatalistically in stripping of the Igbo languages, and replace them by English. In case of Unachukwu and Nwodika, the imposition of language is not forcible, but demanded on the account for dipping their fingers in the reserved zone of privilege. They nurse their desire to learn English. By speaking the language, Moses Unachukwu and his attendant, John Nwodika, represent a picture of linguistically dominated subjects who live through the coloniser's language. In other words, "*one of the main features of imperial oppression is control of the language,*"¹⁶²

4.2. A War Between the Gods

There was no more to be said. Who was Ezeulu to tell his deity how to fight the jealous cult of the sacred python? It was a fight of the Gods.

Arrow of God, p.118.

They said that was how to scare away a python
We were saying: Python, run! There is a Christian here.

Arrow of God,137.

Religion is, amongst other elements, a cohesive power controlling human societies. It entails distinct sets of beliefs or doctrines to organise the socio-cultural patterns, and to fasten people together with particular values and traditions. Accordingly, it is a key aspect of cultural identity by which people define themselves in opposition to others. But when religious systems get affected via contact by multifarious stimuli, different values and beliefs confront their differences in an antagonistic, more tenebrous manner. As a consequence, conflictual changes float to the surface to peel away the veneer of typical, prevalent spiritualities, and put them under the threat of distinction. Due to those changes, a series of

¹⁶² Bill Aschcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *Key Concepts in Postcolonial Studies*(London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p.7.

tensions have been sparked amid societies of varied ideological affiliations, igniting a war between faiths.

Achebe's *Arrow of God* describes the clash of civilisations in a colonial setting, namely Nigeria. It demonstrates the fierce battle between the old faith and Christianity. Domestically, there is, de facto, a fertile ground of ideological fissures, presented in constant rivalry between the priests of traditional deities. In detail, Ezeulu, the Chief Priest of the god Ulu, is challenged by the priest of the god Idemili. The priestly conflict over title pursues intolerant ends for the whole community where which the traditional framework is caught tightly between the demands of Ulu and Idemili. In like manner, Ezeulu's hubris and Nwaka's challenge to Ezeulu clutter the social order of the clan. In part, Ezeulu sees himself as the most powerful religious man to whom all Umuaro must heed what he utters. This seems alternatively hard to be digested by his nemesis, who foments the clan against him. In this sense, Nwaka says: "*Let us not listen to anyone trying to frighten us with the name of Ulu. If a man says yes his chi also says yes.*"¹⁶³ These words markedly reveal much of the internal split beset the traditional religious scene. Even Igbo deities are engaged in fight against one another. Just as their Chief Priests, Ulu and Idemili seek to hold sway over Umuaro's religious podium. This results in a gradual escalation of the dispute to the point that the spirit of Ulu whispers with rage in Ezeulu's ear the following:

I say who told you that this was your fight to arrange the way it suits you?...Beware you do not come between me and my victim or you may receive blows not meant for you! Do you not know what happens when two elephants fight? Go home and sleep and leave me to settle my quarrel with Idemili, whose envy seeks to destroy me that his python may again come to power...As for me and Idemili we shall fight to the finish; and whoever throws the other down will strip him of his anklet!¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³*Arrow of God*, p.25.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.128.

The divide within traditional faith greatly facilitates the penetration of Christianity among the Igbo people. The missionary work succeeds in establishing a firm foundation for the Christian dogma across Umuaro's boundaries; it is through the challenge of local beliefs which missionaries fail to appreciate. To emphasise, Mr. Goodcountry calls the converts of Umuaro to kill the python if they want to fight their bad customs.

If we are Christians, we must be ready to die for the faith... you must be ready to kill the python as the people of the rivers killed the Iguana. You address the python as Father. It is nothing but a snake, the snake that deceived our first mother, Eve. If you are afraid to kill it do not count yourself a Christian.¹⁶⁵

Due to Goodcountry's fomentation, Oduche takes the challenge and tries to kill the royal python, a venerated animal for the Igbo community. His act is seen as a great abomination in the eyes of the clan. The priest of Idemili once again accuses Ezeulu of being lenient in punishing the culprit, and instructs him to cleanse his house to mollify Idemili's wrath. Although he admits his son's sin, Ezeulu refuses to do anything special because of Ezedimili's insults. Hence, an ensuing conflict lights the flame of internal tensions given a way to widen the vacuum between Umuaro' religious factions.

