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DOMAIN: FOREIGN LANGUAGES
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**THE FUSION BETWEEN HISTORY AND MEMOIR IN
CHINUA ACHEBE'S *THERE WAS A COUNTRY* (2012)**

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

Candidates:

Mr. Abdel Kamel DJOUIBA

Ms. Fatima DJOUIBA

Supervisor:

Dr. Bachir SAHED

2023

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DEDICATION

*“Love towards one’s Motherland
The first dignity of a civilized man”*

*To my Motherland, Algeria, and to all those who sacrifice for it yesterday, today and
tomorrow...*

Abdelkamel

DEDICATION

To my dear father, Abdelkamel...

To my beloved mother...

To my family and friends...

Fatima

ABSTRACT

The present study examines the enduring impact of colonialism on Nigeria in Achebe's *There Was a Country*, which is both a historical and personal narrative that seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the Nigerian Civil War and its implications for the Igbo people. It addresses themes of identity, nationhood, and the consequences of political unrest and conflict. Achebe's account offers a unique perspective on the events and sheds light on the complexities of Nigeria's post-colonial history. Hence, the primary aim of this study is to demonstrate the role of memoirs/autobiographies in reflecting on some personal, historical, and national issues. To achieve this aim, the study endeavors to analyze Achebe's work in the light of the postcolonial theory. The first chapter is devoted to the socio-historical context and the theoretical framework. The second chapter examines how the use of memoir analyze Nigeria's past and present. Furthermore, this research highlights the significance of memoirs and autobiographies as powerful tools for reflecting upon personal experiences, historical events, and national narratives.

Keywords: Achebe; postcolonial discourse; memoir; autobiography; Biafra; civil war

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INTRODUCTION

Over the course of several decades, literature has predominantly explored the profound intersection between the act of writing and various historical and cultural contexts. Numerous authors and writers such as Bhabha and Said contend that literary works that expose hypocrisy possess the ability to compel readers to confront the true realities of human existence within a given society. In this context, postcolonial literature serves as a window into the diverse lived experiences of individuals across the globe, specifically their endeavours to secure fundamental human rights like access to education, gender equality, and active engagement in social and political spheres.

Achebe is considered one of the most important writers of the twentieth century. He was a key figure in the rise of anti-colonial ideology in Africa. In his final work, Achebe was clear about the positive legacies of colonialism and praised the British strategy of establishing a state and building a nation in the Lower Niger Basin. A close reading of his writings and pronouncements, from 1958 until his death in 2013, reveals that Achebe was never the simple anti-colonial figure assumed by most, and that his apparent about-face can be interpreted as the culmination of a lifetime of engagement with African history and politics. Insights relevant to the creation of a national identity and state-building in contemporary Africa have important paradigmatic implications in Achebe's ultimate perspectives.

In 2012, a year before his death at age 82, Achebe published a harrowing memoir of the Biafra War that tore Nigeria apart from 1967 to 1970. Because of the historical and national issues, he faced at that time. After his death, *There Was a Country* attracted so much attention. Most of the interested researchers admire and appreciate

the man and his legacy. Although the book is mainly a personal war memoir, it is a longer reflection on Nigeria's history and the causes of its failure and instability as a state and nation.

Achebe's arguments regarding the failure of the country's political leaders are commonplace. However, Achebe also argued that a major factor in the collapse of the Nigerian state was the neglect of much of the colonial legacy inherited from the British. In his last literary work, the author, known for his anti-colonial stance, asserted that colonialism left a legacy in the lower Niger River basin that is still useful and relevant today.

After remaining silent about the events of the Nigerian Civil War for over forty years, Chinua Achebe's *There Was a Country* was published in 2012. The work is an account of that civil war and one of the most destructive events in modern Africa. Chinua Achebe recounts his youth in Nigeria and how he first fell in love and how he gave up everything to be with her, giving up a scholarship to study writing at college. Achebe was a proponent of African independence, especially of Nigeria, since the country was still under British colonial rule. His early writings dealt with these political issues.

Nigeria gained its independence from Great Britain in 1960. Unfortunately, inter-tribal conflicts among the indigenous population led to severe complications in Nigeria's efforts to establish a stable government. The Igbo, who constitute the majority of the inhabitants of eastern Nigeria, declared their independence from Nigeria in 1967 and proclaimed their new nation, the Republic of Biafra. The Igbo had been marginalized in eastern Nigeria, where they were the ethnic minority. Therefore, they established the Republic of Biafra as a safe homeland for the Igbo

people. However, Nigeria refused to recognize the country, whereupon war broke out between the states. This civil war is the climax of Achebe's memoir. The Nigerian Civil War, also called the Nigeria-Biafra War or Biafra War, was one of the cruellest and most violent wars in history. Eventually, the Biafra Army was routed by the Nigerian Army and forced into submission in 1970.

There Was a Country is widely considered one of the most exemplary works of postcolonial literature. Therefore, the present study examines the lasting impact of colonialism on Nigeria in Achebe's *There Was a Country*. It aims to demonstrate the role of memoirs/autobiographies in reflecting on some personal, historical, and national issues. The choice of postcolonialism as a theoretical framework provides an exemplary space for the discussion of related themes such as colonialism, politics, traditions, and imperialism.

Thus, the choice of Achebe's *There Was a Country* as the corpus of this study supports the area under investigation and provides the insight and motivation necessary to uncover the realities related to the intertwining of history and memoir. Therefore, this dissertation explores the role of autobiography to reflect on some personal, historical, and national themes in Achebe's *There Was a Country*.

Undoubtedly, the nature of African and global responses to the passing of Chinua Achebe and Nelson Mandela reflects their distinct biographies, marked by their significant historical contributions as well as the various challenges and nuances of literary and political struggles. The death of Mandela and Achebe in 2013 marks the end of two great historical lives that embody Africa's long twentieth century with all its difficulties, ambiguities, tragedies, and successes.

The profound complexities, contradictions, and changes of colonial and postcolonial Africa are also reflected in their lives. The development of the African world, with its cultures, arts, economies, politics, ecologies, and societies, can be traced to the intertextualities, connections, and intersections that have shaped the histories of Africa and Europe, as well as the histories of Africa and the world from the perspectives of diaspora and globalization.

Achebe did not limit his critique to the Western imperialist representations of Africa by authors such as Conrad and V.S. Naipaul. He also sharply criticized the postcolonial Nigerian leadership and elite for their greed and failure to support the country. He rejected national awards from the Nigerian government twice, and his essays and books, including *The Trouble with Nigeria*, *Hopes and Impediments*, *The Education of a British-Protected Child*, and his memoir *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra*, reveal his multi-layered attack on those who denigrate African history and African culture (Zeleda 129).

Therefore, Achebe's *There Was a Country* represents the fusion between history and memoir. This memoir reflects upon some personal, historical, and national issues. It also discusses how historical events can affect the fate of African nations. Achebe's contribution to the canon of African literature is significant because of the profound influence of his work on the literary and intellectual movement of decolonization. The publication of Achebe's debut novel, *Things Fall Apart*, in 1958 marked a pivotal moment in literary and cultural history. This was not only because it was the first novel by a Nigerian, West African, or African writer, but also because it was published during a time of turbulent decolonization (Zeleda 125).

With *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe wanted to prove to European readers and writers their own imperfect and distorted view of African culture. His writing required the use of the English language. The English language also enabled him to reach a wider audience. He chose to use a lingua franca rather than a tribal language like Igbo.

To understand how Chinua Achebe uses his memoir to reflect on personal, historical, and national issues, it is important to explore the literary and cultural significance of his work. Chinua Achebe is a seminal figure in African literature, and his writings have been instrumental in shaping the discourse on postcolonialism and African identity.

Hence, exploring the interplay between personal narrative and historical context in his memoirs presents valuable perspectives on the complexity of African experience and its roots in the colonial legacy. This research also contributes to a broader discussion of the role of literature in shaping collective memory and identity formation. By examining Achebe's work in this context, this research makes an important contribution to the understanding of African literature, culture, and history and sheds light on important issues relevant to contemporary African politics.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to explore the role of history in the writing of a literary work and to examine how memoir mirrors social, historical, and political issues. The study also aims to apply postcolonial theory to Achebe's memoir in order to unveil the impact of the colonial legacy on the Nigerian people in their quest for freedom and prosperity.

This dissertation seeks to provide answers to the following main research question: How does Achebe employ his memoir to reflect upon some personal, historical, and national issues? To answer this question, the study attempts to answer

the following sub-questions: How does the negative influence of colonial heritage lead to the division of Nigeria? How does Achebe use elements of autobiography to deconstruct historical and political issues? What are the tropes and metaphors used by Achebe to depict the complexity of the Nigerian experience?

Many researchers have undertaken extensive studies on Achebe's renowned memoir, *There Was a Country*, which, through analysis and interpretation, have contributed to a thorough understanding of the historical events that took place in colonial and post-independence Nigeria. Olusola(2019) published an article on “Language, Gender, and Power in Chinua Achebe's *There Was a Country* and ChimamandaAdichie's*Half of a Yellow Sun*,” which discusses how both Achebe and Adichie use English language with traditional Igbo speech patterns as expression of power and gender discourses.

Another study by Felix Chinedu (2014) entitled “*There Was a Country: Achebe's Ijele*” traces the tendencies of Achebe's analysis of the tribal life of his people, his creative thoughts, and his conception of the art of masquerade in his works, particularly in *There Was a Country*. Besides, in her essay entitled “*Chinua Achebe's There Was a Country: Matters Arising*” (2013), ChimaCorieh presents a reassessment of the situation of the Igbo community and the politics of nationhood and identity in Nigeria. The present study, however, occupies the gap in analysing Nigeria's past and present in the light of Achebe's memoir and the ways in which he employs autobiography to reflect on some personal, historical, and national issues.

This study employs a postcolonial approach to examine the historical, political, and cultural realities of Nigeria's past and present as portrayed in Chinua Achebe's memoir, *There Was a Country*. By employing the postcolonial approach, the study

aims to unravel the complex interplay between history and personal memory, shedding light on the author's depiction of Nigeria's colonial and postcolonial experience. Furthermore, the study expounds on the different tropes and metaphors used by Achebe so as to deconstruct the postcolonial plight of Nigeria.

In the postcolonial context, language assumes a pivotal role as a means of control and oppression imposed upon the colonized population. The colonizers frequently enforced their language upon the subjugated subjects as a tool for domination. Consequently, numerous postcolonial writers approach these issues through diverse strategies, often blending the native language with the imposed language. This fusion gives rise to a hybrid language that accentuates the fragmented nature of the colonized psyche. The term postcolonialism primarily encompasses the portrayal of race, ethnicity, culture, and identity in contemporary times, particularly following the attainment of independence by many colonized nations.

Many oppressed writers from colonized countries such as India, Pakistan, Ireland, Kenya, and Nigeria began to write a new kind of literature that reflected and represented their own experiences during and after colonization. In his famous book *The Wretched of the Earth* (1962), Frantz Fanon laid an essential theoretical foundation for future colonial ideologies. He argues that a new world can only be created through a violent revolution led by African peasants. In *Black Skin, White Mask* (1952), Fanon shows the relationship between colonized and colonizers through his personal experiences to observe the emotional damage and agony caused to the colonized. He also analyses the troubled identity of the colonized because of stereotyping and alienation.

Besides, Said's *Orientalism* criticizes how the West portrays the East as anti-Western, illogical, primitive, and dishonest. Said claims that the idea of Orientalism arose from the colonizers' desire to understand their peoples in order to better govern them. Another postcolonial theorist, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, established as a postcolonial critic and focused her writings on the intertwining of gender and ethnicity with postcolonial issues. Moreover, Homi Bhabha presents different theories about the encounter between the colonizer and the colonized. These theories include hybridity, mimicry, ambivalence, and unhomeliness.

As such, this dissertation is divided into two main chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the socio-historical context and the theoretical framework. It examines the socio-historical background of the memoir, from the time of British colonization to independence and the Nigerian civil war. The chapter also explains the theoretical framework of the study highlighting ideas of famous figures of postcolonial literary criticism.

The second chapter is devoted to the analysis of Achebe's memoir the postcolonial perspective. It aims to uncover the realities of colonialism and imperialism depicted in the work. Moreover, this chapter addresses the portrayal of the colonizer and the colonized characters in the memoir as oppressed and oppressors. It underscores the problem of marginalized subjects and the enduring syndrome of colonialism.

CHAPTER ONE: SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter delves into the sociohistorical context and theoretical framework. Achebe's fusion of history intertwines with his masterful storytelling, providing a rich analysis of Nigeria's past, its struggles, and its hopes. Through a critical examination of the historical background and the theoretical framework, the study aims to unravel the intricate layers of this influential literary masterpiece and shed light on its profound sociohistorical significance.

