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Tez Danışmanı: Prof. Dr. Rezzan Kocaöner SİLKÜ

İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı

İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Yüksek Lisans Programı

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ABSTRACT

Colonialism is a noteworthy reality that has shaped the world order throughout history. In cooperation with imperialism, it has dominated various nations and created a mounting antagonism between the colonized and the colonizer. In the course of the colonial history, the British Empire took the lead, and Africa as a continent with dignified nations like Nigeria encountered various unfortunate challenges in all spheres of life. Hence, as a reaction to the profound impacts of colonialism, the term postcolonialism came into prominence. Accordingly, postcolonial theory and criticism emerged to unravel the mysteries of colonialism. Likewise, postcolonial literature was born to cast light upon the realities of the whole colonization process from diverse angles. In this regard, the voice of Africa, Chinua Achebe made a stunning exploration of colonialism through his novels *Things Fall Apart*, *Arrow of God*, *No Longer at Ease*, *A Man of the People*, and *Anthills of the Savannah* reflecting the pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial eras chronologically. His novels and works in general are precious sources of information in the field of postcolonialism. In this respect, employing postcolonial theory and criticism as well as the postcolonial terms ambivalence, hybridity, mimicry, subaltern, and appropriation, this study discusses Achebe's novels in a sensible order with a specific focus on narrative features, culture and indigenous order, identity and characterization. Overall, in doing so with an inductive manner, three basic questions pertaining to the motive behind conducting such a study are answered reasonably. That is, the chronological analysis of Achebe's pentalogy, the use of postcolonial theory and criticism, and revealing Achebe's nation-building journey to help regain dignity as well as writing back to the West to correct the fallacies are the clear answers of the questions 'what', 'how', 'why' respectively.

ÖZET

Sömürgecilik, tarih boyunca dünya düzenini şekillendirmiş kayda değer bir gerçekliktir. Emperyalizm ile işbirliği halinde, çeşitli ulusları yönetmiş, sömüren ve sömürülenler arasında giderek artan düşmanlığa yol açmıştır. Sömürgecilik tarihi boyunca, Britanya İmparatorluğu bu sistemin başını çekmiştir ve bu süreçte Nijerya gibi değerli uluslara sahip olan Afrika kıtası hayatın her alanında çeşitli talihsiz zorluklarla yüzleşmiştir. Bu nedenle sömürgeciliğin derin izlerine tepki olarak 'sömürgecilik sonrası' kavramı ortaya çıkmıştır. Sömürgecilik sonrası teori ve eleştirisi ise, sömürgeciliğin sırlarını ortaya koymak adına açığa çıkmıştır. Aynı şekilde sömürgecilik sonrası edebiyatı da çeşitli açılardan tüm sömürgecilik sürecinin gerçeklerine ışık tutmak üzere doğmuştur. Bu bağlamda Afrika'nın sesi olan Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, *Arrow of God*, *No Longer at Ease*, *A Man of the People* ve *Anthills of the Savannah* romanları aracılığı ile Nijerya'nın sömürgecilik öncesi, sömürgecilik ve sömürgecilik sonrası dönemlerini kronolojik bir biçimde yansıtarak sömürgeciliğin çarpıcı bir analizini ortaya koymuştur. Romanları ve genel olarak eserleri, sömürgecilik sonrası alanında değerli bilgi kaynaklarıdır. Bu çalışma, appropriation, subaltern, mimicry, hybridity, ambivalence gibi 'sömürgecilik sonrası' terimleri yanı sıra, kimlik ve karakter, dil ve söylem, kültür ve yerel düzene odaklanarak mantıklı bir sıralama içerisinde sömürgecilik sonrası teorisi ve eleştirisi ışığında Achebe'nin romanlarını incelemektedir. Genel olarak, bu çalışmada tümevarım yöntemi kullanılarak üç temel sorunun cevabı aranmıştır: 'Ne' sorusuna cevaben Achebe'nin beşlemesinin analizi, 'nasıl' sorusuna cevaben sömürgecilik sonrası teori ve eleştirisinin uygulanması; son olarak da Achebe'nin romanları aracılığı ile ulus inşa etme yolculuğunda itibar kazanmaya yardımcı olduğunu ve ayrıca birtakım yanlışlıkları düzeltmek adına Batı'ya karşılık verdiğini ortaya koymak bu çalışmanın 'niçin' yapıldığı sorusuna cevaptır.

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INTRODUCTION

Colonialism is a phenomenon among the most noteworthy realities that has shaped history giving birth to many unexpected outcomes. When the background to humanity is considered, it appears that the roots of the initial colonial acts date back to a relatively distant past. The geographical explorations, which began and accelerated in the 14th and primarily in the 15th century respectively, gave rise to various economic and commercial activities; and this in turn, led a handful of countries to rival each other for material expectations. In this way, the new routes for trade and financial gains became more of an issue for such countries. Accordingly, the competitive nations paved the way for colonialism for basically financial interests and material superiority. Broadly speaking, colonialism can be defined as the expansion policies of a nation to rule other nations by creating political, economic and religious hegemony, as well as systematically shaping the social and cultural life. Throughout history, colonialism as a concept that used to be associated with certain countries such as Spain, Portugal, France, Holland, and Belgium, became synonymous with the British Empire as well. Strikingly, the Empire managed to dominate the world so successfully that authorities even began to call it 'the Empire on which the sun never sets'. Indeed, colonialism can be seen as the chief reason for making the British Empire what it has become in the course of history.

Taking the whole colonial background into account, the 19th century is entitled 'the Golden Age' for the British Empire and the primary reason behind such a glorious age is the clear success of colonial activities. The Empire annexed distant lands on each continent and profoundly influenced these territories, and thus made the term colonialism much more than an expansion policy. In the colonization process of Africa and Nigeria specifically, the role of the British Empire could not be ignored. The Empire always had a keen interest in this region and became active there. To illustrate, Lagos, the invaluable port of Nigeria, was announced as being a colony as part of royalty in 1861; and Nigeria, in this way, was transformed into a critical part of the Empire from then on. Furthermore, Nigeria was turned into a recognized country and became a formal part of the British Empire in 1914. As a colonial policy, indirect rule system was established then and the active colonization process in Nigeria continued

from the middle of the19th century until the year 1960 when Nigeria gained its independence. Likewise, many African nations were liberated in the course of the early decades in the second half of the 20th century. However, in this post-colonial period, colonialism did not disappear; rather, it kept its existence with a more sinister new face opening as the age of 'neo-colonialism'. In this regard, colonial acts and new initiatives have become the major concerns of the postcolonial nations even in the contemporary age, and accordingly decolonization movements have become an important reality and an obligation for the accomplishment of independence in real terms.

Apart from various disciplines such as history, sociology or political sciences, colonialism has become a central element in literary works. Thus, postcolonial literature emerged for the purpose of focusing on the history of the colonization process, as well as the aftermath from various angles to help the decolonization process. In this respect, just like colonialist texts that have a distinctive discourse to manage the process in a smooth way, postcolonial literature has developed a counter discourse in a natural process to hinder the deterioration in each area of life. For postcolonial writers to be able to subvert the existing degeneration and reverse the colonization process, the realities for the consciousness of history, culture, nationhood, identity, language as well as hegemonic discourse have become of prime importance in postcolonial studies. While the colonial system works on the legacy of its existence to ensure its continuation, postcolonial literature has developed counter arguments and a unique discourse to display the facts regarding the critical issues within the actual historical context. In this respect, the prominent voice of the postcolonial Nigeria and Africa, Chinua Achebe undertook a priceless duty to perform and produced matchless novels to reach the masses. He placed colonial history at the heart of his novels *Things Fall Apart*, *Arrow of God*, *No Longer at Ease*, *A Man of the People*, and *Anthills of the Savannah* to address both the colonized and the colonizer for the purpose of *building a nation* through various means as well as *writing back* respectively. Throughout this study, Achebe's novels will be discussed on the basis of their being documents of the actual colonial history in Nigeria in a meaningful chronological order. While exhibiting a colonial journey throughout Achebe's novels, the impacts of colonialism on Nigeria in terms of the indigenous order and culture, identity and nation, language, discourse and

narrative means will be dealt with. The aim here is to illustrate Achebe's active role in the decolonization process through literary combat and the exemplary guidance not only in Nigeria and Africa, but also across the whole colonized nations.

In this study, by employing postcolonial theory and criticism, the main concerns of this study will be to discuss Achebe's narrative in each novel along with the analysis of narration, language and counter discourse, cultural aspects in relation with indigenousness and colonialism, and the major colonized characters as the identities of a desired nation in the face of the colonization process. Besides this, colonialism as the core reality will be presented in relation to the representatives of the system. That is, the major colonizer characters will also be analyzed throughout each novel. In this regard, while tracing the colonial history in Achebe's novels, the prominent purpose of this study is to shed light on the manipulated realities, pacified traditions, silenced identities, and most importantly a lost nation. Briefly, the literary journey with Achebe's five novels, the application of postcolonial theory and criticism, and nation-building process while answering back to the universalist claims will constitute the *what*, *how*, and *why* aspects of the motive behind this study respectively. In other words, the primary objective of this study is to go through Chinua Achebe's novels whilst applying postcolonial theory and criticism to uncover his nation-building mission alongside the historical facts.

In the first chapter, a brief historical background will initially be depicted. Apparently, history is a critical means with which to make sense of the novels in this study since Achebe believes that historical consciousness is of great importance in the understanding of the distant past, its evaluation of the contemporary age today and how it shapes tomorrow. In this respect, the historical context is a prerequisite for both Achebe's novels and this study. Serving as a bridge between different periods, history is believed to be a vital element in order to bind different generations. In this sense, the British Empire will be discussed in light of its colonial history first. Roughly four hundred years in the history of the Empire, from the 16th to 20th century, is densely associated with imperialism and is globally defined as the colonization age. Although the British Empire had a great lifespan full of successful missions and reached its climax in the 19th century, the imperial activities ceased to exist day to day in the 20th

century due to several valid reasons. As a consequence of the inevitable decline of the Empire, many nations gained their independence like Nigeria in 1960. However, colonialism as an instinctively self-feeding system did not vanish completely. At this point, neo-colonialism came into prominence following liberation movements. Though the national freedom stage was supposed to promote further unity and decolonization movements would mean salvation, civil wars, coups and bloodshed in the newly-liberated nations, these became synonymous with the new colonial initiatives of the neo-colonial age. In this part, it will be demonstrated that even such a brief historical survey will justify the argument that the British Empire is the permanent colonial history itself, and this could be seen as one of the major triggers for all the arguments maintained in this study.

Following the historical background, some specific concepts to elaborate on the historical survey will be defined in comparison with one another. It would seem the historical context is of paramount importance in postcolonial theory and criticism; however, such concepts as colonialism, imperialism, neo-colonialism, decolonization, postcolonialism, and the analogies between postcolonialism and postmodernism, poststructuralism, Marxism and feminism will be clarified to make sense of this study in a more thorough manner. While colonialism is a distinctive period as well as the name of a system in history, imperialism is seen as the collaborator of this system. Though they frequently signify a mutual relationship, the basic distinction between them will be described. As for neo-colonialism, literally, why it is the new colonialism will be understood more clearly since the changes in its stature exhibit a harsher strategy of imperialism in a new age. Next, as a promising movement for the colonized, how decolonization turns into a disillusionment of the people will be displayed. Although it might be seen as a giant step on the way to liberating oneself as a nation, it could appear to be just a false independence followed by postcolonial troubles. At this point, the meaning and implications of post- as a prefix in postcolonial will be argued. In simple terms, it is both an after period and the outcomes of such an after period. In the final part of the conceptual section, it will be shown on what grounds postcolonialism as a field of study is interrelated with postmodernism, poststructuralism, Marxism and feminism in terms of the subject matter, content and argument strategies.

Subsequently, postcolonial theory and criticism itself as a comprehensive field of study, will be analysed meticulously for the valid reason that this critical section forms the methodology employed throughout the novels dealt with in this study. Firstly, it should be noted that postcolonial studies is such an extensive field that it holds some appeal inside for all. It is simply the act of analytically looking at life for didactic experiences to obtain the realities. To be clear, postcolonial theory was born as a reaction to the inadequacy of European and other biased discourses to tell of the innumerable non-European issues ranging from the physical appearance of the people to their life styles. As for postcolonial criticism, it could be seen simply as the methodology or praxis of postcolonial theory. Displaying an anti-role to deconstruct universalist claims for the purpose of form giving to the self, it is making sense of the dominant ideologies through social, cultural, national or political point of views. All in all, postcolonial theory and criticism as a whole is the means of reaching all the individuals of the contemporary age and world order today. While discussing the core values of postcolonial theory and criticism in this part, some unique voices in the field such as Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Spivak will serve as the guidelines to enrich the content and implement the methodology further in this study.

Nevertheless, for a more critical approach to evaluate Achebe's novels, the postcolonial terminology will be discussed with reference to various distinguished critics. In doing so throughout the study, the concepts will empower the implementation of postcolonial theory and criticism to a great extent. Initially, nation, nationhood, nationality and nationalism will be defined by referring to such distinctive authorities as Benedict Anderson, Ernest Renan and Homi Bhabha. Secondly, in light of Edward Said and Bhabha, culture will be discussed. Orientalism as the next term will be detailed in line with Said's matchless work *Orientalism*. Thereafter, considering the Oriental world as a postcolonial setting, Gayatri Spivak's subaltern issue and the problem of representation will be argued critically. Following these crucial concepts, hybridity as the new transcultural phenomenon, mimicry as the so-called representation of the self, ambivalence as the perplexity of a colonial setting, and appropriation as a promising term for the self interests of the colonized will be elucidated profoundly.

In the final part of the first chapter, the motives behind the colonialist and postcolonial texts will be discussed by exploiting the textual qualities and their major concerns. It has been observed, throughout colonial history, that texts woven with colonialist discourse are the driving force of colonial activities for the legacy of harsh realities. In such texts forming the base of colonialist literature, the colonized subjects are often misrepresented or re-represented with deceptive claims. However, postcolonial literature presents a direct response to the whole argument pertaining to the non-objective descriptions of the people of the colonized territories. It promotes a complete counter discourse focusing on such issues as culture, identity or language. Briefly, the last part of the first chapter will serve a crucial role in that it discusses an analysis device that will be used throughout this study.

Subsequent to the illustration of the historical basis of the study, an extensive outlook to colonialism and postcolonialism and some significant related terms, general principles and methods of postcolonial theory and criticism as well as the postcolonial terminology, and colonialist and postcolonial text qualities as the theoretical and critical framework of this study, the second chapter will focus on Chinua Achebe as a postcolonial voice. Initially, Achebe's life and career at a glance, that is the background making him who he is, will be presented. Unanimously in literary and scientific circles, Achebe is considered to be the pioneer of modern African writing and he is the most illustrious man of letters in Africa apart from being an iconic hero of social harmony in Nigeria. The influence of his family, the value of education at primary level, the awareness he got during his university years, and the occupational responsibilities and distinctive duties he performed prior to his writing career seem to be remarkable. These will all be handled with reference to personal accounts presented by himself, his own articles and some certain eminent authorities studying Achebe and his works.

Right after the personal details regarding Achebe's life, the ideological world of Chinua Achebe will be the next matter for discussion. The vision and mission shaping his literary feats will be uncovered. In awe of Martin Luther King, Chinua Achebe appears to have formed his core ideology around humanism and equality, and this is reflected both in his personal life and in his precious works. In light of this sympathy, Achebe is known to have embodied a purely postcolonial character and he is considered

to be the premier novelist on the discourse of African identity. The impact of colonialism, humanism, social transformation, decolonization initiatives, the nation-building process, indigenous values and cultural richness clearly constitute his ideological world and account for his being a unique postcolonial voice. Throughout his striking novels, Achebe aims to re-write colonial history by raising consciousness and debunking the myth of the colonial legacy written by the West. As far as the colonizer is concerned, Nigeria as a country, previously used to be just an area called Niger, is a project on which to build. However, by means of impactful novels, Achebe's ideology enables him to reshape the project if not simultaneously. This ideology based part of the second chapter will be of great help in the evaluation of Achebe's novels and his postcolonial standing as the holder of a counter discourse exhibiting the realities of colonial history.

Having expanded on various aspects of Achebe as a postcolonial voice, the second chapter will be continued by shedding light on the literary world of Chinua Achebe. Of all the precursors in African writing, Achebe is commonly accepted as the pioneer. Indeed, he is the distinctive voice of the continent and the contributions he made to African literature is beyond appreciation. His early affection for writing and the initial interest in a successful writing career will be clearly seen by referring to his early education during the primary and secondary school years. However, his literary career blossomed with the rising of national consciousness in opposition to colonial works such as *Mister Johnson* by Joyce Cary and *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad in the course of his university years in Ibadan. It is known that Africa is a massive land characterized by its diversity and richness, but apparently the continent seems to be misrepresented. Thus, through literature, Achebe had to reveal the realities to show that Africa is not a dark continent at all. From then on, Achebe was a devout postcolonial writer and his narrative devices such as the use of proverbs and local elements will be mentioned. The final issue for discussion will be the reason why and how Achebe became a writer. That is, his writing back process to re-write the whole story will be disclosed just prior to moving the focus to the novels which will be covered in this study.

To conclude the second chapter and as a foreword to the final chapter, the traces of imperial history and colonialism in Nigeria will be re-stressed primarily under the title of Achebe's pentalogy. It appears that Nigeria always had a worth beyond price for the colonizer, and the colonization process left a visible scar on Nigerian society. Reversing all the happenings would not be so easy, yet literary combat could be the safest way ever to further this end. Thus, by and large, Achebe employs a didactic mode for the purpose of reaching the masses through his pen to raise awareness of history and nationhood. In each novel one by one, Achebe addresses the society by undertaking the nation-building duty as a social transformer in addition to replying to Eurocentric norms, practices, colonialist discourses and ideologies. Works like *Mister Johnson* and *Heart of Darkness* are the chief targets of Achebe; and from different ages of the dark colonial history, Achebe enlightens the pre-colonial, colonial establishment, pre-independence, independence and the post-colonial periods in *Things Fall Apart*, *Arrow of God*, *No Longer at Ease*, *A Man of the People*, and *Anthills of the Savannah* respectively.

The third chapter is a chronological analysis of Achebe's five novels, and this final chapter is composed of five discrete parts each of which reflects a different era of the colonial history in Nigeria. In light of Achebe and the numerous distinguished authorities of postcolonial theory and criticism, the last chapter of this study aims to deepen the major argument through a breathtaking navigation of the novels in turn as well as synthesising the previous chapters to the whole. That is, the forementioned theoretical base and critical approach in isolation will have been practiced in association with the selected novels from the perspective of their historical background, narrative modes, cultural elements as well as the characterization of the major colonized and colonizer voices.

Things Fall Apart portrays the days prior to colonialism and the first interactions between the colonizer and the colonized in the second half of the 19th century. The coming of the white will be the focus throughout the novel. It is clearly an influential debut novel by Achebe; and Okonkwo, the hero of the story, is one of the most influential characters both in Achebe's fiction and in the world of remarkable postcolonial works. The change coming with colonialism is worth noting and Okonkwo

symbolizes the indigenous order resisting the transformation of society. Systematically, three major parts will be used to discuss the novel from the perspective of postcolonialism. In the first place, how Achebe's narrative style involving traditional richness with the use of local values, tales, proverbs and even irony present a postcolonial discourse, will be discussed in a detailed way. Secondly, the description of an already existing indigenous order will raise awareness to the sustainability of values, and more importantly, it will also be a direct response to the West and the Eurocentric approaches. Thirdly, to build an ideal nation, Achebe's deliberate use of distinctive characters as role models either from the colonized or the colonizer side will set examples to give lessons. While Okonkwo as the man of action, and Obierika as the man of thought will be the heroes of the colonized, Mr. Brown, Mr. Smith, missionaries, soldiers and administrative staff will represent the colonizer. Briefly, *Things Fall Apart* is the story of Achebe's initial response to colonialist discourse, and in this, postcolonial theory and criticism will help evaluate the literary value of the text with reference to various authorities.

Arrow of God covers the establishment period of colonialism in the early decades of the 20th century, and the growing tensions between the colonizer and the colonized will be characterized in the novel itself. Compared to the story of Okonkwo the resister, Ezeulu's story will display a milder resistance. He will be used to justify change with striking details as to the colonial manipulations and drawbacks of indirect rule. The hero, Ezeulu, can be seen as the portrait of an in-between society. Similarly in *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe's narrative modes, depictions of the cultural elements, and the identities from both sides will constitute the outline of the major argument. Once more, Achebe displays a clear counter position to the colonial discourse with a specific focus on the use of proverbs, songs, stories, symbols and irony. Besides, the objective assessment of indigenous culture and the existing order in opposition to the splintering influences of colonialism will be used to argue the relations of power throughout the novel. Also, in addition to Ezeulu as the colonized, The Lieutenant Governor Winterbottom as the indirect rule administrative staff, missionaries, and violent soldiers will help define how the events in the framework of the novel just fit into the real historical tensions of the 1920s, 30s and 40s. Achebe combines fact and fiction to such

an extent that *Arrow of God* turns out to be a perfect bridge between *Things Fall Apart* and *No Longer at Ease*.

No Longer at Ease, the third masterpiece, will illustrate the colonial atmosphere of the 1950s and will be the depiction of the search for national revival on the eve of independence. The modern setting of cosmopolitan Nigeria in a vain struggle of collective will to unite against colonialism demonstrates the colonial erosion within society. This time, Obi, the grandson of Okonkwo in *Things Fall Apart*, represents the third generation creating a contrast with the second generation of the colonization process. Achebe's focus on resistance and national unity via Obi as a colonized western-educated figure will be hindered by modern day problems such as corruption and bribery. That is, *No Longer at Ease* pictures the painful days of a nation's awakening. In the same manner, Achebe's narrative with symbolic values and intertextuality will prove to be of great literary value. In addition, different from the earlier novels, though considerable traditional elements still exist, Achebe will be critical of his own culture on the grounds that it is the indigenous culture itself providing a chance for the colonizer to divide and rule more easily. As for the characterization, Obi can be seen as the ideological world of Chinua Achebe as an educated identity with full awareness for national unity. Besides, Obi's family symbolizes the second generation and some other colonized characters such as Clara, Joseph and Christopher help determine the degree of transformation in society. On the other hand, the colonizer figures like Mr. Green and Macmillan reflect the colonial atmosphere and the shift in the colonial system. It could be argued that, either through characterization to construct ideal identities or distinctive discourse to answer back to the colonizer, Achebe appears to be in pursuit of a healthy transition at a time when the indigenous world is not at ease at all.

A Man of the People will continue to complete Achebe's chronicle on colonialism to further see what might have gone wrong in the first three novels. It is such a prophetic work that the events of the novel are in striking parallelism with the painful decolonization struggles in the face of the neo-colonial age. Achebe displays a relatively political tone in this novel since the early independent years did not bring about intended results or the peace that had been desired for so long. Creating postcolonial disillusionment, coups and civil wars along with new colonial ploys set the

dark tone of the novel. *A Man of the People* is the novel of dichotomies between the heroes, Chief Nanga as the puppet of a so-called declining colonial system, and Mr. Odili Samalu as the ideal identity for national salvation. They represent the opposite poles politically, and the tension they create dominates the novel. As for the postcolonial analysis of the novel, it could be seen that an ironic discourse, the handling of the richness of language, the intense use of Pidgin English, the flashback technique, and proverbs still as part of traditional elements are the hallmarks of Achebe's narrative style. However, the greatest change compared to the previous novels is that Achebe is unable to demonstrate an indigenous order any longer, which serves as the justification on the legacy of colonialism that is not over yet despite the independence gained. What strikes the reader most, is that Achebe does not use the colonized vs. the colonizer pattern in his fourth masterpiece. Instead, what is worse, the events are driven by the pattern of the colonized vs. the colonized in a ruthless way. The characterization of Achebe is thrilling. While Nanga rivals against Odili at the heart of the novel, Cool Max and Eunice will join Odili as comrades to resist the rotten system of the neo-colonial age. At a symbolic level, Achebe demonstrates the crude relations between the intelligentsia revival vs. political leaders as the puppets and heirs of the colonial background. Achebe signals that nothing is achieved yet, and the biggest problems still persist in an uncontrolled way. That is, the question of a nation that is without a state, needs to be overcome urgently.

Anthills of the Savannah will be the resolution of the whole argument carried out by Achebe in this study. The novel is the picture of postcolonial Nigeria and the last steps to decolonize through and through. Moving the chronological survey further, Achebe depicts the recent contemporary days enriched with optimism as opposed to the gloomy postcolonial world order. Strict military regimes, corruption, coups, failed democracies, civil wars, mismanagement, false leadership are the prime targets to be handled by Chinua Achebe. Consequently, he hopes to introduce an eternal answer to the question over the true nature of independence. Indeed, through an objective assessment, Achebe sets his sight on overcoming the long-lasting colonial days and looks forward to a bright future with a flourishing ideal, free state by a devoted nation. Indeed, Achebe does not address the past and present, but this time it is the future. Once

more and for all, following the same method of analysing the novels from a postcolonial point of view, the narrative of Achebe with its linguistic richness, the use of further Pidgin, storytelling, symbolic values and myths as well as multiple voiced perspectives will form the most impressive message directed towards both the colonized and the colonizer simultaneously. As for the handling of characterization, Sam, Chris, Ikem, and Beatrice are all represented to constitute a base for Achebe's *nation-building* mission and *writing back* process. While Sam is the problem presented at the centre, the rest are the solution itself, that is, the colonized will need to solve the postcolonial troubles among themselves. Chris and Ikem are the voices to witness the weaknesses and strengths of the nation, and Beatrice is seen as the most influential female voice in Achebe's fiction. Thus, this is the last word to pronounce upon and the final judgement to bear in mind. Achebe's road map from the most iconic character Okonkwo to the most influential re-represented female voice Beatrice carries profound implications for this study. That is, it is the prolonged journey of getting over a dark colonial history, it is the regained dignity of the survivors of that history, and it is the perpetual link between the first two and the final chapter eventually.

Concisely, in this study, Achebe's five distinctive novels are profoundly analysed by employing postcolonial theory and criticism to uncover the realities of the colonization process in depth. Throughout the novels, Achebe traces the colonial history in Nigeria and addresses both the colonized and the colonizer with specific purposes. In doing so, he explicitly attempts to exhibit the historical details, objectively reflects on the impact of colonialism on culture, frankly portrays the characters with the qualities of a postcolonial identity, and sharply presents a counter discourse. To this end, the motivation behind Achebe's achievement with these novels is that he aims not only to decolonize the mind by *building a nation,* but also to debunk the Eurocentric myths pertaining to the beloved country Nigeria and the grand continent Africa by *writing back* to the West. Finally, the subjective motive of studying Chinua Achebe and his novels in this study is to help such a great writer as Achebe be better understood in his struggle to empathize with the difficulties of postcolonial subjects, enlighten the colonization process, and eventually increase the mutual understanding between the colonized and the colonizer.

CHAPTER 1

POSTCOLONIAL THEORY AND CRITICISM

1.1. Historical Background

> An Igbo proverb tells us that a man who does not know where the rain began to beat him cannot say where he dried his body. The rain that beat Africa began four to five hundred years ago, from the "discovery" of Africa by Europe ... to the Berlin Conference of 1885. (1)
>
> Chinua Achebe. *There Was a Country* (2012)

Achebe's reference to such a proverb does not only show the importance of history for himself, but it also indicates the importance of the historical context in this study in order to understand Achebe and his novels. It is apparent that, regardless of the rises or declines in the course of history, Achebe is not the holder of aspiration to the past or he does not give the impression of looking 'backward' to having glamorous pre-colonial days. In other words, Achebe is not sentimental over past experiences at all. All Achebe wants is to benefit from the past taking everything into account to shape the present day for future. In this sense, the consciousness of history is a top priority throughout Achebe's works. In *Nigerian History and Culture*, Richard Olaniyan in his introduction stresses the importance of history with these lines: "[W]e need as good as an understanding as a possible of the past before we can begin to really understand the implications of the present. History thus serves as a bridge making the distant past accessible to the present; it serves as a lantern illuminating the present and future" (4). Thus, the historical background will form the heart of this study to enlighten the realities addressed to both the colonizer and the colonized.

The earth is such an invaluable place that it has been home to power struggles among various opponents throughout history. In the race to share such a priceless world, the British Empire has obtained the largest portion and has kept its dominant role up to a certain point through the empowerment of its colonial background. Thus, not only has the empire become the symbol of colonialism, but also it has performed the 'best' implementation ever. In this part, the historical survey of the British Empire with its colonial and imperial background, the colonial history of Africa at a glance and its

decolonization, and the history of Nigeria with critical details will be covered. This will be of great benefit to comprehend the major arguments in the following chapters primarily centring around Chinua Achebe and his great novels as the depiction of the actual colonial traces from history.

The British Empire has emerged and subsequently remained as such a formidable power throughout history that in *Colonial & Postcolonial Literatures*, Elleke Boehmer states "Britain ... had a destiny and a duty to rule the world" (29). The policies maintained by the Empire look so stunning that they bring out some irrevocable consequences. It is assumed that if the policies had not worked out, the empire would not have turned the world into its monopoly. It is noted by Fhlathuin in "The British Empire" that "[f]rom the first English colonial ventures in the sixteenth century to decolonization in the late 20th century, the British empire lasted around four hundred years, and included areas of land on all five continents" (21). Accordingly, it was no surprise that at the end of the nineteenth century, the world was almost British: "In 1900, the British Empire covered one-fifth of the globe and governed 400 million subjects of many faiths and ethnic groups ... [and] ... had become 'the centre of the world'" (Johnson 1). What is more, in *Divide and Rule*, Wesseling points out the result of this continuing global activity of the Empire with a striking fact: "Between 1815 and 1890 more than 12 million Britons left their island home to conquer and populate new worlds. In about 1880 Britain had earned and saved enough money to have invested the total sum of almost £2 billion abroad" (31). Among all continents on which the British Empire had colonial acts somehow, Africa has been exposed to the most severe competition of the major colonial powers. In this sense, besides Africa, the British Empire was among the most fortunate colonizers in that it managed to control a substantial portion of land on each continent, which led the authorities to call the Empire the one on which the Sun never sets down. Nevertheless, due to various solid reasons, following a glorious past, the Empire would collapse ultimately. In *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire 1781-1997*, however, Piers Brendon states that the imperial spirit might be back as the result of a resurrection or second coming with these words: "[Empire] is the embodiment of real ambitions. Nations ache for territorial aggrandisement. The craving for power and wealth is an atavistic instinct. The lust for

conquest is part of the human condition. The spirit of imperialism is not dead: it haunts the modern world and its manifestations are legion" (662). This seems to be the conclusive reason to follow new paths to defy colonialism in disguise; that is, the nations need to appropriate themselves according to the changing conditions and needs of the new age.

In *Toward the African Revolution*, Frantz Fanon asserts that colonialism is such a harsh system that its aim is not to destroy the native elements but "rather a continued agony" (34) for the colonized. The negative aspects of the colonization process is far beyond the numerable figures. Also, in *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon expresses that "[b]y its very structure, colonialism is separatist and regionalist. Colonialism does not simply state the existence of tribes; it also reinforces it and separates them" (74). In colonized territories full of ethnic diversities like in Nigeria, colonialism generates plenty of problems, and it can be seen as the main culprit of the death of the indigenous existence and values. In his another crucial work, *Black Skin White Masks*, Fanon puts forward that colonialism and accordingly the dominant feeling of 'blackness' creates "self-division" (8) and an identity crisis. As it seems, the concern of colonialism is the cornerstone of imperial history and it is the ultimate driving force of this study inasmuch as it shaped the destiny of various nations and national identities amid an irreversible turmoil.

Even though various nations like Nigeria broke up with their colonial ties by gaining their independence, it is seen that the colonization process was not over; but just transforming itself into a new shape. In *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*, Kwame Nkrumah claims that this new dimension, better called neo-colonialism, is not about a construction but destruction: "[It] is based upon the principle of breaking up former large united colonial territories into a number of small non-viable States which are incapable of independent development and must rely upon the former imperial power for defence and even internal security" (xiii). Despite the new layout of the system which has already had strong roots, there exists a hope to overcome it for many postcolonial societies. In the form of a struggle to find a way out, in his *Introduction to Neo-Colonialism*, Jack Woddis pictures the formula of liberation from neo-colonialism as follows: "The transition from neo-colonialism to liberation will not

necessarily always require the armed revolutionary overthrow of a puppet government. Sometimes it will take place as a result of the slow maturing of events, and the unfolding of a whole series of measures -social, economic, and political- which lead, stage by stage, to the transformation of society" (124). This is actually what postcolonial intelligentsia have tried to do in the course of history, and this is indeed what happens in Nigeria and is depicted throughout Achebe's novels in this study.