The outrage which Ezeulu's son committed against the sacred python was very serious matter, Ezeulu was the first to admit it. But the ill will of neighbours and especially the priest of Idemili left him no alternative but to hurl defiance at them all. He was full of amazement at the calumny which even people he called his friends were said to be spreading against it.¹⁶⁶

It becomes a three-cornered fight, primarily between the traditional deities, Ulu and Idemili, and then the latter against the Christian god. After his instruction to Ezeulu,

¹⁶⁵*Arrow of God*, 36.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.44.

Ezidemili sends a petition to the Bishop of the Niger to whom he talks in a threatening tone to leave the royal python alone.

Unachukwu got a clerk in Okperi to write a petition on behalf of the priest of Idemili to the Bishop of the Niger. Although it was called a petition it was more of a threat. It warned the bishop that unless his followers in Umuaro left the royal python alone would regret the day they ever set foot on the soil of the clan.¹⁶⁷

Christian missionaries put pressures on the natives to go against their religious customs and practices. They encourage zealously conversion into Christianity on the soil of the so-called "*God-forsaken*"¹⁶⁸ land where superstitions and myths are still underway. In response, they seek to replace the old faith by Christian creed. In this stream, the Bishop of the Niger says that he is "*praying that the day would not be far when the priest and all his people would turn away from the worship of snakes and idols to the true religion.*"¹⁶⁹ Expressively, the scenario of Christian superiority repeats itself to classify old and new religions in terms of paired opposites. That is, Christ is viewed powerful and merciful, whereas Ulu is vulnerable and erroneous. The difference is made to dislocate the spiritual life of Umuaro that is ultimately doomed because of the fever of ideological discords.

Imprisoned by the British administration, Ezeulu refuses to eat the sacred yams and to announce the annual harvest festival. This turn of events puts starving Umuaro in the lurch, being unable to harvest their crops. At this moment of crisis, Mr. Goodcountry invents a plan to show the Christian god's superiority over Ulu.

Now Mr. Goodcountry saw in the present crisis over the New Yam Festival an opportunity for fruitful intervention...His plan was quite simple. The New Yam Festival was the attempt to misguided heathen to show gratitude to God, the giver of all good things. This was God's hour to save them from the error which was now

¹⁶⁷ *Arrow of God*, p.142.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.72.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.143.

threatening to ruin them. They must be told that if they made their thank offering to God they could harvest their crops without fear of Ulu...If Ulu who is a false god can eat one yam the living God who owns the whole world should be entitled to eat more than one.¹⁷⁰

The tragedy of the Yam Festival urges the people of the clan to sacrifice to the white man's god in order to gain protection from their old deities. They turn their backs on Ulu in particular to keep safe from future starvations brought upon them by stubborn, uncompromising priests. At last, the downfall of traditional faith becomes a matter of fact in a society altered by colonial control. *"Then a god, finding himself powerless, might take flight and in one final backward glance at his abandoned worshipers cry: If the rat cannot flee fast enough Let him make way for the tortoise."*¹⁷¹

The triple war between gods ends with the triumph of the Christian god over the traditional deities, particularly Ulu. The downfall of the latter hints the degrading demise of religious life in Umuaro where Christian missionaries set the stage for further intrusion. So *"when the bell of Oduche's people began to ring,"*¹⁷² the Igbo find a new direction to practice their beliefs and rituals, they plant and harvest their crops of yams in the name of the Son instead of Ulu. All in all, the proselytism to Christianity embarks on a gradual process to dislocate the Igbo spirituality in a religiously assimilated setting.

5. The Wretched of Africa:

What colonialism does is to trespass to another land, control it, and destroy its people's cultural heritage. But colonialism is not the only to be blamed in this matter. For instance, in *Arrow of God*, the Igbos, give up their religion and turn away on the god they found to save them, and to give way to Christianity. This is not the whole story, they even give up their customs, language, and traditions. What they miss to see back then is that they are

¹⁷⁰ *Arrow of God*, p.143.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.152.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p.152.

unconsciously heading to their self-destruction. That can be explained accordingly with the notion of Coloniability as Malek Bennabi puts it. He holds that African societies, and the African mind involuntarily accept colonialism as a reality once they take the superiority of the colonisers for granted. Before colonisation, such societies are culturally diverse, yet they are a nation because of differences but the bourgeois Europe has destroyed this diversity. In the Igbo land for instance, the British merge the different regions creating nowadays' Nigeria, a country that is torn by political and ethnic conflicts which anchors on bloodshed.