1. Chinua Achebe: An Eyewitness to the Unfolding Tale

Achebe was born on November 16, 1930, in the Igbo town of Ogidi in eastern Nigeria. His parents were Isaiah Okafor Achebe and Janet Iloegbunam Achebe. His father was a teacher of Christian catechism for the Church Missionary Society. At that time, Nigeria was a British colony and families like the Achebes who were educated in English held a privileged position in the Nigerian power structure. Achebe was named Albert by his parents, after Prince Albert who was the husband of Queen Victoria of Great Britain. However, he later chose his Igbo name when he was in college (Achebe 7-8).

Achebe initially attended a school where he was taught in Igbo and later learned English, which allowed him to develop a cultural pride and an appreciation of his native language. He was an excellent student and was selected to attend the prestigious Government College in Umuahia, followed by studying medicine at University College in Ibadan. However, he changed his course of study to liberal arts, where he published his first stories (Achebe 19-28).

After completing his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1953, Achebe started working as a radio talk producer for the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation. He travelled to

London in 1956 to attend the BBC Staff School, where one of his instructors, a literary critic, encouraged him to submit the manuscript for *Things Fall Apart* to a publisher. The novel was later published in 1958 by Heinemann, which started a long-standing relationship between Achebe and the publisher. Achebe quickly gained fame after the publication of the novel and he never struggled financially as a writer (Achebe 33-38).

After his return to Nigeria, Achebe quickly ascended through the ranks of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation. In 1961, he took on the role of founder and director of the Voice of Nigeria. Alongside his colleagues, Achebe sought to cultivate a shared national identity and promote unity by producing radio programs that showcased Nigerian culture and addressed pertinent national issues.

From 1966 to 1972, Nigeria experienced political turmoil that affected Achebe as well. The unrest began with a coup d'état staged by young Igbo officers in the Nigerian army. Six months later, non-Igbo officers overthrew the Igbo-led government in another coup. Due to his critical stance towards the regime, Achebe was subjected to persecution by the new government. As a result, he sought refuge in Nsukka, an area in eastern Nigeria predominantly populated by Igbo speakers. In Nsukka, Achebe assumed the role of a senior research fellow at the University of Nigeria. Following the declaration of the eastern part of Nigeria as the independent nation of Biafra in 1967, a consequential civil war ensued, lasting for a duration of thirty months until Biafra was ultimately defeated. As a response to these events, Chinua Achebe, the renowned author, sought exile in Europe and America, utilizing his writing and public speaking platforms to address and shed light on the issues surrounding Biafra (Seibert 265-67).

Achebe advocates for literature and art that confronts societal issues, emphasizing that impactful stories should carry a meaningful message and serve humanity rather than existing for their own sake. Beyond his ground-breaking novel *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe has published four additional novels, along with children's books that convey his perspectives in an accessible manner for young readers. His later works delve into the challenges faced by newly independent African nations, while also critically examining the dearth of effective leadership in Nigeria since its independence. In addition to his novels, Achebe has authored various collections of essays and short stories and has been actively involved in literary publications such as Heinemann's African Writers Series and *Okike*, a prominent Nigerian journal for new writing. Notably, in 1983, Achebe published a critique titled *The Trouble with Nigeria*, which sharply addresses the issue of corrupt politicians in the country.

Chinua Achebe was a Nigerian novelist, poet, and professor who is widely regarded as one of the most important figures in African literature. He is best known for his novel *Things Fall Apart*, which has become a classic of modern African literature and has been translated into more than fifty languages.

Achebe's legacy is vast and multifaceted. His work has had a profound impact on African literature and culture, and his writings have been instrumental in shaping the way people think about Africa and its people. Achebe's writing has also had a significant influence on the global literary community, and his works have been widely recognized and awarded (Msiska 401).

In addition to his literary accomplishments, Achebe was a vocal advocate for African culture and independence. He believed strongly in the importance of African people telling their own stories and rejecting the narrative of colonialism and Western

domination. Achebe was also a prominent public intellectual, and he used his platform to speak out against injustice and inequality (Moore 30-32).

Achebe's legacy continues to inspire and influence writers and thinkers around the world. His writing and ideas have helped to reshape the way we think about Africa and its people, and his commitment to social justice and cultural preservation has left a lasting impact on the world (Eze 237); (Boehmer 238).

The passing of a writer with a reputation that extends from local to international levels inevitably prompts discussions about the writer's legacy and the future of their work. Chinua Achebe's legacy is particularly strong for two reasons. Firstly, he played a crucial role in challenging the idea of canonical racism in academia, particularly through his essay "*An Image of Africa*," which examines the way Africans were portrayed in Joseph Conrad's "*Heart of Darkness*" and the neglect of African perspectives in literature.

The inclusion of Achebe's essay alongside Conrad's work in The Norton Anthology of English Literature demonstrates the significance of Achebe's critique. Secondly, Achebe's ability to address important concerns of modern human and African experiences through his writing, even if controversial, contributed to his lasting impact. Nelson Mandela, an African humanist, was an admirer of Achebe's work while he was imprisoned. Achebe's first novel, *Things Fall Apart*, published in 1958, permanently changed global perceptions of African literature and is the second reason for the endurance of his legacy (Boehmer 237-38).

Chinua Achebe, the Nigerian writer, kept silent for over forty years before writing his memoir *There Was a Country* because he was deeply affected by the events of the Nigerian Civil War. Achebe was a prominent Igbo intellectual and saw first-hand the

devastating impact of the war on his people. He was deeply disillusioned by the failures of leadership that led to the war and the subsequent atrocities committed by both sides. He was also frustrated by the lack of accountability and reconciliation after the war, and the continued marginalization of the Igbo people in Nigeria (Njoku 179).

In Chinua Achebe's memoir *There Was a Country*, which deals with the Nigerian civil war and the collapse of the Biafran state, Achebe brings up many memories from the past in his book, which seem to compete for attention. However, despite the importance of these memories, Achebe also recognizes the value of silence and contemplation, which he learned from his mother. Achebe's mother was not very talkative but had a rich inner life and spent a lot of time in reflective thought. This emphasis on silence is significant because it frames the issues at stake in Achebe's decision to break his silence and write about his involvement in the secessionist struggle, without explicitly naming them. The passage suggests that Achebe is trying to come to terms with the past and make sense of it through his writing, while also acknowledging the power of what remains unspoken (Cobham-Sander 242).

In addition, Achebe was also deeply committed to his writing and felt that it was his duty as a writer to write about the war and its aftermath in a way that would do justice to the complexities of the situation. He wanted to give a voice to the Igbo people and to help ensure that their history and experiences were not forgotten. All of these factors contributed to Achebe's decision to keep silent for over 40 years before writing *There Was a Country*. He wanted to make sure that he had the distance and perspective necessary to write about the war in a thoughtful and nuanced way, and he

wanted to ensure that he was able to do justice to the experiences of the Igbo people(Thelwell 37-8).

2. The Crucible of the Biafra War

Nigeria has also faced several other challenges, including ethnic and religious conflicts, poverty, and inadequate infrastructure. Nigeria's independence was marked by a fragile truce between its three regions, each of which had its major tribe. The North, with the largest population, was ruled by powerful feudal emirs and predominantly inhabited by the Hausa and Fulani, who were devoted Muslims. The British policy of indirect rule through these traditional leaders had entrenched their power. Education and westernization came slowly to the North, unlike the South, where early missionary activity among the Yoruba tribe had strengthened their desire for change.

The Eastern Region, however, dominated by the Ibo tribe, had a strong inclination towards Westernization and education. Despite these challenges, Nigeria has made progress in some areas. For example, the country has seen significant improvements in healthcare and education, and the entertainment industry has grown to become one of the largest in Africa. Today, Nigeria is still grappling with many of the same issues that it faced in the post-independence era, but there is hope that the country can continue to make progress and overcome its challenges (Parker 8).

Nigeria gained independence from British colonial rule on October 1, 1960. The post-independence period was marked by a lot of political, economic, and social challenges. In the early years of independence, Nigeria struggled to find its footing as a newly independent nation. The country faced issues such as ethnic tensions,

political instability, corruption, and economic struggles. The first republic was characterized by frequent coups and counter-coups which destabilized the government.

In 1966, a group of five junior army officers, who were Ibos, carried out a coup that resulted in the death of the Prime Minister and other northerners. Subsequently, an Ibo officer, Major General Johnson T. U. Aguiyi-Ironsi, took control of the government, but tensions rose between the Ibos and the north. There were attacks in northern cities in May that led to the death of many Ibos, and in July, there was a counter-coup by northern Hausa soldiers that resulted in the murder of General Ironsi and his Ibo advisors. Following this, Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon became the new supreme commander in Lagos (Parker 8).

In the years following the civil war, Nigeria struggled to rebuild its economy and achieve political stability. The discovery of oil in the Niger Delta region in the late 1950s and early 1960s led to an oil boom in the 1970s, making Nigeria one of the world's top dozen oil producers and generating significant revenue for the country. Nigeria's strong economy, based on exports of palm oil and cocoa, and active parliament offered a promising future. However, mismanagement and corruption of oil revenue led to economic stagnation and decline in the following decades (Olayungbo 44).

In 1914, Nigeria was formed through the amalgamation of Britain's West African colonial possessions. After gaining independence in 1960, Nigeria was regarded as one of sub-Saharan Africa's most promising postcolonial states, with a large population of around forty five million people and significant oil reserves. However, the country's evolution was hindered by two legacies of British colonial rule. Firstly,

the population was divided along ethnic lines, which were incorporated into a centrally governed federal state. Secondly, Nigeria was split into three main regions dominated by different ethnic groups: the North by Hausa-Fulani, the West by Yoruba, and the East by Igbos. Alongside these political borders, there was also a perceived religious divide between Christianity in the south and Islam in the north (Ebegbulem 76-88).

By the mid-1960s, growing participatory options for the population weakened postcolonial democracy. Patronage systems were created along ethnic lines at the regional level, while the three dominant ethnic groups competed for increasingly lucrative state resources. The deepening rift between the North and South led to fiercely fought federal and national elections, with ballot rigging and other forms of manipulation commonplace. The Eastern Region, in particular, became increasingly isolated (Dirk 6-7).

In January 1966, a group of army officers led by Igbos attempted a coup, which initiated a series of coups and countercoups that ultimately led to the establishment of military rule in Nigeria. The first coup failed after the rebel officers killed several high-ranking officials, including Ahmadu Bello, a prominent leader in the north. The remaining government officials transferred power to Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, the highest-ranking officer in the Nigerian Army, who became the new head of state. However, many in the north saw Ironsi's government as a continuation of the southern-instigated coup, and in July 1966, a group of northern officers and soldiers killed him in a countercoup. Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon was then chosen as the new head of state by the remaining officers. The coup was successful, except in

the Eastern Region, which was dominated by Igbos, where Governor General Ojukwu remained in power(Ejiogu 99-132).

Between June and October 1966, numerous outbreaks of violence culminated in massacres of Igbos residing in the SabonGari, which was a designated "foreigners' quarters" in northern Nigerian cities. These riots caused the deaths of tens of thousands of people, although it is disputed whether or not the Nigerian government systematically organized the killings. However, the Nigerian government did not intervene to stop the violence. As a result of the violence, over a million refugees fled to the Eastern Region, which was considered the homeland of the Igbo diaspora. This massacre was a key event in the lead-up to the civil war, and it led to increased calls for autonomy from the Eastern Region. Eventually, after failed negotiations, the Eastern Region, under the leadership of Ojukwu, declared its independence on May 30, 1967, as the Republic of Biafra. The Nigeria-Biafra war broke out a few weeks later, on July 6, when federal troops advanced into the secessionist territory (Yerima 167-171); (Dirk 7).

Due to insufficient funds, personnel, discipline, and education, the military strength of both sides was limited. Although a significant portion of the Nigerian officer corps, which was previously dominated by the Igbo, made up the secessionist forces, the federal army was still better equipped. Despite both sides launching impressive attacks, the military situation was mostly a stalemate. The FMG's primary strategic advantage was not its military power, but its diplomatic status as a recognized sovereign government. By framing the conflict as an "insurgency" faced by a sovereign government, the FMG was able to convince foreign governments, particularly those in the Organization of African Unity, that it was an internal matter.

The regional organization responsible for mediation made sure not to take any steps that could be seen as recognizing the Biafran government. In turn, the Biafran government rejected any intervention from the OAU(Dirk 8).

Nigeria's diplomatic status played a critical role in the most significant development during the war's early stages, which was the Federal Military Government's (FMG) decision to blockade the secessionist state of Biafra. The blockade was designed to sever Biafra's communication lines with the outside world by imposing restrictions on air and seaports, banning foreign currency transactions, blocking incoming mail and telecommunication, and obstructing international business.

