

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF MOHAMED BOUDIAF - M'SILA

FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

N°:.....



DOMAIN: FOREIGN LANGUAGES

STREAM: ENGLISH LANGUAGE

OPTION: LITERATURE & CIVILIZATION

**IMMIGRATION AND IDENTITY IN CHIMAMANDA
NGOZI ADICHIE'S *THE THING AROUND YOUR NECK***

**Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English in Partial
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Master's Degree**

Candidates:

Miss. Wassima DJERAD

Miss. Ichrak BENAÏSSA

Supervisor:

Mr. Bachir SAHED

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DEDICATION

To my dear mother, Fatima...

Wassima

DEDICATION

To my dear mother, father, and husband...

Ichrak

ABBREVIATIONS

TTAYN: The Thing Around Your Neck

ABSTRACT

Immigration and Identity are among the most formative experiences of our century. They are considered to be the chief preoccupation of most contemporary African writers. The present study scrutinizes immigration and identity in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *The Thing Around Your Neck* (2009). In her short stories, Adichie depicts the postcolonial identity struggle of Nigerian Immigrants in the heart of America. Hence, the study attempts to highlight these immigrants strife for identity and selfhood. It analyses Adichie's work in the light of Bhabha's postcolonial theory of hybridity. Thus, chapter one presents a theoretical framework and a socio-historical context of the work. The second chapter examines the theme of identity in Adichie's selected short stories namely, "Imitation", "The thing around your neck", "The American Embassy", "The Shivering", and "The Arrangers of Marriage". To conclude, postcolonialism has a deep influence on *The Thing Around Your Neck*, since the collection contains multiple postcolonial themes which assert that it is a display for the intervention of the imposed superiority that both the colonizer and United States of America exercise on the African individual self.

Key words: postcolonialism, postcolonial literature, mimicry, hybridity, cultural displacement, the thing around your neck, immigration, identity.

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INTRODUCTION

Postcolonial literature comes from the broadest term of Postcolonialism, which deals basically with the period of colonialism and its aftermath. It has the capacity to reveal the cultural oppression and domination of one country over another, the way in which colonialism has affected the colonized. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that postcolonial African literature would offer a fertile field to explore the impact of European colonialism on the African imagination.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is an author who is mainly concerned with the ongoing effects of colonization in Africa, and more importantly Nigeria. Adichie herself admitted that she only started consciously identified as an African once she moved to the US. This phenomenon is explained by Radhakrishnan¹ as an act of rebirth: the immigrant's "*naturalization into American citizenship simultaneously minoritizes her identity. She is now reborn as an ethnic minority American citizen.*"² In the US, Adichie realized that the Western world holds a single story of what Africa is, based on racist stereotypes. "*Power is the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definitive story of that person*", said the author on her well known TED Talk, "The danger of a single story" (2009).³ This reductive

¹ Was an Indian philosopher and statesman who was the first vice president of India and the second president of India

² Radhakrishnan R, "Ethnicity in an Age of Diaspora". In J. Evans Braziel & A. Mannur (Eds.), *Theorizing Diaspora: A Reader*. Blackwell Publishing, 2003, pp. 119–131; p. 121

³ Adam Zolkover, "Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and David Brooks on the Dangers of Single Storyism" (May 3, 2016) Retrieved from: <https://www.instituteforcivility.org/2016/05/03/chimamanda-ngozi-adichie-david-brooks-dangers-single-storyism/>

portrayal of the African continent prevents outsiders from seeing the African “as equally human.”⁴

Consequently, Adichie writes to combat these stereotypes and the “single story”. In most of her writings, we find characters who are educated, who have comfortable lives, who do not starve, and who have cell phones and cars. These traits made them, as seen by some critics, as “not authentically African”.⁵ Again, this breaks the tradition of previous generations of Nigerian writers, such as Chinua Achebe. Adichie insists on portraying the diverse faces of Africa, not just the one that the West is comfortable with, “*Achebe’s characters were nothing like me and lived without the things that I saw as the norm in my life: cars, electricity and telephones.*”⁶

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *The Thing Around Your Neck*, a collection of individual short stories, is considered as one of the representative works of postcolonial African literature that turn a penetrating eye on the ties that bind men and women, parents and children, Nigeria and the West. This collection deals generally with the Nigerian people who migrate to the United States facing conflicts and surprises, embroiled in questions of identity, allegiance, and the pressures of a new cultural environment, finding themselves at odds deciding whether to adapt this new culture, to reconstruct their identity, or just to reinvent a new one. Accordingly, identity and belonging, immigration and adaptation were the major themes introduced in her stories.

⁴ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, “African “Authenticity” and the Biafran Experience”. *Transition*, (99), (2008), pp. 42–53; p. 45

⁵ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, “African “Authenticity” and the Biafran Experience”. *Transition*, (99), (2008), pp. 42–53; p. 48.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

Adichie's protagonists are striving to achieve extraordinary dreams such as love, intimacy, security, wealth, and hope for a better life. They are impacted by their political and socio-cultural contexts; yet at the same time, they are facing mundane personal challenges and dilemmas: falling in love unexpectedly, grieving, becoming independent, coping with displacement, loneliness and disappointment in their new lives or their new marriages and surviving tragedy.

Nevertheless, Adichie manages not only to retell a postcolonial story of origin and identity but also to redefine a female history where it is necessary to know where one comes from in order to direct one's future step. In her stories, women are generally middle class, intelligent but unconfident, and tend to be rooted by more selfish and amoral characters.

Until recently, many scholars have worked on Adichie's *The Thing Around Your Neck*, such as Mohammad Hussein and Esmail Zohdi, Cruz Periera and others, discussing the bitterness of colonialism and its aftermath, and examining the major themes presented in the stories. Researchers have presented ideas related to the impact of colonialism on the African individual self, and the American dream ideology in which it was the hidden trick that encouraged Africans to immigrate to the USA looking for a better life far from corruption, insecurity and poverty.

Adichie's *The Thing Around Your Neck* researchers tried to examine the notion of identity for some individual stories, this aspect is shown in Mohammad Hussein Oroskhan and Esmail Zohdi's research "Doubleness of Identity in Adichie's "Imitation" (2015) which emphasizes the challenges that resulted in some alteration in the protagonist's inner life, and how immigration impacted the self-identity to give birth to a double identity. He focused on the lives of those African immigrants who

have left their countries for a better life and now are entangled in the doubleness of diasporic identity.

Additional work held by Irina Cruz Periera “Deconstructing the Single Story of Nigeria: Diasporic Identities in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *The Thing Around Your Neck*” (2016). The study deals with the frustration of the American dream; it discusses the ache and the ongoing quest for self-definition. Another work carried by Christina Elisabeth Etz “Short Stories of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie” (2016), in which she gives a clear explanation on how Adichie highlights the typical problems of Nigerian people, who start a new life in the United States of America, being an immigrant herself, and how she incorporates her own experience in her stories. On the other hand, André Kaboré’s study of adichie’s work “Migration in African Literature: a Case Study of Adichie’s Works” (2016), is concerned with studying the causes and the consequences of migration, in addition to the hybridization of characters and settings in Adichie’s work, relating all of these to her own experience.

Therefore, we can see that identity is a much debated term in postcolonial literature. The historical, cultural and ideological circumstances prevalent in the alien and native societies entangle the protagonists. They become victims of despair and loneliness as they feel the people around them asking them, “Who are you? Where are you from? Why are you here?” and where immigrants face considerable hardship, isolation, alienation, and frustration as they try to find a niche in their newfound world. They are entrapped in a dilemma of tensions between a new alien culture and a traditional constraint, surrounding them.

Adichie combines social and cultural changes that occurred during and after colonialism with the issues of identity, hybridity, ethnicity, and multiculturalism.

Hence, this work will expose the intervention of the imposed superiority that both the colonizer exercise on the African individual self. The dissertation elucidates the self's conflicts which are intrapersonal and interpersonal in the African and American society and the subsequent attempt to search for a new identity.

Throughout this study several questions are raised about the subject matter of identity in relation to postcolonial literature and analyses how elements such as language, displacement, otherness, hybridization, construct the identity of a society or affect and reshape it. Hence, this dissertation will attempt to answer the following main question: How does Adichie depict the themes of immigration and identity in *The Thing Around Your Neck*? It also endeavours to answer the following sub-questions: How does Adichie deal with the main components that influence identity such as hybridity, mimicry and displacement in *The Thing Around Your Neck*? How does immigration affect Adichie's identity as a hybrid writer? What is the effect of cultural displacement on the characters' identity?

To answer these questions, this research will be divided into two chapters. The first chapter will expose the a Theoretical Framework and Socio-historical Context on Postcolonialism and its impact on literature in addition to its relation to identity and immigration, as well as issues in Nigerian literature and the developments of the Igbo language within the African short story. The second chapter will analyse the five selected short stories: "The thing around your neck", "Imitation", "The American Embassy", "The Shivering", and "The Arrangers of Marriage". Using the Bhabha's postcolonial theories of hybridity, mimicry and cultural displacement, to see how Adichie tends to withdraw from the Western canon and to create her own personal identity as related to her own experience, and to show that the characters'

interpersonal and intrapersonal struggles can be explained from a postcolonial perspective.

Above all, The Nigerian author, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie explores how immigration and displacement can bring about significant changes to an individual's self-image. The loss of identity and the quest for it have been pervasive themes in contemporary African fiction. Her collection of short stories *The Thing Around Your Neck*, depict the struggles with the Nigerian identity in the middle of America as the Nigerian characters encounter white Americans, black Americans, and other Nigerians of different economic classes. They face differing ideas about what it means to be Nigerian and the problems that arise when others have very narrow views of what Nigeria, and Africa in general, is supposed to look like.

Chapter One: Theoretical Framework and Socio-historical Context

The issues of identity and immigration are of a paramount importance to postcolonial African literature. They are a fertile ground for debating postcolonial writers' attempts to reconstruct or restore their original identity and that of their peoples through literature. Elements that either construct the identity of a society or reshape it like language, displacement, otherness, and so on are always present in the works of postcolonial writers. It is the fruit of their personal experience as well as the experience of their society. They attempt to decolonize their literature and culture and to free themselves from the chains of imperial powers. To better understand how the themes of identity and immigration are explored in Postcolonial literature, we need to know in the first place the very nature of this field and all the aspects that make its basis.

Postcolonialism is a widely used but critically contested term, which means many things to many people, and have been defined within different cultural moments. Indeed, Postcolonialism is a challenged concept and a term that has been substituted in the 1970^s for the post-liberation issues all through the world. It is a continuing process of resistance and reconstruction. It involves a discussion about slavery, displacement, immigration, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, racial and cultural discrimination and the identity question. As an academic discipline, a set of intellectual methods which analyses, explains, and responds to the cultural legacies of colonialism and imperialism. It deals with the human consequences of external control and exploitation of native people from different aspects. It studies the effects of colonialism on cultures and societies. As an interdisciplinary approach, Postcolonialism draws from over the humanities, including history, political science,

philosophy, sociology, anthropology, human geography, film studies, religious studies, feminism, linguistics, literature, and Marxist theory.⁷

Despite the fact that Postcolonialism deals with the effects of colonization on cultures and societies, from the late 1970'S literary critics to discuss the various cultural effects of colonization have used the term. Simon Gikandi defines Postcolonialism as, "*The need, in nations, or groups which have been victims of imperialism to achieve an identity uncontaminated by Universalist or Eurocentric concepts or images.*"⁸ Simon tries to differentiate Postcolonialism from what used to be called neo-colonialism. He calls upon the colonized who has confronted a social conflict between his own particular and the colonizer to accomplish another character uncontaminated by the image that the West shaped about the colonized.