The world has witnessed quite a long-running colonization process, and it has left such a remarkable impact on history that it has always been hard to think about reversing the process. In this respect, decolonization is an outstanding occurrence and Woddis defines it as the "most profound and powerful historical process" (51). No doubt, the process has been painful and it has many underlying reasons. According to David Downing in *Africa: Postcolonial Conflict*, the problems of the decolonization and post-independence period is related to the colonial background and "the legacies of slavery and colonialism, the harsh economic realities imposed by Western corporations and financial institutions, and the destructive impact of the Cold War all made life difficult for most African countries and their governments" (24). African decolonization appears to be the most recent and clearest incident of all the liberation movements and it could be regarded as the monumental occurrence versus colonial powers. Everybody knew that decolonization would not be so smooth. As opposed to the promising days ahead, not only the economic state but also the politics and the lack of order in the governance system pushed new states further into darker days. In *Decolonization*, Raymond F. Betts provides the reader with a bewildering fact: "In round numbers and raw figures, some 75 *coups d'état*, mostly military in nature, occurred in the former colonial world in the first three decades of independence" (69). To overcome the postcolonial panorama via a smooth transience, it is believed that there is much more to accomplish, and the intellectuals and writers of the new states had better put their hands on the task. In an ideological analogy with Fanon, Chinua Achebe comes up with a hopeful state of mind throughout the work *There Was a Country*. In this book based on the personal history of Biafra, Nigeria and his life, Achebe pays special attention to 'negritude' as part of the solution in Africa. This term could be seen as a reaction to the

colonial experience through literature and political thought; and behind such a notion, Achebe is fully aware of his role as a writer.

It could be stated that African decolonization was a long and painful process indeed. Though sovereignty should promote peace and order, it has brought some side effects the roots of which could be found in the colonial background and neo-colonial tactics having been applied to revive the glories of the colonizer over the past decades. Despite the harsh days both in the colonization and decolonization periods, hope as a key word prevails the African states like Nigeria on the way to being a nation for good. Nigeria is an attractive country for the colonial powers and a distinctive part of the colonial history itself, and thus, colonialism means a lot to such a distinguished country. One of the major points in this study is to revolve around the historical background of Nigeria with various references. To better deal with the realities in Achebe's fiction and draw clear conclusions from them, it is of great significance to glance at the country step by step from the earliest records up to today's Nigeria as in Achebe's '*pentalogy*'[1]. In *A History of Nigeria* it is noted that "[t]he borders of the modern state of Nigeria were established in 1914 when the British colonial government amalgamated the northern and southern protectorates of Nigeria to form a unified colonial state" (Falola and Heaton 6). That is to say, before 1914 there was no sign of Nigeria but a Niger-area, which is only a geographical existence with no title or formal identity. However, in one way or another, there has always been much to talk about inasmuch as there exists a deep rooted history and culture across the country.

Indeed, Nigeria can be considered synonymous with its richness as a country. Apart from its ethnic and religious diversity, the language issue is of great importance and thus it can naturally be placed on the top of the diversities list in Nigeria. In "Aspects of Language in Nigeria", Olu Tomori draws attentions to these facts on language with the following words: "Specialists in linguistics and Nigerian languages inform us that there are more than 400 different languages in Nigeria at present. The figure refers to the number of different languages, and not different dialects. There are

[1] 'pentalogy' as a term in this study is employed to refer to the five chronological novels written by Chinua Achebe.

definitely more dialects than five times the number of languages in Nigeria, [that is, around 2000]" (288). It appears that it would be quite difficult to create harmony and unity within the borders of such a country, and thus, the situation has been manipulated by the colonial powers throughout all Nigerian history. Ironically, however, the remedy against this problem is to adopt a unifying language first. Therefore, as Falola and Heaton express, although the indigenous languages are still spoken, "English has been the official language of the country since 1960" (4).

As a result of great struggles, Nigeria managed to gain independence; yet nothing proceeded in the way that had been desired earlier. To clarify, as Pade Badru argues in *Imperialism and Ethnic Politics in Nigeria*, "[i]n more than three decades of political independence, many African states have gone through several violent civil wars generated by ethnic animosities and intolerance ... [and] there is no other place where this ethnic bomb is more frightening than Nigeria..." (1). This seems to be one of the most striking reasons of Achebe's focusing on the construction of national identity in general. Thus, all the implications and ideas pertaining to the actual history and the conditions across the country are the core reflections in Achebe's novels; and they frankly support his nation-building mission.

1.2. Colonialism and Postcolonialism

Glancing at a historical background does not only have to do with historical or political studies, but it is also the heart of postcolonial studies. It is such a multilayered field of study that clarifying some background concepts will be of utmost importance in the comprehension of the theoretical and critical bases in this study. At the heart of the field, colonialism as the colonization process itself and postcolonialism as the outcomes of this process occupy a critical position. Thus, to make sense of the colonial past and postcolonial life, each term, colonialism and postcolonialism in association with some other concepts need to be initially defined.

Colonialism is such a remarkable phenomenon that it has manipulated humanity since the very day it came into existence, and it has been a prerequisite reality of postcolonial studies. In *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader,* Ashcroft et al. state that "[t]he term colonialism is important in defining the specific form of cultural exploitation that developed with the expansion of Europe over the last 400 years" (45). In this sense,

colonialism is a term standing for a distinctive period in history indeed. As for Ania Loomba, it is nothing but a traumatic act of 'locking'. In *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* she argues that "[c]olonialism was not an identical process in different parts of the world but everywhere it locked the original inhabitants and the newcomers into the most complex and traumatic relationship in human history" (2). As far as these critics are concerned, colonialism can be seen as the root of colonial activities around the world, yet since its birth, it has kept evolving and turning into new shapes such as imperialism and neo-colonialism as opposed to the decolonization process and postcolonialism.

When it comes to imperialism, it is regarded as the counterpart of colonialism and many scholars think that they are similar concepts. According to Loomba, it "is the highest stage of colonialism" (6). She holds the view that it is one of the most vital stages and the darkest side of the process. Besides, in his *Introduction to Neo-Colonialism*, Woddis provides further insight into the term and makes a systematic approach seeing imperialism as a kind of capitalism and an economic system. He maintains that the modern colonial system took a new posture as a result of the shift from "free competitive capitalism to monopoly capitalism or imperialism" (13). What is more, in an interview conducted with Spivak on September the 26th, 1987, in Durham, N.C, she strikingly asserts that imperialism is in a new form called neo-colonialism (Harasym 140). In this sense, Spivak appears to have touched upon another dark side of the concept leading to re-consider the issue and the whole process from scratch.

As Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman also put into words in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory*, it seems clear that there exists a need to clarify both colonialism and imperialism concepts in comparison with each other: "... [A] differentiation between imperialism and colonialism might still be confusing to many people is not surprising, since in popular usage, but also in supposedly more specialist works, the two have frequently been employed interchangeably" (1). Nevertheless, there seems to be a fair distinction. According to Edward Said's differentiation in his *Culture and Imperialism*, "[a]t some very basic level, imperialism means thinking about, settling on, controlling land that you do not possess, that is distant, that is lived on and owned by others" (5). In other words, the basic distinction in Said's terms is that "... 'imperialism' means the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating

metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory; 'colonialism', which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory" (8). To put it in another way, it is not appropriate to pronounce that imperialism is the continuation of colonialism or that they are synonymous as Said reveals that in fact they are in a mutual relation supporting, feeding and giving birth to one another.

Dealing with reciprocal relation of colonialism and imperialism, neo-colonialism emerges as another concept worthy of paying attention to in recent postcolonial studies. "Literally 'new colonialism' as a term was coined by the first President of independent Ghana, and the leading exponent of Pan-Africanism, Kwame Nkrumah in his *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (1965)" (Ashcroft et al., *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* 162). It is a work on the explanation of how neo-colonialism came into existence. Nkrumah puts forward that "Neo-colonialism is [...] the worst form of imperialism. For those who practise it, it means power without responsibility and for those who suffer from it, it means exploitation without redress" (xi). Nkrumah carries on his argument by stating neo-colonialism as a really vicious threat to transmit internal problems and make them external issues in the colonial territories: "Neo-colonialism, like colonialism, is an attempt to export the social conflicts of the capitalist countries. ... But the internal contradictions and conflicts of neo-colonialism make it certain that it cannot endure as a permanent world policy" (xii). What can be concluded here is that neo-colonialism is home to various problems for the already-colonized nations in the struggle for survival. In this case, it can be seen as an explicit strategy of imperialism. Though, in his *Introduction to Neo-Colonialism*, Woddis implies the end of the plot is not far away, and thus compares neo-colonialism to 'a dying animal', he seems to be fully aware of the eventual outcomes as well: "Neo-colonialism, ... is essentially a product of the new epoch in which we live. It is a temporary tactic of [a] declining imperialism, but a dying animal can be vicious and dangerous. Neo-colonialism ... will yet do more harm before it is finally laid to rest" (58).

In contrast with colonialism, imperialism, or even neo-colonialism, decolonization is likely to be an intriguing concept as well. As the prefix 'de-' suggests, it signifies a reverse or counter movement. In *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* by Ashcroft et al., it is defined as "the process of revealing and dismantling colonialist

power in all forms. This includes dismantling the hidden aspects of those institutional and cultural forces that had maintained the colonialist power and that remain even after political independence is achieved" (63). Furthermore, it appears to be an act of 'form-giving' to the colonial life with a peculiar agenda. In his extensive historical study *African Decolonization*, Henry S. Wilson highlights that "[w]ithin barely half a century of the European partition, the colonial states had achieved a certain legitimacy ... Day by day, year by year, even to the next generation, they shaped their lives to fit the patterns of colonialism" (19) in the course of the decolonization process. Due to this fact, Wilson addresses the situation as "[f]alse decolonization" or "[f]lag independence" (3). Since this tricky case has positive connotations while displaying a 'false' hope inside, it might be seen as a project of failure. In his introduction to *Decolonization*, Betts evaluates the process as an attempt that is good for the interests of no one: "'Decolonization' entered the lexicon in the 1930s but did not attain popularity until thirty years later. It is an awkward and inelegant word ... Its results pleased no one. It was too hastily done for some, too slowly carried out for others, too incomplete in effect for most" (1). Nonetheless, it sounds to be a promising movement in the sense that it is made up of a set of methods to overcome imperial acts and tactics played on the inhabitants of the colonized territories.

When it comes to postcolonialism as a term, various authorities believe that distinguishing 'colonial' from 'postcolonial' is not as simple as it is thought to be. To do so, it is of great significance to highlight first the meaning of 'post' in postcolonial to elaborate thoroughly on the scope of postcolonialism. In *The Location of Culture*, as Homi Bhabha suggests, 'post' has nothing to do with chronological aspects: "If the jargon of our times -- postmodernity, postcoloniality, postfeminism -- has any meaning at all, it does not lie in the popular use of the 'post' to indicate sequentiality -- after-feminism; or polarity -- anti-modernism" (6). On the other hand, some critics seem to indicate a clear distinction even between 'postcolonial and post-colonial'. As for the hyphenated form of the term, Ashcroft et al. reveal in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* that "... the word 'post-colonial' has come to stand for both the material effects of colonisation and the huge diversity of everyday and sometimes hidden responses to it throughout the world ... to represent the continuing process of imperial suppressions and

exchanges throughout this diverse range of societies ..." (3). Apart from this, in *Postcolonial Cultures* Simon Featherstone combines both approaches to the term by stating "[t]he 'post' in postcolonialism ... signifies a 'development form' or 'replacement of' ideas on a cognate subject ... However, [it] can also have a much sharper historical sense. ... [I]ts field is defined chronologically as 'the time after colonialism' indicating the legacies of a vast political, economic and military force ..." (4).

It is apparent that the initial point to highlight is that there is no definite or single definition accepted by authorities unanimously. All the same, there has always been a major concern. In *Post-Colonial Transformation,* Ashcroft notes that "[t]he term had emerged as part of an attempt to politicize and focus the concerns of fields such as Commonwealth literature ... The term has subsequently been widely used to signify the political, linguistic, and cultural experience of societies from the former British Empire" (10). In this respect, it could be argued that postcolonialism is about anything regarding the societies once colonized by the colonizer. Apparently, the term postcolonialism in fact addresses itself to various encounters between the West and the rest of the world previously colonized. In *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts,* Ashcroft et al. clearly state that "Post-colonialism (or often postcolonialism) deals with the effects of colonization on cultures and societies ... '[P]ost-colonial' had a clearly chronological meaning, designating the post independence period. However, from the late 1970s the term has been used by literary critics to discuss the various cultural effects of colonization" (186). In this respect, it can be deduced that it has a chronological meaning at first, and at the same time it embodies a deeper meaning on cultural influences almost for the past four decades. Above all, when looked at through the perspective of the colonized society, postcolonialism may serve as a way out for salvation, or at least a glimmer of hope for the future. Indeed, in the article "Postmodernism or Post-colonialism Today", Simon During draws quite a similar conclusion from all of these points: "For me, perhaps eccentrically, post-colonialism is regarded as the need, in nations or groups which have been victims of imperialism, to achieve an identity uncontaminated by universalist or Eurocentric concepts and images" (125). Thus, to this end, postcolonialism seems to have profoundly dominated recent decades across the colonized territories of the world.

Furthermore, to get a clearer view of what postcolonialism stands for specifically, it is also necessary to consider its correlation to various fields of study by referring to similarities or differences. Initially, it should be noted that postcolonialism is a distinctive field in the contemporary era. In *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, Loomba states that "[it is] so heterogeneous and diffuse that it is impossible to satisfactorily describe what its study might entail. This difficulty is partly due to the inter-disciplinary nature of postcolonial studies" (xii). It embodies so many alternatives inside and the fields in relation with itself are so abundant that "[i]n its widest reaches, the study of 'postcolonialism' might be said to implicate most of the humanities and social sciences - from anthropology and political science to philosophy, musicology, economics, and geography" (Lazarus 15). What is more, signalling a critical feature of postcolonialism, in *Post-Colonial Transformation* Ashcroft puts forward another significant point focusing on its function rather than its definition as a field: "... it was never conceived of as a grand theory but as a methodology: first, for analysing the many strategies by which colonized societies have engaged imperial discourse; and second, for studying the ways in which many of those strategies are shared by colonized societies, re-emerging in very different political and cultural circumstances" (7). Therefore, in this case, postcolonialism might be seen as a pair of literary binoculars through which both the colonial and post-colonial ages could be better observed thoroughly and judged objectively.

In the first place, the encounter of two 'post's in postcolonialism and postmodernism is worthy of stressing. For many critics, there exists a close and inevitable relationship between them. In *On Post-Colonial Futures,* Ashcroft highlights "[t]he postmodern project of deconstructing the master discourses of the European Enlightenment is much like the post-colonial task of dismantling the discursive effects of European imperialism" (5), and he further claims that "... post-colonialism and postmodernism are both discursive elaborations of postmodernity ... Post-colonial theory reveals the socially transformative dimensions of postmodernity ... This is because post-colonialism refills ... a time and space that are 'emptied' by modernity, and constructs a discourse of the real ... on the material effects of colonial[ism]... " (29). Apparently, what both of these fields deal with is not so diverse. In spite of the fact that

they follow different paths, they manage to end up at the same destination eventually. In the series editor's preface to *Africa Beyond the Post-Colonial* by Uduku and Zack-Williams, Biko Agozino provides the chance to deduce a clear analogy between them by explaining what post-modernists do: "[they] argue that what is wrong with the project of modernity is the assumption that you can separate Europe from the rest of the world as clearly as you could separate the raw from the cooked, the male from the female, the white from the black, the rational from the irrational, the truthful from the false ..." (ix). In the same manner, it could be maintained that postcolonial writers in their studies appear to rise against the unfair ideologies and dichotomies in the course of the colonial and the post-colonial eras.

Moreover, postcolonialism is in a direct correlation with poststructuralism, which is frequently known for its association with deconstruction theory. While some argue that poststructuralism is part of the questioning of the values over the process of European Enlightenment and universalism, many others believe that the development of postcolonial theory and criticism is closely related to the approach and implementation of the poststructuralist theory. Stephen Morton in "Postcolonial Formulations" highlights this relation referring to major critics as follows: "there exists a similarity between two depending on 'difference'... [P]ostcolonial writers seek to analyze language in its relation to political history and political power by being sensitive to difference" (161). In this respect, what makes postcolonialism and poststructuralism resemble each other is basically their focus on non-analogical elements. As an attachment to both fields, there seems to exist a common point of interest out of which they were born. To be clearer, Hegel and the idea of 'dialectic' might set a path to follow. Morton underlines that "[a]s a philosophical concept, the dialectic is constituted of a dichotomy between two antithetical terms, such as the master and the slave, or the state and civil society, which are resolved through a process of negation and sublation" (162). In this sense, colonial and postcolonial concepts themselves already create a complete dichotomy, and thus, could be related to Hegel's idea of dialectics. That is to say, just like Hegel emphasizes the application of thesis and antithesis for synthesis as an interpretive method, postcolonialism as a methodology puts a great emphasis on antithetical

concepts such as colonial and postcolonial, or colonized and colonizer for a better understanding of the colonial history.

In addition to postmodernism and poststructuralism, postcolonialism has a firm connection to Marxism as well. In the introduction part to *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory*, Williams and Chrisman set their sights on economic concerns and outline the analogy between postcolonialism and Marxism with these words: "[The] intimate connection between economics and politics is one of the major contributions of Marxist thinking on the subject, and one which allows the most convincing distinctions between colonialism and imperialism to be drawn" (2). Therefore, Marxism can be regarded as a contribution to postcolonial studies by putting forward its strong emphasis on political, cultural, material relations and exploitation across the colonized areas of the world. In this respect, it could be argued that the ideological base and the concerns of both fields prove to be in a direct mutual correlation.

Apart from all these, while in *The Empire Writes Back* Ashcroft et al. support the relevancy with Marxism, they also add one final analogical point regarding feminism: "... Feminist and post-colonial discourses both seek to reinstate the marginalized in the face of the dominant, and early feminist theory, like early nationalist post-colonial criticism, sought to invert the structures of domination, substituting..." (175). This approach has also been stressed by many distinguished critics among whom Spivak cites her interest in subaltern identities. Considering all these correlations, it could be maintained that postcolonialism is such a versatile field that it needs to be further studied in the framework of its own theoretical bases and critical approaches.

1.3. Postcolonial Theory and Criticism

Postcolonial studies can be said to have emerged as a didactic field appealing to all members of its contemporary era. In *Postcolonial Studies*, John McLeod argues that "postcolonial studies has the potential to assemble new communities and networks of people who are joined by the common political and ethical commitment to challenging and questioning the practices and consequences of domination and subordination. ... [W]e all have something to learn from and contribute to, postcolonial studies" (6). The world of postcolonial studies is enormous, yet they share a common critical viewpoint. As McLeod further states, postcolonial studies "involve learning how to look critically

at the world, and the knowledge and representations that have been made about it" (9). In a metaphorical way, postcolonial theory and criticism functions as spectacles to better see and unveil the realities of the contemporary era, make the connection among each and every experience in life. In other words, it seems that postcolonial studies have the ability to welcome all human beings and provide them with significant means of judgement to make sense of a promising life.

In relation to postcolonialism, postcolonial theory forms the core of the studies in this realm. In his recent study *Postcolonial Criticism*, Nicholas Harrison deals with the text and context relation of the theory and criticism specifically. Even in such a profound work, he is unable to provide a commonly recognized definition of the theory on the grounds that "[p]ostcolonial theory is not an identifiable 'type' of theory in the same (limited) sense as deconstruction, Marxism, psychoanalysis or feminism, on all of which it sometimes draws: it does not have foundational thinkers playing a role comparable to that of Marx or Freud ... " (9). Despite this situation, there exist various decent sources on the scope of postcolonial theory in the contemporary age. According to Ashcroft et al. in *The Empire Writes Back*, "[t]he idea of 'postcolonial literary theory' emerges from the inability of European theory to deal adequately with the complexities and varied cultural provenance of post-colonial writing" (11). However, this is not only about its incompetency; rather, the European or the Western theory fails to uncover the realities of the colonized nations objectively and thoroughly. In this respect, Charles E. Bressler provides further details in *Literary Criticism* on the origin of the theory with these words: "Postcolonial theory is born out of the colonized peoples' frustrations; their direct and personal cultural clashes with the conquering culture; and their fears, hopes, and dreams about the future and their own identities" (238). Thus, it could be maintained that the theory was born as part of a counter movement involving the experiences of postcolonial life such as violence, oppression, resistance, slavery, migration, race, gender, as well as the reactions to the colonial discourses and biased imperial texts. It seems that, associated with each other, these experiences all constitute the intricate fabric of the 'postcolonial', and it should be kept in mind that postcolonialism as a distinct field is a living organism and keeps on flourishing. That is to say, the theory takes on a life of its own and continues to evolve. When the birth and

development of the theory is considered, it used to focus purely on the material world and colonization, but nowadays it presents itself in a different form. In *Postcolonial Resistance*, David Jefferess supports the progress of the theory today with these words: "... [Postcolonial] theory has shifted attention away from the materialist concerns of the economic and political forms and effects of colonialism to concerns of discourse, language, and identity" (57).

In addition to postcolonial theory, postcolonial criticism needs to be treated discretely due to the fact that while the former can be defined with theoretical bases, the latter is more like a method and praxis of the postcolonial theory. First of all, postcolonial criticism has played a huge part in the academic world being popular for around forty years. As Moore-Gilbert underlines in *Postcolonial Criticism* "... [i]t has transformed university syllabuses, reorganised and extended established canons, constructed an expanding material base of journals, conferences and academic networks, stimulated new areas ..." (57). In simple terms, postcolonial criticism has risen out of clashes, and therefore it deals with confrontation and carries certain concerns around it. Thus, it could be stated that postcolonial criticism is a struggle to make sense of the ideologies on colonialism through social, cultural, political, or even psychological points of view. To further elaborate on the development of postcolonial criticism, Boehmer remarks the main phases and presents them under three points as follows:

> [F]irst, the shaping force of anti-colonial and non-Western national liberation struggles championed by both radical and reformist nationalists and by Marxist revolutionaries ... [like] Frantz Fanon ... . Secondly, there is the deconstructive or interrogative impact of, in particular, French post-structuralist thinking (of Derrida, Foucoult, and Lacan) which has shaped the influential postcolonial theories of critics like Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, ... and others. And thirdly, ... the influence of form-giving concepts derived from so-called postcolonial or Third World literatures through which they have been read. (*Colonial & Postcolonial* 343)

In this respect, the first phase is characterized by the clashes and polarization, the second stage is driven by the awakening process and independence struggles, and the implementation of overcoming tactics and literary combat to write back constitute the last phase of the critical survey. In this respect, Achebe and his novels just present perfect examples of postcolonial criticism covering all the phases stated by Boehmer. As for Bhabha in *The Location of Culture*, he supports the idea that postcolonial criticism is nothing more than a product of the modern world order exhibiting a harsh contest and struggle and 'witness' to imparity in the postcolonial world (245). Yet another significant issue which postcolonial criticism deals with is the universalist claims that have not been made objectively. In other words, the promotion of Western values, Eurocentric approaches, norms and practices are among the prime targets of postcolonial criticism.

It is a well-known fact that authorities and postcolonial critics shaping the field are an indispensible part of the postcolonial theory and criticism. In this respect, the forerunners of the field will help the reader comprehend the essence of the literary studies more profoundly since they are credited as influential reference points. In *The Basics: Literary Theory*, Hans Bertens makes an evaluation on the most productive critics and acknowledges Said, Bhabha and Spivak as "the most prominent guiding lights" (172). In Moore-Gilbert's *Postcolonial Criticism*, Robert Young also calls them 'the Holy Trinity'. In general terms, Moore-Gilbert compares and contrasts these giants of the theory with these lines: "[w]hereas Said is generally dismissive about deconstruction and sceptical about Marxism, and Bhabha is sympathetic to the former but hostile to the latter, Spivak embraces both in a largely affirmative manner [and] Spivak's methodological affiliations point to instructive differences ..." (27). For all the minor differences, it is a fact that these authorities are truly the sources of inspiration behind the employment of postcolonial theory and criticism in postcolonial studies.

To review 'the Holy Trinity', Edward Said can firstly be discussed as one of the pioneers in this field. His groundbreaking works *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism* are the most widely read and analysed works in postcolonial studies, and his contribution to the field is far beyond appreciation. Distinguishing *Culture and Imperialism* from *Orientalism*, Moore-Gilbert notes that "*Culture and Imperialism* is in

some ways more ambitious than *Orientalism*, addressing a wider range of cultural histories and cultural forms (including opera). In particular, ... Said pays much more attention to anti-colonial and postcolonial cultural production, an area almost wholly ignored in *Orientalism* ..." (25). Through both works, Said seems to be quite cautious in case he might appear to be biased in his attempt to create such remarkable works. In other words, this could be the reason why, at the end of *Orientalism*, Said clarifies himself with these words: "I hope to have shown my reader that the answer to Orientalism is not Occidentalism. No former "Oriental" will be comforted by the thought that having been an Oriental himself he is likely --too likely-- to study new "Orientals" --or "Occidentals"-- of his own making" (328). Nevertheless, he appears to have gotten some criticism on his "generalizing and universalizing" aspects (351). Said's attempt to avoid dualities while creating a conflict between Orientalism and Occidentalism could be the actual motive behind the assumptions on the 'generalizing and universalizing aspects'. However, for all the oppositions, he is unanimously accepted as one of the cornerstones of this field.

As for Homi Bhabha, his career in the field has been separated into two major phases by Moore-Gilbert, who highlights the first phase as more political compared to the second stage. The striking point in both periods is that Bhabha pays special attention to the issue of identity. When postcolonial identity is considered specifically, it is not something that has a simple definition, rather a joint existence between the colonizer and the colonized. In *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, Loomba finds Bhabha's stance important as "Bhabha's writings are indeed useful in insisting that neither coloniser nor colonised is independent of the other. Colonial identities - on both sides of the divide - are unstable, agonised, and in constant flux" (178). In this case, it is somewhat ironic that the split, ambivalent, or hybrid colonial subjects are in fact universal and homogeneous projections, and they are presented somewhere in-between the colonized and the colonizer.

The last member of 'the Holy Trinity' is Gayatri Spivak, and she is the generator of several unique works as well. Unlike Bhabha and Said, she is associated with diversity in terms of her theoretical base. That is to say, Spivak refuses to be contained within the horizon of any particular critical theory. Thus, as in *Postcolonial Criticism*

Moore-Gilbert states "she draws effortlessly and eclectically on discourses as diverse as feminism, psychoanalysis, deconstruction and neo-Marxist versions of political economy" (27). Through her writings, it seems that the central argument revolves around the 'subaltern' issue. In the article "Postcolonial Studies", Ritu Birla acknowledges Spivak's magnum opus "Can the Subaltern Speak?" as a "course to teach" (88). Indeed, Gayatri Spivak's influential essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" seems to have empowered postcolonial or minority discourses versus Eurocentric approaches. The crucial point is that her major concern is 'representation'; and in *Literary Theory and Criticism* edited by Patricia Waugh, Boehmer claims that "[...] Spivak is concerned to emphasize, so-called subaltern consciousness [as] a product of elite discourse, not a concrete entity in the world; it is a construction of socially authorized language, not a self or subject that can will itself to speak" (354). In this case, it appears to signal that 'subalterns' are not to present but to be presented or re-presented.

Following Said, Bhabha and Spivak as the most commonly appreciated voices in the field, in order to be better able to implement postcolonial theory and criticism, the terminology of the field in light of the 'Holy Trinity' and various other illustrious critics needs highlighting as well. That is to say, in alignment with the postcolonial theory and criticism alongside several postcolonial critics, postcolonial terminology and some specific concepts might function as a device whereby the writing of Achebe could be better understood and analysed with more profound insight. Indeed, the significance of terms in postcolonial studies cannot be overlooked due to the fact that anyone who has even a slight interest in the field will have to apply to certain concepts peculiar to postcolonial theory and criticism. They play a pivotal role in analysing and comprehending especially the written texts in the course of the colonial history. While this is held to be true, it appears that giving a fixed or true-for-all definitions is one of the most challenging tasks for any study ranging from literary to scientific. On this matter, in their introduction to *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, Ashcroft et al. confess that "[i]t would, however, be misleading to suggest that a final and authoritative definition for any term could be found for its use in post-colonial or any other practice" (3). Depending on new circumstances, the terms may signify different meanings, and

thus postcolonial terminology might be seen as some sort of free zone. Still, various critics and scholars will be the guidelines of the most vital concepts in the field.

Apart from being a key term for this study, "Nation" and the terms bound to it such as nationality, nationhood, nationalism are among the fundamentals of postcolonial studies and one of the major points regarding Chinua Achebe and his precious novels. The first thing to bear in mind is "Nation, nationality, nationalism - all have proved notoriously difficult to define, let alone to analyse" (3) confesses Benedict Anderson in his *Imagined Communities.* Still, in Bhabha's detailed compilation *Nation and Narration*, Ernest Renan with his article entitled "What is a Nation?" enlightens the issue thoroughly. A striking point made by him is the denial of 'nations' in the past and they have come into prominence recently and the former ones in the history lacked various things so "Nations ... are something new in history" (9). Concerning the formula of the nation, Renan adds that "[i]f you take a city such as Salonika or Smyrna, you will find [within] five or six communities[,] each of which has its own memories and which have almost nothing in common. Yet, the essence of a nation is that all individuals have many things in common, and also that they have forgotten many things" (11). This means that the crucial point to highlight is simply the commonality of life. Most importantly, for Renan as he concludes in the following lines: "Man is a slave neither of his race nor his language, nor of his religion, nor of the course of rivers nor of the direction taken by mountain chains. A large aggregate of men, healthy in mind and warm of heart, creates the kind of moral conscience which we call a nation" (20). Therefore, the plain definition of 'nation' has not much to do with race, language, interest, religion, geography or military though they also play serious roles. It is the moral conscience and 'will' to live together, and this creates nations in Renan's sense. Clarifying Benedict Anderson's phrase 'imagined community', in *Colonial & Postcolonial Literature* Boehmer proposes that it is not just a natural phenomenon, "[w]hat this phrase implies is that the nation as we know it is a thing of social artifice - a symbolic formation rather than a natural essence. ... Every new instance of independence, therefore -and some might say each new stage in the process of winning independence- required that the nation be reconstructed in the collective imagination; or that identity be symbolized anew" (185). In this respect, throughout his novels, Achebe

centres around the concept of nationhood and demonstrates the importance and means of masterfully achieving a national unity. To this end, he brings up the realities from colonial history both to guide his people and to justify his major arguments directed towards the colonizer and the West. While achieving this, Achebe's focus on existing indigenous values promoting willingness to live together and how they deteriorate due to colonialism naturally reveals the postcolonial standing of his novels.

As for "Nationalism" itself, it has a great deal of diversity, too. In *Imagined Communities*, Anderson maintains that "... unlike most other [-]isms, nationalism has never produced its own grand thinkers: no Hobbeses, Tocquevilles, Marxes, or Webers. This 'emptiness' easily gives rise, among cosmopolitan and polylingual intellectuals, to a certain condescension" (5). It is not a word coined or produced by a major voice but it is a common quality of the postcolonial world. In the context of nation and nationalism, Anderson explains the fact of his 'imagined community' with reference to Renan as follows: "It is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-member, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. ... Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it *invents* nations where they do not exist" (6). Therefore, 'nationalism' appears to be a way of strong imagination and visionary existence. To foster the vigorous imagination behind nationalism, in each novel of Achebe, it is demonstrated that nationalism as a core element binds the nation together and Achebe's objective justification through unique characters with national consciousness helps build up the desired nation as opposed to colonialism and its traces.

"Culture" is another key point which postcolonial studies centre around. In "The National Liberation and Culture" by Amilcar Cabral, culture in its widest perspective is defined as "the fruit of history, reflects at every moment the material and spiritual reality of society, of man-the-individual and of man-the-social-being, faced with conflicts which set him against nature and the exigencies of common life. [And] ... all culture is composed of essential and secondary elements, of strengths and weakness, of virtues and failings ..." (61). Besides, Said as an eminent critic of the postcolonial theory are deeply concerned with culture as well. In *Culture and Imperialism*, he stresses the significance of the term and defines it in two major ways. "... [in both books,

Orientalism and *Culture and Imperialism*], 'culture' means two things in particular. First of all it means all those practices, like the arts of description, communication, and representation ... In the second sense culture is a sort of theatre where various political and ideological causes engage one another" (xii-xiv). Clearly, it could be stated that culture is a key truth which requires distinct attention with which to view the colonial and post-colonial world. As a term itself and various elements evolving around it are of utmost importance for postcolonial studies. As for Achebe, he strikingly accomplishes the exhibition of the indigenous cultural elements at each stage of colonialism throughout his novels by both exalting and criticising to better portray the realities.

Following culture, it is known that the concept of the "orient" and "Orientalism" term are also intensely debated in postcolonial studies, and these terms appear to have gained significance with the publication of *Orientalism* (1978) by Edward W. Said. It has been an epoch-making work of the recent decades. Unquestionably, Said's work has accelerated the studies concerning the East and has chiefly given birth to postcolonial studies in the academic world globally. Said is an influential scholar and favours 'Orientalism' today as "an academic discipline" (*Orientalism* 50). As he conveys initially, the "orient" is a place or better to call a setting, "a place of Europe's greatest, richest, and oldest colonies and it is the source of its oldest civilizations and languages" (*Orientalism* 1). In other words, it is an integral part of European material civilization and culture. Moreover, it is nothing more than "a European invention ... [as] antiquity, a place of romance and exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences" (1). What can be inferred here is that it is a means of defining Europe or the West with contrasting images. More strikingly, it is the deepest and most reoccurring image of 'the other'. Said frankly asserts that "Orient and Occident [which is the 'other' for Orient] are man-made" (5). That is to say, they are created conceptions rather than being geographical locations.