Despite its limited resources, Nigeria successfully organized a blockade without any significant loopholes or long interruptions, primarily because other governments and companies were willing to comply with Lagos's instructions. Additionally, as a recognized government, the Gowon regime had no trouble procuring weapons from international markets. However, due to their "rebel" status, the Biafrans were forced to resort to black-market channels to buy arms, hampering their efforts. Furthermore, Nigeria's sudden currency change in early 1968 rendered millions of Nigerian pound notes in the Biafran treasury worthless, adding to their difficulties (Omenka 367-89).

The United Kingdom (UK) was the most significant external party involved in the conflict. As the former colonial power, the UK had typically provided the federal army with weapons. However, at first, the UK government hesitated in choosing which side to support, causing the Federal Military Government (FMG) to seek assistance from the Soviet Union. Moscow saw an opportunity to establish a presence in a major West African state and began providing arms to the federal side. Concerned

about losing its influence, the UK eventually began sending weapons deliveries as well. The fact that most of Nigeria's oil was located in Biafran territory played a crucial role in shaping the UK's policy stance. London feared that the Arab states, who had limited their oil shipments to countries supporting Israel after the Six-Day War in 1967, would limit their oil supply to the UK if it did not support the federal government during the Nigerian conflict (Astuti 98-105); (Dirk 7).

Even though there was some initial support for Biafra, the majority of oil companies chose to maintain their relationships with the federal government. The British government soon followed suit and also supported a federal solution, mainly because it wanted to ensure the continuous flow of oil from Nigeria. This decision by the British government also influenced the policy of the United States government during the Cold War. To maintain their "special relationship" with the UK, the US State Department aligned with the British position, although they did not provide weapons to the federal government. In this context Onuegbu & Hanson assert,

The gist of the State Department attitude was that... respect for the preferences and sensitivities of the British and Nigerian Governments on the war should be given priority over the need for relief. This meant that the U.S should support the positions taken by Britain and Nigeria, and that the U.S be committed to the principle of 'one Nigeria' and opposed to the secession of Biafra (Hanson 244).

Recognizing their limited chances of success in military combat, the leaders of Biafra shifted their focus to propaganda. However, even in the international community, the prospects of Biafra's propaganda were not promising. Many governments in the Global South were reluctant to support Biafra's right to self-determination, as they were facing separatist movements within their own countries and saw such movements as illegitimate. According to Brad Simpson's analysis, the

Biafran campaign highlighted the uncertainty of how the postcolonial international system dealt with self-determination initiatives and left behind a similarly ambiguous legacy. The Organization of African Unity (OAU), which was established in 1963 after the Congo crisis and the attempted secession of Katanga, was founded on the principle of rejecting separatism and promoting postcolonial sovereignty. As a result, Biafra's campaign to gain independence was largely ignored by African intergovernmental organizations, with only a few exceptions (Odife 243-248).

Despite the secessionists' extensive efforts, the conflict did not attract much international attention in the first year of fighting, even though casualties were high from the beginning. Throughout the war, federal aircraft bombed towns and other targets in Biafran territory, causing numerous civilian casualties. The people in the war zone were particularly at risk during moments of military advances and setbacks. In August 1967, Biafran forces made a major offensive by crossing the Niger and advancing towards Lagos through the Midwestern State.

However, Biafran forces failed to take advantage of the momentum and were halted 100 km east of the capital before retreating when federal forces retaliated. Violence against civilians erupted in border towns that experienced dual occupation, and ethnic minorities in Asaba, who considered themselves, related to the Igbos and were seen as sympathizers of the 'rebels,' were victims of massacres and rape by federal soldiers. The Asaba massacres are still remembered and painful for many in Asaba, even though the Nigerian state has repressed the publication of the events and their commemoration. As a result, the memory of the massacre stands in the way of inter-ethnic reconciliation, as shown by S. Elizabeth Bird and Fraser Ottanelli in their book (Bird 5-25).

Although Nigeria attempted to hide information about the Biafran crisis, the worsening humanitarian situation of the Biafran people brought global attention to the conflict. By the end of the year of 1968, it became clear that the Biafran population was at risk of a severe food shortage, potentially causing hundreds of thousands of deaths. In May 1968, federal forces captured Port Harcourt, the last access point to the sea for Biafra, rendering the secessionist state landlocked. As federal forces continued to advance, the shrinking Biafran enclave was reduced to only the central area of Igboland, which had to accommodate an increasing number of people fleeing the government's offensives. One year into the conflict, the remaining Biafran territory was overcrowded, impoverished, and lacking essential supplies, food, and medicine (Nwoko 131-34).

At that time, the involvement of Western missionaries in the region brought attention to the conflict among various religious groups and humanitarian organizations, leading to a growing international concern. The religious connections also facilitated transnational networks, which enabled the conflict to become an object of international humanitarian concern. Many Christian clergy and individuals perceived the conflict as a significant event, where a Christian Biafra was pitted against a Muslim-dominated federal Nigeria, a cosmic drama. The shared Christian faith provided a means for empathizing with the African "Other" residing in the secessionist enclave (Nwoko 131-34).

The political and military landscape underwent significant changes due to the growing global interest in the conflict resulting from the humanitarian crisis, which appeared to be a political advantage for Biafra. In April of 1968, Tanzania, under Julius Nyerere, recognized the breakaway state based on humanitarian concerns.

Subsequently, Gabon, Ivory Coast, and Zambia also recognized Biafra, followed by Haiti a year later under "Papa Doc" Chevalier. The Portuguese Estado Novo dictatorship, the South African and Rhodesian apartheid regimes, and France's De Gaulle government covertly supported the Biafran secessionists, ostensibly to weaken Nigeria, one of the largest and potentially most powerful states in France's main sphere of influence in West Africa. France aimed to project its postcolonial power and leverage its ties to Francophonie to undermine Nigeria, not only due to its close relations with Britain but also because of its significant political influence in the region. Peking offered some support to Biafra during the Sino-Soviet split, although not as much as other countries. One reason for their support was to counter Russia's influence. By providing airlifts of aid, which served both humanitarian and military purposes, Biafra was able to avoid defeat for several months (Dirk 10-11).

Despite the increase of international interest in mid-1968 and support from various sources, it was not enough to sway the conflict in favor of the secessionists. The military standoff between the two sides continued for one and a half years. Both sides attempted breakthroughs but they were unsuccessful, at least until late 1969. However, Nigerian strategic adjustments and changes in military leadership eventually led to a successful final attack on the Biafran enclave. In early 1970, Ojukwu and some of his followers fled to the Ivory Coast. After two and a half years of fighting, the remaining secessionist regime surrendered on January 15th, 1970 (Dirk 11).

3. The Rise of the Postcolonial

The term "postcolonialism" is a difficult concept to define and remains ambiguous even within the field it represents, which is relatively new. Despite its omnipresence, it has only been in use for about 25 years, and scholars struggle to agree on a precise definition. Some theorists argue that this ambiguity is an essential aspect of postcolonialism, as it encompasses a broad field of critical thinking, including the modern attitude towards colonialism. Postcolonialism is a mobile metaphor that has transnational value and is uniquely suited for the analysis of literary and cultural diversity.

However, its status as a past concept also means that it remains relevant in the present day. In current critical discourse, the term "postcolonialism" is rarely used on its own, but rather in conjunction with other terms such as "third world" or "postmodern," which overlap and support each other. As a theoretical formation, it is used only one-tenth as often as the adjective, indicating that it is losing its force and becoming marginalized (Mishra 377-78).

"Postcolonialism" is a newly coined term that emerged from past components to depict a distinct moment in global history, which includes a blend of experiences, insights, aspirations, and dreams from an earlier silenced part of the world. This term was created to find different perspectives on reviewing the past and future by exploring alternatives to colonialism's narratives, taking advantage of new conditions. Postcolonialism has highlighted from another lens by another researcher as in the quotation below:

Place and space in postcolonialism are closely linked to the concept of discourse. Place denotes the complex interaction of language, history, and culture. Displacement of minorities, whole groups, and even whole nations because of colonialism and

imperialism remains one main concern of postcolonialism (Sahed 227).

Furthermore, the etymology of "colony" reveals its connection to "culture" and signifies how culture and cultivation are interconnected. In the premodern world, living in a place, working on the land, and honouring its gods were intrinsically linked, and the word "colony" was originally used to refer to an inhabitant or farmer. It later evolved to mean a settler in a foreign place, a "colonist" in the modern sense (Mishra 378).

However, the shift in the meaning of "colony" was not harmless, and the Latin root's other connotations were actively used to rationalize and justify various forms of invasion, such as dominating a new land, "improving" it through labor, and introducing new gods. These strategies were employed by European powers during the five centuries of European colonization. Over 1,500 years, this complicated inheritance underwent a transformative shift in the vocabulary of modern European languages, with "colony" becoming associated primarily with invasive settlements rather than neutral dwellings.

Additionally, it lost its deep ties to premodern ways of life, particularly religion. We argue that all these elements continue to be present in contemporary forms of colonization, including classic (colonial) and postmodern (postcolonial) forms. Although the reality has not changed, the meaning of the term has gradually faded throughout two millennia, becoming less comprehensive and unable to reflect the present and past complexities, disregarding present-day surprising connections and contradictions(Nwaozuzu 106-08)(Mishra 379).

"Postcolonialism" is a term made up of the prefix "post-" and the suffix "-al" with the additional suffix "-ism" attached, which has a complex history. The prefix "post-" refers to a time just after an important event that defines its existence. However, the shadow of that event is only guaranteed by its past. The suffix "-ism" comes from the Greek *-izein*, which is added to a noun or adjective to make it a verb, describing a related action.

However, over two thousand years, postcolonialism has been applied to form many words in many languages, which makes it difficult to track their meaning. In modern English, "-ism" can refer to actions or behaviours performed with its headword, or to a doctrine, theory, or practice. "Postcolonialism" is subject to these two meanings. One strand of meaning refers to the kinds of things typically done in a postcolonial situation, while the other has a negative connotation, referring to a doctrine, theory, or practice (Mishra 379-80)(Rukundwa 1172).

The term "postcolonialism" has two distinct meanings that conflict with each other, confusing. One meaning refers to the many possibilities for actions and states that can develop after colonialism has ended. The other meaning, which stems from "postcolonial theory," is a militant tendency that resembles dogmatism and lacks subtlety or originality. It is a rhetoric that calls for action on behalf of a cause that cannot be questioned. This interpretation of "postcolonialism" is postcolonial thought without critical thinking, following postcolonial theory not as a theory but as dogma. It is a dangerous approach that limits understanding of the subject (Rukundwa 1173-75).

Additionally, other researchers have different definition for the same term,

Postcolonialism does not mean 'post-independence', or 'after colonialism' because this would inaccurately put an end to the colonial process. Postcolonialism nonetheless begins from the very first moment of colonial contact. It is the discourse of oppositionality which colonialism brings into being (Sahed 21).

The potential applications of postcolonial theory are vast and interdisciplinary. This developing field of study draws upon theories from various disciplines, including literary studies, anthropology, philosophy, political science, sociology, and more. Postcolonial studies have given rise to a specialized vocabulary of key terms and concepts, such as 'abrogation,' 'appropriation,' 'the subaltern subject,' 'ambivalence,' 'mimicry,' 'palimpsest,' 'cartography,' 'négritude,' 'transculturalism,' 'universalism,' 'diaspora,' and 'comprador,' which are used in postcolonial critique (Burney 60).

African postcolonial literature refers to the body of literary works produced by African writers after their respective countries gained independence from colonial rule. This type of literature reflects the experiences of African people during the colonial period and after. It often explores the themes of identity, culture, race, politics, and social justice. The emergence of African postcolonial literature was marked by a desire to assert African cultural identity, as well as to challenge the dominant narratives and representations of Africa propagated by the West during the colonial period. It includes works by authors such as Chinua Achebe, Ngugi waThiong'o, Wole Soyinka, Nadine Gordimer, and many others (Igba-Luga. 92-93).

African postcolonial literature emerged in the mid-20th century, following the wave of independence movements that swept across the continent in the 1950s and 1960s. During the colonial period, African literature was primarily produced by expatriate European writers who portrayed Africa in negative and stereotypical ways.

African postcolonial literature sought to challenge these representations and assert African cultural identity (Ashcroft 09-10).

One of the defining characteristics of African postcolonial literature is its use of a hybrid language, which combines elements of both African and European languages. Many African writers choose to write in English or French, the languages of their former colonial masters, but they infuse these languages with elements of their native African languages, creating a unique linguistic style. This linguistic hybridity reflects the complex cultural and linguistic identities of many African writers, who often straddle multiple cultures and languages (Kwaku Asante-Darko 4).