Colonialism does also destroy the man, instead of saving him from his own self as they claim their aim is. The colonisers take away the dignity of the colonised once they put hand on their land¹⁷³. That does not satisfy them, so they announce that the native is immune to ethics, evil and is the foe of values¹⁷⁴. Therefore, the colonised become displayable to exploitation, illegal treatments, and abuse. In selected novel, native women get used by white man like Clark while he abuses his Umuaro workers, whipping them and denying them their right to be paid. Ezeulu gets imprisoned on unjust ground, and the British administrator, Wade, shows disrespect, and desecrates the Igbos sacrifice rituals.

Prior to the coming of the white man, the Igbos live in harmony, and regardless of the hostility between some of the tribes, they can settle their matters through reverting to their traditions and social conventions. However, with the white man around, the Igbos, and instead of fighting against the invaders, they quarrel among themselves. Conflict arises even between individuals in the society, and it is depicted in the rivalry between Ezeulu and Izedemili, two priests for two deities¹⁷⁵ Here the British invest the opportunity to widen the vacuum between the natives:

¹⁷³ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, p.9.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., p.6.

¹⁷⁵ Eldred Jones, "Achebe's Third Novel," *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, Vol.1, No.1-3(1966), pp. 176-178; p.176.

In order to free themselves they even massacre each other. The different tribes fight between themselves since they can not face the real enemy--and you can count on the colonial policy to keep up their rivalries; the man who raises his knife against his brother thinks that he has destroyed once and for all the detested image of their helplessness.¹⁷⁶

The war fought between Umuaro and Okperi does not only increase hostility between the two tribes, but also between Umuaro and its Chief priest, who starts later on to scheme against his own people who give up on him when the white man imprisoned him. Ezeulu gets arbitrarily kept in prison for refusing to accept the offer of the colonial administration of becoming a Warrant Chief.

It is the way the white man does his own things. The white man watched Ezeulu with something like amusement on his face. When the interpreter finished he tightened up his face and began again. He rebuked Ezeulu for showing disrespect for the orders of the government and warned him that if he showed such disrespect again he would be very severely punished.¹⁷⁷

The colonisers see in Ezeulu's refusal to be Warrant Chief defiance to the British government and ultimate disrespect that a native is unallowed to show to his superior, and although he has all right to accept or refuse what they offer, they imprison him for a period of two months, and thus they prevent him from fulfilling his priestly duties¹⁷⁸. This is what Fanon explains about the colonisers' attitudes towards their subjects: "*...all he has ever seen on his land is that he can be arrested, beaten, and starved with impunity; and no sermoniser on morals, no priest has ever stepped in to bear the blows in his place or share his bread.*"¹⁷⁹ Clark unjustly keeps Ezeulu in prison wanting to secure the colonial administration's stature among the Igbos. The colonisers believe if they have one native disobeying them and not get punished, other will have courage to do the same.

¹⁷⁶*The Wretched of the Earth*, p.18.

¹⁷⁷*Arrow of God*, p. 113.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.114.

¹⁷⁹*The Wretched of the Earth*, p.9.

During his stay in prison, Ezeulu's grudge rises against both the colonial administration for humiliating him, and his own people for believing that he betrays them for the white man, and for not taking his word into consideration anymore¹⁸⁰. He decides to avenge the people of his village when he refuses to announce the New Yam year; this prevents the people from harvesting their yams, and leads to general umbrage among the people against Ezeulu. He claims it to be the will of his god not his to adjourn the New Year. As a result, famine strikes the villages of Umuaro. People come and leave after having begged Ezeulu to eat the remaining sacred yams, and allow them to harvest, but it is in vain. Ezeulu ensures that he cannot defy the will of his god, while it is his pride that drives him. The British see in this mounting crisis in Umuaro an opportunity to take root in Umuaro by means of religion.¹⁸¹ They call the people of the village to offer their yam to the Christian God to save them from their own god, who only brings suffering upon them. Many people begin to answer the call of the Church, yet Ezeulu and his God do nothing to prevent that, he rather further scatters the people, "*if any man in Umuaro forgets himself so far as to join them let him carry on.*"¹⁸², says the priest.