Postcolonialism is overtly emancipatory. It is driven by concerns with liberation and justice; it celebrates marginal groups, dissolve languages of power, fascinated with subversive strategies of mimicry, parody, irony, in order to dismantle the foundation of colonial discourse, to react against the stereotypes formed by the West about the Other.⁹ Charles E. Bressler sees Postcolonialism as an ongoing self-critique; it is "*An approach to literary analysis that concerns itself particularly with literature written in English in formerly colonized countries.*"¹⁰ Bressler wants to exclude literature that represents western viewpoint, and concentrates on writing from colonized cultures and societies that were once dominated by European cultural

⁷ Kumar D. Sudhansu. "Politics of Cultural Dehumanization: A Study of the Post-Colonial Lives." *Research on postcolonial studies*. Vol. 1, issue. 1, (2016), pp. 49-51; p. 50

⁸ Gikandi Simon, "Postcolonialism's Ethical (Re) Turn: An Interview with Simon Gikandi Interviewed by David Jefferess." In *Postcolonial Text*. Vol. 2. No. 1. (2006) p.02 Retrieved from <http://www.postcolonial-europe.eu/interviews>

⁹ Noel Shields, "Postcolonialism and the Provincializing of Europe: Making of the Modern World." (May 2016). p.26. Retrieved from <https://slideplayer.com/slide/10222451/>

¹⁰ Bressler E. Charles, *Literary Criticism: An Introduction to theory & Practice*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1999, p. 199.

tradition. Peter Brooker, in his book *A Glossary of Cultural Theory*, defines Postcolonialism as:

The study of the ideological and cultural impact of Western colonialism and in particular of its aftermath – whether as a continuing influence (neocolonialism) or in the emergence of newly articulated independent national and individual identities.¹¹

Brooker tries to clarify whether Postcolonialism is the continuation of colonialism as in the sense that colonies get freedom only from political rule or it is a process of newly self-determination and the end of underestimation and marginalization. Therefore, Postcolonialism does not presume the end of colonialism. ‘Post’ never just means ‘after’, rather it is a discourse that resulted from the work of several writers such as Aime Cesaire, Frantz Fanon, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Edward Said, Bill Ashcroft and his collaborators, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, Aizaz Ahmad, and others. They attempted to re-examine the colonized Self. It is the study of the hidden form of colonialism and the imperial impact in the colonized self through literature. Its critical purpose is to establish intellectual spaces for subalterns to “speak” for themselves, in their own voices. Postcolonial studies are engrossed with the issues of hybridity, alterity, in-betweenness, Diaspora and ambivalence, ethnicity, identity, mimicry, and immigration.

Postcolonialism as a notion came to highlight the postcolonial identity as different from the colonial one. For this, Paolini asserts that the postcolonial “Other” comes back in a newly formed identity that is far away from western identity, he reports Helen Tiffin’s words that:

Postcolonial writers ‘rehabilitate’ the self against European appropriation. In fracturing imposed

¹¹ Brooker Peter, *A Glossary of Cultural Theory*. London: Arnold, 2003, p. 218.

European master narratives and perspectives, Postcolonialism replaces them with an alternative vision. This is particularly the case for indigenous peoples in India and Africa who are able to challenge European perspectives with their own metaphysical systems.¹²

Furthermore, the term “post-colonial” was promoted by notable books, *The Empire Writes Back* by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, which also contributed to the recognition of postcolonial literature. It uses the term “‘post-colonial’ to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day.”¹³

Thus, the concept of Postcolonialism is concerned with diverse and numerous issues highlighting the struggle that occurs when one culture is dominated by another. Its ultimate goal is to account for and contest the residual effects of colonialism on cultures. It is not simply concerned with salvaging past worlds, but learning how the world can move beyond this period together, towards a place of mutual respect.

I.1. Africa under Western Eyes

The European image of African culture is an illustration of a deliberate desire to impose Western norms on African literature. For them, African culture and literature must be oriented towards Western standards since they consider African ways inferior and primitive. They have been using Western standards to evaluate it. This Western attitude creates a situation of double colonization: the one suffered by Africans with

¹² Albert J. Paolini, *Navigating Modernity: Postcolonialism, Identity and International Relations*. Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, 1999, p. 79.

¹³ Ashcroft Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*. London: Routledge, 1989, p. 2.

under the system slavery and that of imposing Western norms and standards on African literature.¹⁴

African literature itself is different from all other literatures because of its intense oral tradition and mythical influence. Yet, Europeans created an image of Africa as the antithesis of Europe. In the West, Africa is portrayed as the heart of darkness, with Africans suffering from that quartet of disease, poverty, famine and war, a land of fantastical beasts and cannibals, slaves, and “backward races”. They presented it not only as the antithesis of Europe but also as the antithesis of civilization. Imperialism is a process in which the colonizer tried to take over, not only the land and the wealth of the colonized, but also the culture of these peoples, under the pretext of civilizing the uncivilized, they exported their literatures and powers to the colonies and tried to eliminate indigenous cultures.¹⁵

Colonialism was presented as “the extension of civilization”, which ideologically justified the self-ascribed racial and cultural superiority of the Western world over the non-Western world. They justified colonialism as delivering the light of civilization to unenlightened peoples. “La mission civilisatrice”, or “the civilizing mission” of the French Empire, proposed that some races and cultures have a higher purpose in life, whereby the more powerful, more developed, and more civilized races have the right to colonize other peoples, in service of the noble idea of “civilisation” and its economic benefits, which put Europe in the centre and Africa in the periphery.

Ashish Nandy, an Indian political psychologist, social theorist, and critic, in his book *The Intimate Enemy* (1983) says that:

¹⁴Akoété Amouzou, “African Literature and Cultural Imperialism.” *Revue du CAMES*. Vol. 8. No. 1, (2007) pp. 1-7.

¹⁵ Asma Chriet, “Postcolonial African Literature and the Identity Question- A Special Reference to Ngugi wa Thiong’o’s Ideological Pronouncements.” *Memoir in African Literature*. (2015), p.21.

This colonialism colonizes minds in addition to bodies and it releases forces within colonized societies to alter their cultural priorities once and for all. In the process, it helps to generalize the concept of the modern West from a geographical and temporal entity to psychological category. The West is now everywhere, within the West and outside; in structures and in minds.¹⁶

Ashish Nandy states that one of the modes of colonization is the colonization of the minds, selves, and cultures. It is the idea of those rationalists, modernists, and the liberals who claim to have the responsibility of civilizing the uncivilized world. He argues that colonization is most powerfully a product of the mind, and decolonization is the process of resisting internalized colonial structures of thought.

I.2. Afrocentrism as an Ideology of Liberation

The African American scholar and activist Molefi Asante has coined the term Afrocentrism in the 1980^s, “A *philosophical perspective associated with the discovery, location, and actualization of African agency within the context of history and culture.*”¹⁷ This statement positions Afrocentrism as that ideology which resists forms of marginalisation of African peoples, and which places African culture at the centre of inquiry, and promotes African peoples as subjects rather than objects of humanity. Asante argues that Afrocentrism must directly challenge Eurocentric views on Africa; he places it as a direct response to Eurocentrism.

The goal of Afrocentrism is to break the vicious cycle of the reproduction of black self-abnegation and to decolonize the African mind from European hegemony. In order to liberate Africans and African Americans, Fouad Mami, an Algerian researcher and senior lecturer in postcolonial literature, argues that:

¹⁶ Nandy Ashis, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism*. Oxford University Press. (1983), p. 11.

¹⁷ Molefi Asante, *Afrocentricity: The Theory of Social Change*. African American Images. 2003, p. 3.

An intellectual renaissance of Africa cannot be generated unless authentic African intellectuals combat the Eurocentric and potentially destructive reflexes that shape and define neo-colonial schools.¹⁸

Afrocentrism contends that for a considerable length of time Africans and Europeans have ruled other non-whites, through subjugation and colonization. As a result to the awful portrayal of Africa and Africans, African writers responded to western writings by producing literary works that would represent Africa as it is and not what the west wanted it to be. Thus, Anglophone and Francophone literatures aimed at replacing Euro-centrism by Afro-centrism. In her book, *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction*, Leela Gandhi states: “It is helpful to think of this stipulated shift from abrogation to appropriation as a shift from ‘unlearning English’, to the project of ‘learning how to curse in the master’s tongue.’”¹⁹

Albeit Western writings have contributed in a way or another to the rise of the postcolonial African writing, this latter was an awakening for Africans and African Americans to react against the western social dominion against them, they utilized writing as an instrument to dismiss the way of life of the colonizer.

I.3. The Rise of the Postcolonial

Postcolonial theory is one of the most recent developments in the evolution of philosophical and cultural theories. It emerged in the later part of the twentieth century; a decade or so after most formerly colonized parts of the world gained their political independence mostly through movements of liberation. This nationalism, which motivated people to fight for their independence, was shared by nations across

¹⁸ Fouad Mami, “Identity in Africa: A Philosophical Perspective.” *IBSU Scientific Journal*, (2011), pp. 65-82, p. 69.

¹⁹ Gandhi Leela, *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 148.

continents. Postcolonial theory is therefore, an organized body of inquiry into the colonial past. Made possible by the non-urgency of the activity, it is a calm, objective revisiting of the colonial experience with the aim of critically and deconstructively reflecting upon its ambivalence, its discourse and its legacy as well as a search for ways forward.²⁰

According to Leela Gandhi (1998), postcoloniality is a situation that occurs due to the collective suppression of the colonial experience in the minds of formerly colonized peoples. This suppression or “self-willed amnesia” as she calls it, was the colonized’s mechanism of checking the persistence of mental colonization after independence. Postcolonial intellectuals are, then, able to remember colonialism, and diagnose it as the root cause of the continued alienation colonized people suffer from.²¹

Decolonization was a procedure triggered by the colonized. However, the battle for freedom was felt after the First World War occurred including the vast majority of the world forces. African trooper returnees, who had battled on their colonizer’s side in the war, conveyed with them the driving force to battle the adversary at home. Numerous scholars and African people upheld them.²²

Nonetheless, there are the individuals who discussed the authenticity of such decolonization. Frantz Fanon and Albert Memmi examined the mental inheritance of imperialism that keeps on existing in postcolonial social orders. Fanon compares decolonization, as Memmi and Gandhi, they need the freedom development to be the key of freedom. Decolonization must be more radical, mental and not constrained to

²⁰Yohannes, Linda, “A Postcolonial Look at African Literature: Case Study of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s Works.” *MA Thesis*, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, (2012), pp. 1-83.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

the physical riddance of the colonizer. For Fanon, this second rate mindset of the colonized must be killed through brutality that will upset the current bipolar polarity of the oppressor/abused. This rough battle is to make a radical change in the local's territory. Therefore, his hypothesis did not appear, on the grounds that the tables were never turned, at any rate not in the way that Fanon proposed, and post-pioneer social orders rose with new attributes.²³

Edward Said is one of the main figures of postcolonial discourse theory. He uses Orientalism to mean the way people in western culture imagine and interpret the differences between themselves and people of eastern cultures. They often see the Eastern culture as backward and primitive, which can lead to certain assumptions.

Many of the issues of Orientalism stem from the way eastern cultures are displayed. Said asserts that Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction between “the Orient” and “the Occident”. The attitude that Said sees people who practice Orientalism take is a patronizing one. They instruct people that have a different history and way of life than they represent them differently in media, which influence the way people in the West, imagine and interpret those cultures.

Homi K. Bhabha is one of the most important figures in contemporary postcolonial studies. Bhabha's work in postcolonial theory owes much to Post-structuralism thinkers notably Jacques Derrida's Deconstruction, Jacques Lacan's Psychoanalysis, and Michel Foucault's notion of discursivity.

²³ Linda Yohannes “A Postcolonial Look at African Literature: Case Study of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Works.” *MA Thesis*, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, (2012), pp. 1-83.

Bhabha has developed a number of the field's key concepts, such as hybridity, mimicry, and cultural displacement. Such terms describe ways in which colonized people have reacted to the power of the colonizer according to Bhabha's theory.

Hybridity describes the emergence of new cultural forms. Instead of seeing colonialism as something locked in the past, Bhabha shows how it constantly intrudes on the present.

Mimicry appears when members of a colonized society imitate and take on the culture of the colonizers. Colonial mimicry comes from the colonist's desire for a reformed, recognizable other, as a subject of difference. Thus, mimicry is a sign of double articulation, a strategy which appropriates the other as it visualizes power. Mimicry is the sign of the inappropriate. Mimicry gives the colonial subject a partial presence, as if he is dependent for its representation within the authoritative discourse itself. Ironically, the colonists desire to emerge as authentic through mimicry. On the other hand, Bhabha does not interpret mimicry as a narcissistic identification of the colonizer in which the colonized stops being a person without the colonizer present in his identity.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is an Indian scholar, literary theorist, and feminist critic. She is considered one of the most influential postcolonial intellectuals. Spivak is best known for her essay "*Can the Subaltern Speak?*" and for her translation of and introduction to Jacques Derrida's *De la grammatologie*. Spivak was awarded the 2012 Kyoto Prize in Art and philosophy for being a critical theorist and educator speaking

for the humanities against intellectual colonialism in relation to the globalized world. Throughout her works, Spivak defends the rights of women.²⁴

I.4. The Dilemma of Identity in Postcolonial Literature

Postcolonial literature reflects a way of life and depicts customs, attitudes, religion, and legends of postcolonial societies. Therefore, it inscribes a culture in a frame. It is an affirmation of their identity; it is mostly a realistic literature that gives an account of the real country, where it is supposed to mimic reality.²⁵

Indeed, it is this concept of identity loss that runs deep in colonial and postcolonial literature. The loss of a past, a culture, a way of life is the tragedy that marks the lives of colonized people. It is also this loss that leads to the loss of an identity for the postcolonial people.²⁶ The postcolonial identity is certainly a struggle with extenuating circumstances; it can be defined through various elements that constitute it, as for Couze Venn who asserts that, “*identity is an entity that emerges in relation to an other or others; it is a plural self who is constituted by socio-cultural, corporeal and technico-material mechanisms of formation that can be described.*”²⁷ For instance “Otherness” which is a key concept in defining the postcolonial identity as referring to how colonial and postcolonial subjects see each other, how the West sees the rest and vice versa; and also how postcolonial subjects perceive themselves within their own societies.