Language played a pivotal role in the subjugation and control of the colonized people in the postcolonial era. The colonizers frequently enforced their language on the colonized individuals to exert their authority. Postcolonial writers address these issues in diverse ways, typically by blending local language with imposed language, leading to a hybrid language that highlights the fragmented state of the colonized mind (Igba-Luga. 94).

Another important theme in African postcolonial literature is the struggle for political and social justice. Many African writers explore the impact of colonialism and imperialism on their societies and address issues such as poverty, corruption, and violence. They also examine the role of African leaders and intellectuals in shaping the postcolonial landscape and criticize how these individuals have failed to address the challenges facing their countries.

Numerous countries that were colonized, including but not limited to India, Pakistan, Ireland, Kenya, and Nigeria, began creating a type of literature that reflected their own experiences during and after colonization. Frantz Fanon's renowned book,

The Wretched of the Earth (1961), provided the essential theoretical groundwork for future colonial theories. Fanon believed that a violent revolution led by African farmers was necessary for a new world to emerge. In his book *Black Skin, White Mask* (1952), Fanon drew from his personal experiences to explore the psychological dynamics between colonizers and the colonized, highlighting the emotional harm experienced by both groups (Rukundwa 1183-84).

Frantz Fanon, a noteworthy writer in Postcolonial literature, focused on the psychological impact of colonization and racism on black people. His famous book, *The Wretched of the Earth*, published in 1961, made him a prominent critic of colonial power,

It is important to note that Fanon's works are influenced by psychology, Marxist thought, as well as the Negritude movement. It is in *The Wretched of the Earth* that he diagnoses the psychological alienation of the colonized subjects (Sahed 230).

Moreover, his advocacy for aggressive revolution had a profound impact on numerous intellectuals such as Homi Bhabha, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Edward Said. Fanon was an early author to draw attention to the correlation between language, culture, and subjugation. He asserted that the language of the conqueror or the dominant language was consistently preferred over indigenous languages. This compelled colonized individuals to communicate in the language of the imperial power, leading them to abandon their language and culture as inferior (Burney 60).

Edward Said's work primarily concerns how Europeans control and own knowledge to maintain their power and exclude or ignore the knowledge of the natives. Said's critique of Orientalism, examines how the West portrays the East as illogical, primitive, anti-western, and deceitful. Said argues that Orientalism is an

ideology that emerged from the colonizers' desire to control their subjects by understanding them better. Said also contends that writing about the Arab world requires writing with the authority of a nation and the certainty of absolute truth backed by absolute force (Donzé-Magnier 3-4).

Shehla Burney argues that "Fanon and Said believe that it is the lack of social conscience that often enables the native elite to become the new oppressors, dictators, and power brokers in newly independent societies"(Burney 50) that is why femalewriters such as Jamaica Kincaid and GayatriChakravortySpivak have made significant contributions to postcolonial literature on par with their male counterparts to resist this new domination. Kincaid's novel *A Small Place* portrays Antigua, where she writes extensively about women's experiences with other women, patriarchy, and the effects of colonialism on women's self-image (Mihoubi 5-6).

Spivak, another prominent female writer, and postcolonial literary theorist, by translating Derrida's *Of Grammatology* in 1978, gained notoriety and successfully introduced Derrida's deconstructionist work to English speakers in North America. Spivak, who identifies as a "Marxist-Feminist-Deconstructionist," posed the crucial question "Can the subaltern speak?" in her 1988 essay. This early essay caused a commotion by highlighting issues of exclusion, the dual discrimination faced by women belonging to subaltern groups, and the silencing of their voices due to the exercise of power, control, and oppression(Burney 55).

Homi Bhabha is another postcolonial theorist who was born in Mumbai, India in 1949. He is known for his influential work in the fields of cultural studies, postcolonial theory, and literary theory. Bhabha's work is centred on how colonialism and postcolonialism have influenced cultural identity, and how cultural identity can

be renegotiated in the postcolonial era. His most famous work, *The Location of Culture* (1994), explores the concept of hybridity as a way of understanding how cultures are formed through the interaction and blending of different elements. Bhabha also emphasizes the importance of "ambivalence" in understanding cultural identity, arguing that it is often characterized by conflicting and contradictory feelings and beliefs (Mostafae 164-165).

Homi Bhabha is recognized as a prominent postcolonial critic due to his examination of the interdependent relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. He is particularly acclaimed for his concept of 'ambivalence' in colonial discourse and the notion of 'hybridity.' According to Bhabha, the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is defined by ambivalence, as they oscillate between contradictory emotions such as love and hate, attraction and repulsion, admiration, and denigration.

The term 'ambivalence' in psychoanalysis refers to a conflict between desiring something and not wanting it simultaneously or wanting its opposite. In Bhabha's theory, ambivalence disrupts the balance of power between the colonizer and the colonized and challenges the clear-cut authority of colonial domination. The colonizer is attracted to the colonized for cultural, economic, political, and historical reasons, which are the driving forces behind the colonial project (Mostafae 166).

Mostafae asserts that "Bhabha borrowed the notion of hybridity from Jacques Derrida" which, according to him, Bhabha has utilized the term hybridity as a concept that challenges the dominant discourse and stereotypes of the Other by undercutting colonialism and essentialism (165). Hybridity is a disputed concept in postcolonial theory that refers to the creation of mixed transcultural forms resulting from

colonization. The mixing of the colonizer's culture with that of the colonized has led to linguistic, cultural, and racial forms of hybridity.

Bhabha argues that all cultural ethos is created in a "third space of enunciation," which is a liminal space lying between two spaces. From this ambiguous liminality, the idea of hybrid identity emerges, rather than a sense of exotic cultural diversity. Hybridity displaces the history that creates it and establishes new structures of authority, generating new political initiatives. It is, therefore, a site of resistance and a reversal of the process of domination. In postcolonial theory, the concept of hybridity has often been used to signify cross-cultural exchange and the creation of identities from mixed cultural sources (Mostafae 165).

In this context, one of the most influential novels in postcolonial literature is Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, which explores the interactions between traditional African society and British colonizers. The novel's protagonist, Okonkwo, struggles to come to terms with the changes brought about by Christianity and British control, examining various situations that occurred in a post-independence fictional West African village. Achebe's novel highlights how British legacies continue to weaken the possibility of uniting the country (Thamarai 05).

African postcolonial literature has had a significant impact on the global literary canon and has influenced many writers around the world. It has also played an important role in shaping the cultural and political discourse of Africa and has contributed to the development of a vibrant and diverse literary scene across the continent (Igba-Luga. 94).

Postcolonial theory examines various fields of discourse and thinking, such as nationality, ethnicity, race, and gender, and goes beyond mere criticism to explore

matters of identity, perception, and ideology. By breaking down the underlying frameworks inherent in our portrayals of others in areas like literature, travel writing, art, music, education, and popular culture, postcolonial theory reveals the entrenched structures of colonialist discourse that continue to endure in our social and cultural systems, even in a supposed postcolonial age(Igba-Luga. 94-95);(Burney).

4. The Genres of Autobiography and Memoir

On the first hand, an autobiography is a book that someone writes about their own life, with the word derived from Greek roots meaning "self," "life," and "to write." A memoir is closely related to an autobiography, and the two can be hard to distinguish. However, while an autobiography covers the "life and times" of the writer, a memoir has a more limited and personal focus on the author's memories, emotions, and feelings (Smorti 304-305).

On the other hand, an autobiography is a literary genre that involves the writing of one's own life story. It is a first-person narrative that recounts the author's life, experiences, and personal journey. Unlike a memoir, which typically focuses on a specific period or event in the author's life, an autobiography typically covers the author's entire life, from birth to the present.

Autobiographies can be written by anyone, from famous public figures to ordinary individuals. They can be written for a variety of reasons, such as to document one's life for posterity, to share one's experiences with others, or to reflect on one's own life and identity.

According to Smorti, the genre of autobiography has a long history, dating back to ancient times. Some of the earliest examples of autobiographical writing can be found

in the works of Greek and Roman historians, such as Julius Caesar's "Commentaries on the Gallic War" and Augustine of Hippo's "Confessions." However, in modern times, autobiographies have become a popular literary genre, with many notable examples including "The Autobiography of Malcolm X," "The Diary of Anne Frank," and "Long Walk to Freedom" by Nelson Mandela (Smorti).

Autobiography as a genre offers a unique perspective on the human experience, allowing readers to gain insight into the lives of others and to reflect on their own lives and experiences. It is a powerful tool for self-expression, self-reflection, and understanding, and it continues to be an important and popular genre in contemporary literature (Fivush 3).

In the other side, a memoir is a type of literature that is similar to an autobiography, with the terms often used interchangeably. It is a form of autobiographical writing, but not all writing that is autobiographical is considered a memoir. Memoirs are typically more focused and flexible than autobiographies, with the chronological scope determined by the context of the work.

Historically, memoirs were mostly written by politicians, court society figures, military leaders, and businessmen, and focused on their careers rather than their private lives. Modern expectations have shifted, however, and now memoirs are often expected to include more personal information. Memoirs are generally written from a first-person point of view and are more about what can be learned from a specific section of one's life rather than the overall outcome of one's life (Smorti 306).

A memoir is how one remembers one's life, while an autobiography is more like history and requires research and verification of facts. A memoir is seen as a

collection of the good things a person ought to have done, leaving out the bad things they did (Fivush 3-5).

Above all, *There Was a Country* represents the culmination of Chinua Achebe's extensive research, introspection, and lived encounters, blending elements of memoir, history, poetry, and prose. Through this multidimensional approach, Achebe presents a compelling first-hand account that exemplifies his wisdom and compassion, solidifying his position as a vital literary and moral voice in contemporary discourse. Given its authoritative nature and the breadth of Achebe's expertise, this work stands as a definitive contribution of great significance.

CHAPTER TWO: NIGERIA'S PAST AND PRESENT THROUGH

ACHEBE'S *THERE WAS A COUNTRY* (2012)

Chinua Achebe's *There Was a Country* examines the legacy of British colonialism in Nigeria and how it contributed to the country's problems and conflicts. Some have argued that Achebe stands a strong position against the colonial legacy and the destructive impact of colonialism on African societies and cultures.

1. Colonial Legacy in *There Was a Country*

One of the main themes in the book is the idea that colonialism created divisions and tensions within Nigerian society. Achebe argues that the British colonial system was designed to exploit Nigeria's resources and people, which resulted in the country's cultural and economic fragmentation. The colonial administration's divide-and-rule tactics, which played up ethnic and religious differences, made it difficult for Nigerians to unite and form a cohesive national identity.

The colonial legacy of patently artificial borders drawn for the convenience of European conference tables bequeathed to many newly independent African nations a motley mix of people, each with their own separate ethnic loyalties and traditions. Nigeria's population well illustrates the diverse ethnicity encompassed within sub-Saharan nations that followed in the wake of Ghana's independence in 1957. Nigeria has a multitude of distinct ethnic and linguistic groups. The ethnic contentions among the largest of those groups - the Yoruba, Ibo, and Hausa-Fulani - have littered the pages of the new nation's history (Davis 2).

When Nigeria gained independence from Great Britain in October 1960, it was merely a nation in name and did not have a sense of community or shared identity. Although it existed as a political and legal entity, it did not have a unifying character.

Instead, Nigeria was made up of several ethnic nations, each with its own distinct heritage, language, and culture.

Even after independence, the majority of Nigerians did not identify themselves as Nigerians, but instead prioritized their loyalty to their ethnic group. For instance, individuals primarily saw themselves as Hausa-Fulani, Ibo, or Yoruba, rather than Nigerians, with their national identity playing a secondary role to their tribal and local affiliations. The presence of long-standing hostilities and rivalries between many of the ethnic groups within Nigeria contributed to the lack of a cohesive national identity. However, the legacy of colonialism also played a significant role in exacerbating this issue (Davis 4).

Another aspect of the colonial legacy that Achebe explores is the impact of colonial education on Nigerian society. He contends that the British educational system in Nigeria was designed to produce a class of Nigerians who were loyal to British rule and who could help maintain the colonial system. This system did not equip Nigerians with the skills and knowledge necessary to develop the country after independence.

The British approached education in the colonies with caution, recognizing that educating the natives would lead to dissatisfaction and potentially even rebellion. Educated Africans would not be satisfied with limited opportunities and would likely become advocates for self-rule, which posed a threat to British domination. Colonial officers deliberately limited educational opportunities for the masses, and the education that was provided often reflected British cultural biases, resulting in education that was irrelevant to the volatile economic conditions of the colonies (Ankomah 4).