Near the close of the novel, Ezeulu sees a dream where he hears the sound of the voices of mourners passing behind his compound, which he thinks is a strange thing because there is no path nearby, and rushes outside to investigate the matter:

Ezeulu raised his voice to summon his family to join in challenging the trespassers but his compound was deserted. His irresolution turned into alarm. He ran into Matefi's hut but all he saw was the ashes of a long-dead fire. He rushed out and run into Ugoye's hut calling her and her children but her hut was already falling in and a few blades of green grass had sprouted on the thatch.¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ *Arrow of God*, p. 117.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p.138.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 142.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

This dream can be interpreted as the oncoming Igbo genocide, it is not only Ezeulu's compound that is about to get ruined, rather it is the whole Igbo world. This is what happens by the very end of *Arrow of God*. Ezeulu's son, Obika, is asked to run in the funeral of a man of Umuaro who died because of famine. Because he is already sickened out of fever, Obika meets his final fate. This leaves Ezeulu staggered in disbelief of what his god brings upon him, and he keeps wondering in sorrow, "*But why, he asked himself again and again, why had Ulu chosen to deal thus with him, to strike him down and then cover him with mud? What was his offense? Had he not divined the god's will and obeyed it? [...] What could it point to but the collapse and ruin of all things.*" Even Umuaro is left paralysed at what has come to a man who does not come to the world too often as they believe¹⁸⁴. This final scene in the novel might in fact symbolise the death of a nation, of a culture. Once the Igbo people begin to head to the white man's Church and desert their god, who once brought them together, they lose their very self on the way. Alongside their collide with colonialism as a mischievous intruder, the Igbos allow their internal disputes to destroy the very essence of their existence. However, to look from a different angle, it is much due to the colonised themselves that colonialism takes root in their land. They lose the cultural and ideological fight with the colonisers, while sometimes they even show little resistance. And in this concern, Achebe says:

'What I say is this,' continued Nwaka,' a man who brings ant-ridden faggots into his hut should expect the visit of the lizards. But if Ezeulu is now telling us that he is tired of the white man's friendship our advice to him should've: you tied the knot, you should also know how to undo it... Fortunately the evil charm brought in at the end of a pole is not too difficult to take outside again."¹⁸⁵

Indeed, it all starts with Ezeulu sending his son to the white man' church, then Oduche trying to kill the python, and in the final epoch, people answering the call of Christ to escape the rage of Ulu. The Igbos are the ones to give up their heritage, so it us up to them to bring it

¹⁸⁴ *Arrow of God*, p.147.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p.144.

back to life. They must seek their freedom and independence, yet, not only politically speaking. They must violently revolt against the colonisation of the mind, without which they are still weighing under the brunt of colonialism.

CONCLUSION

Colonialism laid the foundation of a new inclination in the field of literature that gave birth to postcolonial writing, which accounted for the colonial experience and its aftermath. Postcolonial literature portrayed the radical change that occurred in the colonised communities and scrutinised the relationship between the colonised and the coloniser. Chinua Achebe, as a postcolonial author, portrayed the effect of colonialism on indigenous communities which was nothing but destructive.

The first chapter in this paper drew on the significance of *Arrow of God* in relation to history. This novel is not a mere fictional work, but rather a kind of resurrection to the past because almost the same story happened somewhere else where colonialism set foot. That is where from Achebe gained universality as a writer.

Achebe artistically painted the intricate relationships among the native Igbo community, and that with the invaders, the British. These relationships were featured by conflicts, mainly of cultural and ideological nature as discussed in the second chapter. To begin with, the novel opened up with Umuaro's political conflict with Okperi, which ultimately whittled down to war. Then there emerged the religious conflict with the church, and that between Ulu and Idemili, deities of Umuaro and Okperi respectively, in addition to the cultural conflict with the white man. Then, there existed this genuine struggle between Ezeulu and his rivals in his own tribe, the British administrators, and the Christian missionaries. All these complex, nested conflicts maneuvered a loophole for the colonisers to outbreak through the land, the people, and their minds. Thereby, colonialism swimmingly managed to wreck the cultural and ideological infrastructure of the native Igbo society. And for this end, colonialism reclined on ideology and culture, next to power.