²⁴ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?: Speculations on Widow Sacrifice”, *Wedge*, Vol. 7, (Winter, 1985): 120–30.

²⁵ Boobalakashnan. T, “Dimensions of Postcolonial Literature”, (July 16, 2015). Retrieved from <https://boobalakashnan.wordpress.com/>.

²⁶ Mary Brooks, “Colonial and Postcolonial Identity” (December 6, 2005). Retrieved from <http://coursesite.uhcl.edu/HSH/Whitec/LITR/5731copo/models/2005/finals/f05brooks.htm>

²⁷ Venn Couze, *The Postcolonial Challenge: Towards Alternative World*. London: Sage publications Ltd., 2006, p. 90.

Not only Otherness is a key feature that defines postcolonial identity, there is also the issue of language and place. John McLeod reported Bhabha's words about place and its effect on postcolonial identity, "*we find ourselves in the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity.*"²⁸ The issue of language is a controversial issue when it comes to studying postcolonial literary works which constituted a unique identity through the hybrid language used by postcolonial writers. Hence, hybridity is also one of the key features that forge the postcolonial identity.²⁹

Identity becomes the fulcrum upon which the postcolonial character revolves. Each character that is created suffers from a certain lack of direction in their lives. The identities of the postcolonial characters are mired in the struggle to form an emotional, cultural, and societal identity that reflects the experiences of a distant past they cannot recall.

I.5. Postcolonial Issues in Nigerian Fiction

One of Nigeria's most traumatic periods was the civil war years. However, it has also become one of its most fecund periods in terms of intellect. It produced lots of literature as in the words of Arnold Udoka, "*the war was not just the explosion of guns and bombs and air raids, it was also an internal raid and explosion of intelligence. It has contributed a lot of criticism to Nigeria's literary sphere.*"³⁰

Udoka who has written several poems on his personal experiences about the war,

²⁸ John McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000, p. 217.

²⁹ Asma Chriet, "Postcolonial African Literature and the Identity Question- A Special Reference to Ngugi wa Thiong'o's Ideological Pronouncements", *Memoir in postcolonial African Literature* (2015), P.10

³⁰ Edozie Udeze, "Civil War as Literary Tonic." (September 30, 2012). Insight. Retrieved from <http://thenationonlineng.net/civil-war-as-literary-tonic/>

asserted that the greatest beauty of it all is that most lettered soldiers who participated in the war were able to write something for posterity. He said,

Most of the soldiers who we thought were unlettered, we later learnt were not. The military were made up of highly intelligent people, who while in the thick of the war were gathering materials to write books. This is one of the beauties of the war. But unfortunately a lot of Nigerians still see and regard the war as basically a Biafran palaver.”³¹

As witnessed by scholars present in the civil war years, or the Biafran war in Nigeria, Biafrans were being killed only based on their identity. One of the survivors of Polish genocide as a child, who was spending two years in Nigeria for his doctoral thesis, commented, “[It was] as if the twenty some years after the Second World War had been compressed into a few minutes. The holocaust monster was on the prowl again and it was no use trying to escape its implications in Africa or elsewhere.”³² As an expert on problems of Biafran event, Melson underlined that the conflict was not the product of a racial ideology, but a context for a pervading need of self-determination triggered and sustained by the tensions of a post-colonial nation and the search for a modern nationalist ideology.³³

Notwithstanding its prominence, war literature seemed to be a genre reserved for male writers. However, not only women were not part of the discourse on the Nigerian Civil War but also writers of the northern, Muslim, parts hardly contributed work on this topic. It is clear that most works from the Biafra area and by its Igbo inhabitants contributed to the Nigerian Civil War literary corpus since it was them who were afflicted mostly by the war.

³¹ Edozie Udeze, “Civil War as Literary Tonic.” (September 30, 2012). Insight. Retrieved from <http://thenationonline.net/civil-war-as-literary-tonic/>

³² Robert Melson, “My journey in the study of genocide.” *Pioneers of Genocide Studies*. Ed. Samuel Totten și Steven Jacobs. New Brunswick, NJ: Greenwood Press, 2002. p.142.

³³ Lasse Heerten; Dirk Moses, “The Nigeria–Biafra War: Postcolonial Conflict and the Question of Genocide,” *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 16. 2014, pp. 169-203; p. 182.

The 1970^s and 1980^s can be regarded as the most productive years for male writing on the civil war. Subsequently, the number of publications written by men declined and female writing received more and more popularity after 1985. One of the main reasons for the late appearance of female war literature was not the lack of manuscripts but rather the difficulty of finding a publisher who would be willing to take on works written by women. In addition to that, the Nigerian author Adimora Ezeigbo claims that female writers, especially Igbo women, tend to act and speak up as a group, “*Hence the group speaks with one voice and preserves a collective memory of events and of the history and culture of the community to which the group belongs. The tendency in this culture is for women to achieve ‘group identity’*”.³⁴

The landmark historical experiences of Nigerian people and the subject matter of Nigerian literature are constituted by the dehumanization of colonization, the struggles for independence, the savagery of the civil war, the criminalization of the national psyche, the loss and the question of identity, culture shock and hybridization because of immigration.³⁵

Nigerian literature has experienced a development in the past decades and various scholars believe that significant historical events can be used as markers of identification of three different generations of writers. The emergence of Chinua Achebe and his contemporaries in the 1940^s and 1960^s marked a milestone in the Nigerian literary history. The most outstanding writers of this era were Wole Soyinka, Gabriel Okara, T. M. Aluko, Christopher Okigbo, John Pepper Clark and Cyprian Ekwensi. Generally referred to as the first generation writers, this crop of writers gave

³⁴ Akashi Adimora Ezeigbo, “From the Horse’s Mouth: The Politics of Remembrance in Women’s Writing on the Nigerian Civil War.” In *Body, Sexuality, and Gender: Versions and Subversions in African Literatures 1*, Ed. Flora Veit-Wild and Dirk Naguschewski. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005. pp. 221-230, p. 224.

³⁵ Diala Isidore, “Nigerian Literature: Triumphs and Travails”. *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde*, Vol. 48, No. 1, (2011), pp. 5-12.

African literature focus and direction. They addressed basic African problems like colonialism and neo-colonialism, and propagated African values to the outside world.

They sought to correct the misrepresentation of Nigerians and Africans in literary works like Joyce Cary's *Mister Johnson* and *African Witch*, Rider Haggard's *She*, King Solomon's *Mines and Allan Quartermain*, and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. In breaking with the Eurocentric lens of viewing the continent through the eyes of outsiders, Achebe took readers to a place full of complex characters who told their stories in their own words and style. As he once wrote that, a major goal "*was to challenge stereotypes, myths, and the image of ourselves and our continent.*"³⁶

Thus, Nigeria's first generation of writers sought to counter colonial discourse that misrepresented Nigerians and Africans as primitive. This was a time where issues of culture and imperialism were rife. Once Nigeria gained Independence, it became an era where issues of governance and corruption in a post-Independent Nigeria were raised. In looking at first generation writers, the focus is usually very male-centric, rarely recognizing the presence of female writers, playwrights or poets during that time.

Adesanmi Pius, a Nigerian-born Canadian professor, writer and literary critic, satirist, and columnist, merges the group of writers of the first, second generations since both were born in the first decades of the twentieth century and their attention is mainly drawn to the times when Nigeria was under colonial power. However, he distinguishes between them insofar that writers from the second generation might

³⁶ Chinua Achebe, "Developing an African Voice: The Role of the Writer in Africa." (November 2012). Retrieved from: <https://www.theroot.com/developing-an-african-voice-chinua-achebe-1790894278>

have experienced the end of colonial rule but their focus is on the following years of independence and the Civil War as opposed to the first generation writers, who were completely and only affected by British colonial rule.³⁷

The mid 1990^s to the present is the era of the third generation writers who started writing in the period of the structural and economic disjunctions that characterized military rule. Third generation writers want to point out that closure in the politics of Nigeria has not been achieved. These writers, therefore, highlight the importance of negotiating the postcolonial conditions of Nigeria.³⁸ By remembering past incidents, Krishnan Madhu asserts that postmodern Nigerian literature focuses on forming an identity that is based on the connection in their community,

With the passage of time, the resurgence of Biafra in Nigerian literature marks the importance of the period to contemporary identity formation and underlines its lasting effects on national identity and the national imagination, particularly relevant at a time when Biafran nationalism is returning to the forefront of Nigerian politics.³⁹

By taking a different approach to dealing with the past, third generation writers seem to take a step away from earlier generations and create a new identity of writers by redefining Nigerian literature.⁴⁰ Prominent authors and works include Akin Adesokan's *Roots in the Sky*, Maik Nwosu's *Invisible Chapters*, Helon Habila's *Waiting for an Angel and Measuring Time*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple*

³⁷ Adesanmi Pius, Dunton Chris, "Everything Good Is Raining: Provisional Notes on the Nigerian Novel of the Third Generation." *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 39, (2008), pp. 8-12.

³⁸ Krishnan Madhu, "Biafra and the Aesthetics of Closure in the Third Generation Nigerian Novel." In: *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*. Vol. 2, No. 2, (2010), pp. 185-195, p. 194.

³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 186.

⁴⁰ Hewett Heather, "Coming of Age: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and the Voice of the Third Generation." *English in Africa*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (May 2005), pp. 73-97. p. 78.

Hibiscus and Half of a Yellow Sun, Sefi Attah's *Everything Good Will Come and Swallow*, Adimora-Akachi Ezeigbo's *House of Symbols*, and others.⁴¹

Immigration is a major issue in African literature. Many African writers of the first generation, namely, Achebe, Soyinka, and Ngugi, experienced forced immigration for survival. While in exile, they continued producing literary works. The impact of immigration on their productions remains to be investigated. Yet, even at that time, in or outside the boundaries of their own countries, they tackled social issues, including immigration, which is a noteworthy theme in their writings. Along these lines, this writing is called immigrant literature. Following the founding fathers of African literature, like Chinua Achebe in his essay, *Home and Exile* (2001), tells his recollection of the story of internal migration in Igboland. Contemporary African writers are gradually showing deeper concern for this issue in their works of fiction.⁴²

For example, the Sudanese Leila Aboulela's *The Translator* (1999) narrates the story of a woman from Sudan living in Scotland. Edugyan's novel, *The Second Life of Samuel Tyne* (2004), tells the story of a young man of astonishing promise, Samuel Tyne, who migrates from Ghana to Canada, determined to improve his life. In Baingana's *Tropical Fish: Tales from Entebbe* (2005) set in Entebbe, Kampala, and Los Angeles. Christine, the protagonist of this novel, immigrates to America and returns home to Uganda where she struggles to adapt to her former home. Jelloun's *A Palace in the Old Village* (2011) is a novel about an immigrant from Morocco who raises his family in Paris, eventually losing all friendly relationship with his assimilated children. In *Americanah* (2013), and also in her debut novel *Purple*

⁴¹ Sumaila Umaisha, "History of Nigerian literature", (December 2010) Retrieved from <http://everythinginliterature.blogspot.com/2010/12/history-of-nigerian-literature.html>

⁴² Mustapha Harzoune, "Figures (littéraires) de la 'femme immigrée'". *Hommes et migrations*, Vol. 1311, 2015, pp. 184-185

Hibiscus (2004), the 2007 Orange Broadband Prize winner *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006), and the collection of short stories *The Thing Around Your Neck* (2009), Adichie shows a deeper concern for the issue of immigration, especially that of women. Because these works are telling depictions of what goes on in contemporary society. They are hefty indications of the large-scale migration dramatized in contemporary African literature.⁴³

Nevertheless, experiences of immigration differ depending on individuals, situations, and places. Social scientists have classified several factors that play a major role in immigration as economic, demographic, socio-cultural, psychological, political, and several other miscellaneous factors. Of these, the economic factor remains a major reason for immigration. All studies in this respect confirm that most migrations have taken place in search of better economic prospects. Helen I. Safa in her study states:

Migration is normally viewed as an economic phenomenon, though noneconomic factors obviously have some bearing. Most studies concur that migrants leave their area of origin primarily because of lack of economic opportunities in hopes of finding better opportunities elsewhere.⁴⁴

Besides, migration can be caused by the quest for freedom, the desire to break away from traditional constraints of social organization, the exclusion from communities, and the feeling of being isolated.