As for Orientalism itself, it has been a controversial term since it was first coined and has lots of connotations in itself. On the one hand, it is "a mode of discourse"; on the other hand, it is defined as "a style of thought based upon ontological and epistemological distinctions made between the Orient and the (most of the time) Occident" (*Orientalism* 2). Accordingly, Said puts emphasis on the fact that the Orient

is a created notion, and the East is 'orientalised'. It is a matter of power between the Orient and the Occident, and the West uses the East to define themselves. Taking all of these approaches into consideration, it can be stated that Orientalism is not only cultural, but also a political reality as well. Although it is quite prevalent, Orientalism is a "less preferred [term] by specialists today [on the grounds that] it is too vague and general and [...] connotes the high-handed executive attitude of nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century European colonialism" (2). Still, as for Said's own understanding of "Orientalist" and "Orientalism", it is purely an academic term; "Anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient - and this applies whether the person is an anthropologist, sociologist, historian, or philologist - either in its specific or its general aspects, is an Orientalist, and what he or she does is Orientalism" (2). Achebe, as a writer studying the Orient in Said's academic terms, could be regarded as an Orientalist; and with Orientalism as a mode of discourse, he manages to portray the binaries with distinctive qualities, which accordingly creates matchless works of art for postcolonial studies.

Apparently, Said is keenly concerned with Orientalism and proposes that Orientalism has also something to do with imperialism saliently: "The period of immense advance in the institution and content of Orientalism coincides exactly with the period of unparalleled European expansion; from 1815 to 1914 European direct colonial dominion expanded from about 35 percent of the earth's surface to about 85 percent of it" (qtd. in Said 41). It could be argued that there exists a tete-a-tete relationship between colonial advances and Orientalism. Indeed, in *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, Loomba stresses this reciprocal relationship with a similar approach to Said's work: "*Orientalism* can be said to inaugurate a new kind of study of colonialism. Said argues that representations of the 'Orient' in European literary texts ... contributed to the creation of dichotomy between Europe and its 'others', a dichotomy that was central to the creation of European culture ..." (44).

"Subaltern" is yet another popular term attributed to the colonized or somehow oppressed societies. Frankly enough, Ashcroft et al. see it as "inferior rank", and they elaborate on the term enlightening its emergence with these words: "Subaltern ... is a term adopted by Antonio Gramsci to refer to those groups in society who are subject to

the hegemony of the ruling classes" (*Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* 215). In the framework of postcolonialism, it can be considered as a term synonymous with the term 'other'. The issue of 'subaltern' came into prominence with Spivak's strong emphasis in her profound article "Can the Subaltern Speak?". In this article, Spivak draws the attention to the colonized's unfair situation and their inability to voice themselves, and stresses that "... one must nevertheless insist that the colonized subaltern *subject* is irretrievably heterogeneous" (26). It can be argued that it is not a matter of being inferior, rather a multilayered existence. In this respect, this is why Achebe passionately struggles to make the postcolonial voices heard and build up a more authentic panorama in his novels. Quite a few characters address both the colonizer and the colonized to show that they had existed, and they would carry on existing to represent the self.

Relating to the subaltern subjects of the colonized territories and oriental studies as a whole, "Hybridity" as a concept is also a distinctive part of the postcolonial world. The origin of the word "Hybrid" is introduced by Andrew Smith in his article "Migrancy, Hybridity, and Postcolonial Literary Studies" as follows: "'Hybrid' was originally ... a term of denigration - literally so: the blackening or sullying of a thing. Hybridity as a concept came to prominence in the context of supremacist Eurocentric accounts of racial origins and racial distinction" (250). First of all, it is a means of transformation, and in *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* Ashcroft et al. define hybridity as "one of the most widely employed and most disputed terms in post-colonial theory, [and] [it] commonly refers to the creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization (118). Additionally, in *On Post-Colonial Futures*, Ashcroft details the development process of hybridity and refers to various kinds of the term such as "linguistic, cultural, political, racial and religious" (123). On the other hand, Homi Bhabha in "Signs Taken for Wonders" in *The Location of Culture* proposes that it is a clear act of reconsidering the negative aspects of colonial perspective: "Hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects. It displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination" (159). More and more, Bhabha also considers it as a confusion and an uneasiness in people's nature. In *Nation*

and Narration, he raises this awareness by stating that "Hybridity is the perplexity of the living as it interrupts the representation of the fullness of life" (314). As colonialism penetrated into the indigenous land, the concept of hybridity and the characters around the term in Achebe's novels help define the ills of the colonial system and Achebe discloses all the probable menaces while naturally portraying the transformation process.

Another outcome and the natural consequence of postcolonialism is "Mimicry". It is the so-called ability of re-presenting the self with no free will. To clarify, although an entity assumes him/herself as an independent controller of the actions and attitudes in life, the person is bound to mirror them subconsciously most of the time. According to Bhabha's "Of Mimicry and Man" in *The Location of Culture*, "... mimicry emerges as the representation of a difference that is itself a process of disavowal. Mimicry is, thus the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualizes power" (122). Besides, in *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, Ashcroft et al. simply define the term as the process of 'copying and adopting' the attitudes and behaviour of the dominant power by the colonized societies ... Therefore, mimicry is "[a]n increasingly important term ... describ[ing] the ambivalent relationship between [the] colonizer and [the] colonized. When colonial discourse encourages the colonized subject to 'mimic' the colonizer, by adopting the colonizer's habits, assumptions, institutions and values, the result is a 'blurred copy' of the colonizer that can be quite threatening" (139). Concisely, it can be depicted as the dual representation of hybrid identities. Such identities throughout Achebe's novel play a significant role in describing the degenerative elements on the way to being a unified nation, and Achebe employs bold descriptions to strike the reader; to raise the awareness of the colonizer and to notify the Western hegemony on the indigenous land.

As part of the hybridity and mimicry processes, "Ambivalence" is a noteworthy matter of dispute in postcolonial studies as well. It is a fairly complex situation for the colonized who are not sure of what they are standing for or against in life, facing the colonizer and the dominant culture. In *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, Ashcroft et al. note by referring to Young and Bhabha that 'ambivalence' is "[a] term

first developed in psychoanalysis to describe a continual fluctuation between wanting one thing and wanting opposite ... . Adopted into colonial discourse theory by Homi Bhabha, it describes the complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized" (12). In his another precious work, *Postcolonial Transformation*, Ashcroft believes that it is the act of adopting while resisting rather than a pejorative aspect in the full sense: "Ambivalence is not merely the sign of the failure of colonial discourse to make the colonial subject conform, it is the sign of the agency of the colonized - the two-way gaze, the dual orientation, the ability to appropriate colonial technology without being absorbed by it - which disrupts the monologic impetus of the colonizing process" (23). While it is rather compelling to find the balance between adopting and resisting processes throughout his novels, Achebe sheds light on the realities and hints to the right option by displaying not only the positive but also the negative outcomes of the colonization process.

Unlike all the forementioned terms that have negative connotations, "Appropriation" sounds like a way of getting the best out of the colonial experience. In *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, Ashcroft et al. maintain that it is "[a] term to describe the ways in which post-colonial societies take over those aspects of the imperial culture - language, forms of writing, film, theatre, even modes of thought and argument such as rationalism, logic and analysis - that may be of use to them in articulating their own social and cultural identities" (19). In other words, it can be described as the act of having colonizer qualities to use just for the sake of self interest and sustainable welfare. That is, they all perform in opposition to the imperial language and they can be defined as 'mild' resistance following the self interests of the colonized. Appropriation for such a writer as Achebe is seen as part of the resolution and helps him construct an easeful future for the postcolonial identities. In this sense, the term could be taken as a pragmatic and didactic phenomenon throughout the pentalogy of Chinua Achebe.

Employing postcolonial theory and criticism is such a comprehensive praxis that it embraces and involves almost each detail concerning the values and facts of humanity including both the positive and negative side effects of the demanding world order centring around colonialism. To this end, in light of various critics, the essential

terminology and concepts of the field have been disclosed in such detailed way for the basic objective of evaluating Achebe and his novels by applying the postcolonial theory and criticism. However, prior to meeting Achebe and his novels next, the qualities of colonialist texts as opposed to postcolonial texts and their features will also form a base on which to better understand and evaluate the second and third chapters in turn.

1.4. Colonial and Postcolonial Texts

Among the variety of concepts centring around colonialism and the circumstances of the colonial order, postcolonial theory and criticism is of great significance to go through and analyse the colonial/ist texts to unveil the driving forces behind the realities. In the first stage, the matter of discourse, that is colonialist discourse specifically, plays a major part in colonial texts. In a detailed manner, Boehmer explains that "[c]olonialist discourse can be taken to refer to that collection of symbolic practices, including textual codes and conversations and implied meanings, which Europe deployed in the process of its colonial expansion and, in particular, in understanding the bizarre and apparently unintelligible strangeness with which it came into contact ..." (*Colonial & Postcolonial Literature* 50). In such writings, the representations of 'the other' is presented as lowly figures, or just commoners; they have to behave according to the norms or expectations of the controlling powers. To exemplify this case in colonialist writings, Ngugi wa Thiong'o states in "Decolonizing the Mind" as follows:

> In such [writings] there were only two types of Africans: the good or the bad. The good African was the one who cooperated with the European colonisers; particularly the African who helped the European coloniser in the occupation and subjugation of his own people and country. Such a character was portrayed as possessing qualities of strength, intelligence, and beauty ... The bad African character was the one who offered resistance to the foreign conquest and occupation of his country. Such a character was portrayed as being ugly, weak, cowardly and scheming. (1141)

Apparently, throughout the colonialist texts, it is not only a matter of physical traits, but also the way African people live is looked down upon.

As for the colonialist literature, it has no difference in shape, yet it is a more organized medium using the colonialist discourse as its major strategy. In his article "The Economy of Manichean Allegory" Abdul R. JanMohamed believes that "[c]olonialist literature is an exploration and a representation of a world at the boundaries of 'civilization', a world that has not (yet) been domesticated by European signification or codified in detail by its ideology" (18). At this point, it is worth noting that colonialist literature has distinctive qualities and should not be confused with colonial literature. In this respect, Boehmer distinguishes "colonial" literature from "colonialist" literature with these words: "... [C]olonial literature ... includes literature written in Britain as well as in the rest of the Empire during the colonial period[,] ... [whereas] [C]olonialist literature in contrast was that which was specifically concerned with colonial expansion. ... It embodied the imperialists' point of view" (*Colonial & Postcolonial Literature* 2-3). Following the differentiation here, postcolonial texts also need to be handled in isolation so as to make sense of the binary relations between them as opposing poles.

It could be acknowledged that postcolonialism has a promising connotation for colonized societies, and postcolonial texts serve in favour of the colonized directly. Forming an identity through such texts is laborious work, yet certain points enable postcolonial writing to unite the colonized. In *The Empire Writes Back*, Ashcroft et al. assert that "Negritude was the earliest attempt to create a consistent theory of modern African writing" (123). In this case, the continuous alterations such as decolonization and the nation-building processes in the previously colonized world appear to promote postcolonial writing. To elaborate on the issue, in *On Postcolonial Futures* Ashcroft also believes in the role of postcolonial writing to create a distinct and purified culture: "... [M]ost significantly, post-colonial writing, because it is conceived in a dynamic of political and cultural engagement at both discursive and institutional level, is peculiarly placed to initiate cultural transformation" (21). That is the reason for many postcolonial texts including trans-cultural elements and makes use of parenthesis for translation, or maybe better to call 'trans-creation'; and Chinua Achebe is no exception. On this issue in *The Empire Writes Back*, Ashcroft et al. illustrate the situation referring to Achebe: "Parenthetic translations of individual words, for example, 'he took him into his *obi*

(hut)', are the most common authorial intrusion in cross-cultural texts" (61). Besides such interpolations, there also exist untranslated words in postcolonial texts, the reason of which might signify the fact that the language used actually is the 'other' itself. This implies the fact that they do have their own language and this will be helpful to preserve the native culture by raising awareness on this. Overall, it could be argued that post-colonial writings are home to refined lives enriched with optimism based on a common background as well as indigenous values. In this respect, once more, Chinua Achebe's novels would not be an exception to this.

As the counterpart of the postcolonial writing, postcolonial literature could be called the promoted exhibition of postcolonial texts. In the article "Africa: North and Sub-Saharan" over the emergence of the movement, David Murphy states that "[t]he first transnational (and transcontinental) literary movement in Africa[,] Negritude ... emerged in the 1930 ... [and] sought to restore pride in black African culture through a celebration of what it described as its sensual, emotional nature, as opposed to the dour rationalism of Europe" (65). Likewise, the post-war period is worthy of an address since it also left remarkable traces giving birth to postcolonial literature. In *Colonial & Postcolonial Literature*, Boehmer argues that "... the post-1945 moment of anti-colonial and (usually) nationalistic upsurge produced the first literature which unambiguously invites the name postcolonial: that is, a literature which identified itself with the broad movement of resistance to, and transformation of, colonial societies" (184). In this sense, written texts play a major part in colonized societies, and accordingly the metamorphoses of such communities seem to occur much easier with such texts. Thus, in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, Ashcroft et al. resemble "written texts" to "social institution" (298) and Boehmer thinks these writings are part of "nationalist historical fictions" and they might be grouped under three headings as "control, self making or selving, and form-giving" (196) texts. She stresses that they serve to decolonize nations and constitute a significant element of postcolonial literature. Similarly, in the article entitled "National Culture", Fanon considers postcolonial literature as "a literature of combat, because it moulds the national consciousness, giving it form and contours and flinging open before it new and boundless horizons; ... and because it is the will to liberty expressed in terms of time and space" (155).

Postcolonial literature as a means of combat on the way to liberate the self has gone under various titles. Some call it 'commonwealth literature' and some entities identify it as 'third world literature', while some others avoid the trivial differences concerning the title. What is clear is that all appear to denote similar concerns, yet in *Postcolonial Criticism* Nicholas Harrison prefers a new term for postcolonial literature and explains three qualities with reference to Deleuze and Guattari: "Minor literature ... has three salient characteristics. First, it is linked with their positively connoted notion of 'deterritorialization', a term whose meaning ... includ[es] 'a rapid and joyous sliding movement', 'a line of escape' ... The second characteristic of 'minor literature' is that 'everything in it is political'; and the third, that 'everything takes on a collective value'" (102). Regardless of these attributions, it could be argued that the literature itself presents a vigorous resistance with the duty of challenge. Despite the variety of the titles standing for postcolonial literature, the phases it has undergone is quite identical. As the common feature of all the approaches, in *Beginning Theory*, Peter Barry highlights that postcolonial literature has actually evolved into three distinct phases. According to him, the stages can be classified as "adopt, adapt, adept" (195) successively. Barry simply argues that postcolonial literature *adopted* some qualities of Western texts, then *adapted* them by combining with local elements, and finally produced powerfully *adept* literary works unique to the native land. In this respect, it could be maintained that, to monitor these phases, postcolonialism as a realm presents an explicit comprehension and evaluation of the realities in postcolonial literature.

In this very first chapter, the historical background of the study, an overall approach to crucial concepts such as colonialism and postcolonialism, postcolonial theory and criticism as well as the postcolonial terminology and postcolonial texts as opposed to colonialist texts have been dealt with in light of respected authorities and critics such as Said, Bhabha, and Spivak to stress the theoretical and critical bases for the following chapters. In this respect, the first chapter of this study will be a great assistance to all in comprehending and evaluating Chinua Achebe as the centre of attention in the second chapter, and finally his precious novels serving as compelling evidence of the colonial past and phases of the post/colonial world progressing in the final chapter consecutively.

CHAPTER 2

CHINUA ACHEBE AS A POSTCOLONIAL VOICE

2.1. Chinua Achebe (1930 - 2013)

Taking the exemplary life and outstanding career which he led into consideration, Chinua Achebe is titled as the most prominent literary figure in Nigeria and a devout voice of Africa. The experiences he went through are the striking elements making Achebe who he is. Therefore, initially, the aim of portraying his extraordinary life in this chapter is to prove that his life experiences can clearly be associated with his vision and mission as well as his postcolonial stance in his matchless works in the final chapter. Throughout his whole life, Achebe was quite influential and had a rewarding journey. In this sense, to lead such a life, he owes a lot to his family, educational background, and occupational experiences.

The importance of family in one's life can be taken as the first value to mention, and Achebe was so fortunate to have had a path setting family especially during the early period of his life. Innes informs the reader that "Achebe was born in Eastern Nigeria on [the] 16[th] November 1930. He was christened Albert Chinualumogu. His father, Isaiah Okafor Achebe, [was] a catechist for the Church Missionary Society ... . His mother, Janet, had also been a convert to Christianity" (*Chinua Achebe* 4). Initially, it is seen that the world to which Achebe opened his eyes to was a converted world; and in his *Morning Yet on Creation Day*, Achebe verifies this with a single sentence: "I was born in Ogidi in Eastern Nigeria of devout Christian parents. The line between Christian and non-Christian was much more definite in my village forty years ago than it is today" (65). Even his early ages mirror the gradual change in the identity of the indigenous society. The gradual change could be said to have been triggered by colonialism and its reinforcing elements like the religious activities on the land. Accordingly, a colonial and Christian upbringing marks Achebe's infant years considerably. Elaborating on his life, *Conversations with Chinua Achebe* edited by Bernth Lindfors is such a valuable work that it greatly contributes to hearing the intimate voice of Achebe himself. In the interview conducted by Jonathan Cott in 1980, Achebe explains the meaning of his name with these words: '"When we talk about Chi, we're talking about the individual

spirit, and so you find the word in all kinds of combinations. ... Chinua ... is a shortened form of an expression that means 'May a *chi* fight for me'" (84). Achebe likes his indigenous name, yet he does not favour his baptized name 'Albert' so much as the name denotes the colonial past. It is quite natural that even names serve a critical role in terms of identity; and the first step of his mission as identity constructor could yield clues as to Achebe's preference of dropping his Christian/colonial name.

Just like his family background, Achebe's educational life is worth mentioning since it has a massive impact on his identity as well as his world vision. From the earliest ages, first of all, his parents directed him to read intensively and they left a profound influence on Achebe. Moreover, Achebe reveals that his parents used to take pleasure in calling him "Dictionary" (*There Was a Country* 27). In other words, the issue of education had always been at the centre of Achebe's life; and an educated well-off family with minor hardships in those colonial days and love of reading at early ages firmly shaped his educational background. As a result of this rare chance under colonial atmosphere, Achebe had a bright childhood. Likewise, his wife Christie also had an educated childhood and bright career including a PhD in education, which was a perfect criterion to him then. Consequently, Achebe formed a new family at least as perfect as his own family and they had "four children - two daughters and two sons [with] a lovely balance further enhanced by the symmetry of their arrivals: girl, boy, boy, girl. Thus, the girls had taken strategic position in the family" (68) states Achebe in his precious work *The Education of a British-Protected Child*.

Achebe "began [his] formal education at St. Phillip's Central School in 1936 ... and [he] enjoyed school a great deal and was a hardworking pupil" (*There Was a Country* 15). Such an enthusiastic start rapidly developed him. In *The Education of a British-Protected Child* with further details, Achebe mirrors those early formal education days with these words: "Elementary education began with two years in infant school and six years in primary school. For some children there was a preschool year in what was called religious school, where they spent a year chanting and dancing the catechism" (17). The point to highlight here is the pure colonial atmosphere throughout those times. Just like the family dominated his infant education, the colonial setting in Nigeria ruled this formal education, and this presented a new dimension in Achebe's

intellectual awakening yet as a child. In an interview conducted by Gordon Lewis in 1995, Achebe summarizes the situation as follows: "'My parents knew that education was important. To my father it was almost a religion. ... For a long time church schools were the primary source of education, but eventually the colonial government set up a few schools. I went to one of them'" (Lindfors, *Conversations with Chinua Achebe* 187). During the six years in primary school, Achebe continued his education with a formidable state of mind which shadowed even the colonial setting dominating the atmosphere because "[t]he Second World War began when Chinua was completing his second year in primary school, what was called standard two. The remaining years of his primary school education took place against the 'distant background' of the war" (Sallah and Okonjo-Iweala 33). What is worse, Achebe notes that "Government College Umuahia was closed down and its buildings turned over to a prisoner-of-war camp for German and Italian nationals. ... Colonial policy moved in mysterious ways!" (*The Education of a British-Protected Child* 20). Accordingly, at an early age of his formal education, Achebe began to question the values of humanity, war and peace concepts alongside colonialism both in Nigeria and Africa or in a global scale as it was the time when fascism seemed at least as dangerous as colonization itself.

Then, for Achebe the university years were opened up in 1948: "[he] finished secondary school and literally walked into University College, Ibadan! Well, maybe not walked in. There was a nationwide examination, and [he] came in first or second in the country. [He] won what was called a 'major' scholarship" (*There Was a Country* 27). University education was definitely a turning point for both Achebe and his nation as there were lack of educational institutions for higher degrees in the colonial times when it was feared that the consciousness of national unity might emerge and disrupt the colonial plans. However, this was exactly what happened in Nigeria, and Achebe began to emerge as a pioneer voice for his nation through his standing and pen. He shares the details of the first university (1948) in Nigeria by putting an emphasis on the colonial dressing of the institution: "The University College, Ibadan, ... was a new experiment in higher education in the closing years of British colonial rule in West Africa. Its syllabus and degrees were closely modelled on, and supervised by, London University. My professors in English were all Europeans from various British and European

universities" (*Home and Exile* 21). Having a colonial education or covering the syllabuses prepared from the Western point of view, Achebe was not at ease mentally. The more he came across the white man's burden in books and in real life, the more he became aware and sharpened his pen ready to bring about a drastic change in the fate of both the colonizer and the colonized in Nigeria.

As a university graduate with great qualifications Achebe kept on his mission in life and sustained his determination to a great extent. Having a university education meant a successful business life with respected positions and rare chances in life, and Achebe was not an exception: "After graduation [he] did not have to worry about where [he] would go next. The system was so well organized that as [the graduates] left university[,] most of [them] were instantly absorbed into civil service, academia, business, or industry" (*There Was a Country* 29). After his graduation in 1953, it seems Achebe made an easy introduction to his career as an English teacher, which was a great job for him to share his light with the community at large.

His next occupational experience was also an easy-caught chance yet a different one: "[he] did not bother to look for a job; a job from broadcasting literally came to [his] door, looking for [him]. Five years later, [Achebe] was, at the ripe age of twenty-eight, controller of Eastern Region stations of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation" (*The Education* 31). The new job presented new opportunities for him and enlarged his world. "[I]n the fall of 1956 or thereabouts, [Achebe] was selected to travel to the British Broadcasting Corporation school in London where its staff were trained" (*There* 37). It was the first time that Achebe had ever had a chance to see a world outside of Nigeria. During this period of such a successful start and quick promotion in his career, Achebe was busy doing some tasks suitable to his tastes like editing scripts and speeches so "[h]e developed the skill of commissioning and editing short stories that proved valuable in his professional development as a writer and editor" (Sallah and Okonjo-Iweala 61). In other words, these were the initial experiences of Achebe's professional career yet his real occupation was growing up subtly, on the sly. Considering all, it can be stated that not only Achebe's family and formal education but also the jobs he performed contributed to his identity and ideology he held later in life and helped the reader get to know Achebe more closely.

2.2. Achebe's Ideology of Life

When his life and works are taken into consideration, it is apparent that whatever he encountered throughout his eighty-two-year lifespan, Achebe managed to trace the right path for the sake of the salvation of his nation. In this part, Chinua Achebe's ideological standing as well as his approaches to critical issues of the postcolonial studies with reference to mostly Achebe's own works, including various articles right before focusing on his literary side, form the base for the evaluation of his novels in a more meaningful context. To put it in another way, Achebe's standing in life is an invitation to see him as nobody but a pure postcolonial identity, which constitutes the core value of his works in general. In the foreword of *The Chinua Achebe Encyclopaedia*, Simon Gikandi reveals Achebe's philosophy on traditional values in these lines: "Achebe is now considered to be the premier novelist on the discourse of African identity, nationalism, and decolonization ... . If there is one phrase that sums up Achebe's philosophy of culture or language, it is the Igbo proverb: 'Where one thing falls, another stands in its place'" (xiii). It is true that Achebe constantly puts emphasis on the concept of change, that is, if there exists colonization, there should be decolonization as well. He always aims to change things towards the favour of his nation and postcolonial world. Supporting this idea, he reveals his main purpose with these words: "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" (*There Was a Country* 53). To this end, Achebe had to face the complex structures of life performing such duties, and thus he always applied to the Igbo values as a way to sort them all out: "Igbo sayings and proverbs are far more valuable to [him] as a human being in understanding the complexity of the world than the doctrinaire, self-righteous strain of the Christian faith [he] was taught" (*There Was a Country* 12).

Besides the indigenous values Achebe kept alive, Martin Luther King formed an invaluable significance in his vision, and Achebe puts his closeness into words in a frank manner: "[H]is work, his thought, and his death left a strong feeling that this man belonged to Africa in a very special sense ... His vision of an America in which the structures of racism must be challenged and brought down by sheer moral force began

early in Dr. King's life to incorporate the problems of Africa and its people" (*The Education of a British-Protected Child* 131). As a man who left huge influences on Achebe, King resembles a torchlight for Achebe's nation and Africa. On this matter, Achebe justifies King's way with these words: "If you ask me what I think makes Martin Luther King worthy of the honour and celebration we accord his memory today, I will say it in two things: what he achieved himself, and what he stands for in a long line of a people's struggle for freedom and justice" (*The Education* 136). It could be argued that the achievements of M. Luther King and his accomplishments for people are the major reasons behind Achebe's ideological sympathy for him. In relation to his keen interest in the ideology of Martin Luther King, Achebe could be described as a humane person finding the colonial system and its process dehumanizing as follows:

> Colonization may indeed be a very complex affair, but one thing is certain: you do not walk in, seize the land, the person, the history of another, and then sit back and compose hymns of praise in his honour ... So what do you do? You construct very elaborate excuses for your action. You say, for instance, that the man you dispossessed is worthless and quite unfit to manage himself or his affair ... . (*The Education* 112)

This clearly explains the major reasons why Achebe repeatedly puts emphasis on the knowledge of the past and colonial history. In other words, in postcolonial studies framework, the reflections of history could mean to answer back to the colonizer and the West. In the preface of *Morning Yet On Creation Day*, Achebe expresses "I believe that in our situation the greater danger lies not in remembering but in forgetting ... I believe that if we are to survive as a nation we need to grasp the meaning of our tragedy. One way to do it is to remind ourselves constantly of the things that happened and how we felt when they were happening" (xiii). It appears that colonialism is always at the heart of Achebe's ideology and his works; and accordingly, the consciousness of history and the past is the natural outcome of a defence mechanism just like in many postcolonial societies. Concisely, all the qualities and ideas of Achebe as opposed to colonialism generate a clear postcolonial identity whose sole mission is to construct identities in unison against the colonial system and imperialism globally.

To tell the truth, the unity of Nigeria has always been a central matter throughout Achebe's life and works, and especially after the independence of his country in 1960 from the colonial rule, he dedicated himself to the welfare of his nation in the trap of neo-colonialism and its ploys. Just like on Africa, Achebe believes that a European perspective on Nigeria is not unbiased enough to project the core realities inside. He explains this with a proper simile: "I am not saying that the picture of Nigeria and Nigerians painted by a conscious European must be invalid. I think it could be terribly valid, just as a picture of the visible tenth of an iceberg is valid" (*Morning Yet on Creation Day* 48). Achebe implies the lack of knowledge and criticizes the subjective approach of the West on the sly. It should be pointed out that Achebe is an authority who can both praise and condemn the same existence at the same time, that is to say, he is an objective evaluator of the present circumstances. For instance, civil war was a horrible experience for him and he almost refused his beloved Nigeria for which he granted his life towards its unity. As a result, Achebe got some harsh criticism; nonetheless, he clarifies his manners and the change due to the obligatory cases in the country. In the interview conducted by Biodun Jeyifo in 1983, he answers the question "'what is Nigeria to you?'" in such an eloquent way that what he feels towards his beloved country despite the civil war nightmare is clearly seen as follows:

> [M]y view of this is really quite simple. I am a Nigerian. Nigeria, with all its faults, is the country where it pleased providence to put me. Now, I am not one of those who will say Nigeria is an absolute good, that even if Nigeria is cutting my throat, I should be singing the national anthem. That's not my kind of patriotism. [For all the bad experiences,] we reconciled ourselves with this experiment - it's still an experiment - called Nigeria. (Lindfors, *Conversations with Chinua Achebe* 122)

Unanimously, Achebe is considered to be the chief conductor of this experiment and his innovative approaches would pay off sooner or later. In this respect, Achebe's overall ideological world appears to be the embodiment of psychological struggles and intellectual battles; and these could be considered among the prime driving forces shaping the content and qualities of Achebe's writing.

2.3. Achebe's Writing Style

Achebe is such an illustrious man of letters that if anyone wants to feel, touch, hear and smell Africa, Lindfors directly points at him in the first place with these words: "[T]each Achebe. If there is extra time, teach Soyinka too, and then perhaps Ngugi and a few poets, but start with the most important writer and the most significant single text. Start with Achebe. Start with *Things Fall Apart*" (*Early Achebe* 197). Chinua Achebe is indeed a distinctive voice and his writings adorned with a style peculiar to himself have succeeded in shaping the colonial history and will continue to guide his nation on the path towards peaceful unification for good. Starting from the early writing experiences to a developed style of an expert, Achebe's standing as a devout writer with rewarding missions in life and his belief in a writer's role in shaping society have been revolutionary and transformed the way people see the world. Achebe is such a significant authority that he managed to dominate the postcolonial studies for over almost a half century and he is still being discussed in various fields. In *The Fiction of Chinua Achebe*, Jago Morrison reveals that "[s]ince the emergence of *Things Fall Apart* in 1958, Chinua Achebe has acquired a reputation as the 'Godfather' of modern African writing. With combined book sales for his novels running to tens of millions copies, his work has become a staple of the college and university curriculum[s] throughout the English-speaking world" (1). The 'Godfather', as Simon Gikandi underlines in *Reading Chinua Achebe*, was not a "literary orphan" (6) for sure, he had precursors; but the rise of the African writing and the emergence of modern literary tradition is mainly attributed to Achebe. Therefore, it can be fairly stated that the contemporary tradition started and flourished with his contributions. In this part, his early career and the factors leading him to become a unique writer, his literary art, Achebe's own perspective on the role of the writer will form a base and also provide guidance to interpret his distinguished novels in the next chapter of this study.

Besides his affection to writing, during his early school period as well as his high school years, Achebe had "some experience in editing and writing for high school magazines. At Umuahia he had contributed to house organs and had assisted the faculty member entrusted with the responsibility of preparing the college annual for publication" (Lindfors, *Early Achebe* 19). His being fond of stories led Achebe to read

more and more as he grew up, yet the world in which he found himself was purely colonial and whatever he read was somehow biased and colonialist texts. Thus, Achebe's love of reading was met by developing a postcolonial identity in life with a critical posture against anything in clash with his nation. These subjective texts with colonialist discourse, in fact, were the preparation for one of the most distinguished postcolonial text generators. After gaining his high school experiences, the university years, when he obtained an absolute awareness in a real sense, marked a turning point for Achebe and his writing career. In the interview conducted by Charles H. Rowell in 1989, Achebe was asked "'Did your education at the university of Ibadan direct you in any way toward a career in creative writing? I guess what I'm ultimately asking is how did you come to write?'"; and he replied as: "'Yes, well, I think I grew up in Ibadan in a way that pointed clearly in the direction of writing. That was the period when I was able to reassess what I had read and all I had to go by at that point was the colonial novel written by white people about us. ... [I]n my case Ibadan was the watershed, a turning point'" (Lindfors, *Conversations with Chinua Achebe* 183-184).

In *Morning Yet on Creation Day*, Achebe reveals his first intention of writing so as to tell their own story himself: "At the university I read some appalling novels about Africa (including Joyce Cary's much praised *Mister Johnson*) and decided that the story we had to tell could not be told for us by anyone else no matter how gifted or well-intentioned" (70). These works, *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad or *Mister Johnson* by Joyce Cary and alike were "not always innocent" (*The Education of a British-Protected Child* 118); on the contrary, they were dehumanizing, so Achebe had the mission of writing his people himself to both lead them and wipe out the dark stories on Africa. Not only with formal education but also having experiences in the post-graduate years, Achebe acquired a respected background for his writings. On this issue, Achebe reveals that "Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), the Talks Department hired me to maul over script and prepare them for broadcast. A tedious job, it nevertheless honed my skill for writing my novels" (*There Was a Country* 33). Supporting this truth, Innes in *Chinua Achebe* exemplifies the contribution: "As Nigeria moved towards independence in 1960, the role of the NBC in helping to create a sense of national identity ... was an exciting and important one. Achebe's work took him to various parts

of Nigeria to research topics and interview his fellow Nigerians, and might well have contributed to his keen ear ... as well as to the sense [in] his novels" (102).

Occupying a crucial place in postcolonial studies, Africa is a unique existence in terms of both its massive territorial space and the leading exemplary role for the post-colonial world; however, someone was needed to frankly illustrate this in its pure authenticity. Thus, Achebe had a matchless enthusiasm to perform this task. Having been labelled as a 'dark continent' for ages, the voice of the pure realities began to be heard by the masses. At this point, Achebe's writing emerged as the invincible defence and attack mechanism of the African colonized entities as well as all the previously colonized citizens around the globe. That is to say, his works not only saliently preserves the indigenousness, but also feverishly responds back to the West. It is commonly accepted that African literature is a distinctive asset, home to various qualities. In *Toward the Decolonization of African Literature*, Chinweizu et al. refer to the literature in the introduction part with these words: "African literature is an autonomous entity separate and apart from all other literatures. It has its own traditions, models, and norms. ... And its historical and cultural imperatives impose upon it concerns and constraints quite different, sometimes altogether antithetical to the European" (4). In their view, there exist four criteria to take into consideration while defining literature: "the primary audience for whom the work is done, the cultural and national consciousness expressed in the work, the nationality of the writer, and the language in which the work is done" (14). Accordingly, it could be stated that the variety of ethnicities and backgrounds on the continent Africa establishes the richness of African literature.