Culture and ideology often played key role within any colonial space. Religion, education, customs, and language were valid instruments employed by the colonisers to

eradicate native cultures and ingrain their own. In Achebe's novel Igbo spirituality and religious life died an ignominious death when confronted by Christianity, and so did Igbo language, customs, and tradition. Hence, by using the metaphor of *Arrow of God*, Achebe endeavoured to represent the crucial role that religion played in the process of colonisation. The Christian faith permeated within the natives once their own god disheartened them, and let them to suffer severe famine.

However, *Arrow of God* was not concerned with inter-tribal conflict as much as with the chief priest of Ulu. He came into conflict with himself in a quest to hold on to power despite his age and the pervasiveness of the colonial administrators. While his ambivalent attitude towards the white man widened the dissension between him and his people, it ironically led the natives to convert to the colonisers' ways. By attempting to fulfill his role as a protector of the indigenous tradition, he undermined his god and antagonised his people by openly associating with the new forces. Yet, his direct contact with the colonisers launched conflict that, in consequence, led to his unjust imprisonment and humiliation. Here, Ezeulu's disaccord with the white man, as an individual, provided an inference to the external conflict of his people with the colonial system. A justification for such a claim could be the fact that Ezeulu embodied the Igbo tradition; that is the Igbo self, which the colonisers directly targeted.

Ezeulu's final fall was not simply the tragedy of an individual within his society, rather it was the representation of the decline of a whole body of culture, with all its vital components including religion, customs, tradition, and language. Yet this was merely the very first precursor of the fiendish calamity. After the British left, Nigeria stood on the crossroads of culture and wallowed in the mire of identity crisis. This was the direct consequence of the long lasting psychological effects of colonialism. The seeds of racial inferiority were planted in the collective conscious of the Nigerians. To top it all, the aftermath of colonialism was

massively devastating, disordering, and destructive in another sense. Nigeria swept into chaos and civil war. Conflict continued till the present day between the unites of society.

Arrow of God portrayed the effects of British administrators and missionaries in the Igbo land in the light of the various intertwined conflicts among the Igbos. It showed the very first precursors of change, religious and educational, that later on, brought dislocation to historic certainties. So Achebe might have predicted fragmentation of individuals, nation, and identity that resulted alongside colonisation. He did this, with great strength and tragic objectivity, in a literary work that readers appreciated for its realistic depiction of Igbo land and past. His rich depth of imagery, symbolism, and metaphor, and its profound lessons about community and convergence of culture were of high importance.

Achebe used art to voice out his message, to rebut the distorted past of his people. He employed English mixed with local colour to reach wider audiences. The unique manner in which he wrote *Arrow of God*, and before it *Things Fall Apart*, earned him a transcendental position in two literary canons, the Western and the African. His *Arrow of God* spoke the truth about Africa and the Africans and their response to colonial imperialism, which definitely changed the historical perspective towards the continent and its people.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

▪ **Primary Sources**

Achebe, Chinua. *Arrow of God*. London: Penguin Classics, 2009.

▪ **Secondary Sources:**

A- Fiction

Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. London: Heinemann, 1958.

Cary, Joyce. *Mister Johnson*. London: Michael Joseph Ltd, 1947.

Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*. Bejaia :Talantikit, 2014.

B. Critical Practice and Methodology:

Achebe, Chinua. *Hopes and Impediments: Selected Essays(1965-1987)*.

London: Heinemann, 1988.

Ashcroft, Bill. Griffiths, Gareth. Tiffin, Helen. *Key Concepts in Postcolonial Studies*.

London: Routledge, 2002.

-----*The Empire Writes Back*.

London: Routledge, 2002.

-----*The post colonial Studies*

Reader. London: Routledge, 1989.

Bhabha K. Homi. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994.

Boehmer, Elleke. *Colonial and Post Colonial literature*. New York: Oxford

University Press, 1995.

Chakravorty Spivak, Gyatri. *Can the Subaltern Speak?*. Basingstoke: Macmillan,

1988.

Conrad, Joseph. *Notes on Life and Letters*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

2004.