The most significant features of migrant writing is taken from Bhabha's "hybridity". It underlines the way that the transient individual is valued, in the present

⁴³ André Kaboré, "Migration in African Literature: a Case Study of Adichie's Works." *Revue du CAMES*, (2016), pp. 1-17.

⁴⁴ Helen I. Safa, Brian M. du Toit, *Migration and development: Implications for Ethnic Identity and Political Conflict*. Paris. La Haye: Mouton, 1975, p. 1.

world, not by his sticking to his pre-given ethnic ethics and social conventions, however by the intensity of custom to be re-depicted through the states of possibility and conflict that go to upon the lives of the individuals who are in the minority.⁴⁵ Thus, human personality, the manners in which migrant characters adapt to their new life puts, the vulnerabilities and frailties they experience the ill effects of and the correspondence issues are viewed as the real topics of relocation works.

Here, the critical issue to note is that the cheerful recollections of the lost country and the sentimentality the transient characters understanding for their past life are of less accentuation in the movement writing. The hero of the vagrant work perpetually reproduces itself. Through its experiences with social complexities and separating knowledge of being among the minorities, its personality goes past the recollections of past and achieves a kind of development.⁴⁶

So, The common themes in migrant literature are invariably failed quests and thwarted dreams, nostalgia for a home that exists only in memory, conditions of dislocation and isolation, a loss of identity, frustration, embarrassment, and humiliation at the hands of hosts, parents' attempts to preserve common cultural practices and assumptions, and the children's attempts for independence to find new identities, the experience of racism with its accompanying sense of rejection and humiliation. Immigrants also experience a sense of loss on a more personal level once they have started living in another country. They will never again be the same person they were before.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Homi k. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge. 1994, p. 2.

⁴⁶ Fatemeh Pourjafari, Abdolali Vahidpour, "Migration Literature: A Theoretical Perspective" *The Dawn Journal*. Vol. 3, No. 1. (2014). pp. 1-14.

⁴⁷ Emmanuel S. Nelson, Introduction, *Bharati Mukherjee: Critical Perspectives*, ed. Emmanuel S. Nelson. New York: Garland Publishing. 1993. p. x.

I.6. Behind the African Short Story, the Igbo Language and Culture

An outstanding contribution of contemporary Igbo writers to African literature is their adaptive use of the English language, which has been demonstrated to be an effective linguistic style. Helen Chukwuma (1994) rightly observes that these writers have no choice but to fashion the English language to be able to carry the heavy burden of the African experience. They have carried out this task with vigour and freshness keeping within the English language while capturing the idioms and nuances of African languages.⁴⁸

The requirement for universalizing their works and picking English as the scholarly medium opens Nigerian essayists to an extra issue. While it is less hazardous to depict their experience of the African world with the utilization of their local tongue, they regularly achieve confinements in communicating similar contemplations when writing in English. To conquer this issue, essayists have a tendency to fuse pieces of their local dialects inside a content written in English. “Nigerian English”, as this wonder is frequently named, is certainly not a debased consequence of pilgrim defilement, yet an asset of urban and country common labourers alike; English is not the vehicle of abuse, yet one of national articulation. Nigeria is beyond the post-provincial.⁴⁹

Numerous parts of their writings are common adjustments of the oral style to the composed custom. There is, for example, a dominance of metaphorical dialect and informal articulations with neighbourhood hues in coordinate interpretation or transliteration from their primary languages. To comprehend and translate their

⁴⁸ Herbert Igboanusi, “Style and Meaning in Igbo English Novels”. *The Reading Matrix*, Vol. 6, No. 1, (April 2006), pp. 1-7.

⁴⁹ Dawson Emma, and Pierre Larrivé. “Attitudes to Language in Literary Sources: Beyond Post-Colonialism in Nigerian Literature.” *English Studies* 91, (2010), pp. 920-932, p. 931.

implications legitimately, one needs to comprehend the custom from which they are drawn. Something else, endeavours at translating these works will bring about semantic contortion and data skew. Numerous Nigerian scholars, including Adichie, are impacted by Achebe's comprehension of frame in writing, of whether and how to utilize English in Nigerian artistic works that can be obviously appeared in one of his articles:

The African writer should aim to use English in a way that brings out his message best without altering the language to the extent that its value as a medium of international exchange will be lost. He should aim at fashioning out an English, which is at once universal and able to carry his peculiar experience.⁵⁰

In this way, Adichie and other Nigerian journalists effectively join vernacular articulations with the English dialect in their works. Igbo discourse propensities have been transported into English through the phonetic procedures of exchange and interpretation.

From the seven classifications of phonetic advancements in Nigerian writing, Adichie's short stories incorporate credit words and advance mixes. Loan words are utilized to reflect titles, sustenance, religion and conventional traditions that either have no direct lexical reciprocals in English or have counterparts yet may not suit all the social and semantic subtleties of the Igbo dialect things.⁵¹ Pursuers who do not comprehend this vernacular can in any case make out the importance of an obscure word by alluding to the specific circumstance.

⁵⁰ Ernest Emenyonu; Iniobong I. Uko, "The Artistic Purpose: Chinua Achebe and the Theory of African Literature," *Emerging Perspectives on Chinua Achebe*, Vol. 2. Africa World Press. Inc 2004, p. 82.

⁵¹ Herbert Igboanusi, "The Igbo Tradition in the Nigerian Novel." *African Study Monographs* Vol. 22, (2001), pp. 56-57.

Loan blends, the second classification of etymological advancements that can be found in Adichie's works, can be depicted as mixes of English things and the Igbo vernacular, which at that point shape new implications. The English peruses will have the capacity to comprehend the importance of a word taken from Igbo conventions with the assistance of the English headword inside this development.⁵²

For the past four decades or so, the short story genre has been thriving in Africa. But critics gave very little notice to the creation of the indigenous short story, dismissing it as not having any literary value because short stories tended to appear in popular magazines and were, therefore, rated very low. Indeed, short stories by Africans were regarded as the work of apprentices in creative writing. They were also scorned as being too derivative of the European or western model.⁵³

The African short story, however, has gained more and more popularity, especially in African countries where English is spoken. African short stories have found their way into major anthologies used by colleges and universities in the United States.

As the title uncovers as of now, the African short story shifts from the "first" short story, the way Edgar Allan Poe, the individual most broadly known for trying different things with this sort,⁵⁴ created it. Since this short story has a negligible measure of highlights that describes this kind, it is less amazing that its free limits to different types of account fiction are helpful to singular variety. African fiction is extremely affected by the pilgrim rule, which implies that the lion's share of works

⁵² Christina Elisabeth Etz, "Shortstories of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie" *Magistra der Philosophie Vienna* (2016), pp. 17-19.

⁵³ Jean D. Grandsaigne; Gary Spackey, "The African Short Story Written in English: A Survey". *Journal of Modern Literature*. Vol. 15, No. 2, (1984), p. 73.

⁵⁴ Head Dominic, *The Modernist Short Story: A Study in Theory and Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992, p. 2.

manage the effect European nations had on African culture, history and its kin. With a changed socio-environment, writers had to adjust their ways of writing, which can be seen, i.e. in the alternations done to the Western form of the short story.⁵⁵

Accordingly, Charles Larson points out that African writers tend to change the original Western form of the short story and by doing so, they have “*stretched it a bit by injecting a healthy dose of [their] own cultural and aesthetic values into a traditional Western genre and created in the process a frequently new radically different form.*”⁵⁶

Short story writing has persevered through broad dismissal in the earlier century yet as has been indicated already, Nigerian third era authors have started to put new emphasis on this class.⁵⁷ In a fundamental overview, Asoo Ferdinand Iorbee sees why the short story outperforms the novel in African written work:

[T]he writer seizes the plot at the high point of emotion, when the story is most interesting to the reader or listener and does not relent until the final denouement. This condensation of a full story in a form that can be easily adapted in terms of time and space to the small interstices of busy everyday lives gives the short story a definitive edge over the novel.⁵⁸

Basic reviews of Adichie’s short stories specify her approach emphatically: “[She] has possessed the capacity to take after the directs of early specialists of the *short story*” and one can locate her inward clashes of being isolated amongst Nigeria and the USA inside the short stories, which is “*instructional for us, since it sets the*

⁵⁵ Christina Elisabeth Etz, “Short Stories of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie”. Magistra der Philosophie (Vienna, 2016). p. 19.

⁵⁶ Lemuel A. Johnson, “African Literature Association. Meeting, *Toward Defining the African Aesthetic*”. *Three Continents Press*, 1982. p. 83.

⁵⁷ Christina Elisabeth Etz, “Short Stories of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie”. Magistra der Philosophie (Vienna, 2016). p. 22.

⁵⁸ Asoo Ferdinand Iorbee, “The Short Stories of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie”, *Afrrev Ijah: An International Journal of Arts and Humanities* Vol. 1, No. 4 (November 2012), pp. 13-27; p. 26.

tone, characterizes the nature, the topics, setting, and the account procedures in the short stories.”⁵⁹ Despite the way that Adichie takes after the requests of solidarity and intelligibility in the vast majority of her short stories, it ought to likewise be specified that her individual methodologies incorporate shifting sequential points of view, distinctive account viewpoints and anonymous characters.⁶⁰ Such features are for the most part not found in the generally Western short story, but instead by adding them to her works, Adichie endeavours to point out that the Nigerian personality cannot be addressed and bound with just couple of attributes.⁶¹

In the dozen stories in her recent book, *The Thing Around Your Neck*, Adichie writes with great sensitivity of the struggles of Nigerian immigrants to form an identity in the modern world without discarding the values of their culture of origin, and ‘with creativity’, elucidating how the African short story is different from western one using English language with loan words⁶² and loan blends.⁶³

The second chapter will expound on how immigration affects Adichie’s identity as a hybrid writer. Furthermore, the chapter will explore the impact of immigration on the characters’ identity in *The Thing Around Your Neck*. Postcolonial concepts of hybridity, mimicry and displacement, as explained by Homi K. Bhabha will be used to examine Adichie’s celebrated work *The Thing Around Your Neck*.

⁵⁹ Asoo Ferdinand Iorbee, “The Short Stories of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie”, *Afrrev Ijah: An International Journal of Arts and Humanities* Vol. 1, No. 4 (November 2012), pp. 13-27; p. 26.

⁶⁰ Christina Elisabeth Etz, “Short Stories of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie”. *Magistra der Philosophie* (Vienna, 2016). p. 22.

⁶¹ Asoo Ferdinand Iorbee, “The Short Stories of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.” p. 25

⁶² Loan words are used to reflect titles, food, religion and traditional customs that either have no direct lexical equivalents in English or have equivalents but may not accommodate all the social and semantic nuances of the Igbo language items.

⁶³ Combinations of English items and the Igbo vernacular, which then form new meanings.

I.7. Adichie's Formative Years

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie was born on 15 September 1977 in Enugu, Nigeria, the fifth of six children to Igbo parents, Grace Ifeoma and James Nwoye Adichie. While the family's ancestral hometown is Abba in Anambra State, Chimamanda grew up in Nsukka, in the house formerly occupied by Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe. She started her nursery, primary, and secondary education at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, where she also had her early university education as student of pharmacy. During her early undergraduate days at Nsukka, she received Anthony J. Drexel Scholarship for Academic Excellence of Drexel University, Philadelphia, U.S.A, where she studied Communication and political science. As a young woman, she moved to America to carry on her postgraduate studies in creative writing. Adichie lives now in both Nigeria and America. Much of her writing is concerned with experiences of being Nigerian.

Her first novel, *Purple Hibiscus*, set in Nigeria during a military coup, was published in 2003 and won a number of prizes, including the 2005 Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best First Book. Her second novel, *Half of a Yellow Sun*, was published in 2006 and also won awards, including the 2007 Orange Broadband Prize for Fiction. It is set during the Nigerian Biafran war of independence, and was inspired by her grandfathers, who both died as a result of the war. *Purple Hibiscus* and *Half of a Yellow Sun* have been made into films. Adichie's third novel, *Americanah* (2013), continues to explore themes of Nigerian identity and a Nigerian diaspora particularly in America.