Achebe also examines the impact of colonialism on Nigeria's political system. He argues that the British colonial administration created a system of governance that was centralized and authoritarian, which made it difficult for Nigerians to participate in the political process. This legacy of colonialism continued after independence, as Nigerian leaders continued to rely on authoritarian tactics to maintain power, as a negative legacy of the British colonial administration which created a system of governance within Nigeria that limited the development of a shared national consciousness within the country's arbitrary borders (Davis 4).

The British method of indirect rule during the colonial period in Nigeria helped to maintain distinct ethnic and local identities. By relying on traditional native institutions and cooperative tribal chiefs to implement their policies, the British were able to sustain the parochial political systems of many different ethnic groups. This was especially true in the Northern region of the country, where tribal leaders were resistant to Western education. Indirect rule contributed to the continued isolation of these tribal identities (Davis 4).

However, on the other hand, Bruce Gilley in his famous article *Chinua Achebe on the positive legacies of colonialism* argues that Chinua Achebe, in his last work, expressed his approval of the positive effects of colonialism, specifically the British efforts in state formation and nation building in the lower Niger basin. A careful examination of Achebe's writings and statements from 1958 until his death in 2013 reveals that he was not a simple anti-colonial figure, and his apparent change of opinion could be interpreted as the result of his lifelong contemplation of African history and politics. Achebe's final views have important implications for understanding national identity formation and state building in Africa (Bruce 646).

According to Gilley, Achebe acknowledges that the British government in Nigeria was administered with great care and competence. He notes that the British had a highly skilled cadre of government officials who possessed extensive knowledge on how to run a country. He asserts that Achebe points out that the British were not only able to achieve this level of proficiency in Nigeria but also in larger countries such as India and Australia. However, despite acknowledging the competency of British rule, Achebe is careful to state that he is not justifying colonialism. However, he believes it is important to recognize and acknowledge the fact that the British were experienced in governing and had the ability to do so competently (Bruce 652).

“The British governed their colony of Nigeria with considerable care. There was a very highly competent cadre of government officials imbued with a high level of knowledge of how to run a country. This was not something that the British achieved only in Nigeria; they were able to manage this on a bigger scale in India and Australia. The British had the experience of governing and doing it competently. I am not justifying colonialism. But it is important to face the fact that the British colonies were, more or less, expertly run” (Achebe 43).

Achebe is described as being more candid about his voluntary self-colonization in comparison to his previous works. This refers to the historical trend of indigenous people moving closer to areas of intensive colonization. Achebe himself benefited from the education provided by missionaries, which his father praised. He attended Government College in Umuahia for secondary school because of its status as a government college, which reassured his parents. The educational system met their high expectations, as these schools were well-funded, had excellent facilities, and were staffed with excellent teachers, custodians, instructors, cooks, and librarians. Although these schools have since fallen into disrepair under Nigerian control, they

were quite impressive in their heyday. Later, Achebe received a full scholarship to a new university for West Africa established by the British (Bruce 652).

I grew up at a time when the colonial educational infrastructure celebrated hard work and high achievement and so did our families and communities.... As a young man, surrounded by all this excitement, it seemed as if the British were planning surprises for me at every turn, including the construction of a new university (Achebe 27).

To conclude, this acknowledgement of Achebe's positive legacy of colonialism is based on the opportunities given to him which lead him obtain a good position in the Nigerian government, that's why he changed his mind recently.

Achebe's *There Was a Country* offers a nuanced and critical analysis of the legacy of colonialism in Nigeria. The book highlights the ways in which colonialism created divisions and tensions within Nigerian society and how it contributed to the country's ongoing struggles for political and economic development.

2. English Language as a Carrier of Nigerian Experience

Language plays a fundamental role in all human endeavours, and it serves as a crucial link between gender dynamics and power dynamics, as suggested by Oloruntoba (2009). By virtue of its role, language not only shapes our understanding of gender and power but also facilitates the expression of diverse ideological perspectives. Furthermore, language acts as a window through which we perceive and comprehend the world, as it is intricately connected to our thoughts.

Consequently, language becomes a central element in deciphering and interpreting our surroundings. However, the interplay between language, gender, and power creates a perplexing situation, making humans complex entities. Consequently,

language is manipulated to align with various ideological factions. Through the utilization of language to articulate ideologies such as gender, individuals acquire a means of exerting influence and asserting power (Olusola 82-83).

Achebe's statement that "The English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience," ("English and the African Writer" 349) encapsulates his perspective on using English as a medium to express his African identity and experiences. It reflects his belief in the potential of the English language to effectively convey the depth and complexity of African cultures and narratives.

As a Nigerian author writing in English, Achebe played a significant role in shaping African literature and challenging Western stereotypes and misrepresentations of Africa. Through his works, such as *Things Fall Apart*, he demonstrated that English could be utilized to convey the realities, values, and struggles of African societies, fostering a greater understanding of African experiences worldwide (Sahed 112).

Achebe's statement also touches upon the notion of linguistic agency and empowerment. By embracing and adapting the English language, he reclaimed it as a tool for asserting African perspectives and challenging the dominance of Western narratives. In this sense, he saw English not as a barrier, but as a means of engaging with a broader global audience, initiating conversations, and dismantling misconceptions.

However, it is crucial to recognize that Achebe's embrace of English does not imply the rejection of native African languages. Achebe was a staunch advocate for the preservation and celebration of African languages and cultures. His use of English

was a strategic choice to navigate the literary landscape and amplify African voices within a predominantly English-speaking world.

Achebe's statement has sparked debates and discussions about language, cultural identity, and the complexities of using colonial languages to express indigenous experiences. Some argue that the English language, by its very nature, carries embedded biases and limitations that can obscure or dilute the intricacies of African cultures.

The newly established African nations faced numerous challenges inherited from nationalism upon gaining independence. Language was a pressing concern, similar to the situation in India, where the search for an acceptable national language among competing regional tongues caused problems. Bilingual countries like Canada and South Africa also acknowledge the difficulties arising from linguistic duality.

Language, being closely tied to ethnicity, is the most visible expression of cultural identity, and multicultural nations inherently face the potential for division and instability. The need for a national language was evident for the new and politically fragile African countries, as it would signify unity. However, no African country has the luxury of having a single language within its borders. Even Tanzania's national Swahili program, often cited as an exception, disregards certain significant minority languages deliberately, emphasizing the central government's authority both linguistically and politically (Povey 14-15).

A national literature encompasses the entire nation and caters to a broad audience across its territory. It is typically written in the national language. On the other hand, ethnic literature is specific to a particular ethnic group within the nation and is not accessible to the wider population.

A national literature is one that takes the whole nation for its province, and has a realized or potential audience throughout its territory; in other words, a literature that is written in the national language. An ethnic literature is one that is available only to one ethnic group within the nation. If you take Nigeria as an example, the national literature, as I see it, is the literature written in English; and the ethnic literatures are in Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Effik, Edo, Ijaw, and so on (Achebe, "English and the African Writer").

Within African countries, all African languages are considered minority languages, regardless of their individual characteristics. These languages range from isolated ones with a small number of speakers, likely facing extinction, to those spoken by millions across multiple countries, such as Fulani-Hausa. When there have been efforts to promote the use of indigenous languages, it is usually the language of the dominant administrative authority that is enforced. For example, in Ethiopia, Amharic speakers, who are part of the power elite, strongly emphasize the learning of their language as the official language. However, such policies often lead to local resentment, and there are motives other than linguistic reasons behind these language policies (Povey 15).

In Africa, there exists a paradox where the language used for national unity is often a non-African language. One could argue that English is the only language in which Nigerian nationality, for instance, can be expressed. The Nigerian Daily Express once commented that "English is the one outward expression of all that unites the various people in this country." When someone declares their allegiance in an indigenous language, it reveals the divisive nature of ethnicity (Povey 15). Achebe asserts:

What is it that has conspired to place English in the position of national language in many parts of Africa? Quite simply, it is the fact that these nations were created in the first place by the intervention of the

British, which (I hasten to add) is not saying that the peoples comprising these nations were invented by the British(Achebe, “English and the African Writer” 344).

The colonial powers deeply embedded their languages within the social structure of their territories. These languages became associated with higher education, national government, the press, and radio. Consequently, they provided opportunities for social advancement within the system and created new elites composed of those who could interpret and translate the language, including Oxford MA graduates. This extensive linguistic legacy proved difficult to shed after independence, especially since bilateral contacts and associations with former colonial powers often remained intact, both formally through organizations like the Commonwealth and informally through the retention of foreign cultural practices (Povey 15).

However, the persistence of the foreign language was not primarily due to this robust linguistic inheritance. In reality, an African language could have been adapted to meet contemporary needs. There is no inherent superiority of one language over another in terms of efficiency. Some argue superficially that higher education, in the modern sense, must be conducted in a European language. However, both Israelis and Japanese have shown that it is not essential, as they have modified their languages to incorporate the vocabulary of contemporary technology.

In contrast, African languages have not undergone similar changes because new technology primarily existed at the national level rather than the regional level. People employed in these fields had acquired their skills in Europe and found it easier to use the language of their education when exchanging technical ideas. Thus, there was no pressure for African vernacular languages to provide an improved means of communication in these new domains, unlike the demands placed on biblical Hebrew.

English was readily available to efficiently supply the new technical terminology (Povey 15).

There are not many countries in Africa today where you could abolish the language of the erst-while colonial powers and still retain the facility for mutual communication. Those African writers who have chosen to write in English or French are not unpatriotic smart alecs, with an eye on the main chance outside their countries. They are by-products of the same processes that made the new nation-states of Africa(Achebe, “English and the African Writer” 344).

This quote raises broader questions about language, identity, and cultural preservation. It prompts us to consider the complex dynamics involved when individuals choose to write in a language other than their native tongue. Achebe's personal choice to embrace English while still valuing ethnic literatures acknowledges the importance of linguistic diversity and the richness it brings to the literary landscape. This quote also invites reflection on the impact of colonialism and the enduring legacy of the English language in African societies. It serves as a reminder that language choices are often influenced by historical circumstances and individual circumstances, but they should be made with thoughtful consideration for cultural heritage and the potential for literary growth.

“The real question is not whether Africans could write in English, but whether they ought to. Is it right that a man should abandon his mother tongue for someone else's? It looks like a dreadful betrayal, and produces a guilty feeling. But for me there is no other choice. I have been given this language and I intend to use it. I hope, though, that there always will be men, like the late Chief Fagunwa, who will choose to write in their native tongue and ensure that our ethnic literatures will flourish side by side with the national ones. For those of us who opt for English, there is much work ahead and much excitement (Achebe, “English and the African Writer” 348).

Through his writing, Achebe strives to infuse African culture, history, and language into English, creating what he refers to as a "new English" that reflects the African experience. This modified version of English maintains a connection with its ancestral home while adapting to the African surroundings and capturing the essence of Nigerian culture.

I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home, but altered to suit its new African surroundings (Achebe, "English and the African Writer" 349).

Both Achebe and Adichie demonstrate their mastery of the English language by infusing it with elements from their traditional Igbo language, thereby asserting power and engaging in discussions of gender. Achebe's memoir reveals a leaning toward patriarchal gender and power ideologies through his use of rhetorical devices and proverbs. On the other hand, Adichie subtly expresses her feminine beliefs regarding gender through her skilful and elegant use of language.

The significant presence of Igbo language influences in the English texts produced by both authors serves as evidence that language serves not only as a potent tool for expressing an author's unique ideological perspectives but also as a source of power in itself. Both Achebe and Adichie utilize language as an instrument to convey their distinct gender inclinations and power narratives within the selected texts (Olusola 82).

Achebe wrote in English in order to share his personal experiences and suffering with the whole world even he acknowledged that it is kind of colonial legacy in Nigeria, imposed by the British during the colonial era. Despite this, Achebe seeks to reshape and redefine English to suit the African context and express his unique

perspective. English serves as a means of communication and enables Achebe to reach a broader audience beyond Nigeria (Achebe, "English and the African Writer" 349).

By writing in English, Achebe aims to bridge the gap between his African heritage and the Western world, allowing his work to be accessible and understood by a global readership. Overall, in *There Was a Country*, English becomes a powerful tool for Achebe to articulate his thoughts convey the impact of the Biafran War, and challenge the dominant narratives surrounding Africa. It showcases his ability to navigate between different cultures and create a literary space where African voices can be heard and understood(Thelwell39).

Nevertheless, Achebe's belief in the power of language, particularly English, to carry the weight of African experiences demonstrates his dedication to challenging dominant narratives and providing a platform for African voices. His assertion serves as a testament to the transformative potential of literature and the ability of language to bridge cultures, fostering greater understanding and appreciation of diverse perspectives.