Modern African writing has concerned the reality of African life alongside the historical and cultural background transformed by colonization. Therefore, in *Achebe and the Politics of Representation* Ogede claims that "[o]ne goal that unites all the generations of African writers is restoring harmony, egalitarianism, political freedom, and material prosperity for all Africans" (100). Achebe's taking his place in the literary area with the first novel as a groundbreaking masterpiece has been a turning point for modern African writing because "before the publication of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* in 1958, public awareness ... was confined chiefly to white writers such as Doris

Lessing, Alan Paton, or Nadine Gordimer" (40) states B. Eugene McCarthy in his article "Rhythm and Narrative Method in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*". On this basis, it could be stated that there had already been various writings on the continent before Achebe, yet he was the one who gave a new dimension to the perception of modern writing style and changed the existing literary devices. In *Chinua Achebe: A Study of His Novels*, Khayyoom highlights that "[t]he African novel in general is viewed as a distinct literary form in which basic social contradictions are reflected. The novel is characterized by the problematic hero unlike the epic hero who is non-problematic. Mostly, African novels are interpreted as extensions of social contradiction between 'culture' or 'symbolic order'" (28). Such particular qualities require specific writers to carry out the tradition with the correct agenda, and therefore the novelists in Africa have private duties to perform. Despite all the distinctive qualities of African writing, the West poses a negative standing against the existence and uniqueness of the novel tradition, which urges the chief representative of the African writers community to respond in a humorous way. In his *Morning Yet on Creation Day*, Achebe ridicules the Eurocentric approach here with these lines: "[There are] small and proprietary school[s] of critics who assure us that the African novel does not exist. Reason: the novel was invented in England. For the same kind of reason I shouldn't know how to drive a car because I am not descendant of Henry Ford. But every visitor to Nigeria will tell you that we are among the world's most creative drivers!" (54).

It should be an honour that Chinua Achebe has been unanimously dubbed as the founding father of modern African writing in post-colonial Africa. The reasons behind this fact are actually wide and varied making Achebe who he is. As a spokesperson of Africa in his writings, Achebe is seen as the distinguished re-creator or the transformer of the 'dark continent'. He is a committed writer, and he has complete faith in the power of literature. As an elaboration to this notion in the introduction of his short stories work entitled *Girls at War and Other Stories*, Achebe conveys a message to his readers: "One of the greatest things literature does is allow us to imagine; to identify with situations and people who live in completely different circumstances, in countries all over the world" (1). Also he puts forward a more striking idea as to the function of literature in *Hopes and Impediments* with these words: Literature is such a medium that it "offer[s]

the kinetic energy necessary for social transition and change" (167). It could be understood that he sees literature as a direct cause and activator. By this way, Achebe adds that, literature "gives us a second handle on reality; enabling us to encounter in the safe, manageable dimensions ..." (*Hopes and Impediments* 170). In this respect, it can be fairly expressed that postcolonial literature is an intellectual combat without bloodshed, and Achebe has the duty of the commander-in-chief in this arena.

To take part in this combat, Achebe tackles the grave issues of the day such as colonialism, imperialism, independence, neo-colonialism, racism, nationhood, identity, gender, and class as well. In doing so, he follows the manner against the European centred 'Art for Art's Sake' approach. As Achebe confesses, "Art for art's sake is just another piece of deodorised dog-shit ... [and he believes] that art is, and was always, in the service of man" (*Morning Yet on Creation Day* 19). Achebe frankly reveals that his art is for society and his nation. He believes that when the output reaches the commoner, only then is it called art. Accordingly, Achebe favours functionalism versus the European tradition. As for one area of his artistic inheritance, Achebe refers to the tradition of "mbari art" in the Igbo land by defining it in these words: "Part of my artistic and intellectual inheritance is derived from a cultural tradition in which it was possible for artists to create objects of art which were solid enough and yet make no attempt to claim, and sometimes even go to great lengths to deny, personal ownership of what they have created" (*Hopes and Impediments* 48). Therefore, the starting point for Achebe is to create something for all, not just for himself or simply for the sake of art.

To this end, one of the most distinctive qualities of Achebe's literary art to a recognizable extent is the use of proverbs in each of his novels. They could be argued to have such serious no ending functions in his works that, indeed, for Achebe,

> Proverbs are miniature tales; they are the building blocks ... of tales. They are tales refined to their simplest form, because a good proverb is a short story ... A proverb is a very careful observation of reality and the world, and then a distillation into the wisdom of an elegant statement so that it sticks in the mind ... . (Lindfors, *Conversations* 180)

As Lindfors also believes in *Early Achebe*, there are many visible active functions and "[i]ndeed Achebe's proverbs can serve as keys to an understanding of his novels

because he uses them not merely to add touches of local colour but reiterate themes, to sharpen characterization, to clarify conflict, and to focus on the values of the society he is portraying" (56).

Furthermore, Arthur Ravenscroft underlines in *Chinua Achebe* that the use of proverbs is the vivid traditions given through the means of specific use in language (16). This specific use of language is also garnished with the use of pidgin English. A keynote on this language matter in Nigeria is given by Booker in the section "Nigeria" of *The Chinua Achebe Encyclopaedia* with these words: "In their everyday activities many of the inhabitants speak a form of pidgin English that preserves most of the basic grammatical features of English but incorporates a number of changes in syntax and vocabulary arising from the influence of local cultures" (170). Apparently, Achebe applies to Pidgin on purpose and as an explanation to the reason of this through the interview published in *Afrique* (Paris), he puts forward his aim of being realistic in his novels (Lindfors, *Conversations with Chinua Achebe* 9). Achebe wants to portray his society not as it seems but as it exists, he follows each kind of realistic detail in society and Pidgin is just one of them. In this regard, Pidgin as a language or a unique expression mode is used to show the society alongside some social functions rather than individualistic concerns. Moreover, in Achebe's use of language, there are some untranslated words or authentic fabrics like African similes, metaphors, sayings as well, and this is yet another means of Achebe's showing his society as it is with its own indigenousness.

In addition to such qualities, Achebe's writing style involves multiple voices and different point of views including those of the reader as well. Innes argues that Achebe's "involvement of the reader" and "variety of perspectives" creates a remarkable style (*Chinua Achebe* 169). Indeed, this appears to be another way of giving everyone a chance to see the reality out of his fiction. Achebe's conscious calling for the participation of the reader lead them to question and judge, and in this way, both perspectives inside and outside the novel generate a better interpretation to get the messages given by Achebe. Last but not least, the content and subject matters of his works have also something to do with Achebe's particular literary art. By means of complete verisimilitude, Achebe's power to create real life with his concerns about the

past, history, culture, politics and human condition as a community rather than individual traits is one of the most eye-catching aspects of his novels. Interestingly, in the article "Chinua Achebe: the Wrestler and the Challenge of Chaos", Chidi Okonkwo underlines a crucial detail regarding all of Achebe's novels: "Each of Achebe's novels shows at least one protagonist who is proposing to write a book, historical or fictive, as a means of creating harmony out of the chaos of experience" (95), which reveals a noteworthy side of Achebe's preferences in his writing. He might want to create a factual documentation out of fiction to show that fiction is not necessarily a fiction but a pure reality, and thus Achebe urges the reader to question by comparing and contrasting the approaches in his novels and the character's fiction in the very same novels.

In general, Achebe's narrative is the search of figuring out the problems and false notions on Nigeria and Africa, and his works aim to project the real face of the rooted existence in his land. Thus, Achebe tries to show the symbolic values and order in society alongside the nuisances inherited from past ideals influencing the present day Nigeria. It could be stated that colonialism as the core subject matter is the major driving force of his novels. By relating to the colonization in Nigerian history, Achebe depicts the disintegration in the Igbo society and modern Nigeria. Specifically, Achebe touches upon various points "like state politics, urbanization, sophisticated lie, coup d'état and civil wars in recent past ... He is greatly concerned with the historical, political, social, and cultural complexity of the Igbo traditional society in particular and modern African society in general in his works" (Khayyoom 46). While doing this, Achebe is for sure well aware of the responsibilities he is carrying as a writer.

Achebe sees the writer as one of the most important community leaders in terms of their impact on the change and transformation of the existing society as well as the future generations. Therefore, Achebe feels a moral urge to write in order to serve his people. This obligation shapes both his fictional and real world. In *There Was a Country*, Achebe clarifies this point with these words: "My own assessment is that the role of the writer is not a rigid position and depends to some extent on the state of health of his or her society. In other words, if a society is ill[,] the writer has a responsibility to point it out. If the society is healthier, the writer's job is different" (57). For Achebe, under these circumstances, "the writer is often faced with two choices - turn away from

the reality of life's intimidating complexity or conquer its mystery by battling with it" (*There Was a Country* 59), and devotedly, he opts for the latter. Additionally, in *Chinua Achebe: New Perspectives*, Ojinmah supports Achebe's approach to the writer as a path signifying teacher: "For Achebe, the African novelist as a teacher has three primary functions in relation to his society: as [an] historian, rescuing the past; as a critic, analysing the present; as [a] mentor, helping to guide it towards its future" (4). In this respect, as a natural consequence, the writer's position in a new nation on the way to being a unified future is a lot more critical. That is to say, literature should be in the service of people with didactic concerns. As Khayyoom remarks, Achebe, "like Wordsworth and Arnold, rooted in his own history and culture, has assumed the role of a teacher to re-educate and regenerate his society, to restore Africa its pride, dignity and confidence lost during the colonial period" (37).

Enlarging upon the motive behind a career as a writer, in *Home and Exile* Achebe lists three reasons for becoming a writer: "The first is that you have an overpowering urge to tell a story. The second, that you have intimations of a unique story waiting to come out. And the third, which you learn in the process of becoming, is that you consider the whole project worth the considerable" (39). If Achebe does not write, what will happen appears to be a kind of dead end ahead for him and he describes this with a striking example: "It is necessary for sad conditions to be reported, because evil thrives best in quiet, untidy corners" (*The Education* 93). To fight against the devil making advantage of a 'pacified' nation, Achebe is on duty writing back. In this case, it can be expressed that one of the most crucial factors contribution to Achebe's literary insight is the social function of the pen. Indeed, Achebe's novels are full of social messages enriched with political, cultural and historical details. By combining all of them, Achebe neatly points out that Nigeria/Africa has a past, present and future in its most indigenous form. In doing so, he tries to keep all the hazardous content away from his infant nation striving for collaboration and unity.

All the same, here it should be noted that Achebe defines himself as 'against' each kind of -isms: "A writer is not a theorist. None of the "-isms" - Capitalism, Marxism, etc. can solve our problems. Yet, solutions can be found in Negotiation, in History - knowing where we came from. We must not allow History to be our masters.

We must not become slaves to memory. We must use History and knowledge, and experience to negotiate the present" (Mezu 231). With the help of this vast undertaking, Achebe takes over the duty of a writer as a nation builder throughout his works and essays while writing back to the West simultaneously. The task of building a nation through literary means is an obligation towards the formation of many identities in Nigerian nation. Identity is a concept which relates to both the past and the present as well as the future at the same time. In this case, what Achebe does is to highlight different identities from the past with a chronological order to blend in today's identities to create the ideal one for the consistent days ahead in Nigeria. This is an issue centring around the core argument of this study in the final chapter, and Lindfors maintains the same argument in *Early Achebe* by stating "[a]s the historical period he chooses to depict changes, so does his fiction. He is a chameleon-like *chronicler*" (45; my emphasis). By reflecting different identities from the different stages of the colonial past and modern day Nigeria, Achebe suggests the most appropriate identity form to take the required lesson from the fictional representations. Apparently, Achebe's writings are a great source of endless details, and the proper national identity to be reconstructed is among the most important ones.

All in all, it can be stated that, as a Nigerian citizen, Achebe committed his life to his beloved country; and as a writer with unique art, he devoted himself to construct a healthy Nigeria. Still, Achebe has some critical demands on the society as well. In the interview conducted by Kalu Ogbaa in 1980, Achebe explains that "'[i]f literature is important, then criticism of literature is also important, and we should get more and more people who are ready to read the books. Read the books first. It's not enough to say, 'I am a Nigerian, therefore I understand Achebe'. No, you've got to read what I have written. If not, an American who has read it would be a better critic than yourself'" (Lindfors, *Conversations with Chinua Achebe* 65). After all, throughout his novels, Achebe builds up a fictional history by documenting the process of colonization in Nigeria and Africa in general with a specific focus on time and order in a realistic way. In *The Novels of Chinua Achebe* Killam touches upon the same issue with these lines: "His novels form a sequence and reflect, broadly speaking, the changes which have taken place in Ibo, and by implication Nigerian life as a result of what Achebe calls the

'chance encounter' between Europe and Africa during the imperial-colonial period" (2). Accordingly, his novels could be seen as an inquest for the origins and re-identification of Nigeria's past in the form of fictional chronicles standing for factual occurrences simultaneously addressing both the colonized and the colonizer for specific purposes.

2.4. Achebe's Pentalogy

From the 16th century to the late 20th century, almost for four hundreds years, British Imperialism dominated the world successfully. The striking point is, however, that even though colonial activities gradually declined over this period, they never ceased. As previosuly stated by Brendon in *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*, imperialism is not over yet; rather it is the embodiment of "atavistic instinct" (662), and imperial nations crave for power. In this sense, Africa, specifically Nigeria, had always been a special location for the British Empire. There occured such drastic changes on the colonized territories that it was urgent to reveal all the harsh realities to overcome the degeneration created by colonialism. This would not be so easy; still, of all the solutions, literary combat seemed to be the safest and most appropriate means ever.

As a source of social transformation, literature is believed to be didactic and it is known that some literary works have brought about drastic changes as to the destiny of various nations. Chinua Achebe, the great leader of Nigerian society, Africa and the postcolonial world as a whole, dedicated himself to his country and used his literary art to enlighten the darkness with a distinctive mission. Raising the consciousness of history is believed to be among the top priorities of Achebe throughout his novels. In this respect, as Achebe previously emphasized in *Morning Yet on Creation Day* (xiii), forgetting the past is a huge menace, and thus he constantly reminds the historical realities through his novels. Starting a journey with his ground-breaking debut novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958), Achebe managed to hand down four more priceless artifacts, *Arrow of God* (1964), *No Longer At Ease* (1960), *A Man of the People* (1966), and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987). Each novel is a unique experience and a great source of information on Nigerian colonial history. In those mentioned works, Achebe reflects such authentic lives and occurrences that the novels could be seen as matchless documents of colonial history in Nigeria. In better words, the novels are the legitimization of the fact that colonialism is a solid reality and has not passed away yet,

and Achebe utilizes his pen to highlight the traces left from the colonizer with the purpose of creating a postcolonial consciousness and national revival. Through a Fanon-like approach taking Negritude as a reaction with literature, as Achebe himself already hinted at in *There Was a Country*, he struggles to find a solution for national unity. To this end, as a postcolonial writer of modern African writing, Achebe rises against the unfair ideologies and dichotomies of the colonial era. In *Postcolonial Studies*, as McLeod repeatedly mentions, what postcolonial writers like Achebe does is to look critically at the world and assemble new communities for the common good. In this respect, Achebe builds up a nation through his works by applying social, historical, cultural, and even political poignant facts of the various periods of the colonial history. In *The Four Novels of Chinua Achebe*, Njoku comments on Achebe's novels with a similar concern: "[They] were born out of the stress arising from struggle for independence and the trauma of the first decade of independence. They are products of the quest for self-identity and self sufficiency following the soft winds of freedom" (188).

Besides being a writer looking at the world critically and searching for national identity via his novels, Achebe is an absolute postcolonial critic as well. As Bhabha previously mentioned in *The Location of Culture* (245), postcolonial criticism is the product of a contemporary world order; as opposed to imparity in the postcolonial world, Achebe rejects universalist claims, Eurocentric norms, general practices, and ideologies as well as colonialist discourses. Facing such biased stances, Achebe's novels are an indispensible reaction to the West for the purpose of portraying a rooted set of indigenous values and existence as well as alienation in one's homeland. It could be argued that colonialism as a complex system involves symbolic relations, deep connotations, and implied codes; and Achebe tries to decode them and reconstruct colonialist discourse that shows Africa fully with its negative sides. Therefore, Achebe's novels appear to be self-motivating as opposed to the colonial erosion. That is to say, colonialism is permanently at the center of the novels, and it is a total destructive force leading to traumatic outcomes. As a natural consequence, Achebe undertakes the role of a re-generator of his nation to demonstrate the evolution of colonialism in Nigeria.

Focusing on a different stratum in each novel, he mirrors the historical change as well as cultural, social, personal, and psychological crisis as a chronological survey.

In opposition to works such as Joyce Cary's *Mister Johnson* and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Achebe, the holder of "twenty-five honorary doctorates from world-renowned universities, including Harvard University" (Sallah and Okonjo-Iweala 145), writes to tell their own story with the aim of deconstructing colonialist discourse. While doing so, each of Achebe's novels projects a different colonial era of Nigeria. *Things Fall Apart* (1958) is set in a traditional Igbo community at the turn of the 19th century during which the first European missionaries and administrative officials were attempting to penetrate into the country and take control of the land. In *Arrow of God* (1964) the colonization takes place in quite a similar environment, roughly twenty-five years later when colonialism as a system began to be firmly grounded. Achebe moves on with an urban atmosphere in *No Longer at Ease* (1960) so as to portray the life of an educated Nigerian in the late nineteen-fifties. Thereby, he brings the chronicle up to the devastating postcolonial times in *A Man of the People* (1966), which is a stunning political satire ending with a military coup. Eventually, in *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987) Achebe mirrors the so-called leader figures as the military elite who had ruled Nigeria and many other African countries after the collapse of democratically elected regimes. As a matter of fact, Achebe's novels can be said to stand for the chapters in a biography of Nigeria since the very first day the colonizer set foot on the land.

In the final chapter of this study, Achebe's five novels in a historically logical order will be analysed employing postcolonial theory and criticism to reflect on both colonial and postcolonial periods with lifelike depictions. Concisely, while 'writing back' to the Empire as well as to the Western world as a whole, Chinua Achebe, the founder of modern African writing and committed voice of the postcolonial world, presents his 'pentalogy' to create a national identity by following a pattern of chronological reflections of the colonial history in Nigeria. While doing so, through an outstanding mode of objective narration, dealing with history, culture, and characters systematically, his five novels are eventually united by a consciousness-raising purpose to restore a desired national dignity and build up a longlasting nation.

CHAPTER 3

A HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF COLONIALISM IN NIGERIA: CHINUA ACHEBE'S NOVELS

3.1. Pre-Colonial Period and Colonial Initiatives: *Things Fall Apart* (1958)

Nigeria is a country with such huge potential that the British traveller and writer William Winwood Reade called Nigeria the 'Venice of West Africa'" (Wesseling 187). This seems to explain the reason why Nigeria is of special interest to the colonizer. The borders of modern-day Nigeria were established in 1914 by British colonizers, but the history of the peoples that make up the Nigerian polity date back many centuries. In other words, today's Nigeria has a long history and distant past no matter what it is called in different stages of its history. Exploring the years of diversity in Nigeria, Falola and Heaton assert that the complex social structure and the rich cultural background were more harmonious prior to the colonial times in Nigeria. In pre-colonial Nigeria, initially the missionaries began to show up as the precursor of the colonizers though they lacked imperial aims at first. The first phase of external penetration into Nigeria is revealed in *A History of Nigeria* by Isichei as "[t]he first Christian missionaries in Nigeria reached Benin in 1515" (318). It was highlighted that this served no colonialist attempts in a remarkable extent. However, the settlements by the missionaries as well as administrative staff gained momentum rapidly. According to Isichei, "[t]he records of colonialism, which were of course the work of the invaders, reflect one face of reality. ... But only oral histories, collected from village elders to whom colonialism is still a vividly remembered experience, can tell us what it was like to live under an alien and violently imposed government" (386). This clearly signifies the point of view on colonialism among the natives. In this sense, besides oral records, the written records such as Achebe's pentalogy carry out crucial functions to make sense of this whole process in history.

Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is listed among the most influential literary works by many distinguished authorities. In terms of its social, cultural, and political standing, the novel is a milestone for Nigeria and the post-colonial world. Apparently, *Things Fall Apart* portrays the pre-colonial years and the coming of the colonizers to

Igbo land in Nigeria with a vividly realistic handling. Despite the fact that it appears to be a local work, *Things Fall Apart* addresses humanity, and thus is welcomed by almost all post-colonial nations and the so-called 'third world' countries. In *Understanding Things Fall Apart*, Solomon O. Iyasere underlines the significance of the novel with these words: "*Things Fall Apart*, black Africa's most important novel to date, is probably the most studied African creative work both in Africa and abroad. The novel's universal appeal has led to its being translated into more than 50 languages" (1). In this novel, as is indicated in the title, Achebe suggests the importance of nationhood and warns his people against the process of falling apart. Considering Renan's approach in "What is a Nation?", nationalism could be seen as the 'will to live together'; and in *Imagined Communities*, as Anderson already highlighted, the nations need to be constructed in a collective mindset. To this end, *Things Fall Apart* means much more than a piece of fiction and Achebe presents an inevitable tragedy for his nation and tries to create national awareness so as to defy the danger.

Besides, *Things Fall Apart* is so powerful and multi-faced that as Rose Ure Mezu *in Chinua Achebe: The Man and His Works* asserts that "[it] seeks to correct misconceptions, challenge the misrepresentations of the political history and culture of African peoples, and rearrange other established notions on who the African is" (16). That is, through *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe tries to challenge Western perspectives and Eurocentric assumptions. As Ashcroft et al. argue in *The Empire Writes Back*, the inability of the European perspective to explain the lands of Africa as well as the cultures there (11) urges the postcolonial authorities to take action. Accordingly, Achebe, as a postcolonial writer, undertakes this responsibility so as to reveal the truths regarding the colonial history. In this respect, *Things Fall Apart* could easily be seen as a historical revival and construction of an ignored civilization at the turn of the nineteenth century. In such a setting, Achebe tries hard to justify that Africa has a distant past as well as a well-established order that is face to face with the exploitation of critical issues such as the indigenous identity of Nigeria and its traditional values. Briefly, the novel is the portrayal of what life was like in Nigeria, in the Igbo land basically towards the end of the nineteenth century, and Achebe tries to draw a realistic picture of the experiences under the impact of colonialism with the coming of the white

man. In *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe illustrates the appearance of colonial life and its vicious circle in Nigeria employing a distinctive writing style and postcolonial discourse not only to reflect social and cultural transformation, but also to portray the characters in detail from a postcolonial perspective. In doing so, for the mere intention of sustaining a national identity throughout time as opposed to colonialism, he reveals the possible threats tearing down on a nation in pieces.

In postcolonial studies, the language and narrative style employed by the writer hold clues pertaining to the quality and implications of the works analyzed. Therefore, it should be stated that Achebe's very first novel *Things Fall Apart* with its rich narrative is a stark response to the colonialist writings. In this sense, Achebe attempts to overcome the Western hegemony via literature. When his success with his debut novel *Things Fall Apart* is taken into consideration, he seems to have achieved this powerfully. Firstly, Achebe reflects his vision of the past by quoting "Second Coming" by W. B. Yeats at the opening of the work:

> Turning and turning in the widening gyre
> The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
> Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.

In *Chinua Achebe*, Arthur Ravenscroft refers to Miss A. G. Stock with these words: "[she] most persuasively argues the connection between the theme of *Things Fall Apart* and Yeats' vision of history as a succession of civilizations, each giving way to another through its own inability to embrace all human impulses satisfactorily within one enclosed order" (8). It is worth noting that Yeats is known to depict a changing world and use personal conflicts as well as ideological contradictions masterly in most of his works. Inspired by him, Achebe applies Yeats as part of his style and accordingly makes use of the poem with a meticulous approach to reflect on the change occuring in the indigenous land. Besides this, in the article "The Search for Values Theme in Chinua Achebe's Novel, *Things Fall Apart*: A Crisis of the Soul", Willene P. Taylor discusses two specific things that Achebe was able to accomplish with such an introduction as follows: "... the novelist succeeds in showing that the sense of historical decay, continuity, and rebirth is not only characteristic of the European tradition but also of the

African tradition. Second, by exploiting this European literature and historiography, ironically Achebe is able to reverse the white man's narrow definition of culture and history" (27). As far as these approaches are concerned, Achebe's actual intention could be to show that culture and history are not concepts unique to the West alone. Thus, the likelihood of the decline and collapse of the indigenous order in Nigeria could be associated with changes in the Western world. One can deduce that Achebe wants to create a complete awareness so as to avoid possible threats and cultural decline, and build his work on solid ground at the very beginning in such a striking way.

Apart from a stunning introduction, Achebe pays a great deal of attention to the characters on a symbolic level, tales, proverbs or even idioms to justify deep rooted origins. This quality is a clear part of Achebe's postcolonial discourse in order to subvert colonialist texts. Igbo society is placed at the heart of the work and Okonkwo stands for the society in general almost in each aspect. With Okonokwo's allegorical representation of Igbo society, Achebe finds a chance to claim the idea that they did have a culture, a history, a language, and a future as well. In this respect, the conscious use of characterization with its distinctive roles is part of Achebe's narrative sytle, too. What is more, Achebe's portrayal of a couple of tales such as "Tortoise and the Birds" from his culture into the novel aims to reflect a total indigenous life more vividly by disclosing critical details. Thus, just like the characterization, the oral tales are a great contribution to the writings of Chinua Achebe in general. In *Postcolonial Literature,* as Justin D. Edwards stresses, oral culture is a form of resistance to disruptive actions like colonialism and it is a link to the past for the purpose of sustaining an indigenous culture (50). That is, it is an address to the West in order to signify the existence of an indigenous culture in harmony once again. Next, the use of proverbs can be listed among the most striking weapons of Achebe. To be clear, as Gikandi argues in *Reading Chinua Achebe,* they "function as a form of metacommentary: proverbs are figures of thought which comment on the logic of the culture and its discourse; they provide censure and guidance; but they also provide a cultural text from which the individual can read the rules that govern society and the conditions in which such rules are established" (47). On this matter, as Achebe already stressed previously in Lindfor's *Conversations with Chinua Achebe,* proverbs serve as "short stories, or miniature tales"

(56). They are the careful observations of the real world and they are the embodiment of wisdom. Indeed, to provide cultural insight, Achebe makes use of proverbs as one of his most effective narrative devices in *Things Fall Apart*. For instance, "A toad does not run in the day time for nothing" (*TFA*[2] 20) is a striking one. Achebe implies that in his culture, though an action might seem to be a misbehavior, there lies a reason behind it and society is driven by the cultural urges in an indigenous order. Thanks to such literary conventions, Achebe conveys most of his messages in an implicit way. Indeed, proverbs, idioms, and even some imagery as well as third person narrative which provoke new thoughts with multiple layers, thus leaving room for deep connotations, are among the driving forces of the text enriching Achebe's writing style in *Things Fall Apart*. It could be eventually noted that they are all deliberately used as functional devices of such a postcolonial text. Therefore, these are all indispensible means revealing Achebe's narrative power as a response to Eurocentric approaches.

As part of his responsive manner, ironies as a supplementary sub-structure of the novel occupy a distinguished place in Achebe's narrative style as well. Concerning the structures of the ironies themselves, in *The Novels of Chinua Achebe*, Killam specifies that they are vividly tragic ones: "[t]he novel is in fact a structure of ironies - irony of the tragic kind which shows an exceptional man see his best hopes and achievements destroyed through an inexorable flow of events which he is powerless to restrain, tragic irony suggested and supported by a carefully integrated pattern of minor ironies throughout the work ..." (33). Among them, in foreground, is the striking tragic end. In other words, *Things Fall Apart* could be defined as postcolonial text, yet Achebe's ending the novel with a colonial voice deciding to write a book concerning the indigenous people creates a visible irony to ponder on. As previously mentioned by Ashcroft et al. in *The Postcolonial Studies Reader*, colonialist literature is an exploration to demonstrate the untamed world via superiority discourse (18). In this respect, what Achebe intends to do with such an ironic conclusion is to provide some implications to question the realities in the colonized world. According to Killam, the irony of the final paragraph is really a distinctive one: "[As] Okonkwo's personal

[2] *TFA* is employed to refer to *Things Fall Apart* in this study.

tragedy [is] analogous to the inevitable, irresponsible forces which determine historical change, Achebe seeks to distance himself from the particular events of the story and to fit both story and theme into a wider historical context" (32). Likewise in *Chinua Achebe*, Carroll focuses on the importance of the final irony at the end and finds the last page of the novel as "the most radical shift of point of view in the whole novel" (60). Achebe prefers to conclude his artifact with a slight criticism on the sly and leaves behind an eternal piece of work with unforgettable highlights. One can argue that Achebe combines each element of his narration with a dedicated postcolonial stature to lead a single aim of bringing about a change for a better tomorrow. Accordingly, with the use of such ironies and conscious elements of expression in his writings, Achebe undertakes the duty of reconstructing a civilization on the verge of being lost. To accomplish this, he underlines both positive and negative traits of his people while standing against the colonialist approaches at the same time.

The elaboration of culture in postcolonial studies serves a great function. Since culture as a unifying element is not only the body but also the soul of society, Achebe provides countless cultural details. As part of the writing back process to the colonizer, the portrayal of an already existing culture holds a crucial place in Achebe's narration. What he initially demonstrates is a vivid indigenous life on the brink of collapse due to colonization. Achebe provides this as a lesson to take from history. As noted previously, Achebe had a Christian and colonial upbringing. However, as the name indicates, Chinua, meaning 'May a chi fight for me' (Lindfors, *Conversations* 84), struggles to regain the dignity of his beloved culture and fight for his society through literature. In opposition to colonialism, Achebe draws a realistic cultural documentation of those years. In doing so, Achebe turns out to be an objective voice as he favours neither side. Rather, he condemns everything from either side to present the potential drawbacks to the unification of his people. Thus, *Things Fall Apart* is a novel on a profoundly problematic cultural struggle. Considering Olaniyan's striking note in *Nigerian History and Culture*, Nigeria is synonymous with the word diversity itself as Nigeria embodies around 400 languages along with almost 2000 dialects (228). In the novel, Obierika utters that "what is good in one place is bad in another place" (*TFA* 74) and for Okonkwo "the world is large" place (*TFA* 74). In a huge country like Nigeria, the

existing culture and its variations are unavoidable, and Achebe focuses on them to make each detail visible. Achebe intends to show that such richness is the reality itself, yet when this is manipulated by the colonizer, the outcome emerges as something unexpected and even aggrieving. All the same, Achebe establishes a notion that Nigeria needs to exist with its own rules, and needs to avoid external intervention.

Regarding culture, even the tiniest details forming indigenousness are vital in *Things Fall Apart*. Thus, Achebe presents the traditional life more visible through various traditions like the frequent 'kola nut breaking' custom in the novel (*TFA* 19) and traditional norms such as "Children were warned not to whistle at night for fear of evil spirits. Dangerous animals become even more sinister and uncanny in the dark. A snake was never called by its name at night, because it would hear" (*TFA* 9). Similar to these customary traits in society, funerals (*TFA* 122), festivals like the feast of new Yam (*TFA* 36-37) or the wrestling entertainments (*TFA* 50) are inseparable parts of the novel and serve crucial functions. What is more, above all, there exists a judiciary system as well. "Egwugwu" is an assembly of old and wise men and it functions as a court to decide upon the disputes among the people (*TFA* 93-94). Achebe uses a land case leading to division among people to show that the "egwugwu" holds a responsibility to solve issues, and thus he tries to justify the order of indigenous life. Therefore, it could be argued that Achebe displays a harmonious society in *Things Fall Apart* and wants to increasingly sustain this unity. Prior to colonialism in the Igbo region or Nigeria in general, the society had been well-organized with laws and principles of order and a deep religious atmosphere. Throughout the novel, Achebe shows how people are bound to their traditions and the existing order as opposed to the approaching colonial threats. However, following the arrival of the white man, conflicts start to rise in every realm of social life. As Fanon stressed previously in *The Wretched of the Earth*, colonialism serves to divide and rule; it is a "separatist" act (74). In this sense, despite the negative influence of colonialism, Achebe presents a neutral standing towards both sides and it is vividly seen that he is indeed a keen and objective observer of indigenous life.