In addition to these novels, Adichie has published short stories in many literary journals, and some of these are republished in *The Thing Around Your Neck* (2009).

This collection includes stories of Nigerians living in Africa, and also tales of Nigerian immigrants in America. It has been shortlisted for a number of awards, including the 2010 Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best Book. The stories are independent of one another, although they often share settings, such as Nigeria in the 1990^s during General Abacha's military regime.⁶⁴ The stories may be read with little knowledge of postcolonial Nigerian history, but contextual understanding helps to deepen the meaning.⁶⁵

Adichie is a voracious reader from a young age, she found *Things Fall Apart* by novelist and fellow Igbo Chinua Achebe transformative. After the publication of *Purple Hibiscus*, one critic called her "*Chinua Achebe's twenty-first-century daughter.*"⁶⁶ As when she was interviewed by Daria Tunca in the Chimamnda Ngozi Adichie Website she says: "*Chinua Achebe will always be important to me because his work influenced not so much my style as my writing philosophy: reading him emboldened me, gave me permission to write about the things I knew well.*"⁶⁷

Likewise, she agrees that So many people have affected her writing; for everyone she meets and/or talks to, there is the possibility of her fiction being influenced. One of her contemporaries, perhaps the greatest influence is her friend the Kenyan writer Binyavanga Wainaina. He has written extensively on the West's tendency to judge Africa and African cultural output through the prism of clichés, patronizing tones and broad generalizations. This topic of the West expounding on Africa was produced in

⁶⁴ The Abacha military regime that ruled Nigeria from 17 November 1993 to 8 June 1998 could well be summarized as a government that was involved in a perennial, if uneven, struggle with civil society organizations and the international community that wanted a rapid return to civilian and democratic rule

⁶⁵ Anica Boulanger-Mashberg, "Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *The Thing Around Your Neck*": Insight text guide. (2014). pp. 1-6.

⁶⁶ Jane Ciabattari, "From the Archives: 12 Questions for Chimamanda Adichie." (Apr, 2011)

⁶⁷ Chimamanda N. Adichie, *Personal Communication*. Interviewd by Daria Tunca (January 27, 2005). Retrieved from <http://www.cerep.ulg.ac.be/adichie/cnainterview.html>

his ironical exposition “How to write about Africa”⁶⁸ which attacked the still predominant generalizations used as a part of any composition by Westerners about the African mainland.

As an examination of Adichie’s life, it is shown that she was affected by the Biafran war in Nigeria, since her grandfathers died in a refugee camp in the war. Besides, she was influenced by the work of Achebe “*There Was a Country*”,⁶⁹ which is a lament for Biafra and the decline of Nigeria. Even though she did well at school when she was studying medicine, Adichie wanted to be a writer. She realized that she could not do that in her country; that is why she had to go to the U.S. since most writing in Nigeria was male dominated, and that African women writers have struggled to gain literary attention and also admission to the literary canon.⁷⁰

These make anyone doubt and question why Adichie did not practice writing in Nigeria. Nigeria as a male dominated society does not give any attention to writing produced by women as if women are the subaltern that cannot speak. Hence, it seems that Adichie did not believe in herself; she was afraid that her writing would not be read or succeed in her country.

While in the U.S., Adichie produced many literary works; some works tackle the issues of the Biafran war, or the Nigerian military coup during the unstable political, economic, social systems of postcolonial Nigeria, such as “*Purple Hibiscus*” and “*Half of a Yellow Sun*”, as if these works were kept in chest in Nigeria but when she came to America the pen took his full path. Later, she starts producing works that tackle the problems of young immigrant women; loss of identity and the quest for it,

⁶⁸ Binyavanga Wainaina. “How to Write about Africa” *Granta* 92: The View from Africa Essays & Memoir (19th January 2006). pp. 1-3. Retrieved from: <https://granta.com/how-to-write-about-africa/>

⁶⁹ Chinua Achebe. *There was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra*. New York. Penguin. 2012.

⁷⁰ Sadia Zulfiqar Chaudhry, “African Women Writers and the Politics of Gender”. (December, 2013). p. 8.

the hybridization of culture, and how Nigerians imitate the west in order to fit in the society, the issue of gender, and the experience of racism with its accompanying sense of rejection and humiliation, as it is shown in the works of *Americanah* and *The Thing Around Your Neck*. This means that Adichie deals with the issue of gender in Nigeria, and a clash of cultures in America, where she faced problems of identity, racism and stereotypes.⁷¹

The impact of immigration on Adichie's life is reflected in her works. She has a personal experience of migration, because her life, from the age of nineteen to the present, is shared between America and Nigeria. Culturally, migrants are bound to imitate the culture and the way of life of the country they migrate to. Even the setting in Adichie's fictions becomes hybrid, heterogeneous, covering both the country of origin of the characters and the country they migrated to.

Adichie, in all her works, reflects the cultural heritage of Nigeria, drawing mainly on her experience within the Nigerian society where she was born and grew up. Adichie is using the Nigerian folklore, anecdotes and proverbs in her works. She has a double identity: Nigerian and American. In an interview about her novel *Half of a Yellow Sun*, she said, "*I wrote this novel because I wanted to write about love and war, because I grew up in the shadow of Biafra, because I lost both grandfathers in the Nigeria-Biafra war, because I wanted to engage with my history in order to make sense of my present.*"⁷² She clearly shows that she mixes facts and fiction in her works. As "*hybrid writers mix fact and fiction; poetry and prose; memoir and history; biography and memoir,*"⁷³ one can say that Adichie is a hybrid writer.

⁷¹ André Kaboré, "Migration in African Literature: a Case Study of Adichie's Works." *Revue du CAMES*, (2016), pp. 1-17.

⁷² Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, "*Half of a Yellow Sun: The Story Behind the Book; An Interview with Adichie*". Interviewed by Charlie Kimber, (October, 2006).

⁷³ Larson Thomas, "Hybrid narrative". (2015), p. 2.

Adichie's hybridity is also expressed in the many languages she makes her characters speak in her works.

Chapter Two: The Politics of Belonging in Adichie's *The Thing Around Your Neck*

At night, something would wrap itself around your neck, something that very nearly choked you before you fell asleep.⁷⁴

Nigeria has produced such talented writers as Wole Soyinka and Chinua Achebe. To that list, we can now add Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, whose accomplished collection, *The Thing Around Your Neck*, published earlier in magazines and journals, which comprises twelve stories that can be read individually and in any random order since the stories are not linked to each other. However, for some stories a chronological or geographical connection can be found.

In these stories, which take place in Nigeria and the United States, questions of belonging and loyalty are present several times. Her characters, many of whom grow up in Nigeria and emigrate (or see their relatives emigrate) to America, many stumble into danger or confusion. Rather than becoming cosmopolitan members of a newly globalized world, they tend to feel dislocated on two continents and caught on the margins of two cultures.

The same applies to recurring themes, such as racism, gender, family, immigration, religion, violence, oppression and political corruption. These are just the main themes mentioned in Adichie's collection but their reoccurrence ties those stories together. Although the reader is free to choose his or her own order of reading, it is hardly unnoticeable that Adichie must have put thought on the succession of her stories in this collection. This can be seen in the alternation of settings. The first story

⁷⁴ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *The Thing Around Your Neck*. Alfred A Knopf. New York: Toronto, 2009, p. 119.

is set in Africa, the next one in America, and this order repeats itself throughout the whole collection.

The purpose of such an ordering is to highlight the contrast between those two continents and this depicts even more clearly the main theme that recurs in each of these short stories: the clash of cultures.

Although Adichie's short stories are fictional, she often incorporates chronological references, such as the death of a former President of Nigeria's wife or the impact of religious colonizers on the lives of indigenous people. Furthermore, personal experiences of her life in Nigeria and the USA can be found in her short stories.

The title exemplifies her prevailing theme of homesickness as a physical, as well as a metaphorical, malaise. Feeling a sense of nostalgia for a lost home often results in a dilemma, identity crisis, psychological limbo and cultural purgatory. Homesickness becomes a reality and many immigrants often reflect on the unusual nature of a new country's culture and the fact they are silent and invisible. They are no one in their new country. This is where the title of the collection comes from, "*At night, something would wrap itself around your neck, something that very nearly choked you before you fell asleep.*" (TTAYN, 119)

II.1. Alienation in America: Characters as Lost Ships in a Wide Sea

Colonialism and post colonialism have been regarded by social scientist as a major vehicle of social change in Africa and the African character in specific. In line with this general notion, a clash between the Nigerian and the colonized cultures to a clash between the Nigerian and American or white cultures were made. Consequently, these culture clashes caused some far-reaching consequences of both positive and

negative natures, new styles were perceptible in food, clothing, housing, and other social conduct, Were a fantasy of being autonomous and being rich was made to the choice of migration and leaving the homeland to self-clashes.

To that point, Adichie's short stories: "Imitation", "The Thing Around Your Neck", "The American Embassy", "The Shivering", and "The Arrangers of Marriage", reveal the cultural oppression and domination of one country over another; the way in which colonialism has affected the Nigerians, also they turn a penetrating eye on the ties that bind Nigeria and the west. The image of the 'American Dream' is one that has global reach and has been spread by popular culture via television, films and the Internet. This leads people to construct a fantasy that life in a western country will be easier and filled with opportunity. Nearly always, such high expectations are never met and often a new set of problems become a reality for the migrants.

The immigrant experience is widespread, and it requires understanding as people struggle to maintain their sense of themselves and their values while adapting to new cultural environments. "*The history of immigration*", writes Oscar Handlin, "*is the history of alienation and its consequences. For every freedom won, a tradition lost. For every second generation assimilated, a first generation in one way or another spumed. For gains of goods and services, an identity lost and uncertainty found.*"⁷⁵ Indeed, Adichie's short stories depict the life of Nigerian immigrants who pass through a sense of alienation. He or she does not realize what they are and what they should be, and where the question of "Who am I?" is raised.

⁷⁵ Quoted in Thomas Wheeler, *The Immigrant Experience*. Baltimore, MD. Penguin, 1971.

Through the short story “The Arrangers of Marriage”, the main character Dave insists on penetrating the American society and American culture sacrificing everything and abandoning his own culture. He believes that Americans are superior in everything. He even changes his name from Ofodile into Dave, and he believes that the only way to fit in America is to “*talk like Americans, eat like them, drink like them, use their words and erase any cultural differences*” (TTAYN, 102) otherwise he would be rejected in society and treated like immigrants.

Dave detaches himself from his native culture and even rejects it completely. Dave isolates himself from his own Nigerian culture though Americans can understand him now, and he is more polite speaking the language of America, but alienation from his culture, language, and customs makes him ignorant, looking so artificial. He breaks the sacred chain of fidelity and patriotism to his native land. After getting the Green-Card, Dave decides to marry a Nigerian girl and take her to the states. Chinaza accepts to marry him after her aunt and uncle tell her about his life in America, “*a doctor in America! It is like we won a lottery for you*” (TTAYN, 105). Chinaza has her justifications to accept this marriage as she is longing for a better life out of slavery of Nigeria. But her dreams fade away.

Dave forces Chinaza to go by her English name, Agatha, though she does not like it, “*my English name is just something on my birth certificate. I have been Chinaza Okafor my whole life.*” (TTAYN, 106) Dave is an ego; he is gradually alienating her from her rooted culture imposing the American culture on her mind. He forces her to use some words instead of others, like “cookies” not “biscuits” and “elevator” instead of “lift”,

You should say ‘Hi’ to people here not ‘you’re welcome’. [...] ‘I’m not called Ofodile here, by the

way. I go by Dave [...] the last name I use here is different, too [...] “It’s Bell” [...] if you want to get anywhere you have to be as mainstream as possible [...] If not, you will be left by the roadside. You have to use your English name here. (TTAYN, 106)

After the great self-destruction and detachment from society with Dave, Chinaza is like the lost ship in the deep wide sea of frustration, lassitude, and alienation. Dave distances her completely from her society, her people, her culture and even herself.