3. Autobiographical Elements in *There Was a Country*

The autobiography can be seen as a peculiar creation in the realm of literature. While language and paint differ greatly as materials, autobiography relies on vision and memory as fundamental controls, time and space as central challenges, and reduction and expansion as desired objectives. It serves as both an artistic endeavour and a reflection of one's life, encompassing the necessary years. Throughout

people's existence, they often lack certainty regarding cause and effect, and rarely grasp the complete shape or continuity of their experiences.

However, when they write their life story, they skilfully define, limit, and mould that life into a self-portrait that differs significantly from their original model. It resembles real life but is, in fact, composed and framed as a deliberate creation. Autobiography cannot be considered strictly "factual," "unimaginative," or even "non-fictional," as it embraces various storytelling techniques and disregards many of the restrictions—such as accuracy, impartiality, and inclusiveness—imposed on other historical literary forms. Consequently, readers can legitimately analyse autobiography, like other literary genres, by identifying its structural components and observing their intricate relationships. To establish principles of autobiographical writing, the first step is to recognize these elements (Howarth 364-65).

At the forefront of an autobiographer's approach lies the crucial element of character, which shapes the image or self-portrait presented in their book. Several factors contribute to the formation of this character, including their sense of self, place, history, and motives for writing. It is important to distinguish this character from the authors themselves, as they function as a dual persona: narrating the story and embodying it as the protagonist. Despite being the same person, both artist and model, there are distinct points of separation between them. They inhabit the same time and space, but the narrator possesses more knowledge than the protagonist, while maintaining the latter's ignorance to create believable suspense. Ultimately, the contrasting images must merge as the past converges with the present, aligning the protagonist's actions with the narrator's thoughts (Howarth 365-67).

In Chinua Achebe's memoir *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra*, the element of character is significant, particularly in relation to Achebe himself as the narrator and protagonist. Achebe's portrayal of his own character and the characters around him helps shape the narrative and provides insight into his personal experiences and perspectives.

For a brief period, I spent some time living with my older brother John, who was working at Central School, Nekede, as a teacher. My father had wanted John to follow in his footsteps and become a teacher too. John was a gifted student and successfully fulfilled that dream (Achebe 17).

Achebe presents himself as a reflective and introspective narrator throughout the memoir. His character as a narrator is characterized by a deep sense of empathy, compassion, and a desire to document and understand the events of the Nigerian Civil War. Achebe's voice serves as a guide, offering historical context, personal anecdotes, and critical analysis.

When Azikiwe came back from his university studies in the United States of America, in 1934 or thereabout, he did not return to Onitsha, his hometown. He settled at first in Accra, in the Gold Coast (present-day Ghana), where he worked as the editor of the African Morning Post, a new daily newspaper. There were stories of inter-ethnic friction in the Gold Coast, so he moved to Lagos. Despite initial problems in Ghana, Azikiwe had acquired admirers, especially young aspiring freedom fighters (Achebe, *There Was a Country*, 41).

Achebe's character as the protagonist in his memoir is shaped by his identity as a Nigerian writer and intellectual. He expresses a strong sense of cultural pride and an unwavering commitment to social justice. Achebe's belief in the power of literature and his dedication to telling the story of Biafra reflect his character as a writer and advocate for truth.

What then were we to do as writers? What was our role in our new country? How were we to think about the use of our talents? I can say that when a number of us decided that we would be writers, we had not thought through these questions very clearly. In fact, we did not have a clue what we were up against. What I can say is that it was clear to many of us that an indigenous African literary renaissance was overdue. A major objective was to challenge stereotypes, myths, and the image of ourselves and our continent, and to recast them through stories—prose, poetry, essays, and books for our children. That was my overall goal (Achebe, *There Was a Country*, 52-53).

Achebe portrays himself and the people around him with depth and nuance, recognizing the complexities of human nature. He does not shy away from highlighting the flaws and contradictions within individuals, including himself. This approach adds layers to the characters in the memoir and reflects Achebe's understanding of the multidimensionality of human existence.

My elder brother John was a very brilliant man. I still say he was the most brilliant of all of us. He was very eloquent, and he would correct my spoken English. I often wondered about John. . . . How did he gain such control of the English language? (Achebe, *There Was a Country*, 19).

There were four classifications of grades: A for distinction, C for credit, P for pass, and F for fail. Most pupils at Umuahia passed all their subjects. I passed my school certificate exam with five distinctions and one credit. Inyang passed with six distinctions and one credit. I narrowly graduated top of the class only because the distinctions that I got were higher in the courses (26).

Achebe's character is also shaped by his interactions and relationships with others in the memoir. He describes the camaraderie among his fellow writers, intellectuals, and political leaders during the Biafran struggle. Achebe's depiction of these relationships highlights the collective efforts and shared ideals that emerged during the challenging times.

As we sped off, I kept thanking this man for the help. I was completely surprised at the hospitality and warmth that greeted me on my first day in school. His son became a friend, naturally, because he was the first "Umuahian" I had met. Later that semester I would discover that this lad, who would become a renowned physician, Dr. Francis Egbuonu, had come to Umuahia from St. Michael's School, Aba. It was, coincidentally, the very same school that another very close friend of mine, Chike Momah, had attended (Achebe, *There Was a Country*, 21).

Throughout the memoir, Achebe's character undergoes growth and reflection. He confronts the harsh realities of war and grapples with his own limitations and failures. Achebe's introspective character allows readers to witness his personal evolution and the lessons he learns from the tumultuous events he recounts.

Another significant factor in autobiographical strategy is technique, encompassing the artistic elements such as style, imagery, and structure that construct the self-portrait from within. These technical components have not received adequate attention, except for some promising studies on style. Pascal's claim that style varies according to the autobiographical "personality" or "calling" has been challenged by Jean Starobinski, who argues that autobiographers shape style only to meet the requirements of the genre itself. Therefore, style is not subordinate to content but serves as a significant formal device. Even simple stylistic choices, such as tense or person, hold direct meaning as they contribute to broader effects like metaphor and tone (Howarth 366-67).

In *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra*, Chinua Achebe employs various literary techniques to effectively convey his experiences and perspectives. These techniques include his writing style, use of imagery, narrative structure, and metaphors. Here is an exploration of these elements in the memoir. His writing style is marked by clarity, directness, and accessibility. He uses a straightforward and

conversational tone, allowing readers to easily engage with his storytelling. His prose is often rich in descriptive detail, creating a vivid sense of time, place, and emotion (Sahed 121-123).

Achebe skilfully employs imagery to evoke powerful and sensory experiences. Through vivid descriptions, he paints a visual picture of the events, landscapes, and people he encounters. This use of imagery enhances the reader's immersion in the memoir and helps to convey the depth of his experiences. Besides, the memoir follows a primarily chronological structure, tracing the events leading up to and during the Nigerian Civil War. Achebe weaves together personal anecdotes, historical analysis, and reflections to construct a cohesive narrative. This structure allows for a comprehensive understanding of the war's impact on Achebe and the broader context of Nigeria (Achebe, *There Was a Country*58).

As mentioned earlier, Achebe employs metaphors to enhance his storytelling. He employs figurative language to create symbolic connections and convey deeper meanings. These metaphors often highlight the complexities of war, the Nigerian nation, and personal experiences, allowing for a richer understanding of the memoir's themes, such as the war as a nightmare, the triangle game and the scapegoat metaphor (Achebe, *There Was a Country*91-99).

He also incorporates intertextual references in his memoir, drawing from literature, history, and other sources. He quotes poems, songs, and speeches to provide additional layers of meaning and context. This intertextuality enriches the narrative and highlights the connections between literature, politics, and society.

There is some connection between the particular distress of war, the particular tension of war, and the kind of literary response it inspires. I chose to express

myself in that period through poetry, as opposed to other genres... As a group these poems tell the story of Biafra's struggle and suffering. I have made the conscious choice to juxtapose poetry and prose in this book to tell complementary stories, in two art forms (Achebe, *There Was a Country*04)

Achebe interweaves personal reflection and critical analysis throughout the memoir. He examines the causes and consequences of the Nigerian Civil War, reflecting on its impact on the nation and its people. Achebe's analytical approach invites readers to engage with the historical and political dimensions of the narrative(Achebe, *There Was a Country* 39, 92, 226).

The final strategic element is theme, encompassing the ideas and beliefs that lend meaning to an autobiography or make it a consistent reflection of the writer. Themes may arise from the author's overarching philosophy, religious faith, or political and cultural attitudes. While themes are personal, they also serve as representatives of their era, just as other literary works can illustrate the history of ideas. Autobiography, in particular, possesses a broad thematic foundation as its writers grapple with issues like love, memory, and death that appeal to a wide readership. These themes can be attributed to historical causes, acknowledging the evolving dynamics between authors and readers over the centuries.He opined that, “we were church people after all, helping the local church spread Christianity” (Achebe, *There Was a Country* 12).

However, it is more prudent to observe how each autobiographer orchestrates their theme in various contexts and disguises to establish a stronger sense of intellectual unity for themselves, their story, and their readers. Broadly speaking, the theme of autobiography is life itself, as the narrative cannot legitimately conclude with death – the hand must continue to pose while in perpetual motion. An autobiographer requires an alternative form of narrative resolution that connects their

personal ambitions with those of the reader. As we will discover, the thematic conclusions drawn are the clearest indications of variations in autobiographical strategy (Howarth 365-67).

In *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra*, Chinua Achebe explores several themes that reflect his ideas and beliefs, providing a consistent reflection of the writer's perspectives. Achebe emphasizes the importance of preserving and celebrating one's cultural identity. He expresses a strong sense of pride in his Nigerian heritage and highlights the richness and diversity of Nigerian culture. Achebe's portrayal of Biafra's struggle for independence underscores the significance of cultural identity in shaping the nation's aspirations (Ekhatör 18).

Achebe critically examines the impact of colonialism on Nigeria's socio-political landscape. He highlights the lingering effects of colonial rule, such as economic disparities, ethnic tensions, and political instability. Achebe calls for a reevaluation of Nigeria's postcolonial trajectory, advocating for a more just and inclusive society (Ekhatör 23).

The Nigerian Civil War, particularly the secessionist state of Biafra, serves as a central theme in the memoir. Achebe provides a personal account of the war's devastating impact on individuals, communities, and the nation as a whole. He reflects on the causes of the conflict, its human toll, and the need for reconciliation and healing (Ekhatör 14).

Achebe firmly believes in the power of literature to shape society and bring about positive transformation. He highlights the role of writers and intellectuals in advocating for justice, exposing societal issues, and promoting empathy and understanding. Achebe's own work as a writer and his dedication to telling the story

of Biafra exemplify his belief in literature as a catalyst for change. Achebe also reflects on the challenges of nation-building and the importance of unity in a diverse society. He calls for the recognition of shared values and a collective effort to overcome divisions and promote a sense of common purpose. Achebe's vision of a united and inclusive Nigeria is evident throughout the memoir. Sahed has explained this idea in the following quotation,

As such, Achebe believes that the essential role of the African writer and his moral obligation is to work on correcting the false impressions of Africa in Western narrative. Achebe highly stressed the vital rationality of precolonial African peoples as a way to challenge racist stereotypes (Sahed 235).

These themes in *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra* align with Chinua Achebe's broader body of work and his commitment to social justice, cultural pride, and the power of storytelling. The memoir serves as a platform for Achebe to explore these ideas and beliefs, offering a thoughtful and introspective reflection on Nigeria's history and his own experiences.

4. Metaphors of Nation and War in *There Was a Country*

Chinua Achebe's memoir, *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra*, created significant controversy within the Nigerian political landscape upon its publication in 2012. This section examines the metaphors employed by the author to portray the concepts of the Nigerian society, the nation and the Nigerian civil war within the memoir.

InyaOnwu has dealt with this stylistic writing in Achebe's memoir, thus for him two central metaphors used by the author to represent the notion of nation are the "dysfunctional family" and "scapegoat" metaphors. In relation to war, metaphors

included “war as nightmare”, “as a triangle game”, and “as a series of violent crimes”. This metaphorical framework underscores the significance of poor governance, corruption, and ethnic politics in the failure of Nigeria's initial democratic experience (1960-1966) and the ensuing civil war of 1967-1970 (Inya 199).

The metaphor of the dysfunctional family is used to depict the state of Nigeria during the period of the Nigerian civil war and its aftermath.

That epiphany made us realize that Nigeria “did not belong we,” as Liberians would put it. “This country belong we” was the popular pidgin English mantra from their liberation struggle. That was not the case for Igbo people and many others from Eastern Nigeria. Nigeria did not belong to us. It was now clear to many of us that we, the Nigerian people, were not what we had thought we were. The Nigeria that meant so much to all of us was not reciprocating the affection we had for it. The country had not embraced us, the Igbo people and other Easterners, as full-fledged members of the Nigerian family. That was the predicament that the Igbo and many peoples from Eastern Nigeria found themselves in, and one that informed Ojukwu’s decisions, I believe, on the eve of civil war (Achebe 87-88).