From the cultural perspective, one can understand that *Things Fall Apart* is not only a counter argument to justify the strengths as an assault on colonialism, but it is also a critical work on internal clashes and social weaknesses encouraging the white

man to divide and rule. While portraying the positive sides of local life is part of the response back to the colonizer, the negative traits of the native culture are also to be pondered on by the colonized. Though colonialism is constantly at the center of the events, Achebe does not avoid focusing on the negative aspects of his people as well. The reason why Achebe also deals with the weaknesses of his people is to portray the welcoming atmosphere of the indigenous life for the colonizer. Due to cultural inconsistencies and the susceptibility of the natives to manipulation, the colonizer do not have serious difficulty in penetrating the land. Among the drawbacks of the local culture, even gender issue provides serious implications. Apart from gender discrimination between male and female inhabitants of the land, even the crimes are categorized as "male and female" (*TFA* 124). For example, when "Okonkwo's gun had exploded [accidentally] and a piece of iron had pierced the boy's heart" (*TFA* 124), and this was seen as a female crime "because it had been inadvertent" (*TFA* 124). Unity among his people is of premium importance for Achebe and this could be better achieved with a balance of social dynamism between genders. Besides being a patriarchal setting to criticize, Achebe touches upon the issue of the existing superstitions among his people. The matter of 'evil forest' is used to criticize the indigenous culture on the sly as it also creates a chance for the colonizer to manipulate the minds of the native people. While a cursed forest filled with evil spirits is given to the missionaries and the land is supposed to spoil the white, nothing happens at all. On the contrary, "[t]he first day passed and the second day passed and third and fourth, and none of them died. Everyone was puzzled. And then it became known that the white man's fetish had unbelievable power ... Not long after, he won his first three converts" (*TFA* 149). This was another demonstration of how and why things had already begun to fall apart. Likewise, 'osu' is defined as somebody who is an outcast in the indigenous culture; but on the other hand, they are welcomed by the church. Therefore, Achebe clarifies the falling apart process with a striking example in the novel: "These outcasts, or, *osu*, seeing that the new religion welcomed twins and such abominations, thought that it was possible that they would also be received. And so one Sunday two of them went into the church" (*TFA* 155). Achebe believed that the change was quick in each sense; however, he does not only put the blame on the colonizer. With these cultural

issues to take into account, Achebe warns the colonized to reconsider the flaws of the indigenous values. Overall, from a postcolonal perspective, it seems clear enough that the existing order is a key point of discussion in the novel. While Achebe exalts the indigenous culture, he also objectively denounces its flaws and presents them among the probable reasons for falling apart.

In addition to the significance of studying the narrative devices and cultural elements in postcolonial works, the characterization enables the postcolonial writers to express themselves in a clear way. That is, for the writer, it is a convenient way to create identities with collective minds and it is also a chance to provide role models. In *Things Fall Apart*, the identities to construct an ideal nation are described successfully with the initial characterization of the colonized. To begin with, the journey Okonkwo sets off on is mirrored with striking details, and Achebe describes him perfectly as a man tall and huge, with bushy eyebrows and wide nose, looking severe (*TFA* 3-4). He is an easily recognizable figure, and he succeeds in being the center of focus when whoever is around and "he [is] a very strong man and rarely [feels] fatigue" (*TFA* 13). Besides his physical strength, Achebe consciously reflects Okonkwo's inner self with his powerful characteristics as well. He is a little bit of a perfectionist and that is what makes him feverish and quick tempered from time to time, and also "[h]e [has] no patience with unsuccessful men" (*TFA* 4). Hereby, Achebe tries to present the leadership qualities possessed by Okonkwo, and reinforces how ambitious Okonkwo is in reality. He is a brave hero to his people. Achebe notes in the novel that "He [is] a man of action, a man of war" (*TFA* 10). He is a ruthless hero and "in Umuofia's latest war he [is] the first to bring home a human head" (*TFA* 10). When he is angry, he is "rumbling like a thunder in the rainy season" (*TFA* 82) and "Okonkwo [is] popularly called the 'Roaring Flame'" (*TFA* 153). Such attributions are echoed at certain intervals. In other words, "Okonkwo [is] not a man of thought but of action" (*TFA* 69). In *The Empire Writes Back,* Ashcroft et al. argue that Africans are represented in complete negative terms (69). As opposed to Eurocentric approaches and descriptions, Achebe defends the African personality via Okonkwo in the first place. Considering such a critical figure, it is not surprising that "Okonkwo [is] well known throughout the nine villages and even beyond. His fame rest[s] on solid personal achievements" (*TFA* 3). Another point to stress his way to

greatness, he is even "ashamed of" his father Unoka since he is not a role model to follow for him and his people of new generation facing a brand-new colonialism on land. Okonkwo truly cares about the next generation because he believes that the youth has gone soft, and it is a threat for the continuity of a nation standing up to colonialism. Achebe makes the reader feel that "[t]o show affection [is] a sign of weakness; the only thing worth demonstrating [is] strength" (*TFA* 28). Though Okonkwo is not a cruel man, he is forced to behave violently. The masculine culture dominates the identities and this might result in unexpected events and produce brutal outcomes. To illustrate, "Dazed with fear, Okonkwo drew his machete and cut him down. He was afraid of being thought weak" (*TFA* 61). Okonkwo is unwilling to act; however, he has to perform the roles given by the existing culture. From the perspective of postcolonial theory and criticism, cultural critiques are of great significance to uncover the texts. In this sense, Okonkwo's masculine manners and brutality are seen to be dictated by the norms of society and here Achebe presents the stunning justification of how culture can shape identity and insidiously lead the nation to the right or wrong path.

Despite all the social and personal strengths or flaws dealt with, Achebe needs to provide a role model via characterization, and thus portrays Okonkwo as the chief resister against colonialism. As has been asserted by Loomba previously, colonialism is a trauma and a clear act of locking the subaltern (2). Okonkwo believes that there "would be no peace" (*TFA* 158) if the white men did not keep clear of the land. Unfortunately, social transformation just proceeds and Okonkwo is in a vain struggle to reverse the colonial dominance on Igbo land. He misses the pre-colonial culture and solidarity among his people, "If Umuofia decided on war, all would be well. But if they chose to be cowards he would go out and avenge himself. He thought about wars in the past" (*TFA* 199). The portrayal of the day to day basis shows that Okonkwo feels a stronger urge in himself to take action. He even states "I shall fight alone if I choose" (*TFA* 201). Just as Chinua as a name signifies the struggle, so Okonkwo is the representation of resistance against colonialism. Achebe implies that this is like the last phase of the beginning of the worst scenario and Okonkwo cannot stand the surrounding events anymore. Okonkwo is the last sign of the past and there opens a new world on the indigenous land; and people have no choice but to transform themselves for the

worse. Following his ruthless act resulting in the killing of a white man (*TFA* 205), Okonkwo quits with a tragic end: When the white try to find Okonkwo to take revenge, they [come] to the tree from which Okonkwo's body [is] dangling, and they [stop] dead" (*TFA* 207). Apparently, unable to put up with the decline of indigenous order, Okonkwo eventually commits suicide.

Although Okonkwo is the hero of the novel, there exist some counter arguments on this matter. In *The Four Novels of Chinua Achebe*, Njoku claims that the novel is not an epic but just fiction (21), and Okonkwo is not a hero from the perspective of the West. He puts his thoughts into words with these lines: "Okonkwo is not a hero of the western tradition, such as Achielles, Agamemnon, Ajax, Hector, Ulysses, Aeneas, Beowulf, Roland, or King Arthur. He seeks the conquest of no realms, no nation, but the sanity of domestic tranquility and security in his traditional order and mode of life" (32). However, Achebe actually portrays much more than a domestic hero. Okonkwo is indeed the embodiment of the whole nation and continent, and maybe even all the colonized globally. It should be noted that Achebe's masterpiece is a well organized text and the fall of the hero is a decision taken by the author himself. His tragedy has a function and it says something about taking lesson from history. That is why his falling is the symbol of the falling of his nation against colonialism. Okonkwo is likely to be one of the most remembered and functional characters of all times in Achebe's novels, and Achebe uses him not only for a declaration of war on colonialism but for self-criticism as well.

Reflecting on the influence of colonialism, characterization is a practical means of achieving Achebe's mission to unite by setting examples as role models. To this end, besides Okonkwo, Achebe deliberately makes use of some other major characters like Obierika. In comparison with Okonkwo, Obierika has a more rational role, and thus Achebe portrays him in a different function as opposed to colonialism. In an interview (1981) compiled in Lindfors's *Conversations with Chinua Achebe*, Achebe sincerely replies to the question "'if there is something of Achebe in Obierika in *Things Fall Apart*?'", with a clear utterance: "'Well, the answer is yes, in the sense that at the curicial moment when things are happening, he represents this other alternative'" (118). Apparently, Obierika stands for the alternative critical voice and a potential way of

overcoming those initial stages of colonialism. Indeed, as professed in *Critical Essays* by Sydney E. Onyeberechi, Obierika is the character that Achebe assigns crucial duties in the background; and unlike Okonkwo, he survives in the novel: "As if implying that a brave soldier is one who survives to tell his story, Achebe makes Obierika a survivor in the novel" (88). As a rational voice, Obierika is the path to be followed by the indigenous people. Interestingly enough, he represents the ideals of Achebe in *Things Fall Apart*. He is the survivor, the savior, and the hope of the nation. While Okonkwo is the action to take, Obierika is the ideological road map. However, for all the roles and positive qualities assigned, Achebe ends his novel with a paradoxical case regarding Okonkwo and Obierika in the final scene. Since it is against custom, Obierika is unable to touch his friends dead body and ask the colonizer to bring his dangling body down from the tree: "It is an abomination for a man to take his own life. It is an offense against the Earth, and a man who commits it will not be buried by his clansmen. His body is evil, and only stranger may touch it. That is why [the natives] ask [the white] to bring him down, because [they] are strangers" (*TFA* 207). It is quite ironical that even the rational voice of the novel at some point displays irrational behaviours and depends on the colonial powers eventually. This could be intentionally portrayed by Achebe to criticize and highlight the weaknesses of the indigenous culture once more. Eventually, the colonizer settle in the land. What is striking is that talking about the locusts[3] early in the novel already foreshadows the end of the existing order and implies the initial stage of colonialism as well as its transformation in society. Towards the end when Okonkwo comes to the fore and urges Obierika to fight, he gets the reply "It is already too late. Our own men and our sons have joined the ranks of the stranger. They have joined his religion and they help to uphold his government" (*TFA* 176). The drastic change is summarized with these striking lines:

> How do you think we can fight when our own brothers have turned against us? The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably

[3] locust can be defined as a large grasshopper having strong powers of flight. It is observed to usually have a solitary life, yet at times there might be a population explosion and it migrates in vast swarms leading to extensive damage to vegetation. In this novel, locusts are employed as a metaphor to symbolize the colonizer.

> with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart. (*TFA* 176)

It seems clear that Okonkwo is indeed the man of action while Obieriaka is the man of thought. Though they are burdened with significant roles and they complete each other, the change is unavoidable. There occurs "such a profound change" (*TFA* 182) in society that this is eventually felt in each layer of society. As Achebe portrays in the following lines,

> apart from the church, the white men had also brought a government. They had built a court where the District Commissioner judged cases in ignorance. He had court messenger[s] ... [coming] from Umuru on the bank of Great River, where the white men first came many years before and where they had built the center of their religion and trade and government" (*TFA* 174). [Accordingly, throughout the process of colonization,] "the spirit of the clan was pacified" (*TFA* 191) [and] "the village was astir in a silent, suppressed way. (*TFA* 199)

While the characterization of the colonized in search of ideal identities serves Achebe's nation-building process, Achebe's examination of the colonizer characters is part of his writing back process to describe the negative impacts of colonialism. Indeed, the characterization of the colonized with striking realities is the reflection of Achebe's response to the West. He traces the transformation of society by employing factual details in his fiction, and in this way he discloses the facets of the missionaries, administration, and soldiers. Achebe illustrates that the colonizer did not bring light to the heart of darkness. On the contrary, they are responsible for the darker days ahead. It is clear that *Things Fall Apart* is a fiction; however, it is such a well depicted novel that it is a pure vision of what life was like during the second half of the nineteenth century in Igbo land. Achebe makes a serious attempt to capture realistically the tensions of the Ibo people under the impact of colonialism, and the characterization of the colonized help Achebe better portray the first encounter between the colonizer and the colonized.

Considering the social transformation, the missionaries, as the leading actors to create cultural chaos, are among the initial pawns. Not only did the white man bring an unfamiliar religion there, but they were also to establish a new way of life. As Killam asserts, "the new faith possesses an appeal sufficiently strong to challenge and undermine the old religion" (30). That is, the traditional balance was to be turned upside down and torn apart. Indeed, the faith served as the first and one of the most influential means of deconstruction in the Igbo land. According to Ogede, the missionaries are divided into two categories as being good and bad, yet the common point is that "they all represent the same message despite differences in personality. Acculturation of the native is the goal of that message; practiced intimidation, the vehicle of its delivery" (27). It seems that eradicating the existing culture first was the major target of the white man. Through characterization and bilateral interactions in his *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe displays everything brilliantly. One of the most transparent evidences of the change occurring in the society is Obierika's paying another visit to his friend in exile: "The missionaries had come to Umuofia. They had built their church there, won a handful of converts and were already sending evangelists to the surrounding towns and villages. That was a source of great sorrow to the leaders of the clan, but many of them believed that the strange faith and the white man's god would not last" (*TFA* 143). The case depicting the colonial establishment in this quote would have a permanent influence on the existing structure of the society. "The arrival of the missionaries had caused a considerable stir in the village of Mbanta" (*TFA* 144) and the situation was getting worse. At this point, the impact of language and discourse cannot be disregarded especially on such vulnerable societies. That is, the accomplishments of the missionaries were partly due to a powerful discourse as follows:

> The white man was also their brother because they were all sons of God. And he told them about this new God, the Creator of all the world and all the men and women. He told them that they worshipped false gods, gods of wood and stone. ... 'We have been sent by this great God to ask you to leave your wicked ways and false gods and turn to Him so that you may be saved when you die.' (*TFA* 145)

The society was so fragile and the white man was so powerful that they had no difficulty in tearing down the existing beliefs and replacing them with their own perspectives. While the people were burdened with irrational ideas culturally, the colonizer managed to provide valid explanations to transform the mindsets of the indigenous people. As a result, they built up a church there and there came more and more converts: "The young church in Mbanta had a few crises early in its life. At first the clan had assumed that it would not survive. But it had gone on living and gradually becoming stronger" (*TFA* 154); and further, "The Christians had grown in number and were now a small community of men, women and children, self-assured and confident. Mr. Brown, the white missionary, paid regular visits to them" (*TFA* 159). What is worse, this was not all, the transformation was not over: "Mr. Brown learned a good deal about the religion of the clan and he came to the conclusion that a frontal attack on it would not succeed. And so he built a school and a little hospital in Umuofia" (*TFA* 181) as well.

Alongside the missionaries, the colonizer soldiers were also heavily responsible for the transformation of the society. Achebe presents them as the representative of colonial violence triggering an imposed change in society. The white men riding "iron horse[s]" (*TFA* 138) were in the country and "[t]he elders consulted their Oracle and it told them that the strange m[e]n would break their clan and spread destruction among them" (*TFA* 138). The Oracle also told them "the other white men were on their way" (*TFA* 138) and "[t]hey were locusts, and that first man was their harbinger sent to explore the terrain" (*TFA* 139). In *Things Fall Apart*, as footnoted earlier, Achebe uses the powerful metaphor 'locusts' to symbolize the whites. Achebe defines them as 'the unfamiliar sight' and he implies the coming of the white man. Just like "[Locusts] came in the cold harmattan season after the harvest had been gathered, and ate all the wild grass in the fields" (*TFA* 54), the white men were ready to exploit the land ruthlessly. What Achebe discloses here is the clear reflection of the transition from the pre-colonial to the colonial era in Nigeria. "At first, a fairly small swarm came. They were the harbingers sent to survey the land. And then appeared on the horizon a slowly-moving mass like a boundless sheet of black cloud drifting towards Umuofia. ... Everybody knew by instinct that they were very good to eat" (*TFA* 56). However, they were the

white who were there to eat. That is, the harbingers and the locusts were merely the portrayal of colonialism and the symbols of the colonizer. These men on iron horses with "powerful guns" (*TFA* 141) employed violence as their policy to pacify the people. When they made an appearance in the market place, "they began to shoot. Everybody was killed, except the old and the sick who were at home and a handful of men and women whose chi were wide awake and brought them out of that market" (*TFA* 139-140). That is to say, "A great evil has come upon their land as the Oracle had warned" (*TFA* 140). The colonial suppression was spreading and Obierika, talking to Okonkwo, feared that "Perhaps green men will come to [their] clan and shoot [them]" (*TFA* 142). "[S]tories were already gaining ground that the white man had not only brought a religion but also a government" (*TFA* 155). Apart from the church and government, "[the white men] had built a court where the District Commissioner judged cases in ignorance" (*TFA* 174). In this respect, with such many details, it appears that colonial systems were being settled in each sense. There were schools being constructed as well. "Mr. Brown begged and argued and prophesied. He said that the leaders of the land in the future would be men and women who had learned to read and write. If Umuofia failed to send her children to the school, strangers would come from other places to rule them" (*TFA* 181). Signifying 'indirect rule', this was a clear warning for the permanent settlement and control of the colonizer soon. By means of soldiers, Achebe appears to show the white man's burden is a real burden on the shoulders of society. While depicting this with such elaborate details, Achebe reveals the realities of the colonial system.

The possibility of indirect rule and the establishment of colonial order was reflected in parallel to the real occurences of the day and here what Achebe aims to achieve is to answer back to the colonizer frankly by employing a counter discourse. To implement the colonial rule, everything proceeded as planned and "Mr. Brown's successor was the Reverend James Smith; yet, he was a different kind of man. He condemned openly Mr. Brown's policy of compromise and accommodation. He saw the world as a battlefield in which the children of light were locked in mortal conflict with the sons of darkness" (*TFA* 184). Achebe uses Mr. Smith as a new colonial voice and a step further in its colonial aims. Though everything was not as pleasant as planned, the

pre-colonial years were over and the colonial years had already emerged. Violence on both sides, in the form of attack or counter-attack, did not stop anything from progressing. Mr. Smith formally witnessed the process legitimazing the colonial age. Towards the very end of the novel, when six leaders including Okonkwo meet the District Commissioner, the colonialism on land is proclaimed by the District Commissioner as follows:

> We shall not do you any harm, if you only agree to cooperate with us. We have brought a peaceful administration to you and your people so that you may be happy. If any man ill-treats you we shall come to your rescue. But we will not allow you to ill-treat others. We have a court of law where we judge cases and administer justice just as it is done in my country under a great queen [,] ... the most powerful ruler in the world. (*TFA* 199)

The Commissioner strikingly lays out the colonial system and Achebe wants not only his people but also the West to witness the physical presence of the British Empire and formal colonialism in Nigeria. In this respect, the coming of colonialism and the death of Okonkwo the resister, hold significant implications as to the future of Nigeria. Following the death of Okonkwo, the district commissioner reveals his plan to write a book on his colonial experiences. It seems that he had even chosen the title of the book: *'The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of the Lower Niger*'. Achebe ironically ends the novel with the purpose of implying an inevitable fall of the nation. That is, the last man is gone, and the rest are almost pacified. One can see that *Things Fall Apart* is the picture of an accelerated downfall and Nigeria's constrained welcoming the blossom of colonialism on land. As M. Keith Booker stresses in the section "*Things Fall Apart*" of *The Chinua Achebe Encyclopedia*, "Achebe's novel stands [as] a direct refutation of Africanist discourse like the Commissioner's *Pacification* book and makes it clear that the coming of European colonialism to Africa brought not civilization, but chaos and destruction" (255). This ironic final chapter is no more than a depiction of the dissolution of the set of social structures and existing order, but at the same time, it is the signal to look forward to an era of national salvation.

All in all, *Things Fall Apart* is Chinua Achebe's leading masterpiece in his series of novels as a pentalogy, and in this very first novel Achebe describes the pre-colonial tensions and colonial establishment in Nigeria towards the end of the nineteenth century. Achebe does not ignore any realistic details, and indeed the novel is the pure representation of the real life events of the era. While doing this, the narrative presents a counter discourse to the Eurocentric approaches and colonialist discourse, and also serves a nation-building function by the intense focus on the cultural and traditional values as well as characterization with ideal alternative voices. Above all, it is a universal milestone, and since it addresses all colonized and suppressed postcolonial societies, that is the subalterns in Spivak's terms, it echoes the voices of the 'third' world countries. By profoundly focusing on the historical realities, cultural transformation and the characters influenced by colonialism, *Things Fall Apart* appears to be only the first novel of the chronicle on colonialism; and to go on writing back and looking forward, Achebe travels in time and moves to the next stage with *Arrow of God*.

3.2. Colonial Period and Growing Tensions: *Arrow of God* (1964)

Arrow of God, the third novel in the sequence of publication by Achebe, is the second work of the chronicle portraying the colonial background and rising tensions in Nigeria. It is set in the establishment period of colonialism between the years of *Things Fall Apart* and *No Longer at Ease*. In Achebe's series of novels, while *Things Fall Apart* is the beginning of colonial experiences in Nigeria, *Arrow of God* is the picture of how things go well for the colonizer, and colonialism is not just a threat but a sinister part of life now. Achebe keeps his focus on the transformation dominated by colonialism, and he provides the reader with such realistic details that the novel itself is yet another illustration of the real history experienced in Nigeria in the first half of the twentieth century. That is to say, the novel is a multidimensional analysis on why and how such a profound change occured.

Published in 1964, *Arrow of God* is the story of a priest, Ezeulu, who rejects a crucial appointment as warrant chief. Therefore, he is imprisoned for several weeks, and accordingly, he is unable to announce the appearance of the new moon in the village. As a consequence, the feast of New Yam is delayed, and the villagers suffer from hunger and face harsh times as their old supplies of yams run out, and some begin to turn to the

harvest festival of the Christian god as an alternative. Just like the ending of *Things Fall Apart*, the resolution of *Arrow of God* is of great significance as well since it demonstrates Ezeulu's isolation in madness following the loss of his beloved son. The personal story here is the story and destiny of the indigenous people as a whole, that is, it is the story of how 'things fall apart' again. In *A Critical View on Chinua Achebe's Arrow of God*, Innes relates to the realities of the day as follows:

> Like *Things Fall Apart*, it is firmly based on the written and oral history and culture of the Igbo peoples, and it is set in a specific and crucial period of history, when both British administrators and Igbo elders were attempting to make use of one another's cultures and institutions for their own ends. Achebe has shifted the story to approximately 1920, when 'indirect rule' was official British colonial policy in Nigeria. (5)

During such years of high tension, Ezeulu is committed to traditional ways, yet he seems to be under the heavy influence of the colonizer. Therefore, he mirrors the in-between society and unavoidable change. Considering Bhabha's approach to identity concept, colonialism creates a medium where the identities of the colonized nation are stuck between their own culture and the culture of the colonizer. Achebe presents purely hybrid postcolonial identities in *Arrow of God*, and ambivalence dominates the novel. The indecisiveness of the colonized is the trigger of the fall and further cultural degeneration. As a matter of fact, in *Reading Chinua Achebe* Gikandi reveals that the novel or the narrative itself is the portrayal of "an ideal desired and a reality encountered" (58). Throughout the novel, Achebe touches on a wide range of issues such as social dynamics and tensions, religion, power struggles, authority and leadership, and resistance between the colonized and the colonizer. In other words, *Arrow of God* is the exploration of the daily life facing colonialism and its striking outcomes. All kinds of conflict and occurrences of the day are nothing but a warning to the local people to signify the upcoming troubles. In this respect, Achebe keeps his basic intention to raise awareness and guide his people with his powerful pen as well as responding to Eurocentric discourses and approaches.

It could be argued that *Arrow of God* is not just the picture of Nigeria, but a portrait of the internal and external tensions either in Africa or in any colonized country.

He presents a clear opposition to colonial discourse, and in doing so, Innes claims that "*Arrow of God* subverts the novels of Conrad and Cary sometimes by parodying them, sometimes by taking similar situations and characters and placing them so that the reader sees them from a new and African perspective, and sometimes by setting up a series of parallels between the African and European characters" (*A Critical View* 8). This means that Achebe maintains his objective manner and he is not only after differences but also similarities dominating the daily life within a colonial atmosphere. Between the clash of African traditionalism and Western modernity, the life of indigenous people with a specific focus on historical details, culture and characterization is captured thoroughly.

At the heart of the novel, religion, politics, and power issues are the major triggers of the conflicts. As Ogede puts forward in *Achebe and the Politics of Representation*, "*Arrow of God* is a supremely political novel, and its newest contribution to the project of historical reconstruction lies in unambiquously highlighting how religion and politics were bound together during colonization. ... It is as much a story of a community's fall from a state of religious peace into anarchy ..." (35). When politics and power are in the same bowl, there comes the matter of psychological hegemony. Indeed, the novel is centered around power relations; that is, how to obtain, how to manage, and how to manipulate power. In *Chinua Achebe: New Perspectives*, Ojinmah states that "Achebe's examination of the use and abuse of power is dominant in this novel" (25). Achebe displays the facts regarding the power relations during colonial life and provides various lessons. Talking on this matter, Innes stresses that "[i]n *Arrow of God*, written when the political rivalries in newly independent Nigeria made the question of responsible leadership an urgent one, the novelist has become the flute player whose duty is to entreat his community to 'come away from death'" (*Chinua Achebe* 82). In this respect, Achebe undertakes a critical burden to battle against the shattering influences of colonial life, and accordingly, he embodies all the qualities of a unifier through *Arrow of God* once again. In other words, Achebe aims to raise awareness on the traces of colonialism and re/construct a national identity by making use of his own narrative with a counter discourse, by presenting the threats on the existing cultural values and order, and by depicting the confrontations between the

colonized and the colonizer with implicit references to the real life events and historical facts of the day.

Arrow of God is a novel with such rich narrative texture that Achebe demonstrates his mastery in establishing a distinctive style again. The form of the novel and the counter discourse employed is the starting point to understand the messages conveyed. In this sense, *Arrow of God* clearly signifies the impending dangers. First of all, commenting on this point in the section "Arrow of God" of *The Chinua Achebe Encyclopedia*, Nicholas Brown draws an analogy with another masterpiece: "Yeats' 'The Second Coming' which, in representing the going of Christianity, is suddenly able to represent its coming. This structure is inverted in *Arrow of God*, which, in narrating the coming of colonialism, secretly anticipates its going" (34). In those years that Achebe portrays, the coming and going of the possible threats do not seem to disappear so soon. Hence, Achebe struggles to help his people out with his great narrative. Besides, the language used in *Arrow of God* is a step beyond the language used in *Things Fall Apart*, and even this is a direct reference to the period showing the deep colonial signs. That is, a better use of English describing the people on the indigenous land could be a signifier of the colonial establishment and the influence of the colonizer's language on the indigenous land. At this point, as is in *Things Fall Apart*, it can be clearly seen that Achebe's style explicitly reveals plenty of details illustrating the period. The use of proverbs is, for instance, still a common quality in Achebe's *Arrow of God*. Just like he does in *Things Fall Apart*, he keeps the ties with his people by applying to such indigenous elements. In *A Critical View on Chinua Achebe's Arrow of God,* Innes puts a strong emphasis on this quality of Achebe's narrative, that is to say, the novel is woven with great "intensity and coherence by the repetition of proverbs, songs, stories, phrases and images which gather force and significance as the story unfolds" (23). On the one hand, Achebe tries to preserve the indigenous values with the help of such a narrative mode; on the other hand, he reveals the critical elements leading the nation to 'fall apart'. In this respect, Achebe's meticulous handling of the novel just exhibits yet another realistic fiction to seriously take into account.

Behind the counter discourse employed by Achebe, the use of a more conscious narrative in addressing both indigenous people and the West, adds a new dimension to the textual quality of *Arrow of God*. As Innes points out in *Chinua Achebe*,

> The predominant voice in the earlier novel is the collective one, distinct from but in tune with the voices of Obierika, Uchendu, Okonkwo, and others, resulting in a fairly unified perspective which makes the shock of the District Commissioner's differing perspectives in the final pages all the more effective. In *Arrow of God* the voices are much more various, not only are we given the contrasting cultural perspectives of Igbo and British communities, but also a series of contrasting views and voices within each community. (71)

In this sense, using various voices to be heard, Achebe portrays the complexities of the day in a more convincing way. As Mezu notes in *Chinua Achebe: The Man and His Works*, "[e]ssentially, *Arrow of God* is a dark drama ... . Whereas *Things Fall Apart* has flashes of light, rich, sunny ambiance, and playful communal ceremonies, the atmosphere in *Arrow of God* is marked with dark, morbid humor" (50). This can be interpreted as Achebe's implications on the era with a higher degree of threat. The years that he portrays set the background of the text, and it is not surprising to be faced with a darker period since things just go on falling apart. Mezu considers the novel a 'classic Aristotelian Tragedy' in a sense: "the hero's fall from grace is not through vice or depravity but from some character flaw or error in judgment" (58).

Besides, Achebe's narrative benefits from the some significant symbolic relations dominant throughout the work. For instance, the Yam Festival lies at the heart of the novel and Achebe uses this culturally powerful event to create further details around it. The use of such an indigenous value provides freedom to both Achebe and the readers to navigate between the lines. The festival triggers the minor events in a domino effect. In other words, the failure to call the festival is the prime cause of chaos among people. According to Chidi Okonkwo in the article "Chinua Achebe: the Wrestler and the Challenge of Chaos", "[t]he New Yam festival additionally symbolizes the clan's consciousness of historical change and the need for continual self-regeneration and self-contemporisation" (86). Apparently, it can be argued that Achebe's narrative style helps

construct a composed meaning and a unique discourse. By means of all the devices used and implications throughout the novel drafted by such a distinctive writing style, Achebe's *Arrow of God* is just an opportunity to glance at the establishment years of colonialism.

Apart from the literary features of Achebe's distinctive style, as is in *Things Fall Apart*, the analysis of existing indigenous culture during the early colonial years provides a clear view of life and profoundly shows the scope of the transformation. Culture is a firm part of social realities, and this is a special matter of discussion in postcolonial studies. Achebe seems to be in awe of the social order during the pre-colonial years in *Things Fall Apart*, yet he displays a critical approach to his own culture in *Arrow of God*. Trying to be objective, Achebe might be denouncing the indigenous culture this time to see each side of the coin. In *Achebe and the Politics of Representation*, Ogede comments on the novel with these lines:

> *Arrow of God* succeeds so thoroughly in its objective not only to demonstrate that before colonization, the Igbos were a highly intelligent group that had full control of both their circumstances and the environment, but also in its obvious objective to acknowledge the openness to opposing ideas, the basis of Igbo democracy, an attribute that unwittingly assisted in rendering the community vulnerable to the Western onslaught. (40)

The susceptible nature of the indigenous culture creates an atmosphere that could be manipulated easily by the colonial powers, and thus Achebe subtly tries to uncover such points. Traditional values are supposed to promote unity, but it does not happen in this way throughout the novel. For instance, the New Yam Festival lies at the heart of the incidents; it is the symbol of order in society, that is, the festival represents both the beginning and ending announcements of the common periods. In a metaphorical way, it functions as the dawn and sunset of society. Indeed, the festival is the time when all people come together and share the moment of equality. However, it is the festival itself which disrupts the harmony among the people this time. Achebe conveys the message that if the colonizer take advantage of the weaknesses and abuse the circumstances, everything might be turned upside down. This is what the readers see in *Arrow of God*

systematically. As the saying goes, "[w]isdom is like a goatskin bag; every man carries his own. Knowledge of the land is also like that" (*AG*[4] 16). What Achebe seems to believe is that neither wisdom nor knowledge is carried by the society; rather, both are dominated by the colonizers. These are the means of power, yet that is the reason why Achebe starts questioning this vulnerability in the very beginning of the novel with these words:

> Whenever Ezeulu considered the immensity of his power over the year and the crops, and therefore, over the people he wondered if it was real. It was true he named the day for the feast of the Pumpkin Leaves and for the New Yam feast; but he did not choose it. He was merely a watchman. His power was no more than the power of a child over a goat that was said to be his. As long as the goat was alive it could be his; he would find it food and take care of it. But the day it was slaughtered he would know soon enough who the real owner was. (*AG* 3)

Overall, it could be deduced that Achebe's explicit references to cultural elements is in strict relation with his counter discourse. Besides notifying his own people, the discourse Achebe employs in *Arrow of God* indicates that the existing order does not exist anymore due to the degenerative influences of colonialism.

Throughout the novel, Achebe clarifies that cultural vulnerability and its manipulation has a saying in the destiny of the people. To illustrate such a drawback, Achebe maps out the indigenous culture once more with its strengths and flaws simultaneously. In the first place, it is seen that the society has its inner clashes to face and this creates division among the citizens. To illustrate, a royal python is taken as a sacred symbol with high value in the society, but it is imprisoned by one of Ezeulu's sons in a box (*AG* 46). This is one of the moments when people lose their rationality and even assault each other not only verbally but also physically. This is just one example of a minor issue leading to internal troubles among society, and people are overwhelmed by such conflicts. Accordingly, they are unable to resist the manipulators living among them. Achebe does not avoid sharing such moments of weakness at all; rather, he helps

[4] *AG* is employed to refer to *Arrow of God* in this study.

the reader see through more transparent binoculars. Therefore, in *Arrow of God*, Achebe puts a great emphasis on culture and he discloses plenty of details ranging from eating, drinking, crying, meeting, praying, marrying, bride and dowry stipulation to sacrificing. From the perspective of postcolonialism, between the lines regarding these customs, Achebe implies the points contributing to the fall of the nation. In this respect, his critical voice is a complete guide to the reader. Though Ezeulu's refusal to call the New Yam feast is the first step of the domino effect, the peculiar traditions, and values prevailing in society seem to have accelerated the process of *falling apart.*

Culture is indeed the embodiment of the physical and moral values of the society, and Achebe's critique of culture in *Arrow of God* is further elaborated with gender relations. Chinua Achebe, as a realistic writer, tries to depict his people as naturally as possible. Accordingly, he frankly portrays a patriarchal society. Similar to the portrayal in *Things Fall Apart*, male dominated culture is also discussed in *Arrow of God*. In doing this, the main intention of Achebe is to add another layer to the reasons why the nation falls apart. Whether it is racial or not, any kind of discrimination like gender bias in society is a contribution to the ideals of the colonizer. Since the use of power is a critical issue, Achebe is of a more critical manner in *Arrow of God* as the treatment of females in the indigenous culture might be seen as a hindrance on the way to being a unified nation. The loss of female roles and voices or their passive existence in the background might signify the loss of half of the power among the citizens struggling against both internal matters and external powers. Therefore, Achebe underlines quite a few striking instances, and he highlights his critical voice in the gender relations issue as well. Men are acknowledged as the absolute power holders in society and this creates serious clashes between genders. In *Arrow of God*, manhood is to be exalted (*AG* 112), yet Achebe provides a critical perspective here. Indeed, Achebe intensively presents many thought-provoking examples. Therefore, when the signs of patriarchy are felt as in "'Go and call your mother for me. I think it is her turn to cook tomorrow'" (*AG* 14), the reader is given options to compare and contrast this time, which is one of the points making *Arrow of God* different from *Things Fall Apart*. Thus, seeing a female character answering back to males in a defiant tone should not surprise the reader in the novel: When Nwafo asks his sister "'Have you finished preparing the

bitter-leaf'", Obiageli can reply, "'Don't you know how to prepare bitter-leaf? Or are your fingers broken?'" (*AG* 5). One way or another, Achebe does not fail to promote awareness of gender relations in *Arrow of God*. When all the cultural issues are taken into consideration, the society is portrayed frankly in a striking way, and at this point Achebe is not the voice sticking up for the positive sides of his beloved culture alone. At the same time, he evaluates the flaws of the culture and presents them as issues to be solved if the nation struggles to free itself from restraints.