Edward-Yearwood, Grace. *Africa Is Nobody's Metaphor: Hopes and Impediments by Chinua*

Achebe. Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times, Review.

Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press, 1967.

------. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 1963.

Ferosa, Jassawala and Keed, Dasenbrock. *Interview with Writers of the Postcolonial World*.

Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1992.

Lindfors, Bernth and Chinua Achebe. *Conversations with Chinua Achebe*. Jackson:

Mississippi, 1997.

Memmi, Albert. *The Colonised and the Coloniser*. London: Routledge, 2013.

Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage 1994.

Wa Thiong'o, Ngugi. *Decolonising the Mind: the Politics of Language in African Literature*.

Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1986.

Wren, Robert. M. *Achebe's World*. London: Longman, 1980.

C. Essays/ Articles:

Achebe Chinua." The Black Writer's Burden." *Presence Africaine*, Vol. 31, No. 59(1966), pp. 137-149.

Andrews, E. Edward." Christian Missionaries and Colonial Empire Reconsidered: A Black Evangelist in West Africa." *Journal of Church and State*, Vol. 51, No. 4(2009), pp. 633-691.

Bernstein, Henry." Modernisation Theory and the Sociological Study of Development." *Journal of Development Studies*(1991), pp. 141-160.

B. Lewis, Marry Ellen." Beyond Content in the Analysis of Folklore in Literature: Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*." *Research in African Literature*, Vol. 7, No. 1(Spring 1976), pp. 44-52.

Booth, S. Newell, JR."Tradition and Community in African Religion." *Journal of Religion in Africa*, vol. 4, No. 2(1978), pp. 81-94.

- Brantlinger, Patrick." Victorians and Africans: the Genealogy of the Myth of the Dark Continent." *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 12, No. 3(Autumn 1985), pp. 166-203.
- Brown, R. Hugh."Igbo Words for the Non-Igbo: Achebe's Artistry in *Arrow of God*." *Research in African Literature*, vol. 12, No. 1(1981), pp. 69-85.
- Christiana Okechukwu, Chinwe." Oratory and Social Responsibility in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*." *Callaloo*, Vol. 25, No. 2(Spring 2002), pp. 567-583.
- Chukwukere, B.I. " The Problem of Lnguage in African Creative Writing." *African Literature Today*, Vol. 3, No.2(1972), pp.10-25.
- Dasenbrock, Reed Way." Creating a Past: Achebe, Naipaul, Soyinka, Farah." *The Literary Imagination and the Sense of the Past*, No. 68/69(Fall 1985), pp. 312-332.
- George, Olakunle." The Narrative of Conversion in Achebe's *Arrow of God*." *Comparative Literature Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 4(2005), pp. 344-362.
- Gerring, John." Ideology: A Definitional Analysis." *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 4(December 1997), pp. 957-994.
- Gikandi, Simon." Chinua Achebe and the Invention of Culture." *Research in African Literature*, Vol. 32, No. 3(Autumn 2001), pp. 3-8.
- Hungtinton, Samuel." Conservatism as an Ideology." *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 51, No. 3(June 1957), pp. 454-473.
- Ienshie, Nsemba Edward." Ties that Bind and Differences that Divide: Exploring the Resurgence of Ethno-cultural Identity in Nigeria." *African Development*, Vol. 39, No. 3(2014), pp.153-212.
- Jones, Eldred."Achebe's Third Novel." *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, Vol.1, No.1-3(1966), pp.176-178.