Achebe compares the nation to a family that is deeply divided, plagued by internal conflicts, and unable to maintain a sense of unity and stability. The dysfunctional family metaphor highlights the fragmentation and discord within Nigerian society, particularly along ethnic lines. It symbolizes the breakdown of trust, communication, and cooperation among different ethnic groups, mirroring the tensions and violence that erupted during the civil war between the Nigerian government and the secessionist state of Biafra. Just as a dysfunctional family experiences strained relationships, power struggles, and an inability to effectively resolve conflicts, Nigeria, in Achebe's memoir, is portrayed as a nation torn apart by ethnic rivalries and political struggles.

The metaphor emphasizes the deep-rooted problems and unresolved issues that continue to affect the country's postcolonial development and nation-building efforts. By employing the metaphor of the dysfunctional family, Achebe highlights the need for reconciliation, healing, and a collective effort to overcome the divisions and challenges that have hindered Nigeria's progress. It serves as a critique of the political and social landscape of the country while urging for a renewed commitment to unity and understanding among its diverse ethnic groups (Msiska 405-07).

The metaphor of the scapegoats is used to illustrate the unjust blaming and targeting of a particular group or individual for the problems and conflicts that occurred during the Nigerian civil war.

The weeks following the coup saw Easterners attacked both randomly and in an organized fashion. There seemed to be a lust for revenge, which meant an excuse for Nigerians to take out their resentment on the Igbos who led the nation in virtually every sector—politics, education, commerce, and the arts. This group, the Igbo, that gave the colonizing British so many headaches and then literally drove them out of Nigeria was now an open target, scapegoats for the failings and grievances of colonial and post-independence Nigeria(Achebe 66-67).

The concept of a scapegoat refers to a person or group who is made to bear the blame, punishment, or responsibility for the actions or shortcomings of others. In the context of Achebe's memoir, the scapegoat metaphor highlights the scapegoating of the Igbo people, who were predominantly associated with the secessionist state of Biafra.

During the civil war, the Igbo people were subjected to discrimination, violence, and persecution. They were often scapegoated as the cause of Nigeria's political and social problems, with their ethnicity being used as a basis for their exclusion and

mistreatment. This scapegoating reinforced ethnic divisions and perpetuated a narrative that marginalized and dehumanized the Igbo people. By using the metaphor of the scapegoat, Achebe critiques the unjust and unfounded blaming of the Igbo people for the country's woes. He highlights the destructive consequences of such scapegoating, emphasizing the need to recognize the complexities of the conflict and to foster a more inclusive and empathetic understanding of Nigeria's history and diverse ethnic groups.

The scapegoat metaphor also points to the larger issue of accountability and responsibility within the nation. It raises questions about the collective responsibility for the events of the civil war and challenges the simplistic narratives that single out one group as the sole cause of the conflict. Overall, the scapegoat metaphor in Achebe's memoir serves as a powerful critique of the scapegoating of the Igbo people and calls for a more nuanced and inclusive understanding of Nigeria's history and the complexities of its social and political dynamics (Smith 788-91).

The metaphor of the nightmare represents the deeply unsettling and traumatic events that Achebe witnessed and experienced during this period. It reflects the sense of chaos, fear, and despair that engulfed the nation, as well as the psychological impact of living through such a harrowing conflict. Achebe's memoir explores the nightmarish realities of war, including the loss of loved ones, the destruction of communities, and the disruption of social and cultural structures. Through vivid and evocative descriptions, Achebe conveys the horrors of war, the arbitrary violence, and the dehumanizing effects it has on individuals and societies.

Furthermore, the metaphor of the nightmare can also extend beyond the immediate context of the Nigerian Civil War. It symbolizes the broader historical and

political implications of colonization and the lasting effects it had on Nigeria and its people. Achebe examines how the legacy of colonialism continues to haunt the country, shaping its social, cultural, and political landscape. By utilizing the metaphor of the nightmare, Achebe emphasizes the significance of acknowledging and grappling with the painful aspects of history. Through his memoir, he seeks to raise awareness about the profound consequences of war and colonization while encouraging dialogue and understanding among different communities and nations (Achebe 91-92).

The metaphor of the triangle game is related to the role of the three powerful countries in the world at that time, Britain, France and USA in the Nigerian Biafra war, highlighting their position as a game concerning the fate of the Nigerian people.

The BBC's Rick Fountain, in a story on Monday, January 3, 2000, called "Secret Papers Reveal Biafra Intrigue," confirms that oil interests and competition between Britain, France, and the United States played a far more important role than the "unified Nigeria" position (Achebe 99-100).

France had a significant role in supporting the secessionist state of Biafra, which sought independence from Nigeria. The French government, under President Charles de Gaulle, provided political and military assistance to Biafra. France supplied weapons, military equipment, and advisers to the Biafran forces, and also facilitated arms shipments through various channels.

The Government [of France] considers that the bloodshed and suffering endured for over a year by the population of Biafra demonstrate their will to assert themselves as a people. Faithful to its principles, the French Government therefore considers that the present conflict should be solved on the basis of the right of peoples to self-determination and should include the setting in motion of appropriate international procedures (Achebe 101).

France's support for Biafra was motivated by several factors. Firstly, it aimed to counterbalance British influence in Nigeria, as France historically had a more neutral stance toward Nigeria's internal conflicts. Additionally, France had economic interests in Biafra, particularly in the form of oil exploration contracts.

There were other French interests that later came to light: Paris wanted the French oil company Elf Aquitaine (which had a smaller market share in Nigeria's oil industry) to have a greater footprint in the West African region(Achebe 102).

Britain, as the former colonial power in Nigeria, had a complex role during the civil war. The British government officially supported the Nigerian government led by General Yakubu Gowon and recognized Nigeria as the legitimate government. Britain provided military support, including weapons and training, to the Nigerian federal forces.

Britain's position was primarily driven by the principle of maintaining the unity and territorial integrity of Nigeria. Additionally, British officials were concerned about the potential destabilizing effects of supporting a secessionist movement and were mindful of the potential for setting a precedent for other secessionist movements in Africa.

Great Britain's official response to the conflict, we were told, was predicated upon the fact that as our "former colonial master," she would not stand for the breakup of one of her prized colonies, especially one she had worked hard to develop (Achebe 99).

The United States initially maintained a policy of non-interference in the Nigeria Civil War, emphasizing the principle of non-alignment and not taking sides.

The United States of America was officially “neutral” during the conflict, which meant that it overtly supported neither the Nigerians nor the Biafrans (Achebe 102).

However, as the conflict progressed, the U.S. shifted its position to support the Nigerian government. The U.S. provided significant military assistance to the Nigerian federal forces, including weapons, ammunition, and military advisors. The American support aimed to maintain stability and prevent the breakup of a major African country. Additionally, the U.S. government viewed the conflict through the lens of the Cold War, considering Nigeria an important strategic partner against the spread of Soviet influence in Africa (Achebe 102-104).

Biafra was like a vision of the apocalypse is another metaphorical picture used by Achebe to describe the crimes made by the Nigerian army against the Ibo people."

On entry into Aba, the Nigerian soldiers massacred more than 2000 civilians. Susan Masid of the French Press Agency reporting this horrifying incident had this to say: “Young Ibos [sic] with terrifying eyes and trembling lips told journalists in Aba that in the villages Nigerian troops came from behind, shooting and firing everywhere, shooting everybody who was running, firing into the homes (Emphases in original); (Achebe 138).

Biafra was like a vision of the apocalypse, a haunting and harrowing portrayal that Chinua Achebe skilfully employed to underscore the unimaginable atrocities committed by the Nigerian army against the Ibo people. Through this metaphorical picture, Achebe evoked a sense of utter devastation, illustrating the catastrophic impact of the conflict on the lives and land of the Ibo community.

In comparing Biafra to an apocalypse, Achebe aimed to capture the profound sense of destruction and desolation that engulfed the region during the Nigerian Civil War. The metaphor not only conveys the magnitude of the suffering endured by the

Ibo people, but it also emphasizes the far-reaching consequences of the conflict, both on a physical and emotional level.

Just as an apocalypse signifies a cataclysmic event that brings about the end of the world, the reference to Biafra as an apocalypse highlights the severe disruption and disintegration experienced by the Ibo community. It signifies the collapse of their society, the shattering of their dreams and aspirations, and the annihilation of their way of life.

Moreover, the metaphor of the apocalypse conveys a sense of chaos, horror, and a loss of hope. It suggests the sheer scale of violence, mass displacement, famine, and disease that afflicted Biafra during the war. By associating Biafra with this apocalyptic vision, Achebe powerfully conveys the magnitude of the Nigerian army's crimes against the Ibo people, depicting their actions as nothing short of an apocalyptic nightmare.

Through this vivid metaphorical picture, Achebe compels readers to confront the brutal realities of war, urging them to bear witness to the immense suffering inflicted upon the Ibo people. It serves as a poignant reminder of the need to acknowledge and remember the dark chapters of history, so as to prevent the repetition of such atrocities in the future.

“Beacon” is another metaphorical picture used by Achebe in the memoir, “how Mandela became the beacon of justice and hope on the continent, indeed for the world. For those who do not know, Mandela did not have an easy life. He fought alongside African heroes” (Achebe 258). This means that Mandela became the beacon of justice and hope on the continent. Indeed, he can be considered a metaphor

for the world. It is used figuratively to describe Mandela's role as a guiding light or a source of inspiration and guidance.

By comparing Mandela to a beacon, the metaphor suggests that he stood out prominently, radiating a sense of justice and hope that illuminated the path for others. Beacons are typically used to guide ships or travellers in darkness, and in this context, Mandela's actions and principles served as a guiding force for those seeking justice and positive change in the world.

The metaphorical use of "beacon" not only emphasizes Mandela's significant impact but also underscores his ability to inspire and lead others towards a better future. It conveys the idea that his presence and actions were instrumental in shining a light on the principles of justice, equality, and hope, illuminating the way for others to follow.

CONCLUSION

The verdict: Chinua Achebe, a novelist, poet, and lecturer from Nigeria, left a rich and varied legacy. Achebe was educated in English and grew up in a privileged position within the Nigerian power structure, but he also developed a sense of cultural pride and a love for his own tongue. In addition to bringing him acclaim, his groundbreaking book *Things Fall Apart*, released in 1958, contested the Western dominance and colonialism narrative in African literature. Achebe became a well-known public intellectual due to his dedication to African culture and independence as well as his outspoken support for social justice and equality. His writings and thoughts have changed the way that the world views Africa and its people, inspiring and influencing writers and philosophers all across the world. Further evidence of Achebe's influence can be found in his

His capacity to address significant issues of contemporary human and African realities through his literature, as well as a critique of canonical racism in academia. Despite having remained silent for more than 40 years, Achebe's memoir *There Was a Country* captures his in-depth thought and introspection as well as his resolve to give the Igbo people a voice and make sure that their history and experiences are not lost. Achebe has left a lasting legacy that has had a significant influence on literature, society, and the fight for justice and equality.

Fact, there were many difficulties in Nigeria's post-independence era, such as racial and religious tensions, poverty, and poor infrastructure. Political unrest, corruption, and economic hardships plagued the nation as it sought stability. Oil was initially found in the Niger Delta region. economic prosperity, but ultimately resulted in poor management and downfall. Nigeria's population was divided along racial and

religious lines, with several ethnic groups predominating in each of the country's three main regions. A succession of coups and countercoups occurred throughout the post-independence period, which resulted in the installation of military government.

An important occasion during this period was the Nigeria-Biafra conflict, which started in 1967. The Ibo tribe, which controls Biafra, declared its independence, which sparked a war with the federal government. A blockade established by the federal government during the war caused a humanitarian crisis and drew attention from around the world. Some nations recognized Biafra in response to the struggle, but the backing of the world community was insufficient to change the course of events. The separatists. A successful final attack on the Biafran enclave resulted from Nigerian military leadership changes and strategy revisions after the military standoff had lasted for several years.

Nigeria has made progress in several sectors, like healthcare and education, despite these obstacles and conflicts. The entertainment sector has expanded to rank among the biggest in Africa. But the same problems that plagued the nation after independence still plague it today. There is optimism that Nigeria will be able to overcome its difficulties and keep moving forward in the direction of stability, growth, and unification.

The term "postcolonialism" is nuanced and complex, defying easy definition. In the past 25 years, it has become a relatively new notion and is still being discussed among academics. Some people consider its ambiguity to be one of its most important features since it allows for a wide variety of critical thought and captures the contemporary view of colonialism. The phrase has global significance and is useful for examining literary and cultural variety.