Presenting the cultural matters in the background, Achebe builds his novel on the value of national identity through the conscious use of characterization, and projects the colonized as the embodiment of major obstacles on the way to fulfilling the national dream. Among them, at the heart of the novel is Ezeulu. He has such a major role in the novel that even the title *Arrow of God* is attributed to him. Despite his influential and powerful position, Ezeulu is known more for his flaws and for misleading the society under the threat of the colonizer. As Fanon argues in *Black Skin White Masks*, blackness is a natural form of othering and it is the source of self-division resulting in an identity crisis (8). As a black subaltern facing an intense colonial atmosphere, Achebe sets Ezeulu as an example to his people to warn against the menaces dominating them, and also he wants to stress that they are on the verge of being torn apart yet again. Just like criticizing the indigenous culture in the background, Achebe does not hesitate to show the threats generated by the colonized in *Arrow of God*. He implies that as long as one is blind to the realities, s/he is eventually doomed to fall apart. Ezeulu is the owner of various roles and responsibilities, yet he can be seen as both a promising future and a possible threat to his own people in the novel. In *Chinua Achebe: New Perspectives* Ojinmah argues that Ezeulu is a powerful intermediary for the people and servant of the god (29). However, his faulty decisions and acts create unexpected consequences. Similar to Ojinmah, in *Chinua Achebe* Carrol also comments on Ezeulu with these words: "As his ceremonial appearance indicates, Ezeulu is half man, half spirit; in the world of man he is very powerful, in the world of spirits he is a servant" (89). In a complex role like this, Ezeulu, as a strong leader with a plagued and blurred state of mind, has huge challenges ahead. From the perspective of postcolonial theory and criticism, as in a typical colonized society, Ezeulu is dominated by ambivalence and

develops a hybrid identity, which could pose a serious menace to the unity of the society. In *The Four Novels of Chinua Achebe* Njoku maintains that the novel itself is a power struggle "between Ezeulu and British colonialism, between Ezeulu and missionaries, and between Ezeulu and Ulu" (132). That is to say, as the outcomes of colonial atmosphere, Ezeulu could indeed be seen as the representation of ambivalence. In this respect, Ezeulu is at the center yet under inevitable heavy burdens; thus, he is additionally expected to face some major struggles as well as several minor clashes. As Njoku underlines, he is the leader of an '*either*/*or'* world as opposed to colonial games employed (167). Under such circumstances, Ezeulu loses his ability to judge and manage the moment, and turns against his people while neglecting his duties and responsibilities. In general terms, Achebe presents Ezeulu as a mighty figure who is always after being loved, respected, and, more importantly, feared. Therefore, eventually he almost goes insane.

In *A Critical View on Chinua Achebe's Arrow of God*, regarding the psychological mood throughout the novel, Innes draws a heroic analogy between Ezeulu and Lear (23), and in *Chinua Achebe* Arthur Ravenscroft creates a tragic resemblance between Ezeulu and Macbeth (28). In addition to such analogies, considering the tragic ends, Ezeulu is also like Okonkwo of *Things Fall Apart*, yet they might be the opposite edges of a sharp sword. Compared to Okonkwo, "Ezeulu possesses the characteristics of the classical tragic hero - a man of power and influence in his community, a leader who epitomizes the spirit of his times. A man, too, with a tragic flaw, arrogance and pride, which causes him to commit an error in judgment when he lets his personal feelings interfere with his usually keen assessment of circumstances" (Killam 82). It is plainly seen that Achebe's *Arrow of God* is a source of how the authorities evaluate Ezeulu and the colonized. He is the one to call the festivals; and his announcements to guide the society and to bring order among people is the justification of his power and authority. Achebe portrays Ezeulu as a mighty figure that has a very critical burden on his shoulders. "The prefix *eze* in Ibo means king" (*AG* 108). Thus, Ezeulu is believed to be "a kind of priest king" (*AG* 108). Accordingly, at a time when indirect rule is a crucial policy of British colonialism, Ezeulu is a perfect match to their needs. The whites want to appoint him as a 'Paramount Chief' (*AG* 108). This seems to be a direct relation to the

realities of the day by Achebe. As Isichei suggests in *A History of Nigeria*, the alliance between the British and traditional leaders formed "the heyday of colonialism" (380). Alongside many responsibilities and manipulations of the colonizer, Ezeulu turns into a man who rules the destiny of his people, and Achebe uses this chance meticulously. Though it is known that Ezeulu's only fault is that he expects everyone to think and act like himself (*AG* 94), this can be just one of the faulty steps to take while trying hard to unite a nation on the brink of *falling apart* completely.

Displaying a postcolonial standing, Achebe apparently unfolds the story around Ezeulu and the pragmatic use of him in the novel conveys Achebe's major implications directly in a rather striking way. At the very beginning of *Arrow of God*, Achebe provides the reader with foreshadowing: "Ezeulu did not like to think that his sight was no longer as good as it used to be and that some day he would have to rely on someone else's eyes as his grandfather had done when his sight failed" (*AG* 1). The reader knows that this poor sight would cause trouble in the future. One of the first steps taken by Ezeulu is his closeness to the whites. Talking to his son Oduche, Ezeulu reveals that "it was I who sent you to join those people because of my friendship to the white man, Wintabota. He asked me to send one of my children to learn the ways of his people and I agreed to send you" (*AG* 13). Behind his hybrid identity in ambivalence, Ezeulu is aware of the hamartia here, and colonialism plays its rules as the game allows. Although Ezeulu innocently wants his son to "be [his] eye" (*AG* 47), the manipulation of the colonizer and their colonial ploys rule the society. Any action taken by Ezeulu seems to leave a trace on the destiny of his people. His standing against the oppressive manners of the whites, somehow, creates a sense of inferiority gradually. Still, as a man rejecting white power, he might display hostility against Christianity and administration, and even make people follow him as "[t]he white man has met his match in [Ezeulu]" (*AG* 186). Once imprisoned by the whites, Ezeulu finds time to question and correct himself; however, the transformation of the society outside the jail just continues. Unable to know what to do, Ezeulu exposes his insights to Oduche with these lines:

> I have sent you to be my eyes there. Do not listen to what people say - people who do not know their right from their left. No man speaks a lie to his son; I have told you before. If anyone asks you why you should be

> sent to learn these new things tell him that a man must dance the dance prevalent in his time. (*AG* 191)

In this respect, as Ashcroft et al. note in *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, appropriation is an act of benefitting from colonial experience (19) and Ezeulu displays a mild resistance for self-interests as opposed to the colonization process. The captivity is a period of silent time, and Ezeulu appears to have found himself. Achebe makes a conscious use of his ups and downs to set more striking examples with possible consequences. Ezeulu seems intoxicated with new thoughts and "[h]e [is] no more than an arrow in the bow of his god" (*AG* 193). In terms of inner conflicts, this is one of the climax points for Ezeulu, he keeps questioning: "And what about the white man's religion and even the white man himself? This was close on profanity but Ezeulu was now in a mood to follow things through. Yes, what about the white man himself? After all he had once taken sides with Ezeulu and, in a way, had taken sides with him again lately by exiling him, thus giving him a weapon with which to fight his enemies" (*AG* 193). Ezeulu seems well aware of the colonial games, and he closely experiences *falling apart*. As a divided and confused character, "[o]ne half of him [is] man and the other half *mmo* - the half that [is] painted over with white chalk at important religious moments. And half of the things he ever [does are] done by this spirit side" (*AG* 194).

To further elaborate, more importantly, Ezeulu is drawn to be the embodiment of the psychological pressure about whether he should have announced the New Yam Feast at the last new moon. This is supposed to be the major conflict with his people and Ezeulu waves the protests away: "Go back to your villages now and wait for my message. I have never needed to be told the duties of the priesthood" (*AG* 206). Ezeulu is in a deep perplexed state of mind and he is far from thinking in a healthy way. "[H]e still has three sacred yams to eat from last year" (*AG* 209), yet the people do not know what to eat for survival. Achebe demonstrates that people depend on Ezeulu, and he stands against the demanding manners of his people. He turns his back against the people and his personal decisions may change the destiny of a whole nation. This is the chief conflict and Achebe signifies how local values and traditions may leave negative impacts on the future of a nation when manipulated by the colonizer. Ezeulu's confession, "I am the Chief Priest of Ulu and what I have told you is his will[,] not mine

... The gods sometimes use us as a whip" (*AG* 210) reveals that Achebe is quite critical of the practices of local religion as the white man can get the best out of the inner clashes. The implicit idea behind either being 'arrow' or 'whip', is that they might damage the nationhood process itself. Unable to make up his mind in a rational way, Ezeulu has only two options, whether to eat yams and announce the feast or see the six villages ruined and the people believes that he is taking revenge on his own people as they let the white man take Ezeulu away. As for Achebe, in an interview conducted by Michel Fabre in 1973, he reveals his personal ideas on Ezeulu with these lines:

> [Ezeulu] is an intelligent man and can see what is about to happen. ... [He] is no naive man. ... He is a shrewd political leader, too, when he recognizes the necessity of temporary alliances, with some whites, not as an aim but as a tactic. He pretends to welcome some changes in order for his society to absorb them instead of being ruled by them, so that in his order, his religion, his tradition will survive these changes and ultimately regain power. (Lindfors, *Conversations with Chinua Achebe* 48)

The implication here is that even a character like Ezeulu displaying various flaws has a strong and critical role in the novel and the clear portrait of the colonized serves Achebe's mission as a writer to guide his people. As the saying goes in the novel, "[i]f the rat cannot flee fast enough, [l]et him make way for the tortoise" (*AG* 231). The important thing is where to stop and move on, what to do and avoid; then the future is likely to be more promising.

Apart from addressing the colonized to underline the pros and cons of being hybrid and ambivalent characters, Achebe also makes use of authentic depictions of the colonizer and their roles through his objective binoculars with a further emphasis to answer back to the colonizer. The stunning part of the characterization of the colonizer, once more, is the analogy between the historical realities around them and the period reflected in the novel. While in *Things Fall Apart* the reader witnesses the coming of the colonizer, *Arrow of God* is the portrait of the colonizer's establishment and years of indirect rule. In *The Four Novels of Chinua Achebe*, Njoku maintains that "[t]he fictional world of the novel claims a high degree of verisimilitude in some historical realities. Thus, Capt. T.K. Winterbottom, Tony Clark, Mr. Wright, and the rest of the

colonial group might as well be pseudonyms of actual colonial administrators" (132). That is to say, Achebe depicts the changing role of the whites and the transition years in which the existing traditions face harsher clashes. Besides, in *Chinua Achebe: Teacher of Light*, Sallah and Okonjo-Iweala describe the context with these words: "*Arrow of God* is set in the 1920s, during the period when the policies of the British colonial government changed from 'pacification' to 'indirect rule and then to 'direct rule' over Nigeria" (112). However, such a transition was not a smooth one. "The various cultures of Nigeria were initially ruled under three protectorates of the North, South, and Lagos. [In]1914 [the British] made Nigeria a united entity" (Badru 69). Behind the unity, however, is the use of violence and exploiting the mess which was created by the Empire itself. According to Falola, "[v]iolence has a political purpose: to dominate, to resist domination, to create conditions for negotiation, and to target people and objects that symbolize oppression" (ix). In other words, the answer to the question how colonialism was achieved in Nigeria, would be by violence and "the use of war" or "the threat of war" (Falola 1).

In addition to the astonishing parallelism between the facts of the day and fiction of Achebe, 'indirect rule' constituted a basic principle of the colonial system in Nigeria. In *A History of Nigeria*, Falola and Heaton explain the system in detail as follows:

> Dubbed 'indirect rule', the British system of governing through indigenous political institutions allowed local chiefs and elites to maintain their local authority while submitting themselves to the authority of a central apparatus of British colonial administrators. ... If an 'indirect ruler' displeased the British, he would not be the local authority for long, regardless of the 'traditional' basis of his authority. (7)

Apparently, the reason why the British seemed to favour the system so much is that "[t]hey felt that indirect rule optimally balanced alien with indigenous governance so as to promote the stability and continuity necessary for the gradual development of broader political, economic and social transformations in Nigeria societies over the long term" (Falola and Heaton 112). In this sense, Achebe's novel perfectly fits the real events and history of the colonized territories. Referring to the period, Jago Morrison, in his *The*

Fiction of Achebe, summarizes the realistic picture of those years putting the blame on "colonial maladministration based on ignorance and mistaken assumption" as follows:

> Lugard's favoured measures for the enforcement of authority in the region are several times reflected in Achebe's novel. First, Lugard recommended a blanket policy of creating chiefs in place of council elders. Secondly, he prescribed a system of prisons under the control of local authorities, to punish both offenders and those resistant to colonial authority. Thirdly, he proposed direct taxation of villages, collectable by the chiefs themselves. Fourthly, he called for a hereditary system of authority, whereby the sons of chiefs would be groomed to assume authority on the deaths of their fathers. In practice, these policies were implemented by stages over a period of 20 years from the turn of the century. By the 1920s, there was a substantial body of resistance to both the principle and the detail of Lugard's colonial philosophy. (97)

What was actually planned and done with Lugard's policies, is carried out by Achebe's fictional characters in *Arrow of God* in identical ways. Indeed, as Said argues in *Culture and Imperialism*, colonialism as a reality is all about the attitudes of domination; it is settling and controlling; it is the immersion of a sinister theory (8).

Those colonial years are also the first signs of resistance against the maladies of the colonizer. In the section "*Arrow of God*" of *The Chinua Achebe Encyclopedia*, Brown argues that the main motives over the policies and establishment of the colonizer are political, religious or ethical, and material (30). This might be the reason why Achebe focuses on the colonizer's role as politician, missionary, soldier and even more. Under these circumstances, life for the both sides should be tense, and the interactions between them play a crucial role. According to Carroll, both worlds are "unintelligible to each other" and "the result of this separation is mutual misunderstanding" (96). Mostly arising from the policies of the colonizer, the gloomy atmosphere of those years mirrors no unified approach for and from both sides, but rather depict a picture in which the colonizers are also at unease. Regarding this matter, Njoku highlights that "Mr. Wright and other Europeans are portrayed as individuals whose importance depends on their service and dedication to the colonial system. Achebe is very realistic in making

the white men somehow living representatives of the colonial system. They are instruments of an odious system, willing promoters of a pervasive and dying system" (143). This is one of the points where Achebe conveys messages in the novel; the collapse of the colonizer and the dying system is to inject the idea that hope is the salvation on the way to create a unified nation. In Renan's terms, being a nation is based on common values of a society and Achebe intends to increase these.

Alongside such many details, the fact that the colonizer in *Arrow of God* outnumber the ones in *Things Fall Apart* deeply demonstrates the transformation of the society. In the first place, Achebe sets out with some certain implications of trouble on land: "Who would have imagined that Umuaro would go to war so sorely divided?" (*AG* 15). The changing situation is to be revealed here, that is, the divide and rule policy of the colonizer is in progress. Despite the fact that the war over land is a dispute among the local people, the colonizer as authority interrupt and there comes no resistance. It is indicated in the novel that "[i]t is all due to the white man who says, like an elder to two fighting children: You will not fight while I am around. And so the younger and weaker of the two begins to swell himself up and to boast" (*AG* 20). The colonizer control everything by utilizing whatever is required to achieve the colonial policies, and the violence comes as the first choice. One of the chief figures, "[t]he white man, Wintabota, brought soldiers to Umuaro and stopped [the problems]. The story of what these soldiers did in Abame [is] still told with fear, and so Umuaro [makes] no effort to resist but la[y] down their arms" (*AG* 29). This quote uncovers the role of colonial violence and the pacification of the indigenous community vividly. Such acts taken by the whites are yet another concrete justification of their establishment on the Igbo land. These are the years when the colonizer encountered uprisings while trying to dominate all areas of life with injustice in Nigeria. The domination and the ruling is set on the formal grounds as well. That is to say, the disputed land Okperi turns into the colonial base as can be seen in these lines:

> [It] was not a very big station. There were only five Europeans living on the Government hill: Captain Winterbottom, Mr. Clarke, Roberts, Wade and Wright. Captain Winterbottom was the district officer. The Union Jack flying in front of his bungalow declared he was the King's

> representative in the district. He took the salute on Empire Day at the march past of all the school-children in the area- one of the few occasions when he wore his white uniform and sword. (*AG* 32)

Broadly speaking, the white men physically occupy the land, and the land belongs to them from then on. In analogy with the history, the colonizer hold the belief that "unlike some of the more advanced tribes in Northern Nigeria, and to some extent Western Nigeria, the Ibos never developed any kind of central authority" (*AG* 38). In other words, the whites are there to divide and rule, and that is why Igbo land is resistant. However, even under these circumstances, the colonized people are seen as inferior entities, as subalterns, and they are susceptible to exploitation. As part of their plans, the colonizer also try to build up better infrastructures though they are for their own interest. In one scene, the local people are employed to construct roads. The roads are planned to connect the tribes in conflict, e.g. Okperi and Umuaro, and such clashes are likely to be manipulated by the whites. The workers do not get what they deserve and the payments are reduced gradually. What is worse, the labourers are seen as quasi slaves and "pet dogs" (*AG* 77) and the whites carry whips all the time to pacify them. Again this is parallel to the riots of the 1920s, 30s and 40s in Nigerian history. The unpaid workers and exploitation by the colonizer trigger the uprising against the whites.

Reflecting the atmosphere of those years, the Lieutenant Governor sends out a memorandum to the colonizer as follows:

> My purpose in these paragraphs is limited to impressing on all Political Officers working among the tribes who lack Natural Rulers the vital necessity of developing without any further delay an effective system of 'indirect rule' based on native institutions: To many colonial nations native administration means government by white men. You are all aware that H.M.G considers this policy as mistaken. In place of the alternative of governing directly through Administrative Officers there is the other method of trying while we endeavour to purge the native system of its abuses to build a higher civilization upon the secondly rooted native stock that had its foundation in the hearts and minds and thoughts of the people and therefore on which we can more easily build,

> moulding it and establishing it into lines consonant with modern ideas and higher standards, and yet all the time enlisting the real force of the spirit of the people, instead of killing all that out and trying to start afresh. We must not destroy the African atmosphere, the African mind, the whole foundation of his race ... . (*AG* 57)

In this respect, it seems that *Arrow of God* is set in the time of indirect rule as a way out by the colonizer and indeed "[t]his was what British administration was doing among the Ibos, making a dozen of mushroom kings grow where there was none before" (*AG* 60). However, the proposed solution might not be effective enough. "When the roof and walls of a house fall in, the ceiling is not left standing. The white man, the new religion, the soldiers, the new road - they are all part of the same thing. The white man has a gun, a matchete, a bow and carries fire in his mouth. He does not fight with one weapon alone" (*AG* 86).

In addition to the administration and military policies, Achebe does reflect further elements in action against the colonized. Similar to *Things Fall Apart*, the power of religion and the religious discourse in *Arrow of God* play a significant role in the domination of the indigenous people. Achebe wants to show that it is a clear threat to the unity of his people: "The place where the Christians built their place of worship was not far from Ezeulu's compound ... Ezeulu was becoming afraid that the new religion was like a leper. Allow him a handshake and he wants to embrace" (*AG* 43). In accordance with the church, the discourse of the missionaries helps shape the society getting away from the existing values: "If we are Christians, we must be ready to die for the faith. You must be ready to kill the python as the people of the rivers killed the iguana. You address the python as Father. It is nothing but a snake, the snake that deceived our first mother, Eve. If your are afraid to kill it, do not count yourself a Christian" (*AG* 48). The clashes between values further deepen the gap in society and the colonizer manage to exploit the natives and their religion, and thus, people start believing that "[t]he white man has power which comes from the true God and it burns like fire" (*AG* 86). In this case, it could be argued that religion marks a critical place in the establishment of colonialism.

Just as Said previously stated that colonialism is in mutual relation with imperialism, the colonizer is in mutual relation with the colonized as well. That is to say, the subalterns are not the only ones who are influenced by the colonization process on an unfamiliar *oriental* territory in negative terms. Taking all the actions of the colonizer into account, Achebe maintains his objective depictions of both sides throughout the work and the colonizer seem to have hard times, too. The white man in Africa have serious problems in adapting to the climate on the continent, and they are unable to sleep because of the mosquitoes (*AG* 30). Also, being unable to rule indirectly as planned, the colonizer have to deal with the illegal rulers disrupting the central authority in relation with the tax issues (*AG* 59) as there were in 1920s and 1930s in the history of Nigeria. As a result, the internal clashes emerge within the political context. As the novel progresses, Achebe refers to the colonizer more frequently. Especially, Winterbottom turns into a man questioning the colonial system and behaves in a self-critical way. He charges the administration with the wrong policies and inconsistencies: "The fault of our Administration is that they invariably appoint the wrong people and set aside the advice of those of us who have been here for years" (*AG* 110). Besides this, The Lieutenant Governor sends a letter to inform on the Russian peasants in revolt against the new regime; and fears that the local people might take them as examples; thus, he advises the colonizer to "[s]erve them right" (*AG* 182). Achebe makes the reader feel that the ties controlling the local people are getting looser, and Winterbottom's reaction to the advice on treating the locals properly summarizes it all clearly: "*Shit on the Lieutenant-Governer*" (original emphasis 182). Here, it is seen that there also emerges a clear division among the colonizer. Achebe shows colonialism as a system is fully established, yet everything does not seem as perfect as planned by the Empire. Amid such internal confusion on the side of the colonizer, Achebe makes his fiction a part of real life once more and urges his people to ponder on obtaining the chance to unite and benefit from the situation. In this way, Achebe also answers back to raise a question over the existence of the imperial powers with disruptive manners on such distant territories.

All in all, what Achebe shows throughout the novel is that *Arrow of God* is a perfect continuation of *Things Fall Apart*, and it is a vivid justification of the British

colonial history and its establishment in Nigeria. Embodying a unique narrative style, unveiling the existing culture and possible threats, characterizing the colonized and the colonizer with specific focus on their hybridity and ambivalence, Achebe presents a unique work of fiction enabling the reader to develop insight into reality. Just like he does in *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe concludes *Arrow of God* in pure chaos with some implications directing the reader to the next part of the pentalogy. In *A Critical Study on Chinua Achebe's Arrow of God*, Innes refers to Achebe's personal judgement as to the critical ending of the novel with these words: "in general terms, the end of a story is only an end in one sense. It is a beginning in another sense because it is an open ended kind of end. At the end of a page, another page is projected, like an echo or the pebbles you throw in a pond, and it goes and on. This specific ending has all sorts of meanings for me" (32). Eventually in the novel, following Obika's death, Ezeulu has almost gone insane; the most powerful figure of the novel prepares his own end himself. Whether this is the end of a man's future or a nation's future is left unanswered by Achebe, but what is clear is that the colonial powers are there and keep shaping the Nigerian history. "So in the end only Umuaro and its leaders saw the final outcome. To them the issue was simple. Their god had taken sides with them against his headstrong and ambitious priest and thus upheld the wisdom of their ancestors - that no man however great was greater than his people; that no one ever won judgement against his clan" (*AG* 232). The winner at the end represents a complete ambiguity, but it is well known that "the world is no longer what it was" (*AG* 55). By implying that the Nigerian world is *no longer*, and perhaps never to be again, *at ease*, Achebe continues his mission to unite people on the way to nationhood with his next masterpiece *No Longer at Ease*.

3.3. National Struggles and Impending Independence: *No Longer At Ease* (1960)

No Longer At Ease, the second novel of Achebe in terms of the year it was published, is the next scene and the third novel in the sequence written to reflect the colonial setting of the 1950s in search of a national revival, and in this novel Achebe is in pursuit of a collective will to be united against the colonial manipulations in the so-called modern days of Nigeria. Considering the precious work *Imagined Communities* by Benedict Anderson, nation is a symbolic formation; and in Renan's terms, nationalism is the will to live together on the basis of common values. In this respect,

No Longer at Ease is a perfect part of Achebe's nation building mission. In this novel, different from the earlier ones, Achebe draws a cosmopolitan Nigeria in an advanced setting in which the lives are de/reformed and the local life is on the brink of extinction as a result of persisting colonialism on the native land. Thus, the novel forms a conscious and logical sequence in terms of its subject matter and reflection of the real life occurrences. Therefore, it could be stated that *No Longer at Ease* exhibits the conflicts of a society in transition facing chaotic days. The novel itself serves Achebe's unifying mission as have in the rest of his novels. In this one, he explores the struggles of cultural transition from colonialism to nationhood.

Looking from the historical context, Achebe's fiction is so realistic that *No Longer at Ease* appears to be a replica of the years of high tension following the establishment of the colonial rule. It is noteworthy that, to set themselves free from colonial ties, Nigeria displayed praiseworthy efforts against the British Empire. Independence was not a matter of chance. It was earned; however, an independent Nigeria was not born at ease. In *Colonialism and Violence in Nigeria* Falola depicts the first half of the 20th century with these words: " [The colonial administration years], spanned the period from the turn of the century to the late 1940s, [was] a period when Nigeria was under colonial rule and Nigerians resisted the forces of colonial domination. Violent resistance revolved around policies on such issues as taxation[,] ... exploitation, domination, and inequality" (xi). Indeed, those are the years when the colonization process began to be a severe pain on the way to being a nation. The possible outcomes of colonialism were all due to the fact that the British tried hard to dominate Nigeria. In "British Colonial Administration", Gambari also draws attention to exactly this point and proposes a clear solution alongside: "The most important effect of [the] changes in Nigerian society was to create a small but growing and extremely articulate class of western-educated men- and eventually women- who formed the vanguard of the nationalist movement" (163). Indeed, the educated individuals in Nigeria were significant both to rule and to be ruled for a better country. As a consequence of the change in the stature of society, steps were to be taken faster, and meanwhile the public resistance began to emerge. Regarding this issue, Falola draws an analogy by stating that "[r]esistance and nationalism became two sides of the same coin.

One side fought to protect the old order of traditions and pre-colonial nations and the other side fought to create a new order in an emerging nation-state" (132). Whether resistance worked out or not might not have seemed evident; however, it seems to have triggered a national awakening. In this respect, Falola believes that "resistance failed to stop the colonial conquest, but the process helped to create a distance between the colonizers and their subjects in ways that later fostered nationalism" (53). In other words, resistance and nationalism worked in collaboration and ultimately succeeded in creating national awareness.

Besides the initiatives being highlighted already, education played a considerable role in this national awakening. That is to say, the awakening of Nigeria can be attributed to the rise of intellectual movements on the way to national liberation. As part of this awakening, in alignment with real history again, in *My Nigeria: Five Decades of Independence*, Peter Cunliffe-Jones exemplifies one of the most critical unions with these words: "In the 1930s, a group called the Nigeria Youth Movement was formed, intent on building a national organization to demand independence" (81). Such revivals were nationwide and almost everybody did whatever they could. The colonial dominance was too heavy a burden; hence it "was challenged by a very large number of local risings" (Isichei 396). What is more, Isichei further elaborates on the involvement of women in these years as well: "There were several remarkable women's movements in south-eastern Nigeria in the 1920s. ... [And] [t]he Women's War of 1929 was a ... serious matter. It involved Igbo, Ibibio and Opobo women from a large number of communities ..." (399). These all were quite understandable as the colonial atmosphere kept on disrupting the existing order by exploiting the indigenous people and their values. Those years were also shaken by unequal treatment and unjustly high taxes. Falola strongly believes that "the process of collecting taxes created additional problems. As people were never willing to pay, tax collectors acquired a negative image ... [and] [a]dditional hostility emerged when the government increased tax rates when it calculated that the prosperity of the people had improved" (86). Therefore, "[v]iolence and protests were part of the anti-tax resistance of the colonial era. Some cases of anti-tax violence took on the characteristics of what the official records called "wars" because of their intensity" (Falola 79). Nothing was really at ease; and there was an

urgent need to face the dark days. Activism in Nigeria increased a lot more, and even "[t]he role of workers and labour unions became important in the 1940s" (Falola 153).

Briefly, when such historical background was taken into consideration, Achebe's fiction and the objective of his nation-building project would seem much clearer. *No Longer at Ease* centres around the protagonist Obiajulu Okonkwo (Obi Okonkwo), who is interestingly the grandson of *Things Fall Apart*'s Okonkwo and the son of Nwoye or Isaac, the retired Church of England catechist, in an urban setting. Obi is back from conducting his studies in England, where he majored in English contrary to the expectation that he would study law and return to 'defend' the locals. He is Umuofia's first son to obtain a European-quality education and he is employed in a respectable civil service job in the administration of the 1950s in the days just before independence. The novel opens as a modern tragedy in which Obi is on trial for accepting bribes as a civil servant, and then proceeds with flashbacks. In general, Achebe leaves the reader face to face with the crisis and pains of a nation's birth. Contrary to *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God,* Achebe densely attempts to convey psychological reflections of the society rather than the physical conflicts throughout *No Longer at Ease*. That is, Achebe portrays the states of mind of the local people in modern day Nigeria. In broader terms, according to Annie Gagiano in *Achebe, Head, Marechera: On Power and Change in Africa, No Longer at Ease* is a novel of the failure of transformative energies (76). Focusing on the distinctive sides of *No Longer at Ease* from the previous two novels, Carroll claims that it is quite different from the earlier novels of Achebe in that "[m]isunderstanding between generations and cultural dislocations are not limited to any one country. But the significance of Achebe's [this] novel does not reverberate beyond its regional setting. It remains, in a limited sense, a West African novel" (85). The subject matter could be valid anywhere yet it is clear that the move from local life to modern day Nigeria diverges *No Longer at Ease* from the earlier novels in terms of the period covered; and thus it also seems to be the perfect continuation of Achebe's chronicle. Besides this, Gagiano underlines that the novel is a kind of neo-colonial dichotomy (77) and Achebe proposes valid responses to some questions such as "What is decolonization? Why has political independence failed? What is independence? What new and which ancient webs of power enmesh the emerging society?" (65). As has been

put into words previously, in *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*, Nkrumah sees neo-colonialism as the worst form of colonialism and it is a deconstruction process rather than re-construction process in the face of decolonization (xi). In this respect, the novel is considered to be the exploration for probable modernization versus national victimization on the way to unite as opposed to colonialism. On the whole, Achebe once more conveys a compelling fiction in a realistic manner to create a collective memory, and attempts to build up a nation independent from colonial ties by making use of his distinctive narrative style, and masterly representations of the existing culture in transformation as well as the characterization of the colonized and the colonizer in *No Longer at Ease*.

Like he did in *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, Achebe demonstrates his narrative skills to better transmit his ideas and notions to be taken into consideration either by his people or the Western world. Initially, it can be said that Achebe uses a logical development in his fiction, that is, both characters and events follow a reasonable pattern. The changes occur gradually related to each other, so the reader can better become a part of the narrative. Contribution to the textual cohesion, one of the key qualities that Achebe applies in this novel is the use of intertextuality. The title, *No Longer at Ease*, is from T.S. Eliot's poem "The Journey of the Magi":

> We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
> But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
> With an alien people clutching their gods.
> I should be glad of another death.