Alienation as a concept in the social sciences is a feeling of powerlessness and estrangement from other people and from oneself. It refers to feelings of estrangement, of being lost in life. This kind of alienation can be found in “The Thing Around Your Neck”, alienation is presented through the character of Akunna; the protagonist, where she is lonely and desperate, and where she grips with fear and anxiety when she comes to America. The fear of the unknown and not knowing anyone has a huge contribution to her sense of alienation and not belonging. She also gets exploited by her uncle and suffers from a sense of powerlessness. She is not familiar with Western customs and style and cannot adapt to it. She makes herself completely invisible as a reflection of her omnipotence and insignificance, “*Nobody knew where you were, because you told no one.*” (TTAYN, 74) “*Sometimes you felt invisible and tried to walk through your room wall into the hallway*” (74) Akunna feels utterly powerless, and she feels that she loses control, “*At night, something would wrap itself around your neck, something that very nearly choked you before you fell asleep.*” (TTAYN, 119)

As has been mentioned before, being exposed to new cultural aspects often evokes feelings of alienation, which is due to a clash of different beliefs, and a different cultural and ethical understanding. This experience is an irritation for many

immigrants, weary they might forget about their roots, many distance themselves from the practices of the new world they are living in.

Other immigrants, however, are concerned that their otherness makes them stand out from the rest of the group, and in order to become part of this group as an equal member, a process of assimilation takes place. Acquiring the regional accent, changing names or food and clothing habits are just few examples of this phenomenon. Yet, immigrants are confronted with the task of having to develop a new cultural identity that involves both worlds.

II.2. Framing Double Identities

In recent years there have been many changes in societies, especially in the post-colonial period. Many new ideas have emerged alluding to “Diaspora” and “globalization”. These ideas contributed to the change of man and his thinking, but these ideas remain between supporters and opponents.⁷⁶

The world is liable to be interrelated by the circuits of migration and trade. With the ascent in the quantity of worldwide outsiders and the augmentation of the socio/geological limits, the new individuals of the networks confront an assortment of complex social difficulties. Subside Wade,⁷⁷ a British anthropologist who is had practical experience in issues of race and ethnicity in Latin America, in his book *Cultural Identity: Solution or Problem?* calls this wonder “globalization” Being influenced by the progression of innovation, the procedure of globalization influences individuals to communicate with each other unreservedly and quickly, yet it kills neighbourhood personalities. And this effect of globalization in the opinion of many

⁷⁶ Mohammed Hussein Orskhan, *Doublness of Identity in Adichie's "Imitation"* (2015), p, 2

⁷⁷ a British anthropologist who is had practical experience in issues of race and ethnicity in Latin America

scientists and researchers Its roots and origins date back to the sixteenth century AD, where it emerged with the beginning of the Western colonization of Asia, Europe and the Americas, and was associated with the modern trading system in Europe. Globalization contributed to the development of societies and the change of thought, but caused to erase the character of the citizen. Stuart Hall affirms that the detachment of the idea might be a consequence of “globalization” Corridor helps the people to remember the way that the limits of the way of life have been extended. This procedure associates distinctive morals to each other, as he says, “*people are not just lawful subjects of a country; they take an interest in the possibility of country as spoke to in its national culture. Globalization has besieged people.*”⁷⁸

Accordingly in this our concentration is in the lives of those African who have left their nations for a superior circumstance of living and now are framing double identities, because globalization has a great impact on the personality of each member in the society, Has great impact on his identity.

Among the assortment of African immigrants, numerous Nigerians have left their nations to different parts of the world for reasons as various as the mission for better training, business, political shelter and other financial components. Without a doubt, numerous Nigerians emigrated to the European nations or North American nations as the best places of the earth to live on. In addition, Hollywood movies are the other reason to attract many immigrants because it indicated through its films to many of advantages of America.

Additionally, those Nigerians who have emigrated from their own particular nation to different nations for quite a while, get back home with a deceptive

⁷⁸ Mohammed Hussein Orskhan, *Doublness of Jentity in Adichie’s “Imitation”* (2015), p, 2

impression of the abroad nations. They affirm the feeling that there are better schools, plenitude of good sustenance and better lodging. This has increased the enthusiasm of many Nigerians to emigrate abroad in order to live peacefully.⁷⁹

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a young female voice who has chosen to demonstrate these negative parts of living abroad. There is no doubt that America is better than Nigeria but Chimamanda mentioned in her short story entitled “The Thing around Your Neck” (2009) many negative things that might be a danger to the Nigerian citizen.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie distributed an accumulation of short stories, *The Thing around Your Neck*, in 2009. Considering upon these stories, one can see Adichie’s worries about the lives of diasporic African particularly in the United States. She has addressed Nigerians’ involvement in these stories. She showed how the Nigerians were so happy when they arrived to America and how they felt later, she tried to show how the feeling was.⁸⁰

As a first example, the short story “Imitation” which talks about a family who has decided to leave their country, Nigeria, to The United States. The better conditions in The United States were the main reason for this family to immigrate. For this situation, Obiora’s better half Nkem portrays the United States as:

“this country of curiosities and crudities, this country where you could drive at night and not fear armed robbers, where restaurants served one person enough food for three... America has grown on her snaked its roots under her skin” (*TTAYN*, 27).

This view communicated by Nkem demonstrates the lavish province of United States. It is an ideal nation to live on contrasting with their country. Nigerian people

⁷⁹ Mohammed Hussein Orskhan, *Doublness of Identity in Adichie’s “Imitation”*.2015, p, 3

⁸⁰ Ibid

even refuse to come back to Nigeria they loved America as they were the original people there because America has changed them as the women said to Nkem when she asked her if she planned to move back, the women answer that she will never comeback, *“but how can I live in Nigeria again? she said. When you’ve been here so long, you’re not the same, you’re not like the people there.”* (TTAYN, 21) This view expressed by the woman shows that the Nigerian people start forgetting their mother country. Another example shows double identity is when Nkem decides to cut her hair *“Does something happened before I cut my hair?”* (22) She is so proud of her decision. She wants to be like the American girls in order to be attractive for her husband. She does not feel comfortable anymore because of her old look; that is why she decides to change. By this simple event of cutting her hair, the doubleness of Nkem’s identity is clear. She wants to act like American girls since her husband betrayed her with an American girl with short and curly hair. Besides, we can see how Nkem starts adopting a new identity when she talks to Amaechi *“there are things that are best unknown.”* (TTAYN, 25) Nkem cannot stop acting like Americans did she even start drinking the wine as she said to Amaechi *“bring the wine that is in the fridge and two glasses.”* (27)

In another part of the story, we can smell the spirit of nationalism when Nkem starts talking with an uneducated rural Igbo accent when she calls to ask about her husband Obiora who lives in America. The best example of imitation in this story is *“Imitation yams”*. (TTAYN, 24) Amaechi tells her how the American copying the original yams; they sell the fibrous potatoes as yams Nkem decides to leave America and find a school for their children in Lagos, *“We have to find a school for Adanna and Okey in Lagos”* (29), even she repeats this sentence several times to not only convince him but also herself. Even if she knows that he is confused about her

decision but at least she tried *“never heard her speak, never heard her take a stand.”*
(29)

As it is clear, Nkem cannot tolerate living in America anymore. She is frustrated and ambivalent towards her life and finally she makes her mind and decides to leave for Nigeria forever.

In other short stories of Adichie, we can see the doubleness of identity clearly, “Arrangers of Marriage”, is a story of a new couple who goes to live in America. Ofodile is a doctor in America who decides to marry a Nigerian woman Chinaza and go to live in America. Even Chinaza is a real Nigerian she brings with her *uziza* seeds *“she feared I would grow them on American soil.”* (TTAYN, 103) Yet, in this short story we can see many signs of doubleness of identity as well when Ofodile said to her, *“Americans say busy”* (105). He is influenced by the way Americans speak; he even forgets his mother language, *“I watched what buttons he pressed on the white microwave.”* (105) He adopts a new lifestyle and he becomes pure American, even Chinaza has noticed this change *“carefully memorizing them.”* (105) Chinaza learns a new style since her arrival at America. *“Americans don’t drink their tea with milk and sugar.”* (105) Ofodile becomes a real American citizen. He forgets everything about his identity, *“I got used to the way things are done here a long time ago. You will too.”* (TTAYN, 105) He tries to reassure her that she would change her way as he did; it is just a matter of time. Another sign of doubleness is when he says to his wife *“you should say ‘hi’ to people here, not ‘you’re welcome’.”* (106) *“It doesn’t work that way here. Everybody says ‘hi’ ”* (106) He keeps trying to change her way of speaking, ignoring her identity and changing her ideas and way of thinking. Changing the name is a very important sign of doubleness of identity. Ofodile becomes Bell this is the new name as Chinaza said *“American friendly.”*

(106) She is surprised even the name for her is not close to his real name, *“That’s not even close to Udenwa,”* she said. She feels that her husband has changed his name just because he wants to get the appreciation of Americans and to be accepted between them. *“You have to use your English name here”* (16), here we can see that Ofodile insists on her to use an English name if she wants to live in America. This implies one has to forget one’s identity in order to survive in America. However, Chinaza was a nationalist who wants to keep her Nigerian identity by responding *“I’ve been Chinaza Okafor my whole life”* (106) but her name has been changed to Agatha Bell. When he fills out a social security number application, Ofodile insists to have a double identity, he insists on his wife not to call things as the Nigerians do *“Cookies. American call them cookies”* (107) when she calls them *“biscuits”*. Ofodile wants to become a real American since he is living there; he even wants to change his identity, since he is the one who comes to America so he is the one who must change his identity, his style, his accent *“he sounded different when he spoke to Americans.”* He even changes his pronunciation of the R. His R is over-pronounced and his T was under-pronounced, *“Speak English. There are people behind you.”* (108-9)

He obliges his wife to speak in English so as not to feel that he is an alien. He is against the people who immigrate to America and then they act as they are nationalists; they keep their identity and refuse to become Americans, *“the ones who immigrate and continue to act as if they are back in their countries”* (TTAYN, 107) for Ofodile is just acting nothing real. While in America, one should act like Americans and if one wants to be successful he/she must speak English. Immigrants will never move forward unless they adapt to America.

American food is also praised by Ofodile “*We’ll get pizza first, he said. It’s one thing you have to like in America. We overcook food back home and that is why we lose all the nutrients. Americans cook things right. See how healthy they all look?*” (TTAYN, 108) He does not like the way his countrymen cook; he becomes attracted to the food of Americans and he thinks that is so healthy.

But there is a hidden side of Chinaza she loves her identity but she is unable to show it to her husband “*he did not know that I spoke Igbo to myself while I cooked.*” (TTAYN, 112) She drinks the original tea when she is with Nia “*my tea with milk and sugar.*” (114) We can see the double identity of Ofidile clearly, he is all the time controlling his wife and he does not like her way and suddenly, he declares his admiration even he starts thinking about his children “*I had to think about my children’s looks,*” he changes his identity according to his interests. To pretend not to understand their mother tongues any longer, to refuse to eat Nigerian food or make constant reference to their life in America all of this is a real cause for Chinaza to leave America.

In another short story entitled “The Shivering”, which is the longest short story in Adichie’s collection, we can see the theme of nationalism when Ukamaka and Chinedu have received news of the death of the first Nigerian woman in Spain and a plane crash in Lagos, “*I am Nigerian. I live on the third floor. I came so that we can pray about what is happening in our country.*” (TTAYN, 88) Even though they live in America, they still think about their country and they feel pity about what is going on in Nigeria “*there is too much iniquity in our country, too much corruption. Too many things that we have to pray about*” (94)

Amid recent century, America has turned into a perfect place to live in for the African individuals. With the high rate of relocation to America from Africa, the migrants confront new difficulties which have brought about some modification in their internal life. The emigrant suffered doubleness of character. When they are settled in the new nation, they choose to mirror their conduct, after some time they feel that there is something strange since they are not genuinely from that place.

II.3. Diasporic Subjects and Immigration

The rate of migration from the third world to America has expanded significantly. Generally, these individuals leave their nation searching for better life in the other nation. And if so, when they land in such nations like America, they ought to not just manage the outer issues, for example, joblessness and vagrancy yet in addition should adapt to some internal issues like the diaspora subject. A diaspora is defined as a community of people who do not live in their country of origin, but maintain their heritage in a new land, inclusion of emigrants, or people who have left their homelands to settle permanently in a different one, is a major characteristic of a diaspora. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, a Nigerian author, addressed the issue of diaspora and talked about the problems experienced by the Nigerians and the disturbing conditions they live.⁸¹

Many people leave their countries and territories on a yearly basis, usually with different cultures. They are forced to adopt to live in the new community they have arrived at. They will face what we call the diasporic problem because they will be between two different cultures; they do not even know which one they should follow. Many people migrate for different reasons, some because of war, others because they

⁸¹Mohammed Hussein Oroskhan, *Doublness of Identity in Adichie's "Imitation"*.2015, p. 3.

want to be safe and equal. They want to be educated, rich and happy. But this is not the problem behind immigration. The problem is that all people who immigrate take with them their identity, thoughts, ideas, culture, language, race, colour of skin, way of dressing, and everything has a relation with their mother country. And when they arrive they face another world totally different from theirs. They experience a dilemma; they do not know what they should do which identity they should adopt.