Despite having a brief history, "postcolonialism" is nonetheless important in today's conversation. It is frequently used in connection with other concepts that support and overlap its notions, such as "third world" or "postmodern". Although its use as a theoretical formation has diminished through time, it nevertheless retains some influence.

The Latin word "colony," which originally denoted a resident or farmer, is whence the phrase "postcolonialism" gets its name. However, over time, the definition of "colony" changed, becoming connected to intrusive settlements and losing its significance. to premodern practices. Different sorts of colonization were justified and explained using this change.

The word "postcolonialism" is made up of the prefix "post-," which designates a period of time following a momentous event, and the suffix "-ism," which may refer to practices, behaviors, or doctrines associated with the headword. Therefore, "postcolonialism" includes both the options for action and the states following colonialism as well as the ideology or theory related to it.

Furthermore, there is ambiguity since the term "postcolonialism" has two competing definitions. The prospects for growth and activity following colonialism are emphasized in one interpretation, while a militant tendency nearing dogmatism is discussed in the other. The latter perspective, which is based on "postcolonial theory," restricts critical thought and prevents a thorough comprehension of the subject.

Interdisciplinary postcolonial theory draws from a number of fields, including literary studies, anthropology, philosophy, political science, and sociology. It has created a unique vocabulary of crucial words and ideas utilized in postcolonial criticism.

African postcolonial literature first appeared after the African nations were freed from colonial rule. It examines themes of identity, culture, race, politics, and social justice while reflecting the experiences of Africans both during and after colonialism. In order to portray their diverse cultural and linguistic identities, African writers frequently employ a hybrid language that mixes African and European elements.

Due to the crucial role that language plays in the enslavement and control of colonized people, postcolonial writers have addressed language concerns and created a hybrid language that emphasizes the disjointed state of colonized mentality.

In addition to discussing the effects of colonialism and imperialism on society, African postcolonial literature emphasizes the fight for political and social justice and criticizes African leaders for failing to solve the problems facing their nations.

The global literary canon has benefited greatly from African postcolonial literature, which has influenced writers everywhere and shaped the cultural and political conversation in Africa.

Beyond criticism, postcolonial theory explores issues of identity, perception, and ideology. It contests the ingrained imperialist discourse patterns that are still present in our social and cultural institutions even in the so-called postcolonial era.

Overall, postcolonialism as a concept and subject of study is still developing and is still important for comprehending the effects of colonialism and how they continue to affect civilizations all over the world.

This research has also examined both autobiographies and memoirs as types of autobiographical writing that provide light on the authors' own histories and experiences. While autobiographies cover every aspect of a person's life, memoirs

have a more focused subject matter and are frequently concerned with particular experiences, feelings, and emotions. While memoirs have an emphasis on personal reflection and exploration of a specific time or incident, autobiographies strive to present a comprehensive overview of the author's life.

Moreover, the history of autobiographies dates noteworthy examples can be found in the writings of Greek and Roman historians, which date back to antiquity. Autobiographies have become a prominent literary genre in recent years, including books by well-known people like Nelson Mandela, Anne Frank, and Malcolm X. Readers can learn about other people's experiences through autobiography, which encourages self-expression, self-reflection, and understanding.

On the other hand, memoirs, which largely concentrate on the authors' careers, have historically been connected to politicians, members of the courtly society, military commanders, and merchants. Today's expectations, however, have changed, and more private information is now expected to be included in memoirs. Memoirs give a first-person account of particular events in one's life, with an emphasis on the lessons that can be drawn from those encounters.

Therefore, memoirs don't need to do the investigation and fact-checking that autobiographies do. Memoirs rely on personal memory and are more subjective. A memoir is sometimes described as a compilation of the highlights, leaving out the lowlights, of a person's life.

Chinua Achebe's book *There Was a Country* mixes prose, poetry, history, and memoirs. Achebe provides a riveting first-person story that highlights his knowledge and humanity by drawing on forty years of scholarship, meditation, and personal

experience. This work strengthens Achebe's position as a prominent moral and literary voice of our day, and it carries weight.

Thus, *There Was a Country* by Chinua Achebe offers a thorough analysis of the effects of colonialism in Nigeria. According to Achebe, colonialism caused tensions and divisions in Nigerian society, which prevented the country from being united as a whole, as well as a fractured cultural and economic environment. He examines the detrimental effects of British colonial education, which, in his opinion, was created to uphold British control and did not effectively prepare Nigerians for progress after independence. Achebe also discusses the British-instituted authoritarian and centralized governmental structure that persisted after independence and impeded the formation of a unifying national identity.

Although Bruce Gilley and other authors and critics contend that Achebe's final book expressed a more nuanced viewpoint, it is vital to keep in mind that while Achebe's work is frequently perceived as critical of colonialism, Gilley claims that Achebe recognized the British had the knowledge and skills necessary to rule Nigeria just as they had successfully ruled over much larger nations like India and Australia. Achebe's apparent shift in perspective is thought to be the outcome of his extensive thought on African politics and history. It is crucial to stress that Achebe does not defend colonialism; rather, he emphasizes the necessity of appreciating the British government's skill without downplaying its drawbacks.

As such, *There Was a Country* provides a critical examination of colonialism's negative impacts on Nigeria, focusing in particular on how they affected national identity, education, and governance. Important discussions regarding colonialism's

long-lasting effects and its intricate legacies in postcolonial African society are sparked by Achebe's writing.

As a fundamental link between gender dynamics and power dynamics, language plays a significant role in human undertakings. It influences how we view gender and power, allows for the expression of many ideologies, and serves as a lens through which we view and interpret the outside world. But because of the complicated interactions between language, gender, and power, language can be used to support various ideological positions. The quote from Chinua Achebe, "*The English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience,*" perfectly expresses his viewpoint on utilizing English as a medium to communicate his African identity and experiences. Achebe, a Nigerian novelist who wrote in English, made a vital contribution to dispelling Western misconceptions about Africa and showing how English might be used to communicate the realities, ideals, and difficulties of African nations.

It is evident that Achebe's use of English is not a rejection of local African languages; rather, it is a calculated move that helps African voices be heard in an English-speaking world while navigating the literary terrain. Achebe's assertion has spurred discussions regarding the difficulties involved in utilizing colonial languages to convey indigenous perspectives, as well as the potential constraints and prejudices included therein. The difficulties with language that colonialism and nationalism left behind in African countries also show the complexity of language as a sign of cultural identity and cohesion.

Because colonial powers thoroughly ingrained their languages within the social structures of their territories, the persistence of non-African languages as national

languages in Africa is a historical legacy of colonial powers. It was challenging to overcome the linguistic hierarchy that was brought about by the linkage of these languages with advanced technology, national government, media, and higher education following independence. However, the choice of language for literary expression should be selected carefully, taking into account both the potential for literary progress and cultural preservation.

The fact that Achebe values ethnic literature while writing in English demonstrates the significance of linguistic diversity and the depth it adds to the literary environment. Achebe aims to create a "new English" that reflects the African experience by incorporating African culture, history, and language into English through his work. Achebe and other African writers, like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, use their use of traditional African languages to assert their authority and engage in topics of gender to show that they are fluent in English.

Overall, language is a powerful instrument for conveying distinct ideologies, claiming dominance, and bridging cultural divides. It has the power to alter by upending prevailing narratives, promoting understanding, and giving a stage for other voices to be heard and understood. Achebe's commitment to altering narratives and giving a global audience a fuller awareness of Africa's intricacies is demonstrated by his faith in the ability of language, particularly English, to convey the weight of African experiences.

To conclude, autobiography is a singular work of writing. It depends on the fundamental controls of vision and memory, the central difficulties of time and space, and the desired outcomes of reduction and expansion. Autobiography is both a creative activity and a reflection of a person's life over the requisite number of years.

Autobiography, however, should not be absolutely defined as "factual," "unimaginative," or even "non-fictional." It disregards a lot of the limitations placed on other historical literary forms and encourages a variety of storytelling styles. By recognizing the elements that make up an autobiography's structure and noting the complex relationships between them, readers can appropriately critique it.

Character, technique, and theme all play important parts in Chinua Achebe's autobiographical essay *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra*. As both the narrator and the main character, Achebe's persona gives the story its shape and provides insight into his experiences, convictions, and personal development. His use of imagery, analogies, narrative structure, intertextuality, and reflective analysis all contribute to the memoir's increased literary and emotional effect. Achebe's perspectives are furthermore consistently reflected in the discussion of topics like identity, cultural pride, colonial legacies, the Nigerian Civil War, literature as a tool for change, and unity and nationhood, which advances knowledge of the themes and background of the memoir.

By dissecting these components of *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra*, we are better able to understand the autobiographer's tactical decisions and the complex interplay between character, technique, and theme. The genre of autobiography provides a potent platform for self-expression and narrative development, allowing authors to craft their lives into intentional works while inviting readers to connect with their goals and shared experiences.

Finally, *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra*, a memoir by Chinua Achebe, uses a variety of metaphors to convey ideas about Nigerian society, the country, and the Nigerian civil war. The metaphor of the dysfunctional family

highlights the division and strife within Nigerian society, notably along ethnic lines, and portrays the situation of Nigeria during the Nigerian civil war and its aftermath. It mirrors the tensions and violence that broke out during the civil war and represents the loss of trust, communication, and cooperation amongst various ethnic groups.

The metaphor of the scapegoat shows how the Igbo people were unfairly blamed for Nigeria's difficulties and conflicts throughout the civil war. It highlights the scapegoating, prejudice, and persecution that the Igbo people experience and criticizes the unjustified blame of one group for the problems of the nation. With the failure of Nigeria's democratic experiment and the resulting civil war, these analogies emphasize the importance of bad government, corruption, and ethnic politics.

In order to describe the terrifying and horrific events of the Nigerian civil war, Achebe adopts the metaphor of the nightmare. It captures the anarchy, dread, and despair that swept the country as well as the psychological toll of experiencing such a gruesome fight. By emphasizing the long-lasting repercussions of colonialism on Nigeria and its people, the nightmare metaphor also represents the colonization's broader historical and political ramifications.

The Triangle Game serves as a metaphor for the involvement of strong nations in the Nigerian Biafra war, including the United States, Britain, and France. Achebe emphasizes their position as a stake in the fate of the Nigerian people, highlighting the geopolitical goals and drivers of their support or neutrality throughout the struggle.

Consequently, Achebe compares the crimes the Nigerian army did against the Ibo people to an apocalypse by comparing Biafra to it. By representing the disintegration of Ibo society and the tremendous pain faced by the people, this metaphor illustrates

the conflict's terrible effects. It acts as a potent reminder of the necessity to acknowledge and remember the dark periods of history in order to stop the repetition of such atrocities.

To sum up, Achebe's use of metaphors in his book offers insightful understandings into the intricate dynamics of Nigerian society, the effects of conflict, and the geopolitical factors at play during the Nigerian civil war. These metaphors encourage readers to engage critically with historical events, consider the difficulties of nation-building, the effects of colonization, and consider the value of cooperation, fairness, and compassion in ensuring a brighter future for Nigeria.

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الملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة ظاهرة التأثير اللامنتاهي للاستعمار على نيجيريا من خلال كتاب أتشبي "كانت هناك دولة"، وهو عبارة عن سرد تاريخي ومذكرات شخصية، يسعى من خلالها الكاتب لتوفير فهم أعمق لحرب نيجيريا الأهلية وتأثيراتها على إثنية الإيبو. يتناول الكتاب مواضيع الهوية والوطنية وعواقب الاضطرابات السياسية والصراع العرقي. يقدم سرد أتشبي منظوراً فريداً حول الأحداث ويسلط الضوء على تعقيدات تاريخ نيجيريا بعد الاستعمار. لذا، الهدف الرئيس لهذه الدراسة هو توضيح دور المذكرات/السير الذاتية في التأمل في بعض القضايا الشخصية والتاريخية والوطنية. لتحقيق هذا الهدف، تسعى الدراسة لتحليل أعمال أتشبي في ضوء نظرية ما بعد

الكولونيالية. حيث اختص الفصل
الأول بالتعرض للسياق الاجتماعي
التاريخي والإطار النظري
للدراسة. بينما يعالج الفصل
الثاني كيفية استخدام
المذكرات لتحليل الماضي
والحاضر في نيجيريا. علاوة على
ذلك، تسلط هذه الدراسة الضوء
على أهمية المذكرات والسير
الذاتية كأدوات قوية للتأمل
في التجارب الشخصية والأحداث
التاريخية والسرديات الوطنية.

الكولونيالية؛ مذكرات؛ سيرة

ذاتية؛ بيافرا؛ الحرب الأهلية