At the very beginning of the novel, it is not surprising that Achebe refers to T.S. Eliot, who is a poet of the post World War I period with an alienated world view. The title owes a lot to the poem and the relation between is quite critical for the interpretation of the novel. It appears that the title itself and epigraph of the novel points out the central problem that characterizes Achebe's novel. In fact, as Gikandi argues in *Reading Chinua Achebe*, the title and the epigraph are direct references "on the pilgrims' desire to return to a fixed place they could call home ('our places') and their ultimate realization that after a pilgrimage such a place no longer exists, that the old dispensation

has been disturbed, that death is the only certainty" (81). To further elaborate on the issue, Gikandi highlights that

> The 'Journey of the Magi' prefigures Obi Okonkwo's struggle to rediscover his place in the 'new' Nigeria and the real and imaginary problems that block this process. ... Obi's desire for a nation could not be fulfilled because Nigeria in the 1950s had yet to evolve linguistic and cultural figures for a new national consciousness, and he had been forced to confuse his (imaginary) romance of the nation with the national community. (81)

In this way, Gikandi profoundly stresses how the title of the novel and the poem are critical for the evaluation and comprehension of Achebe's narrative. In addition, as Jago Morrison refers to Rogers in *The Fiction of Chinua Achebe*, "Obi's passion for T.S. Eliot - and especially for 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' help to underline his qualities of paralysis and prissy indecision" (78) and likewise, "Achebe's self-conscious use of Graham Greene and *The Heart of the Matter* reinforces the sense of Obi's rootlessness and inanity" (79). What is more, in addition to such intertextual relations, Morrison discloses yet another key point referring to Roger again:

> Achebe's entire second novel can be read, on one level, as a parodic reappropriation of Conrad's text, with Obi taking on the role of a 'black Kurtz'. Like Kurtz, Obi is a 'quasi-literary' man and an idealist, filled with theoretical, Eurocentric ideas about Africa's need for civilization. Both men find Africa itself more difficult to navigate than they anticipated, buckling under the challenges it puts to them. ... Throughout Achebe's novel, the chiaroscuro of *Heart of Darkness* is reversed, with white becoming black and dark becoming light. (79-80)

Indeed, just like intertextuality provides an insight into the context of the novel and enlightens the content as well as unveils Achebe's counter position, symbolic devices such as cars and modern gadgets help describe the setting in the novel. Achebe's use of them carries a significant function to represent the striking gap in society and the noticeable transition on the eve of independence. It aims to signal the decolonization years ahead. Also, Achebe intentionally both opens and ends the novel with a question,

and the atmosphere seems to be quite obscure. Achebe wants the reader to ponder on the means of unity on the threshold of independence and helps better see the facts of his fiction by the society. The simplicity and directness of his narrative alongside the literary merits serve the same purpose as well; they are all struggles full of an enthusiasm to reach the masses and appeal to their minds. Overall, as Thomas J. Lynn notes in the section "*No Longer at Ease*" of *The Chinua Achebe Encyclopedia*, "the narrative of *No Longer at Ease* is a skillfully woven story with subtle and effective attention to detail, image, symbol, and structure, and it is narrated in Achebe's characteristically lucid prose" (176). By means of such narrative features, *No Longer at Ease* proves the fact that it advances Achebe's project that began with *Things Fall Apart* by creating a distinctively African fiction in English.

Moving on from the literary aspects into the cultural atmosphere of the novel itself, Achebe's objective illustration of the existing colonial life on the eve of independence period carries the specific purpose of highlighting and questioning the rare chance for change. As part of his counter discourse to write back, at the beginning of the novel, the Umuofia Progressive Union in Lagos, and Umuofia as an Ibo village in Eastern Nigeria, which is the home town of Obi Okonkwo (*NLE*[5], 3) are described and Achebe informs that Umuofians "[were] very proud of [their town] when it was the terror of their neighbours, [then] the white man came and levelled everybody down. Those Umufians who leave their home town to find work in towns all over Nigeria regard themselves as sojourners" (*NLE*, 4). Achebe wants to draw attention to the mobility within the borders with the coming of the whites. Despite an existing order and a past to be proud of, the indigenous people of Nigeria are trying to stick to their values across the country, and in fact that is the reason why the emergence of various unions work together to overcome the colonial past and its traces. These are the people displaced in their own country striving for food and shelter as *sojourners*. The change, that is, the low quality of life of the locals is emphasized frankly by Achebe. All the same, the people hope to keep the existing values as long as the colonial atmosphere allows. For instance, before the union meeting starts, "everybody [stands] up and [the

[5] *NLE* is employed to refer to *No Longer at Ease* in this study.

president] [says] a short prayer. Then he present[s] three kola nuts to the meeting. The oldest man present [breaks] one of them, saying another kind of prayer while he [does] it" (*NLE* 5). Besides, regardless of location and position, local tastes and customs dominate the lives of the Nigerians: "The second generation of educated Nigerians had gone back to eating pounded yams or *garri* with their fingers for the good reason that it tasted better that way. Also for the even better reason that they were not as scared as the first generation of being called uncivilized" (*NLE* 16). Such rituals and cultural values are revived while most of them are under colonial threat or have already been eroded. Behind a discourse referring to the indigenous values with certain intervals throughout the novel, what Achebe attempts to indicate is that the indigenous order still exists and needs to go on existing as opposed to false modernization via exploitation of the colonization process.

In addition to the risk of losing cultural ties to unify, Achebe as an objective and keen observer of the society deals with internal fallacies as well by revealing them on the sly. That is, he does not put the blame on the colonial influence alone. Rather, he criticizes his own people to create awareness among them. Similar to the male dominated culture in *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, one of the points Achebe touches upon is the patriarchal culture again. To illustrate, the sisters in the novel are seen as the means of financial gain since there exists a custom of bride price, or in another case, when Obi, Clara, Christopher and Bisi try to decide whether to go to the cinema, Bisi expresses her unwillingness. Yet, Christopher interferes with these words: "Look here, Bisi, we are not interested in what you want to do. It's for Obi and me to decide. This na Africa, you know" (*NLE* 87). Considering such internal divisions, Achebe informs his people about the possible menaces in the cultural sphere. Therefore, he seems to treat female voices with further care in this novel compared to the previous ones. For instance, one of Obi's sisters, the fourth, has a special name, and her name Nwanyidinma means "a girl is also good" (*NLE* 6). It is clear that Achebe tries to promote consciousness in each sense on the way to nationhood. The interesting point here is that Achebe, unlike in the previous two novels, translates the name and its meaning into English. This is a message both to the West and to his own people. The use of local lexis is always crucial to Achebe to keep the culture alive and respond back

to the West. However, he might imply that those are the years when the ties are already gone and the colonial ploys succeeded in transforming the society. To revive the existing values, Achebe is ready to use purely colonial language to fight against the colonial powers. Just as in *Post-Colonial Transformation* Ashcroft believes in the role of language, so Achebe holds the view that language is a rigid part of identity construction. While another valuable postcolonial writer Ngugi wa Thiong'o detests the language of the colonizer, English, Achebe uses English and literature to reach to the wider communities, and thus creates consciousness and collective mindset to challenge Eurocentric approaches. As a matter of fact, this is taking an advantage over the colonizer via their own means; that is, this is nothing more than a trait of postcolonialism signalling a pure appropriation as a natural consequence of the colonization process.

Another crucial point bringing about internal division is the issue of class. It could be discussed that Achebe wants to highlight the class issue might be more of an issue now as a result of false modernization as well as the gap created among the people. To be clear, the matter of being *Osu* and its hinderence for unity is specifically criticized by Achebe frankly. Clara, with whom Obi is in love, denies marrying Obi regarding herself as inferior *Osu* (*NLE* 56). In addition to herself, the rest of the characters except Obi, argue that it is impossible for them to marry. Achebe criticizes this through Obi's perspective to set an example as "it was scandalous that in the middle of the twentieth century a man could be barred from marrying a girl simply because her great-great-great-great-grand father had been dedicated to serve a god, thereby setting himself apart and turning his descendents into a forbidden cast to the end of time. Quite unbelievable" (*NLE* 57). Considering that marrying an *osu* is inappropriate culturally, Obi's father thinks this is a shame (*NLE* 107), while his mother gets even more annoyed with these words: "If you do the thing while I am alive, you will have my blood on your head, because I shall kill myself" (*NLE* 108). Surprisingly, his well-educated friend Christopher also states "I don't think we have reached the stage where we can ignore all our customs. You may talk about education and so on, but I am not going to marry an *osu*" (*NLE* 114). What is worse, even Clara herself, as a pregnant women prefers abortion to getting married to aviod the shame (*NLE* 115-116). Such cultural matters are

prevalent throughout the novel and Achebe's criticism on cultural issues outnumbers the norms of the society that he desires to preserve. Apart from such striking cultural details addressed to both the colonizer and the colonized, Achebe masterfully deals with the characterization of both sides. Thus, as he did in *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, with a postcolonial standing and critical approach, Achebe meticulously displays an objective approach to reflect the colonized in transition.

Taking the actual history into account, Achebe presents a perfect documentation of the pre-independence years through the modern day conditions of the colonized convincingly. At the very beginning of the novel, the issues of false documents and corruption, and the court scene (*NLE* 1) provides what Achebe clearly tries to demonstrate. The case of the colonized in the pre-independence years is not bright at all, yet this does not mean it is not promising either. Due to the suppressing colonial regime, the indigenous people gradually take a new shape and this deterioration is even reflected in their saying: "if you want to eat a toad you should look for a fat and juicy one" (*NLE* 5). It is seen that a corrupted life style dominates people, and Achebe does not want to miss the chance to send messages to hinder ongoing troubles. Such social issues as corruption and bribery (*NLE* 67) inherited from colonial days are part of the daily life now. On the other hand, the colonial institutions and the government are seen as "they" (*NLE* 26), which signifies Achebe's longstanding hope for the future since the people still consider the colonizer as alien forces. This might be taken as a re-appropriation and counter-othering phase; this is indeed what Achebe's counter discourse intends to accomplish. It could trigger an awakening somehow at some point in the near future. Besides this, the roles were to change in those days. For instance, apart from men with good titles, reputable positions and university education, most women were nurses and teachers rather than submissive mother as they used to be in the past. Also, the colonial language appears to have taken a different shape; many people such as drivers, passengers or nurses were speaking 'Pidgin English' (*NLE* 112, 125), which can be seen as breaking the strict ties from the colonizer's language. Though it sounds to be inappropiate English, it is in fact a localized one rather than a colonized one; that is why it could be taken as an exact appropriation in the framework of postcolonial criticism. In

this respect, what Achebe means to achieve here is to show that change occurs and Pidgin is part of the process to write back.

Indeed, the portrayal of the colonized on the eve of independence is of great significance for Achebe both to create an awareness on a healthy transition and to avoid the probable menaces arising from the tensions of modern day colonial atmosphere. He tries to provide his people with a chance for self-reflection on the internal and external threats at the same time. The selection of the major figures, that is, the characterization of the colonized forms a critical base throughout the novel; and just like he managed to do in his first two novels, Achebe carries the burden on his shoulders further and struggles to forge a new identity for the sake of cultural unity as opposed to colonialism. Therefore, the major character, Obi tries hard to identify modern Nigeria preparing to be a new Nigeria. As a colonalized subject, even though Obi faces alienation just like many other Nigerians in the course of the pre-independence years, Achebe's conscious use of disillusioned atmosphere is there to initiate a search for hope towards a bright future. Obi encounters ideological confusion and he tries to find his place among the existing values and changing culture. In other words, Achebe draws a portrait of a man in social, moral, professional, and individual decline. As a result of a longstanding painful colonization process, ambivalence dominates the characters of the novel; and Obi appears to be the holder of an inconsistent role. However, what Achebe desires for the society is that it is high time to stick to values and fulfill the requirements of being an independent nation for better days. Leading lives in misery and being torn apart between the modern colonial days and the existing traditional values do not take the indigenous people any step further. Rather, Achebe implies that fighting against being the victim of colonial life, alienation, disillusionment as well as dislocation are the actual means of reaching a unified nation. Considering the conditions, Achebe calls for an updated road map for his people, and to this end, Obi is the first major figure to handle this. In *Chinua Achebe: A Study of His Novels*, Khayyoom considers the leading character as a caricatured anti-hero: "Obi, fickle-minded, with the disturbed consciousness of a young graduate who incidentally is the product of hybrid culture with his English education and living in England, emerges as a naive young man dispossessed of his cultural roots" (87). In postcolonial theory and criticism, hybridity is an anticipated outcome of the

mutual orientation of the colonization process. Thus, Obi seems to be torn between the cultures of the colonizer and the colonized. That is, Achebe illustrates him as a hybrid hero with certain flaws and ambivalences.

Possibly due to some certain weaknesses, he is a self-destructive hero and displays an anti-role against himself. Keeping the novel as a whole in mind, Gikandi states that Obi "is a man entrapped in the dialectic of difference and identity; he finds that he cannot completely dissociate himself from the colonial culture which he has inherited from his father, nor can he totally identify with the Igbo culture of his ancestors" (*Reading* 98). It is clearly seen that Achebe presents Obi as a character who gets familiar with the idea that he is not unique but a product of collective and accumulative conscious and background. As opposed to all the obstacles and neo-colonials ploys on the eve of independence, Obi's class and generation is supposed to be seen as the hope and the bridge to pass to the promising days. Obi, however, appears to fall in the colonial traps. Thus, Achebe presents him as a sample representation of the new generation to avoid further troubles. Although his revolt against colonialism fails due to several things such as his loose traditional and national ties, Obi can still have an impact on his people across the country. Focusing on Obi to understand him precisely, in *Chinua Achebe* Innes underlines four journeys that define Obi's development and role in the novel:

> Obi's story, through set chiefly in Lagos, is structured around a series of journeys, each of which takes him and the reader to a deeper and more complex understanding of the culture which has formed Obi as well as the degree to which he has grown away from it. The first is his journey from Umuofia to Lagos; the second the voyage back from England to Lagos. The third and fourth journeys are the most significant - the two trips back to Umuofia - for the difference between these two trips marks the change that takes place in Obi. (50)

The change in Obi is clear enough, but the transformation of Nigeria seems to be a more serious concern to Achebe. Therefore, following these trips, Achebe eventually demonstrates Nigeria as an alien wasteland in disillusionment, and "the crisis of Obi's

return[s] indicate clearly that however thoroughly the Igbo and Christian ingredients are mixed, they will never coalesce" (Carroll 71).

It is worth noting once again that characterization is always the favourite tool that Achebe employs to convey his standing and postcolonial voice throughout his novels. In *No Longer at Ease*, during the transition period in the turmoil years, Achebe presents Obi as the portrait of the age with further critical details. "His full name was Obiajulu - 'the mind at last is at rest'" (*NLE* 5). Achebe's choice of such a specific name for the major character carries some messages and might encourage hope in an era when 'the mind is not at ease' at all. Just like Achebe himself, Obi finds a rare chance to study abroad thanks to a scholarship which are to be repaid four years later. He has the burden of a promising boy for his nation, and Achebe reflects, through Obi, how education is important for the transformation of a society. As Falola remarks, "[t]he Western-educated elite in the 1940s and 1950s knew what they wanted ... . Those ... educated in Europe and the United States were able to compare Nigeria with other countries and develop an idea of progress premised on the idea that they would use their education, knowledge, and skills and imported technology to move the country forward" (132). From the perspective of postcolonial criticism, this chance could be argued as an act of appropriation. That is, the insight gained through Westernized education would awaken the nation and foster national unity and development. Just as Achebe previously professed that university education was a turning point for him (*Home and Exile* 21), so it does for Obi. It is a huge step on the way to gaining national consciousness. Even Achebe's own family, as stated previously, believed that education is like a religion; it is a core value to obtain and help sustain the nationhood process. Obi was such a distinctive and bright student that his selection for the scholarship was not so difficult but his "going to England caused a big stir in Umuofia" (*NLE* 6). This was quite unusual, yet the world was changing and the mobility was on the increase for the colonized. Here what Achebe creates implicitly is the pure sense of nationhood to be emerged soon. "Obi was away in England for a little under four years. He sometimes found it difficult to believe that it was as short as that. It seemed more than like a decade than four years, what with the miseries of winter when his longing to return to Nigeria first became more than just a name to him. That was the first great thing that England

did for him" (*NLE* 10). Achebe intends to show that the feeling of homesickness is a step to promote the feeling of belonging to the nation. What is more, "during the first winter in England he had written a callow, nostalgic poem about Nigeria" (*NLE* 13). Obi's deep longing and dislocation ends when he is back in Nigeria (*NLE* 40).

Besides the national consciousness raising function of Obi, as the novel progresses, Achebe changes his focus to various critical issues sharpening his counter discourse. He presents Obi as the one who also condemns the colonial mind. He turns into the embodiment of Achebe's ideological world. It is quite apparent in the conversations with Joseph that Obi reacts to the colonial mindset in many cases by denouncing the system. This is also no surprise as "he is the grandson of Ogbuefi Okonkwo who faced the white man single-handed and died in the fight" (*NLE* 43). That is, Obi is the story itself from *Things Fall Apart* to *No Longer at Ease*. Protesting against Joseph, Obi shows how he is the man of Achebe with these words: "'What is a pioneer? Someone who shows the way. That is what I am doing'" (*NLE* 60). He encourages the ones around to be the part of the change. In one of the union's meetings, Obi Okonkwo was announced to say a few words and the announcement was received with joy: "'Our fathers have a saying about the danger of living apart. They say it is the curse of the snake. If all snakes lived together in one place, who would approach them?'" (*NLE* 64). Here he refers to the indigenous culture and existing way of living in harmony, and emphasizes the significance of unity as a nation once more.

While Obi is the representation of the change itself following the colonial transformation of his nation, Achebe demonstrates that the colonial system keeps transforming the society and social maladies such as bribery turns into being part of daily routines of life. Obi is in strong opposition to such habits and shows exemplary resistance (*NLE* 69). However, he is overwhelmed by persistent approaches and somehow gives in sooner or later. As a result of a colonial mindset and manipulations, hybridity and ambivalence pave the way for his inevitable decline. What is more, to re-state Bhabha's "Of Mimicry and Man" in *The Location of Culture*, mimicry is signs of double articulation (122); it is re-forming the identity itself yet this ability of re-presenting the self is within certain constrains far from free will. Thus, Achebe shows that the legacy of colonialism remains as the arch enemy for the colonized. Eventually,

Obi emerges to be a corrupt as well (*NLE* 96) and Achebe alarmingly warns his people against such maladies as corruption via Obi's self-destruction. His acceptance of bribe reveals numerous matters among which initially financial difficulty comes into play. Obi's former and deepening further financial crises (*NLE* 99-100) force him to find a way out. Apart from financial troubles, Obi's psychological state of mind deteriorates due to his relations with his family and beloved Clara. "The beast of no nation" (*NLE* 121), Obi gets worse and worse; he is unable to sleep in the last few months because of the obstacles he has been facing. Obi is such a crucial character that Achebe employs him with numerous details to emphasize the gradual deterioration in his characterization as the symbol of a declining nation. Eventually, what is the most striking among all his experiences is that due to his vulnerability and in-betweenness, Obi falls prey to the colonial ploys and is forced to accept the bribe of only 20£, which leads to the arrest of the hero (*NLE* 135). In *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, as Ashcroft mentioned previously, ambivalence is a psychological state (12); it is a state of mind in between the colonizer and the colonized; and it is a dual orientation of the colonizing process (23). It could be argued that, in the postcolonial criticism framework, Achebe draws an iconic character falling pray to ambivalence in a tragic way.

Though Obi as the representation of Achebe's ideology is the most striking character in the novel, he is not the only influential one. Achebe draws a broader picture with some other colonized figures as well. Being the representative of the second generation, Obi's family holds a crucial place in the novel by setting a clear comparison-contrast opportunity with Obi and his contemporaries symbolizing the third generation on the way to getting rid of colonialism. Mr. Isaac Okonkwo, Obi's father, is a retired catechist who lives on 25 £ pension per year. Considering a colonized person who is converted and served for the colonizer, the huge disparity between the life standards justify how destructive and exploitive the colonial rule is. Obi, however, is the one who is well aware of this cruelty. As he can see, his father "too was all bones, although he did not look nearly as bad as his mother. It was clear to Obi that they did not have enough good food to eat. It was scandalous ... that after nearly thirty years' service in the church his father should retire on a salary of two pounds a month, a good slice of which went back to the same church ..." (*NLE* 44). Obi's dad and mom stand in clear contrast

to Obi in the way they perceive the world at large. For instance, they are strictly bound to the traditional values which do not fit to the age in which they live. In this respect, the separatist manners on the threshold of independence do not help the nation unite in peace.

Additionally, Obi's affair with Clara provides grave implications as to the class issue as reflected in the previous novel as well. Obi is in love with Clara, yet his parents are opposed to this affair on the ground that she is an *osu*, a kind of inferior cast and damned rank in society (*NLE* 105-106). To show this internal exclusion, Achebe drives Obi forward again: "What is this thing? Our fathers in their darkness and ignorance called an innocent man *osu*, a thing given to idols, and thereafter he became an outcast, and his children, and his children's children forever" (*NLE* 106). In short, Obi uses the discourse that his father might use in talking to the heathen kinsmen. Despite Obi's protest and the parents' clarification about the *osu* matter (*NLE* 110), nothing changes and the parents resent Obi's case deeply. The elderly people of the same generation from the union puts a strong emphasis on the inappropriateness of the affair: "That is what Lagos can do to a young man. He runs after sweet things, dances breast to breast with women and forgets his home and his people. Do you know what medicine that osu woman may have put into his soup to turn his eyes and ears away from his people" (*NLE* 127). Mostly in contrast to Obi, father and mother as the characters from the earlier generation of the colonial rule help the reader draw a map of the transition to a new stage. Apart from the parents, Obi's beloved Clara, and friends Joseph and Christopher, the rest of the union members in the background are all contributors to reflect the age during which corrupted Nigeria longs for liberation from the deep rooted colonial ties. It was such a high time to bring down colonial rule that Achebe also demonstrates the case of the colonizer in the same manner as frankly as the colonized.

As have been in the previous novels, the portrayal of the colonizer and the striking realities are parts of Achebe's answer back to the West. While fostering hopes to flourish for the Nigerians, Achebe does not ignore the harsh realities during the period of transition by disclosing the colonizer and the colonial atmosphere on the eve of independence. Achebe's reflections on the colonizer in alignment with the real time occurrences give further insight into both the novel and age itself. Just like he focuses

on Obi and the other representatives of the indigenous population, Achebe mirrors the colonizer and their acts meticulously. Apart from planting thriving hopes for the future, Achebe signals various threats concerning the colonialism in a new bizarre fashion through the characterization of the colonizer and their deeds. In the first place, Achebe presents such a setting that it is possible not only to find the British, but also some other Europeans and their culture dominating daily life in Nigeria. It seems that Nigeria has already become open to the wider world and exploitation through the colonization process. Western drinks, games, sports, or even new Irish missionaries (*NLE* 95-132) alongside new tendencies all contribute to the rise of new colonial order and capital culture vs. longstanding native life and indigenous values.

Putting a great emphasis on the situation of the colonizer, Achebe implies the painful transformation and imminent threats on purpose. The major colonizer voice throughout the novel, Mr. Green accuses Nigeria of being corrupt and faulty with these words: "They are all corrupt. ... We have brought him Western education. But what use is it to him?" (*NLE* 3). The ironical case here and the change for the worse due to colonial past can be evaluated in the ideas and words of local people as follows:

> We are strangers in this land. If good comes to it may we have our own share. But if bad comes let it go to the owners of the land who know what gods should be appeased. Many towns have four or five or even ten of their sons in European posts in this city. Umuofia has only one. And now our enemies say that even that one is too many for us. But our ancestors will not agree to such a thing. (*NLE* 5)

It appears that the transformation of society is irreversable. When Obi is on the way back home following his education in the U.K., the boat full of administrative officers like Macmillan (*NLE* 18) demonstrates how profound the change in modern day Nigeria is. Ironically, the boat destination is called "Freetown" (*NLE* 23) and it is likely that Achebe may signal some implications and foreshadows something with the choice of such a name. Paradoxically, Freetown might be suggesting the independence to gain soon since the novel is set in the eve of independence. The promising boy "Obi's first day in the Civil Service was memorable, almost as memorable as his first day at the bush mission school in Umuofia nearly twenty years before. In those days white men

were very rare" (*NLE* 51), but they form a huge majority now and Nigeria goes deeper and deeper into a new (p)age of so-called independence days and the country is *no longer* at ease.

In the postcolonial theory and criticism framework, not only the colonized, but also the characterization of the colonizer enable Achebe to answer back. In this respect, Mr. Green, Obi's boss, represents the strong voice of the colonizer. He is the most prominent figure drawn by Achebe to portray the colonizer of the age. He is "a very devout Christian [and] a sideman at the Colonial Church (*NLE* 84). Following his European education, as a man of full consciousness pertaining to the realities of his country, Obi summarizes the case of Mr. Green and the age as is in the following quotation:

> It was clear he loved Africa, but only Africa of a kind: the Africa of Charles, the messenger, the Africa of his garden-boy and steward-boy. He must have come originally with an ideal - to bring light to the heart of darkness, to tribal head-hunters performing weird ceremonies and unspeakable rites. But when he arrived, Africa played him false. Where was his beloved bush full of human sacrifice? ... In 1900 Mr. Green might have ranked among the great missionaries, in 1935 he would have made do with slapping headmasters in the presence of their pupils; but in 1957 he could only curse and swear ... . (*NLE* 84-85)

Achebe here relates Mr. Green to Conrad's Kurtz as a man to bring light to the 'heart of darkness'. However, it should be noted that Achebe frankly and objectively underlines the troubles on both sides. In *The Fiction of Chinua Achebe*, Morrison, referring to Carroll, reveals the case of Mr. Green with these words: "Achebe's portrait of the colonial Mr. Green describes a comparable uneasiness and ambivalence. In *Things Fall Apart*, the commissioner is unassailable in his ignorance, but the role of Green in *No Longer At Ease* is a much less stable one. His role is to administer the last days of a colonial regime that is soon to be dismantled" (73). In these so called dying days of colonialism, both sides apparently suffer. Similarly, Gikandi reaches a conclusion with respect to Mr. Green as follows: "Mr. Green's frustration arises from his inability to function as a proper colonial" (*Reading Chinua Achebe* 93). Indeed, Mr. Green is

troubled by the realities stemming from the colonial tension in a revolutionary transition period for the colonial history. In a debate with Obi, he condemns the will of the local Nigerians for freedom with these words: "It's people like you who ought to make the Government decide. That is what I have always said. There is no single Nigerian who is prepared to forgo a little privilege in the interests of his country. From your ministers down to your most junior clerks. And you tell me you want to govern yourselves" (*NLE* 122). The idea that everybody wants independence yet does nothing for Nigeria sounds like the voice of Achebe and Obi does not welcome this view: "It is not the fault of Nigerians. You devised these soft conditions for yourselves when every European was automatically in the senior service and every African automatically in the junior service. Now that a few of us have been admitted into the senior service, you turn round and blame us" (*NLE* 122-123).

In *No Longer At Ease*, it seems that Achebe displays yet another realistic masterpiece that his literary feat lies in showing the accuracy of not only what happened in Nigeria, but also what may have happened as well as would have happened in the proceeding years of colonialism. In *There Was a Country*, Chinua Achebe highlights that

> [t]he British were well aware of the inter-ethnic tensions and posturing for power among the three main ethnic groups. By 1951 they had divided the country into the Northern, Eastern, and Western Regions, with their own respective houses of assembly, to contain this rising threat. There was also what many thought was an inane house of chiefs- a poor copy of the House of Lords of the British Parliament. Clear-eyed pundits saw this mainly as a political ploy ... . (47)

In other words, while the Nigerians were working hard for the brighter days ahead, the British were also carrying on the policies blocked by the national revival of Nigeria. By implanting their own system, it would be easier to dominate while trying to seem like helping Nigeria out with politics. "The British clearly had a well-thought-out exit strategy, with handover plans in place long before we noticed" (*There* 48) confesses Achebe. As Gambari announces in "British Colonial Administration", "[a]t last, on 1 October 1960 the independent Federation of Nigeria was proclaimed, and was admitted

to the United Nations and to the Commonwealth" (171). However, as in *A History of Nigeria* Isichei points out in the manner of a serious warning, "[i]n the 1950s, [the independence eve], conflict between Nigerians came to seem more important than conflict with the British" (409). That is, the independence was impending, yet the struggles were turning into more serious challenges. Following the independence, the problem of the colonial background would emerge and disturb the nation further in the times when the peace of freedom should have dominated the air.

Concisely, Achebe's third novel can be discussed as a work completing the tradition of unveiling the facts pertatining to colonial life through fiction. *No Longer at Ease* is the embodiment of a collective consciousness including both the colonizer and the colonized in the eve of a new age. Thanks to his vigorous discourse alongside his strong willed ideals and eminent illustrations of the colonial life giving birth to further crises and hopes, Achebe closes an era in which nobody is actually '*at ease*', yet all aspire an easeful life in unity. The rise of the decolonization movements come with some deeper troubles while the imperial games survive in disguise with further sinister implementations. All in all, the problems of both the colonizer and the colonized result from the same source of the blurred and misled colonial history. Thus, Achebe has a saying for both sides and this is what makes him strive to shed light on the details in an objective way. In *Chinua Achebe: New Perspectives*, Ojinmah personally claims that "Nigeria was not adequately prepared for the responsibility of being independent" (51). Actually, this is why Achebe portrays Obi and the rest with flaws and reflect the dark traces of colonialism as the major reason lying behind all the mess. Therefore, as Gikandi believes, "Achebe's generation is trying to invent a Nigerian nation and a Nigerian national consciousness from amorphous and unstable entities arbitrarily yoked together by the colonizer" (*Reading Chinua Achebe* 80). 1950s' Nigeria was a profound trouble for Achebe seeking to come up with a solution to unite his people through the use of literary power. Since Achebe concludes his novel with a problem and implied solutions, his following two novels carry very critical missions. After all, as Morrison underlines in *The Fiction of Chinua Achebe*, the story should not be cut that short: "with *Things Fall Apart*, *Arrow of God*, [and] *No Longer At Ease*, Achebe explores three crucial moments in the colonial history of Nigeria: the incursion of the British into

Iboland in the late nineteenth century, the aftermath of formal colonization and the run-up to independence in the mid-1950s" (112). With his fourth novel, *A Man of the People*, Achebe turns to a contemporary scene and invites all to experience the neo-colonial age to have a saying to answer back, and thus have a further voice on the destiny and future of Nigeria for independence in real terms.

3.4. Neo-Colonial Period and Decolonization Initiatives: *A Man of the People* (1966)

It is well-known that colonial history is not necessarily over yet, and accordingly colonialism is not likely to erode easily in the works of Achebe. When the matter is, once more, the destructive impact of colonialism by the imperial powers on Nigeria, Achebe is the pioneer authority to consult helping witness the traces left behind, and *A Man of the People* is yet another great masterpiece for all in this regard. Achebe's fourth novel is an urgent need to see what went wrong in the first three novels pertaining to the road map of national struggle as opposed to colonialism. In this respect, in *The Novels of Chinua Achebe* as Killam notes, this is a novel that completes the tetrology: "*A Man of the People* while different in tone, more immediate in subject and more deliberately polemical in purpose than any of the other novels, completes a sequence of novels which reveal the changes wrought in Nigerian life during the twentieth century" (97). It can be argued that the fourth novel is the exploration into the meaning of national liberation in a real sense, thus *A Man of the People* can be regarded as a searching novel to follow the right path for real 'independence'. Since *A Man of the People* is a novel published in 1966, just before the political upheavals leading to bloodshed across the country, it also seems to be a political satire that focuses on the menaces and abuses of the postcolonial condition in Nigeria. In *Chinua Achebe*, Carroll stresses that "[a]ll four [novels] are political novels, but when we group them in this way it is apparent that the two set in earlier period describe attacks, both in internal and external, upon the traditional Igbo way of life, while the two later novels, far more pessimistic in tone, diagnose the after-effects of this conflict in the modern state" (119). The scope Achebe handles in *A Man of the People* seems to be wider compared to previous three novels. As far as it seems, with the contemporary days and modern problems, postcolonial theory enlarges the issues it deals with to a great extent. That is, postcolonial theory used to focus on the material world and colonization, but today it includes cultural,

economic and political issues as well as language, discourse and identity at the center (Jefferess 57). In this respect, *A Man of the People* appears to be the embodiment of the contemporary concerns of the postcolonial theory and criticism.

Understanding Achebe in *A Man of the People* requires the full understanding of the era as the novel presents striking parallelism to the actual history in Nigeria. 1960 was the year when a long-desired independence period was initiated. Everything was supposed to be different and promising since "Nigeria [also became] a republic, replacing the queen with an indigenous president as the symbolic head of state in 1963" (Falola and Heaton xvii). However, the quick change in Nigeria did not bring about expected results as a free state and this altered Nigeria abruptly in its initial years of independence. "Three years later still, one of the few Africans to have seen the monarch at close quarters while she was in the country, her ADC Major Ironsi, became Nigeria's first military dictator" (Brendon 544). Independent Nigeria tasted freedom for merely a few years. Unable to do anything, the new-born state fell prey to the neo-colonizers. That is, the infant Nigeria was adopted by neo-colonialism and began to develop disillusionment in the course of the so-called early independence years. Freedom should connote quite a hopeful stage in one's lifespan, yet in Nigeria it meant something totally different due to the new ploys of the colonizer. Not only in Nigeria but also in most of the newly-liberated nations, the destiny throughout the independence years were set by the external forces. "In the year Nigeria would become independent, 1960, 17 African nations would be given their freedom" (Cunliffe-Jones 86), which made the authorities name the year as "the Africa year". However, all would have similar stories to tell and what they had undergone since the liberation was nothing more than the disgrace of colonialism in a new stage. The so-called post-independence period of Nigeria, which is merely the new colonial age, presents striking facts helping the reader see the colonial history in Nigeria as a whole.