The first short story “Imitation” is a story which talks about a Nigerian couple who live in America. The couple become far from each other and this makes a troubled relationship. Obiora cheats on his wife Nkem with an American girl and this is what makes her so sad. That is why she starts spying on him *“I’m spying on my husband with a new houseboy I don’t even know.”* (TTAYN, 26) Infidelity has roots in immigration. Obiora does not respond to his wife’s phone calls. His children do not see him; they just talk on the phone, *“soon they will stop being lured by toys and summer trips and start to question a father they see so few times a year.”* (27)

In another short story “The Arrangers of Marriage”, Adichie explores the negative and positive aspects of immigration. The story is about a new couple living in America who is affected by American weather and lifestyle,

I knew Uncle Ike and Aunty Ada would sound warm, they would ask what I had eaten, what the weather in America was like. But none of my responses would register; they would ask just to ask.” (TTAYN, 104)

Those are the first questions that supposed to be asked by anyone when you are away in another country. When one gets married to someone who lives in another country, he/she will face some problems later because they do not have enough time to know each other well, “Aunty Ada had said. *“You will have plenty of time to get to know each other before the wedding.”* “Yes, Aunty.” *“Plenty of time”* was two

weeks. Plenty of time, was two weeks.” (TTAYN, 104) This is what happened to Ofedile and Chinaza. She gets annoyed of his “snoring”. Ofedile is a doctor in America and for any girl it is a dream becoming true. Thinking that she will be in heaven when she moves to America, her aunt Ada tells her “*it’s like we won a lottery for you.*” (104) A lottery card is a dream for any African and Chinaza wins it.

To get something for less than half the price is one of the best things any Nigerian loves and maybe is the reason for immigration for some people, getting what they need with a good price, “*Always best to shop when there is a sale. Sometimes you get the same thing for less than half the price. It’s one of the wonders of America.*” (TTAYN, 109)

In “The American Embassy”, the story starts with a title that is a big sign of migration, the woman who is in front of the embassy for a chance to go is pushed by the war in Nigeria. Her husband is known to be a pro-democracy writer in New Nigeria. He poses a threat to the Abacha rule, who killed her son Ugonna; she regularly has flashbacks of him, “*it was easy enough for him to say that, as though she knew how to go about keeping her mind blank, as though it was in her power, as though she invited those images of her son Ugonna’s small*” (TTAYN, 80) These Flashbacks explain the woman’s causes to apply for an asylum visa to America.

Besides, she gets upset when she sees a man being flogged by a soldier, “*she saw the man’s glasses slip off and fall. She saw the heel of the soldier’s boot squash the black frames.*” (TTAYN, 80) It appears that a brutal situation like this has become part of the everyday life of Nigerians during the dictatorship of Abacha, and this is the reason why she wants to move from Nigeria. The sign at the photo studio, “*EXCELLENT ONE-HOUR PHOTOS, CORRECT AMERICAN VISA SPECIFICATION*”,

(81) reminds her that her life was good until her husband decides to flee the country, and she had to attend her son's funeral. Thus, Asylum is the last chance and the only solution to leave Nigeria. Her conversation with her husband about his cousin's wedding party confirms their unsettled relationship, their feelings about their murdered son, as well as their mutual hatred of the government,

A month ago, when her husband forgot about his cousin's wedding [...], telling her he could not cancel his trip to Kaduna because his interview with the arrested journalist there was too important, she had looked at him, the distant, driven man she had married, and said, "You are not the only one who hates the government." She went to the wedding alone and he went to Kaduna, and when he came back, they said little to each other; much of their conversation had become about you gonna, anyway. (TTAYN, 84)

While in the embassy, the woman is asked by the visa interviewer to give real evidence why she wants to leave Nigeria, "*can you prove it? Do you have any evidence to show it? Yes, but I buried it yesterday. My son's body.*" (TTAYN, 86) It is the last evidence to get her visa and live in peace. She wants to use the grave of her son as a real evidence to gain her visa. She wants to prove that she suffered a lot and now she wants to be safe.

Moreover, the next story, "The Shivering" which is about Chinedu and Ukamaka who live in America. They immigrated to America because of the bad situation in Nigeria. They start adapting to the different life in America, "*this after all was America where people called before they visited.*" (TTAYN, 88) Another quote that shows socio-economic factors behind migration is when Chinedu wants to make sure her ex-boyfriend is fine after hearing of the plane crash, "*he doesn't have a cell phone in Nigeria.*" (90) Thus, back in Nigeria, there is difficulty to call to make sure relatives and friends are fine When Chinedu tells Ukamaka, "*my visa expired three*

year ago," (100) because of the problems in Nigeria she chooses to stay in an illegal situation instead of going back to Nigeria.

In the short story "The Thing Around Your Neck," Akunna wins an American visa at the national lottery; she is looking forward to living and experiencing the American dream. The diasporic element is so clear in all stories, as we can see it when Nkem was so confused about people who leave their houses, wives, and children and move to work in Nigeria even if the work in America is good. The answer is that, Nigerians respect the Big men one example of this is Amaechi's parents behaviour with Obiora, he said they "*had embarrassed him, kneeling down on the dirt to thank him, clutching his legs.*" (TTAYN, 24)

Unlike Americans, Nigerians hold an idea that is that the Big men should be respected that is why they prefer to move and feel the power and identity because they cannot accept the ways of Americans, "*America does not recognize big men. Nobody says 'Sir! Sir!' to them in America nobody rushes to dust their seats before they sit down.*" (TTAYN, 21)

In "The Arrangers of Marriage", Chinaza wants to speak Igbo but she cannot because the American society and her husband too speak English. Her husband wants her to be a real American but inside her she was a Nigerian, "*he did not know that I spoke Igbo to myself while I cooked.*" (TTAYN, 112) She does not want to make him angry. She does not know what she should do. She accepts to change her name to an English name, and then she becomes confused when she meets a black American use an African name, "*Oh, I said and shook my head; she is a black American, had chosen an African name while my husband made me change mine to an English one.*" (111)

Indeed, she was confused about what happened and why she accepted this; her husband is sure that if he wants to be a successful person in America he must follow their steps, no time to judge or talk, *“This is not like Nigeria, where you shout out to the conductor.”* (TTAYN, 107)

“The Arrangers of Marriage” remains one of the most touching, important tale that this collection offers. It highlights toughness against femininity. It is a story expressing disgust towards men’s attitudes and shows silently but clearly demonstrates the tendencies Adichie feminist who wears national hidden to some extent.

The very first impressions of the young girl reveal disappointment, and she has no solution, she does not revolt but repeatedly blames the arranger of marriage, She wail: *“The arrangers of marriage only told you that Doctor made a lot of money in America. They did not add that before doctors started to make a lot of money they had to do an internship and a residency political program [me], which my new husband had not completed.”* (TTAYN,107) She adds, *“Another thing the arrangers failed to mention – mouths that told the story of sleep that felt clammy like old chew gum that smelled like the rubbish dumps at Ogbete market.”* (104)

In the end Nkem decides to return back home. She recognizes that she is just acting. She is not the real Nkem; she loves to drink tea with sugar and milk but her husband refuses this habit. She accepts just to make him happy but in the end she returns to her habit *“my tea with milk and sugar;”* (TTAYN, 114) she is confused.

The theme of Diaspora is presented in the short story “The Shivering”. The two main figures live in America; they choose America because it is a safe town, not like Nigeria, but they still follow the news about their mother town *“listened to BBC*

news.” (TTAYN, 89) They care about Nigeria, “*there is too much iniquity in our country*” “*too much corruption,*” they are not willing to go back home, they just pray for their country. Chinedu suffers from dispersion in his views, sometimes, thinking about his country, “*I came so that we can pray about what is happening in our country.*” (88) Sometimes Chinedu is scared of going back to his country, “*my visa expired three years ago [...] I’m going to get a deportation notice.*” (100) The last short story that contains standards of diaspora is “The American Embassy”. It is a story about a woman who loses her son, and her husband escapes to America from the dictatorship of Abacha. Diaspora is manifest when the woman wants to live in peace. She decides to join her husband in America to get a visa and to live freely. She gives the death of her son as a proof to move. However, deep inside her there is something which refuses to go, since her only son Uggona died, there is no life without him. She thinks that she did not yearn for a new life in America, because she realized that their new life had already begun with the birth of Ugonna. She decides to stay in danger but next to her son’s grave than leaving him behind and joining her husband in America. Furthermore, when the dictatorship of Abacha reaches her house, she runs away without thinking about her son, and after they go she returns. She finds him dead. She was so sad, “*she had never felt so ashamed. She had failed him.*” (TTAYN, 83) She uses the death of her son as an evidence and hope that will help her to leave the country. However, during the interview, she is haunted by guilt,

she realized that she would die gladly at the hands of the man in the black hooded shirt or the one with the shiny bald head before she said a word about Ugonna to this interviewer, or to anybody at the American embassy. Before she hawked Ugonna for a visa to safety. (TTAYN, 86)

“The Thing Around Your Neck” is full of diasporic aspects. At first Akunna wants to live in America, she considers the USA as a dream. After she goes there, she

feels alone, and decides to return back to her town. It is unclear whether Akunna will ever return to the USA but the last sentence might reveal that this is the last good bye from her boyfriend, “*you turned away and said nothing, and when he drove you to the airport, you hugged him tight for a long, long moment, and then you let go.*” (TTAYN, 79)

As a conclusion, we can recognize that immigration was the best solution for many to gain a safe life. Yet, these changes in lifestyle make some disruption in the character of each immigrant. They become a little confused about what they should do or what they should not do. All these changes show us the real personality of each immigrant.

II.4. Hybrid Cultures and Individuals

These days, we live in a changing world in which is not coherent and fringes have been blended. Because of these developments, new ideas like “hybridity” have come into being. This idea has a wide extension, and it is examined in various fields of study like social investigations, science and Cultural activities.⁸²

The flow of information and the movement of people in this world have been a profound reason in the creation of the new culture in the form of mixing of local and foreign ideas and values, this kind of mixing is called hybridity.⁸³

Homi K. Bhabha was among those interested in the idea of hybridization and is the first researcher who built this idea in communities. In 1994, Homi K. Bhabha expressed “The location of culture” that had an extraordinary impact on the

⁸²Farahzad, Farzaneh. “Hybridity in immigration literature and translated literature.” (December, 2010)

⁸³Essays, “Hybridity Concept In Postcolonial Studies Cultural Studies Essay.” UK. (November 2013) retrieved from <https://www.ukessays.com/essays/cultural-studies/hybridity-concept-in-postcolonial-studies-cultural-studies-essay.php?vref=1>

improvement of hybridity hypothesis and is considered as “Bible of Hybridity”. He was interested in the idea of hybridization because it is related to social life and multiculturalism.⁸⁴

Hybridity is to mix between two different cultures, two different ways of living, because of friction with other civilizations through migration. Hybridity occupied a significant place in Adichie’s short stories. Starting with the first short story, “The Arrangers of Marriage” this story is about couple who lived in America, when they get married they face some difficulties each one of them has his ideas, and thoughts, each one has his culture, this variances assemble to create a family, in any marriage we have a hybridity of culture, ideas, and different way of thinking “*they did not warn you about things like this when they arranged your marriage*” (TTAYN, 103) which they may be different from one to another. Also when Chinaza brings with her “*uziza seeds*” to America in order to grow them up there, she wants to mix between to different culture a Nigerian seeds growing in American weather.

Even the setting in Adichie’s stories becomes hybrid, heterogeneous, covering both the country of origin of the characters and the country they migrated to. For example, the collection of short stories, *The Thing Around Your Neck*, the stories dealing with migration are mostly set in the USA after the Biafran war.

Adichie’s hybridity is also expressed in the many languages she makes her characters speak in her works. Through her characterization, she expresses the migrant soul with a migrant style by making migrants speak different languages as a result of their hybridity. In “The Arrangers of Marriage” for example, the new husband teaches American English to his new wife “*Cookies. American call cookies*”

⁸⁴Farahzad, Farzaneh. “Hybridity in immigration literature and translated literature.” (December, 2010)

(TTAYN, 107) “*Speak English. There are people behind you.*” (109) This couple use a diversity of languages; they mix between their mother tongue and the new languages.

Hybridity is expressed in “The Thing Around Your Neck” When Akunna gets to know a man in the restaurant who she believes to be different. He is American and white, and his culture is different from hers, but they could engage in a relationship. But this relation does not last long despite the struggle that was due to different customs and ideas.