- Jordan, O, John." Culture Conflict and Social Change in Achebe's *Arrow of God*." *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, Vol. 13, No. 1(1971), pp. 66-82.
- Joseph, A. B. Clara." Nation Because of Differences." *Research in African Literature*, Vol. 32, No. 3(Autumn 2001), pp. 57-70.
- Kalu, C. Anthonia." The Priest/Artist Tradition in Achebe's *Arrow of God*." *Africa Today*, Vol. 41, No. 2(1994), pp. 51-62.
- Kwame Awuyah, Chris." '*Arrow of God*': Ezeulu's Response to Change." *College Literature*, Vol. 19/20, No. 3/1(October 1992- February 1993), pp. 214-219.
- Lutfi, Hamadi."Edward Said: The Postcolonial Theory and the Literature of Decolonisation." *European Scientific Journal*, Vol.2(2014), pp.39-49.
- Madubuike, Ihechukwu. "Chinua Achebe: His Ideas on African Literature." *Présence Africaine*, Vol. 31, No. 59(1974), pp. 60-87.
- Mafeji, Archie." The Ideology of Tribalism." *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2(August 1971), pp. 253-261.
- Melamu. M. J. "The Quest for Power in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*." *English Studies in Africa*, vol. 14, No. 2(1971),pp. 225-240.
- Manji, Ambreena." 'Like a Mask Dancing': Law and Colonialism in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*." *Journal of Law and Society*, Vol. 27, No. 4(December 2000), pp. 626-642.
- Mathray, Mark." Power and Meaning in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*." *Research in African Literature*, Vol. 34, No. 3(Autumn 2003), pp. 46-65.
- Mills, Charles." Revisionist Ontologies: Theorising White Supremacy." *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1(1994), pp. 105-134.
- Mordaun, G. Owen."Conflict and its Manifestations In Achebe's *Arrow of God*." *Africa Focus*, vol. 5, No. 3-4(1989), pp. 153-165.

- Okechukwu, Chinwe Christiana."Oratory and Social Responsibility." *Caklalo*, Vol.25, No. 2(2002), pp. 567-583.
- Olakunle, George."The Narrative of Vonversion in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*." *Comparative Literature Studies*, vol. 42, No. 4(2005), pp 344-362.
- Osakwe, Chima."Literacy and Social Status in Achebe's *Arrow of God* and Soyinka's *Isara*." *Journal of the African Literature Association*, vol. 5, No. 1(2010), pp. 130-143.
- Patterson, Ruth." *Arrow of God* by Chinua Achebe." *The Journal of English*, Vol. 66, No. 3(Mars 1977), pp. 64-65.
- Pramanik, Suchitra." Igbo Culture as Colonial Resistance." *The Criterion: An International Journal in English*, Vol. 5, No. 2(April 2014), pp. 571-580.
- Safe, Suzanne." Wherever Something Stands, Something Else Will Stand Beside It, Ambivalence in Achebe *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*." *Changing English*, Vol.9, No.2(2002), pp.119-131.
- Tenpenny, Laura. K."Nigerian Representations in Joyce Cary's *Mister Johnson*." *Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange*, No.12(2001), pp. 1-41.
- Vilhanova, Viera Parolikova." Christian Missionaries in Africa and Their Role in the Transformation of African Societies." *Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2(2007), pp. 262-294.
- Wren, Rebert M. "From Ulu to Christ: the Transfer of Faith in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*." *Christianity-Literature*, vol. 27, No. 2,(1978), pp, 28-40

ملخص

تعتبر رواية سهم الله للكاتب النيجيري تشينوا أتشوبي إحدى المعالم البارزة في الأدب الإفريقي الحديثة. حيث لاقت ثناء عالميا واسع المدى لاحتوائها طابعا متفردا في سرد أحداث التاريخ النيجيري مع قدوم الاستعمار البريطاني . تنقل الرواية محنة قبيلة أوموارو التي تنتمي الى مجتمع الايغبو و ذلك بطابع درامي في ظل التصادم الثقافي و الأيديولوجي القائم بين أفريقيا و أوروبا. تبين الرواية أيضا نفوذ و سلطة الديانة المسيحية كأداة أيديولوجية امبريالية و دورها في هز كيان المعتقدات القديمة. و عليه تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على مختلف النزاعات و الشرور الثقافية و الأيديولوجية التي صاحبت القدوم الاستعماري محدثة بذلك شرخا كبيرا بين قبائل الايغبو. الفصل الأول يضع الرواية في إطارها السوسيولوجي و التاريخي من خلال طرح بعض القضايا و الحقائق التي تزامنت مع أحداث الرواية بينما يتطرق الفصل الثاني إلى تجسيد قراءة نقدية للرواية تتناسب مع الأفكار و المواضيع المطروحة فيها. و عليه فان ما يمكن استنتاجه هو أن رواية سهم الله تعكس بوضوح التجربة المريرة التي يخوضها شعب تحت وطأة الاستعمار و دور المستعمر في حرك مأساة الشعوب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاستعمار، ما بعد الاستعمار، ثقافات، أيديولوجية، صراعات.