As a conclusion, hybridity is very clear in the collection of short stories, include all areas, language, ideas, style and relationships. All this is due to migration as the first factor. Hybridity is an element related with diversity in everything, since we decide to be a migrate you are going to face many changes and variety in cultures, ideas, religion, languages and this is what we call it hybridity.

II.5. Life-threatening Images of War and Violence

In the stories being examined, Ngozi Adichie deals with African issues such as wars, violence and instability. Specifically, the stories deal with family relations, Civil wars, Migration, Violence, Cultural conflicts, Corruption and the desire to migrate to America for the sake of living in peace. This is what Ngozi Adichie has dealt with in her stories.⁸⁵

Starting with the diasporic living, Lives of Africans in the Diaspora and the general problems of living of Diaspora Nigerians are unforgettable to Adichie’s innovative mind. “The Thing around Your Neck”, “Imitation”, “On Monday of Last

⁸⁵ Asoo Ferdinand Iorbee, “The Short Stories of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie,” *AFRREV IJAH: An International journal of Arts and Humanities*. Vol. 1, No. 4 (November 2012), p.04

Week”, “The Shivering” and “The American Embassy” address diasporic experiences. Chimamanda dealt with this subject with great precision because of the injustice and corruption it carried in African societies.⁸⁶

Chimamanda talked about The Nigerian Civil War and Corruption in *The Thing Around Your Neck*, The Nigeria-Biafra Civil War is so dear to Adichie’s mind that she hardly leaves it out in any of her narratives. Apart from being the main subject its conduct, the human suffering and deaths are not the subject matter but the aftermath of the crisis.

Between the early 1960s Nigeria and the southern region affected by the breakout of the Nigeria-Biafra Civil War in the late 1960^s, Adichie reveals the realities of war ranging from materialism and craft before engaging in psychological and emotional aspects. It is the framing of the explosion of the North-South conflict as a pivotal moment that not only provides a historical context but acts as a step in the psychological and emotional impact of war on individuals, relations, ethnic groups and the nation as a whole.⁸⁷

The military dictatorship appears in the “The American embassy”, which serves as a painting depicting the entire Nigerian scenario. Located in an exclusive part of Lagos with the “*gates attached to the vineyard*” (TTAYN, 80) the story vividly envisions the hideous brutality that defines the relationship between the military and civilians, the persistent evidence of poverty, the harassment of journalists by the military specialists and the abundance of Sani Abacha and evil in the administration. With a definite final goal of controlling fanatics from Nigerians who sit strictly to be

⁸⁶ Ibid

⁸⁷ Raquel Segovia, “*Half of a Yellow Sun* Is a Powerful Portrait of the Nigerian Civil War” (25 October, 2016) retrieved from : <https://theculturetrip.com/authors/raquel-segovia/>

accommodated for US visas, the army is sometimes sent to keep up with the trend. Instead, ground troops turn and wear the skin as detailed by one of the characters:⁸⁸

A soldier was flogging a bespectacled man with a long whip that curled in the air before it landed on the man's face, or his neck, she wasn't sure because the man's hands were raised as if to ward off the whip. She saw the man's glasses slip off and fall. She saw the heel of the soldier's boot squash the black frames, the tinted lenses. (TTAYN, 80)

It is ironic that the brutality in front of the US Embassy is full of Americans who cherish individual rights and freedom. As the protagonist notes, "*Sometimes I wonder if the American embassy people look out of their window and enjoy watching the soldiers flogging people.*" (TTAYN, 81) This may be a condemnation of the harsh and sadistic attitudes of Americans working at the embassy, and therefore of America itself, which attracts Nigerians to their country to reduce their wage bill and boost productivity.

The persecution of Abacha was one of the most difficult and frightening situations in the African region and in the perspective of human rights, This persecution appears in the short story "The American Embassy", where the oppressed treatment by Abacha soldiers and repeated attacks are described as the warriors tried to attack her after her son was killed and her husband was deported. This short story emerges on the grounds that it is told with a unique technical force that is one of a kind. There is an admixture of thoughtfulness and continuous flow. As usual there is next to no on character advancement however the centrality of the subject emerges with force and significance.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Asoo Ferdinand Iorbee, "The short stories of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie", AFRREV IJAH: An International journal of Arts and Humanities. Vol. 1, No. 4 (November 2012), p.12

⁸⁹ Asoo Ferdinand Iorbee, "The Short Stories of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie," AFRREV IJAH: An International journal of Arts and Humanities. Vol. 1, No. 4 (November 2012), p.12

In conclusion, it should be said that Adichie's short stories showed information about the contemporary Nigerian landscape. She has the ability to deal with those troubling issues that discourage development and improvement in Nigeria, such as issues of poor distribution, religious radicalism, nostalgia for the past, military irresponsibility, the deceptive mentality that drives the desire to live abroad by all means, and corruption at high and low levels. Adichie addressed all topics related to the Nigerian people in order to raise awareness.

African Literature, and indeed all literatures, do not attempt to offer solutions to economic, social and political problems but merely expose them and allow society to correct itself by their presentation. Adichie cannot go outside her constituency; she has shown us where our problems are located and all we can do is trace where these problems are situated.

II.6. Conflicts and Surprises in Pursuing the American Dream

The pursuit of the American Dream has not always been the primary reason for immigrating to the USA. As numbers show, in the two decades from 1960 onwards, people were concerned about receiving education abroad; however, as soon as studies were completed, they would return to their home countries again.⁹⁰

Many of Adichie's short stories include the protagonists' wishes to come to America and follow the paths of family members and other relations who apparently made it in the new world. Such stories which are told and retold back home lead to high expectations, but as can be read in "The Thing Around Your Neck," for example, the central character is Akunna, a dutiful young woman from a struggling family in Lagos, who has arrived in America via the "visa lottery" to live in her so-

⁹⁰ Christina Elisabeth Etz, "Shortstories of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie" *Magistra der Philosophie* Vienna (2016) P. 55.

called “uncle’s” home, to study, work for a living, and send half her earnings back to her parents. Yet she has to learn in it the hard way that reality is not as she was told it would be, “*Right after you won the American visa lottery, they told you: In a month, you will have a big car. Soon, a big house.*” (TTAYN, 72)

However, none of these predictions happen to Akunna, and instead of finding the American Dream to be real, her situation worsens with every step she takes in this country, Akunna is soon sexually abused, betrayed casually, by the “uncle”, a married man with children,

he sat on your bed – it was his house, after all – and smiled. If you let him, he would do many things for you. Smart women did it all the time. How did you think those women back home in Lagos with well-paying jobs made it? Even women in New York city? (TTAYN, 73)

Akunna’s dream of America started to let go, she experiences anxiety because she cannot fulfil the relatives’ expectations of her; she struggles to pay her rent on a waitressing salary and consequently cannot send home extra gifts expected by the Nigerians. Nor does she want to disappoint them, she learnt from her uncle how America works, “*The trick was to understand America, to know that America was give-and-take. You gave up a lot, but you gained a lot, too.*” (TTAYN, 72)

She suffers from the burden of the stereotypical image of a wealthy American, because many Nigerians have a stereotypical impression of America as a place of wealth and luxury, big cars and big houses where people had plenty, “*You thought everyone in America had a car and a gun.*” (TTAYN, 72) Akunna is bewildered by the American reality she is exposed to, which does not meet her expectations.

CONCLUSION

The present research explored postcolonial literature and its reflection in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *The Thing Around Your Neck*. Thus it drew a general overview about Postcolonialism and postcolonial theory examining identity and immigration as major themes of postcolonial African literature. Through approaching Adichie's life and the five selected short stories from her collection *The Thing Around Your Neck*, the dissertation unveiled the themes of immigration and identity in the selected short stories.

Postcolonialism is concerned with diverse and numerous issues highlighting the struggle that occurs when one culture is dominated by another. Hence, the dissertation showed the impact of the imposed superiority that the colonizer exercises on the African individual Self. Moreover, it elucidated the psychological conflicts of Nigerian immigrants and the subsequent attempt to form a new identity.

On the other hand, the question of identity in itself is very crucial to the writers who come from an ex-colonised nation like Adichie. She expresses her feeling of loss and tries to find out any links that make her feel the sense of belonging somewhere to find out who she is regarding her own society or the Western society. Thus, this dissertation identified the subject matter of identity in relation to postcolonial literature and analysed how elements such as language, displacement, otherness, hybridization, construct the identity of a society or affect and reshape it.

Furthermore, the dissertation showed the major factors that led to immigration and the quest for a selfhood. The impact of colonialism on the Nigerian character in specific, in addition to the Nigerian Civil War or the Biafra war and the Sani Abacha regime, with the search of better economic prospects, and the desire to break away

from traditional constraints of social organization, led many Nigerians to immigrate to America, as the country of boundless possibilities where they can fulfil their needs and desires.

Culturally speaking, migrants are bound to imitate the culture and the way of life of the country they migrate to. Therefore, this dissertation showed the main consequences that resulted from the process of immigration, such as culture shock, alienation, double identity, mimicry, frustration, embarrassment, humiliation, and hybridity.

Adichie's hybridity is expressed in the setting of her short stories, in which it becomes hybrid, heterogeneous, covering both the mother country of the characters and the country they migrate to. This is also expressed in her characters' complex identities. Her characters speak in different languages; they use both Igbo language and British and American English. She makes the African Short story as new as different from British and American fiction by including various chronological perspectives, different narrative perspectives, unnamed characters, the use of Igbo language and culture.

The Thing Around Your Neck depicts the life of Nigerian women in Nigeria and the USA, exploring the recurrent themes of family relations, gender issues, history, diasporic identity, migration, inheritance laws, racism, love, culture conflicts, youthful exuberance, religion, corruption, the Nigerian Civil war and experiences of corporate prostitution.

Through the moving account of this woman's search for her roots, Adichie manages not only to retell a postcolonial story of origins and identity, but also to redefine a female history, "her-story", where it is necessary to know where one

comes from in order to direct one's future steps. In her narration, she puts forward the model of femininity derived from Igbo culture, with respective portraits of wives and paternal figures, which suggests the writer's concern with issues of gender and the ongoing process of cultural practices on individual woman and her family also living abroad.

This postcolonial study of *The Thing Around Your Neck* and its different postcolonial themes such as Immigration and Identity, proves Adichie's characters hybridity, multiculturalism and double identity. Thus, it may open the door to further future studies for researchers who are interested in postcolonial issues in African contemporary fiction.

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Résumé

L'immigration et l'identité sont l'une des expériences les plus formatrices de notre siècle. Ils sont considérés comme la principale préoccupation de la plupart des écrivains africains contemporains. La présente étude examine l'immigration et l'identité dans « *Autour de ton cou* » de Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. Dans ses nouvelles, Adichie décrit la lutte identitaire postcoloniale des immigrants nigériens au cœur de l'Amérique. Par conséquent, l'étude tente de mettre en évidence ces conflits entre immigrants pour l'identité et l'individualité. Il analyse le travail d'Adichie à la lumière de la théorie postcoloniale de l'hybridité de Bhabha. Ainsi, le premier chapitre présente un cadre théorique et un contexte socio-historique du travail. Le deuxième chapitre examine le thème de l'identité dans les nouvelles choisies de l'Adichie, à savoir « Imitation », « Autour de ton cou », « L'ambassade américaine », « Les frissons » et « Les arrangeurs du mariage ».

الملخص

تعد الهجرة والهوية من أكثر التجارب التكوينية للإنسان في هذا القرن، كما أنهما يعتبران الشغل الشاغل لمعظم الكتاب الأفارقة المعاصرين. وعليه تتناول هذه الدراسة الهجرة والهوية في "الشيء الذي حول رقبتك" للروائية تشيما مندا نجوزي أديتشي. حيث تصور أديتشي في قصصها القصيرة صراع الهوية في ما بعد الاستعماري للمهاجرين النيجيريين في قلب أمريكا، وبالتالي تحاول الدراسة تسليط الضوء على صراع هؤلاء المهاجرين من أجل الهوية والانتماء الذاتي. ويحلل عمل أديتشي في ضوء نظرية التهجين لما بعد الاستعمار لباجا. وهكذا، يقدم الفصل الأول إطارًا نظريًا وسياقًا اجتماعيًا تاريخيًا للعمل، أما الفصل الثاني فيتناول موضوع الهوية في القصص القصيرة المختارة لأديتشي وهي "التقليد" و "الشيء الذي حول رقبتك" و "السفارة الأمريكية"، "العرشة" و "منظمو الزواج".