In light of this historical context, Achebe's fiction not only draws the colonized into the novel to re-assess everything from bottom to top in a breath-taking way, but also replies to the colonizer with shocking details. The problem at the heart of the novel is the colonialism in a new yet darker shape; that is, the problem is the process of rapid Africanisation with further troubles. In *Early Achebe*, Lindfors underlines that "the

novel, published just nine days after the first military coup in Nigeria, has been hailed by many reviewers as a 'prophetic' work, one in which Achebe predicted with uncanny accuracy the end of his country's First Republic" (135). Briefly, *A Man of the People* elaborates on the rise and demise of Chief the Honourable Dr. M.A. Nanga, an opportunistic and corrupted character struggling to use his position and power as well as wealth to secure his post; all he does is to avoid political jeopardy and ensure an easy life with eat-and-let-eat regime. However, a sudden *coup d'état* at the end ruins everything. Achebe demonstrates how every step that a leader takes shapes the new age and the realities of the new independence period. Achebe portrays Nanga as an influential figure, and thus, he is presented as 'the man of the people', which leads all the incidents to centre around himself.

Overall, Achebe presents Chief Nanga and Mr. Odili Samalu, the narrator of the novel as an idealist teacher, in complete contrast with each other. In this respect, they represent the opposite poles in politics. In *Chinua Achebe: Teacher of Light*, Sallah and Okonjo-Iwela argue that "Odili, influenced by his Western education, has a detached approach to local politics, shunning corruption and avoiding traditional allegiances that he describes as 'primitive loyalties'. Nanga, on the other hand, is a pragmatist who, by hook or by crook, exploits 'primitive loyalties' to grab his share of the 'national cake' and to enhance his material comfort" (115). From the perspective of postcolonial theory and criticism, as McLeod previously stressed in *Postcolonial Study*, Achebe displays stunning dichotomies throughout the novel evoking the dialectics approach of Hegel (162) by means of the events between these two major voices. Indeed, as powerful figures, they dominate the novel; and more importantly, they assist Achebe in making his voice heard to a greater extent. While Nanga is the embodiment of what to avoid, Odili is there to set an example as a promising figure after *No Longer At Ease*'s Obi and his hamartia. Drawing an analogy between Obi and Odili in *The Novels of Chinua Achebe*, Killam asserts that Odili

> is a young, university graduate, and therefore a part of the new elite of the country. He possesses idealism and a desire to create a better country than that in which he lives. Like that of Obi Okonkwo, Odili's idealism is directed towards promotion of the general good in the country. The

> moral center of the book is found here. But unlike Obi's idealism, Odili is tempered by an awareness of practical realities and a capacity for decisive if not always serviceable action. Obi fails through a too careful consideration of the opposing forces which hedge him round. Odili cuts through qualifications and rationalizations and acts in support of his beliefs. Odili is the man Obi might have become. (87)

In the first three novels, Achebe presents a search for independence, and hereby it can be argued that Odili is the man who is looking for a real independence and the novel can be seen as a critique of modern Nigeria. In this critique, Achebe sheds light on the white man's legacy, that is, imperialism in its both actual and transformed shape in Nigeria as a free state. In *Chinua Achebe: A Study of His Novels*, Khayyom states that "*A Man of the People* [is] set in the contemporary world of a country confronting imported values" (50). The imported values and legacy are in fierce clash with the idealism Odili possesses for the welfare of his country, and he struggles against the maladies in each and every area of life. Since the novel is a political one, the lack of political morality and political maladies are the priorities of Odili to fight against.

The events around the central figures and major problems as well as political occurrences of the day demonstrate why Achebe's *A Man of the People* might have been taken as a prophetic work. In this respect, Achebe is such a distinguished writer in his documenting the real life that he is known to have almost been jailed due to his prophecies regarding the coup that took place in the early years of independence. In *The Fiction of Achebe*, however, Morrison argues that nothing is prophetic; that is, Achebe just depicts the colonial history of Nigeria through his powerful fiction (117). "In Nigeria, as in the whole of West Africa, the system broke down with amazing rapidity. Parliamentary democracy lasted just over five years, from October 1960 to January 1966" (468) frankly states Isichei, and she quotes from a trade union document of 1963 to explain the real reason underlying this in the following lines: "Independence has not brought democracy to [Nigeria] ... The existing major political parties ... are dominated, controlled and financed by the agents and representatives of the rich classes. They only use the people, the workers and farmers, as ladders to climb into power" (470). That is why the first republic did not last long, which marked the first major problem, a failed

democracy in a free Nigerian state. In the article "Politics Since Independence", Leo Dare accuses of 'the Westminster parliamentary system' for the failure: "Numerous problems were inherited with the independence euphoria. Among these were the built-in winner-takes-all approach of the Westminster model, the imbalance in the size of the regions, the issues of minorities and their demand for separate states, and regional-based political parties which the colonial indirect rule policy had helped to nurture" (189). As for Achebe in *There Was a Country*, he frankly criticizes the British influence and sees it as the source of many problems: "Within six years [1960-1966] of this tragic manipulation[,] Nigeria was a cesspool of corruption and misrule. ... Elections were bluntly rigged. The subsequent national census was outrageously stage-managed; judges and magistrates were manipulated by the politicians in power. The politicians themselves were pawn of foreign business interests" (51). Under these conditions, Achebe believes, nothing would be better but worse gradually, and he goes on highlighting the most serious event in post-colonial Nigeria: "Most members of my generation ... remember a time when things were very different. But the Biafran [Civil] war changed the course of Nigeria. In my view it was a cataclysmic experience that changed the history of Africa" (*There Was a Country* 2). As an Igbo, Achebe tells the readers what was so bad in fact with the civil war in these lines: "What terrified me about the massacres in Nigeria was this: If it was only a question of rioting in the streets and so on, that would be bad enough, but it could be explained ... But in this particular case a detailed plan for mass killing was implemented by the government -the army, the police- the very people who were there to protect life and property" (*There Was a Country* 82). And he sees the civil war as nothing more than a psychological disaster on the nation: "I could not escape the impact of this *trauma* happening to millions of people at the same time" (*There Was a Country* 71). In other words, in the neo-colonial period 'things fall apart' yet again: "We were especially disheartened by the disintegration of the state because we were brought up in the belief that we were destined to rule" (*There Was a Country* 108) adds Achebe. It could be argued that whatever happens to be in the novel are the disguised facts underlying the events of the age rather than the prophecies of the writer.

Amid the chaos and tensions dominating modern Nigeria and postcolonial disillusionment, Achebe is the light and path finder for his people. In *Chinua Achebe: The Man and His Works*, Mezu even describes the novel as a "new playing field" for the "survival of the fittest" (95). That is to say, either the neo-colonial struggles of the colonizers or the search for the second independence would win the struggle. As far as it seems, the setting is a chaotic postcolonial country and there are no clear answers and solutions to this. Therefore, Achebe still has a burden to carry in this fourth novel and in the last one *Anthills of the Savannah* as well. In Conversations *with Chinua Achebe*, Lindfors believes that "when you get to the time of *A Man of the People*, the situation is somewhat worse than in *Arrow of God* [and *No Longer at Ease*]" (49). However, despite everything, Achebe is not a pessimist at all. As in his previous novels, Achebe maintains the same objectives and focuses on different details by providing further assistance to guide his people. Through his meticulous narrative and vivid illustration of the existing life in new order alongside the striking portraits of the colonizer and the colonized, Achebe creates a factual documentary out of his fiction, and he longs to shape his people and clear up the path for real independence in *A Man of the People* once more in an unprecedentedly satirical and touching manner.

As part of his distinctive narrative style and counter discourse, Achebe presents various background elements backing up his argument throughout the novel. His complete control and technical skills as a novelist employed in the novel exhibit another unique work. First of all, Odili Samalu is the hero of the novel and at the same time he is the one who narrates the story. Achebe's intention could be to reveal the facts of the day and psychology with further accuracy. According to Gikandi, this is supposed to demonstrate a much more transparent portrait of the day: "as a first person narrator, Odili allows Achebe to both expose the corrupt world of our politicians, but also the limited knowledge of the interpreters of this world - the intellectuals" (*Reading Chinua Achebe* 111). Going into deeper interpretation regarding the narrator, Gikandi states that Odili's primary function "is to capture a mode of language and narration that distances his readers from the corrupt world of Chief Nanga and his associates. Represented through clichés and empty phrases, the neocolonial world is shown to be either valueless, hopeless imprisoned in the colonial structures which it mimics ..." (116). In

this sense, Achebe prefers employing an ironic narrative style to clearly depict the postcolonial state. Gikandi further states that "[i]ronic discourse - rather than ironic speech acts which are confined to words which mean the opposite of what they state - refers to the total strategy [Achebe] adopts to deconstruct dominant or official discourse and thereby expose the 'cold facts' which official rhetoric conceals "(114). Hence, in the postcolonial studies framework, Achebe is believed to use ironic discourse as a cultural critique of dominant institutional traditions. The ironic stance of the novel gives birth to satirical approach as well and is a direct response to the Eurocentric approaches. In the *Novels of Chinua Achebe*, Killam argues that "Achebe employs the irony of the satirist in order to ridicule and condemn the circumstances the book evokes" (84). Broadly speaking, it seems that *A Man of the People* is a kind of satirical farce on corrupted politicians of the postcolonial era and the exploitation system of the neo-colonial order inherited from the colonial past. In *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, Loomba states that "[a] country may be both postcolonial (in the sense of being formally independent) and neo-colonial (in the sense of remaining economically and/or culturally dependent) at the same time" (7). This is exactly what is seen in Nigeria in a rather large scale. In *Stepping-Stones*, Leith-Ross tells the readers her personal experiences in Nigeria, and verifies the existence of the British with various reasons both in direct and in indirect ways in the course of post-colonial period since it is not a post- but a neo- stage for them anymore (38).

In addition to these textual features of a counter discourse, Achebe still makes use of traditional elements as well. "In *A Man of the People*, as in Achebe's other novels, proverbs are used to sound and reiterate major themes, to sharpen characterization, to clarify conflict, and to focus on the values of the society Achebe portrays. ... [T]hey provide *a grammar of values* ..." (Lindfors, *Early Achebe* 73). These are the crucial elements with which to explore the novel and bring up a more meaningful understanding of both Achebe and the age he demonstrates. Furthermore, Achebe employs flashback technique in this novel creating a dramatic effect by inviting all from one scene to another. This arises interest by creating suspension in the novel. He links the beginning of the novel with the ending and completes the whole frame. Besides this, the use of language differentiates *A Man of the People* from the previous

novels. The novel is set in the post-independence era and the indigenous people are looking for localizing the way of life while struggling against further colonial pressures and neo-colonial ploys. Drawing an analogy with *No Longer at Ease*, Achebe intensively presents 'Pidgin English', which is the Nigerian interpretation of colonial language, both just to create comic effect in his narration and to convey some further serious message to his people. It might be interpreted that a language of one's own is also a huge step on the way to becoming a unified and liberated nation. In the light of postcolonial theory and criticism, language issue and such intense use of Pidgin are examples of certain appropriation throughout the novel. In this respect, though it is still the colonial language, Achebe likes to give it a local flavour by inserting 'Pidgin' on purpose. In *Chinua Achebe*, Carroll puts forward a probable function of Pidgin use in his novels with these lines:

> In *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, pidgin was used sparingly to signify the meretriciousness of the forces seeking to erode traditional Igbo values which were expressed through a simple yet dignified English. By the time [of] *A Man of the People*, there has been a reversal. When Nanga employs pidgin in this flexible, colorful way, we are compelled to see it as an African means of combating European, cosmopolitan values. (128)

It appears that the dominant use of Pidgin is indeed purposeful and has a significant function serving Achebe's intentions. In this sense, the same language in different forms represents two different sides that are plotting against each other. Adressing both the colonizer and the colonized through all of his narrative qualities, Achebe's style unveils his good intentions and deliberate exploitation of his skills to signify the right route amidst the sinister tricks and threats of the post-independence years.

Apart from Achebe's mastery in writing back to both internal and external targets, the portrayal of the colonized and colonizer plays a pivotal role in the understanding of the novel and the age it is set in. What Achebe differently does this time is that *A Man of the People* is not necessarily a work of the colonized vs. the colonizer; rather, it is actually a work of the colonized vs. the colonized. In the post-independence years, the colonizer bear the role of the camera eye in the background

while the inherited system with a freshly harsh face carries on its bad deeds on its own by pulling the colonized into confrontations with each other. As a result of this, some deeper problems, certain grave issues, social and political maladies, and further threats appear on the stage; and that is the reason why Achebe focuses on the colonized more than the colonizer in his fourth novel. One of the most potent ideologies of colonialism, divide and rule, is still there and it is the major cause of social disintegration and internal clashes. As Badru previously defined in *Imperialism and Ethnic Politics in Nigeria*, Nigeria is an "ethnic bomb" and associated with almost 30 years of civil wars and coups (1). In other words, neo-colonialism dominates the novel and Achebe signals the emergency here and reflects all the possible menaces to re-structure a new-born nation for more consistent days through the eyes of the colonized.

At first glance, since Chief Nanga, is the actual title character as *A Man of the People*, he should be very significant for the narrative to convey what Achebe intends to do. He is a clever opportunist and knows very well how to keep his power and his role as 'a man of the people'. In *Early Achebe*, Lindfors describes him as "self-seeking, grossly corrupt politician who lives in flamboyant opulence on his ill-gotten gains" (70). Achebe uses Nanga to show the great mutation that the nation has undergone with colonialism and to reflect a self-destroying nation strikingly. He is drawn as a leader to dictate and control all. His monopoly dominates the series of events intoxicating the independence years. In *The Four Novels of Chinua Achebe*, Njoku depicts him with these words: "He is a man corrupt in all facets, seeking bubble popularity and determined to maintain power at all costs. An ardent opportunist, his goals are economic self interest, power, and authority. He does not seem to be concerned for political morality and ethical sounds ... He is a pragmatist; his interests are local, regional, practical, and immediate" (76). From a postcolonial perspective, in these so-called early independence years, he is no more than a puppet still manipulated by the colonial ties and colonialism itself. In *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, as Ashcroft et al. previously clarified, mimicry is simply the act of copying and adopting (139); it is an ambivalent relation between the colonizer and the colonized as a result of colonial experiences. In this respect, Chief Nanga is a 'blurred' copy of the colonizer in

Ashcroft's terms, and thus, as Ashcroft further believes, mimicry could be quite threatening.

As for Odili, he poses a sharp counter position and *A Man of the People* is basically the projection of antagonism. As a child whose mother died at his birth and whose father was a district interpreter whom he despises, Odili grows up alienated and turns into a lonely yet sensitive child in a world full of internal and external foes. Elaborating on Odili, Njoku narrows down his relation with Nanga to three major points as follows:

> First of all, he lives under an atmosphere rigged with colonial mentality. He may be tempted to force the dynamics of wallowing in the traditions of the elders. Secondly, he may have no outlet for his newly acquired European taste for classical, baroque, or romantic art. Thirdly, communication with the African majority may be difficult, or he must learn fast to go back to the soil. He must be faced with the problem of learning to come down his high horse, if he reaches the African majority. (63)

In this case, the personal relationship between Chief Nanga and Samalu Odili symbolizes the crude relations between Nigerian intelligentsia and their so-called political leaders during the post-independence period. Between the polarization of the colonized at home, the purpose of "*A Man of the People* is precisely to confront its middle-class Nigerian leadership with the immanence of their own failure" (Morrison 129). Odili's ethnocentric manners and intellectual side diverge him from the rest, yet in fact this is also one of the major reasons contributing to the failure of the nation and "[t]hus, [Achebe stresses that] Odili shows a weakness of being easily seduced by the same materialistic pathos to which the politicians have fallen prey" (Mezu 106). He is the embodiment of alien values, and so appears to be a Westernized African. In this sense, just like Nanga, from time to time he appears to be a puppet as well. In Bhabha's terms, postcolonial identity could be defined as a joint existence between the colonizer and the colonized. That is, it is an ambivalent and split identity form. Besides, postcolonial identity is already hybrid by nature. In *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts,* Ashcroft et al. already stated previously (118), hybridity is a means of

transformation and it is the result of colonialism and a purely blurred creation in the contact zone. In this respect, Odili is by all means a hybrid identity. What is more, from a postcolonial perspective, Odili is unable to shape his own realities just like Nanga, which makes him the portrayal of mimicry as well. In light of this analysis, a strong opposition between them is likely to arise from the fact that both cannot obtain the same since they are unable to go beyond being manipulated figures. In short, as authorities underline, rather than setting a clear contra-position against the colonizer in his fourth novel, Achebe confronts the colonized with one another by providing precious details and exemplifications in an eloquent manner.

As the justification of the forementioned arguments by the authorities as to the role of the major characters, through a captivating characterization, Achebe presents a magnum opus indeed. Initially, as the title character, Achebe's Nanga is the holder of the various ideas to be conveyed to the people. Achebe's impicit messages and up-to-date notifications to his people in a modern postcolonial setting are well presented via him. He gives serious lessons to the people as someone who is unable to get lessons from the events that turn a dynamic and newly liberated country into an upside-down world. In the first place, Chief the Honorable M. A. Nanga is "the most approachable politician in the country" (*AMP*[6] 1). He has thousands of followers and he is 'the man of the people'. He is a very influential figure and the peculiar approaches and mottos like "*Not what I have but what I do is my kingdom*" (*AMP* 2) deeply charm his people, and therefore the whole country is in awe of the leader and behind him (*AMP* 3). He used to be Odili's teacher and he had close interests in politics and the relations grew stronger and made him a distinguished politician with a good educational background. Achebe demonstrates that politics dominates the everyday life during the post-independence years. The Prime Minister's declaration "[f]rom today we must watch and guard our hard-won freedom jealousy. Never again must we entrust our destiny and the destiny of Africa to the hybrid class of Western-educated and snobbish intellectuals who will not hesitate to sell their mothers for a mess of pottage..." (*AMP* 5) sums up the policies of the era, yet nothing proceeded as planned. Thus, Achebe tries to demonstrate the way to

[6] *AMP* is employed to refer to *A Man of the People* in this study.

the people just to differentiate the realities from the fallacies. Odili overhears a minister turned from teaching to politics, just like Nanga, uttering these words: "Sometimes I use to regret ever leaving the teaching field. Although I am a minister today I can swear to God that I am not as happy as when I was a teacher" (*AMP* 8). Achebe implies that something is wrong with the early independent years. The ministers, the future of the country, are seen as servants and maybe even puppets. In this case, the term independence gets into a problematic shape and Achebe wants his people to question those years. The motto "*Do the right and shame the Devil*" (*AMP* 10) needs to be paraphrased better. There comes a need to question what the right thing is or who the devil is? As long as there is a saying or concept like "national cake" (*AMP* 11) among the leaders, which promotes abusing power and signals corruption, there must be an unfair execution of justice and social order among the citizens.

As in *My Nigeria: Five Decades of Independence* Cunliffe-Jones simply defines, "[c]orruption means that the money earned by the state does not go to education, health care, roads, or bridges. Hundreds of billions of dollars have been squandered or stolen ..." (130-31). Regarding the corruption issue, he shows that it is one of the most serious problems in the whole of the Nigerian states across the country and reveals the major reason: "The corruption of politics by oil ... has spread throughout Nigeria. ... Oil money is what politicians across Nigeria fight for. It washes around Abuja, the capital. It floods through the 36 states of north and south ... [and] ... the 774 local governments spread right across the nation" (135). It is seen that the country is dragged by corruption everywhere. On this matter, Cunliffe-Jones provides the reader with the shocking consequence of the problem with numbers: "Since independence, the total stolen or squandered by Nigeria's leaders stand at more than $350 billion, the country's former corruption fighter Nuhu Ribadu said in 2006, and no one since has challenged that figure. But whatever the numbers, ... [t]he true cost of corruption is added up in the lives ruined and lives lost and the wider damage wrought" (150). In this sense, he talks on behalf of the Nigerians: "As Nigerians say, the country's experience of corruption is far from unique in the world. It is just more extreme than most" (159).

In an incredible analogy with these real figures concerning the ills of the postcolonial Nigerian history, in *A Man of the People* Achebe hints that corruption is

inevitable and likely to bring about a national disaster soon. "A[nother] common saying in the country after [i]ndependence was that it didn't matter *what* you knew but *who* you knew" (*AMP* 15). Achebe shows that nothing is as people desired in the early independence years. Amidst the problems, the politicians like Nanga are in the roles of savior of the nation. When everything, from top to bottom, was purely colonized, the officials even tried to promote "*OHMS*" (our home made products) policies (*AMP* 32). Achebe purposefully uses this to create an ironical case. Yet, another irony is Nanga's notification to Odili: "If anybody comes to you and wants to make you minister, run away. True" (*AMP* 32). Paradoxically, a 'Man of the People' is not even aware of the responsibilities he is holding as a reputable leader and he leads the country into a further mess in a neo-colonial age. As Woddis stressed previously in *Introduction to Neo-Colonialism*, neo-colonialism is like a "dying animal" yet it can be "vicious and dangerous" (58). In this sense, even though it just appears to be form giving to colonial life with changing circumstances, it could give rise to painful days ahead. Similarly, Achebe reveals himself in this way and points at the corruption and mismanagement in politics. What is more, Nanga's wife, Mrs. Nanga confesses that "[a]ny woman who marries a minister has married worse than a night-watchman" (*AMP* 32). By this way, Achebe also provides different voices to justify the darkness of the day and ills of the rulers in pure irony dominating the novel. As it is stated in the novel, "[a] man who has just come in from the rain and dried his body and put on dry clothes is more reluctant to go out again than another who has been indoors all the time" (*AMP* 33). Hereby, the trouble with Nanga and Nigeria is well professed as follows:

> The trouble with our new nation - as I saw it then lying on the bed - was that none of us had been indoors long enough to be able to say 'To hell with it'. We had all been in the rain together until yesterday. Then a handful of us - the smart and the lucky and hardly ever the best - had scrambled for the shelter our former rulers left, and had taken it over and barricaded themselves in. And from within they sought to persuade the rest through numerous loudspeakers ... . (*AMP* 33)

It appears that independence paved the way for unanticipated troubles and there exists no prospect of unity. What is worse, the division among the people forms a more

serious posture. The nation was still *'no longer at ease'*, and it is in a more alarming level this time. Not surprisingly, the country transforms from 'a country of *the* people' into 'a county of *a* man'. "I don't care if you respect me or not, but our people have a saying that if you respect today's king others will respect you when your turn comes..." states Nanga (*AMP* 57) and justifies how the destiny of the nation is in the hands of 'A' man and the personal interests are priviliged regardless of the the welfare of the public. What is more, following a scene where Nanga cheats on Odili, Odili's rages with the words "What a country! You call yourself Minister of Culture. God help us" (*AMP* 66) frankly reveals the moral and cultural exploitation and corruption in a deep sense, too. In other words, polygamist Nanga keeps destroying personal lives as well. Everything was so out of control that "the country was on the verge of chaos. The Trade Unions and the Civil Service Union made loud noises and gave notice of nation-wide strikes. The shops closed for fear of looting. The Governor-General according to rumor called on the Prime Minister to resign which he finally got round to doing three weeks later" (*AMP* 91). That is, scandals were causing general depression in the country (*AMP* 92). What is worse, violent groups like Nanga's Youth Vanguard were emerging and terrorizing the non-established order in the post-independence years. Nanga was doing whatever he could do and he manipulated the media for his personal gains to overcome the turmoil he had triggered. The media was campaigning for Nanga to restore his image and cover the wrong policies (*AMP* 122).

In addition to such gloomy political atmosphere, Odili, presenting the opposite wing in politics, makes Nanga feel further uneasy; and in this way, Achebe displays striking dichotomies to voice the realities of the postcolonial era. In one of his campaign meetings, which Odili attended disguised but recognized soon, for the elections, Nanga's manners and talk in public as to Odili signals an imminent end frankly:

> I hear some people asking who is he: I will tell you. He was once my pupil. I thought him ABC and I called him to my house to arrange for him to go to England. Yes, I take the blame; he did not just smell his hand one morning and go to my house - I called him. Anyone who wants to may blame me. He even tried to take a girl on whose head I had put the full bride-price and many other expenses - and who according to our

> custom is wife - this girls here ... Odili the great! So you have come to seek me out again. You are very brave; or have you come to seek Edna, eh? ... My people, this is the boy who wants to take my seat. This is the boy who is thrusting his finger into my eye. (*AMP* 128-129)

Nanga's struggles and lies to depict Odili as a traitor further aggravate the tension, and accordingly violence takes place on stage. Unfortunately, Achebe intends to show that such violent and antagonistic atmosphere dominated the country then, and the reasons lying behind should be uncovered for the welfare of the people. In short, the story of Nanga and these grieving memories in the promising days of independence are of didactic purposes for Nigeria. Therefore, with *A Man,* Nanga, *of the People*, Achebe draws a noteworthy figure mirroring the facts of postcolonial Nigeria in a neo-colonial age to ponder on, and thus avoid the ills and troubles of the modern day Nigeria. It should be hard to manage a newly-independent state without a nation; the 'Nigerian Nation' needs to be built urgently. As Benedict Anderson argues, however, nationalism has no grand thinkers (5). To put it in another way, there exists a need to fill in this emptiness to lead the communities. In this respect, once more, Achebe appears to achieve another great mission to this end.

On the other hand, it should not be easy to stand against the *'man of the people*', yet Achebe presents Odili as a devout opposing figure with both strengths and flaws leaving room for questioning and hope. Odili is also the one to take and give lessons simultaneously, and Achebe's intentional focus on the colonized versus each other scheme is clarified and better observed when looked into Odili with further details. Briefly, he used to be one of Nanga's favourite students 16 years ago (*AMP* 2), but now they are at odds with one another. During those school years, Odili was an activist and part of the Student Branch of the People's Organization Party (*AMP* 3). As narrator, the eye of an activist provides more transparent events to critically observe or to be part of. Following his university education, which was a rare chance then, he gets a job offer in the civil service and suddenly Odili turns into a national hero. However, he opts for the teaching post in the bush rather than being a part of corrupted civil service in the centre (*AMP* 15). It is quite unusual that a colonized person might get a post that is related to

the ruling of the society. In this way, Achebe shows how the situation of the colonized in a postcolonial country has changed after the longstanding colonial years.

Irrespective of the so-called development in the aftermath of independence years, Achebe also demonstrates that nothing has been achieved as intended yet. Following the longstanding active colonial days back in history, independence needs careful consideration and everyone should avoid the traps and take lessons for a more consistent period of governance. Everything is new and the age itself is a huge challenge for Odili as well. He clarifies the period saying "[f]or a person like me who simply couldn't stood to lick any Big Man's boots it created a big problem" (*AMP* 15). It is seen that it is a problematic period and he appears to be part of the problem. What Achebe implies is that all the panorama of the country is the portrayal of the so-called freedom. As long as any person is dependent on another and s/he has to lick someone's boots, there is no chance of achieving an independence in a real sense. Therefore, it is not surprising that Odili is not ready to obey Nanga at all. The son of a District Interpreter, Odili holds a passion for education and change for the better however hard the corrupt world is around himself. In this sense, he does not seem to get on well with his father on the grounds that "he would tell [him] for the hundredth time to leave 'this foolish teaching', and look for a decent job in the government and buy [himself] a car" (*AMP* 28). Achebe demonstrates that the perception and expectations of the colonized are in complete contrast with each other, which can be seen as a chance and moment to be manipulated yet again by the colonizer.

Considering the internal clashes driven by neo-colonial ploys and possible manipulations, Achebe demonstrates that there is still a lot to do and a long way to go. Right after the independence, everything just seems to get worse. Nigeria has to win against both the colonizer and the colonized at the same time. In this respect, Achebe's fourth novel is supposed to be more optimistic yet the narrator's, Odili's, perspective help Achebe's people see the danger and get better prepared against any possible impediments. During his short visit to Nanga, Odili had a better chance to see the striking realities of the country:

> From the day a few years before when I had left Parliament depressed and aggrieved, I had felt, like so many other educated citizens of our

> country, that things were going seriously wrong without being able to say just how. We complained about our country's lack of dynamism and abdication of the leadership to which it was entitled in the continent, or so we thought. We listened to whispers of scandalous deals in high places - sometimes involving sums of money that I for one didn't believe existed in the country. But there was really no hard kernel of fact to get one's teeth into. But sitting at Chief Nanga's feet I received enlightenment; many things began to crystallize out of the mist - some of the emergent forms were not nearly as ugly as I had suspected but many seemed much worse. (*AMP* 35)

The closer Odili got to Nanga, the further insight he got into the postcolonial condition of Nigeria: Nanga's life is the micro form of the country and Odili is exposed to this world since his early childhood. Achebe draws a journey with Odili and reflects a good story of continuous change; he illustrates that Odili's mind seems to be filled with the paradoxes and ironies accounting for the future of the country.

For all the flaws, Odili was one of Achebe's inner voices and he "had ambitions to write a novel about the coming of the first white men to [his] district" (*AMP* 53). Achebe wants him to be the past, present and future, that is, hope for the country. Thus, as Odili claims, he "will have the last laugh" (*AMP* 65), and he will not walk alone. Going hand in hand, Maxwell Kuamo, called Cool Max, is one of the comrades on the way to win a hard struggle, the fight against both the colonized and the colonizer in the background. Therefore, "a new political party [was] about to be born" (*AMP* 69). When the conditions of the colonizer fans like Odili's dad thinking "[they] should never have asked the white man to go" (*AMP* 74) are taken into consideration, Odili and Max has a mountain to climb, yet Achebe pictures them as the lights of the future. Independent yet not unified, Nigeria is still in serious trouble in Achebe's *A Man of the People*. In the first place, they are in need of "true nationalists" (*AMP* 75). Achebe gives a possible solution on the sly via the promising youth in the government and civil service. Odili is so dedicated that he takes some sort of Marxist stance by expressing they "had nothing to lose" (*AMP* 92) and "the quick transformation is the feature" (*AMP* 100) and future of the country. From the perspective of postcolonial theory and criticism, it could be

argued that Marxist stance might have some implications here. In *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory*, Williams and Chrissman previously highlighted that postcolonialism is also based on Marxism partly due to the subject matters it deals with such as cultural, material, political exploitation as well as economic concerns (2). Having a fellow with the same ideals and ideas makes Odili stronger than he used to be. Cherishing the hope inside, a new formation comes into existence eventually. At this point, Achebe's striking details show how he is involved in all during those years of high tension. "Max and some of his friends having watched with deepening disillusion the use to which [the] hard won freedom was being [used] by corrupt, mediocre politicians had decided to come together and launch the Common People's Convention" (*AMP* 70). Thereof eight young people had devoted roles and goals, which are most likely to be the actual implications of Achebe himself. As they stress, "[they] were either independent in this country or [they] are not" (*AMP* 72). Achebe puts forward such a group to signify the importance of consistency on the way to complete freedom. The first thing to do was "to drop cats among their pigeons here and there, stand aside and watch" (*AMP* 73). Achebe deliberately shows how intriguing those years were and Nanga is likely to encounter serious obstacles with such a counter movement. It is high time that "the intoxicating months of high hope soon after Independence" (*AMP* 73) were refreshed.

Following the pattern of the colonized vs. the colonized, Achebe's drawing both sides with sharp contrasts and the idea that "the coming elections was going to be a life and death fight" (*AMP* 90) foreshadow how gloomy the country's destiny would be, and this sums up the whole story and the reality. The country is on the threshold of huge chaos and everybody is so tense. Achebe keeps the tug and pull more and more especially throughout the latter part of the novel. Nanga's proponents are growing in intensity of their violent acts with slogans and placards "NANGAISM FOREVER: SAMALU IS TRAITOR" (*AMP* 103). Assuredly, Achebe is believed to be the man of anti-isms (Mezu 132). In this novel, he shows how any kind of -isms is not the solution at all but the deterioration of the probable welfare. More and more, Achebe further elaborates on Nanga's neo-colonized tactics and shows how the new phase of colonialism is still a dark, maybe even darker, face of the independence years: "Take

your money and take your scholarship to go and learn more book; the country needs experts like you. And leave the dirty game of politics to us who know how to play it" (*AMP* 109). Analysing the discourse of Nanga, colonial manipulation is the root of all problems and independence years were settled on the continuation of colonialism. The whites and their dirty tactics were everywhere across the country and Achebe proposes a national cleansing through Odili and his comrades. Odili's answer to Nanga's offer was clear: "It is NO in capital letters!" (*AMP* 109). That is to say, Achebe notifies that "filthy money" and rotten tactics were not to be the solution at all.

In search of a permanent solution in the course of such high tension years, Achebe does not leave Odili alone to clear up the path to nationhood. Besides Max, Eunice and some other voices were all campaigning counter movements and battling against the ploys of the colonizer. "Max's unprepared speech - or perhaps it was prepared in its broad outlines - was on the whole impressive. ... Max began by accusing the outgoing Government of all kinds of swindling and corruption. He gave instance after instance of how some of our leaders who were ash-mouthed paupers five years ago had become near-millionaires" (*AMP* 114). Surprisingly, Max, cannot resist taking some "filthy money" as well and Odili protests and becomes violently angry with Max. He has the pure intention to use it for a counter movement though: "Now you tell me how you propose to fight such a dirty war without soiling your hands a little" (*AMP* 117). On this critical issue, Achebe shows how serious the condition is. That is to say, even the fellows might trace different routes while trying to reach the same destination. In this way, the importance of a wholesome unity is underlined once more by Achebe. While Max tries to be a realist, Odili wants to keep being an idealist, and as for Achebe, he proposes to mingle the pros and omit the cons between these. Despite all, the country is in "genealogical cul-de-sac" (*AMP* 130), Odili is in hospital under arrest, Max was killed, Eunice was arrested (*AMP* 130-132) "and so a minor reign of terror began" (*AMP* 132) across the country. Such a novel with such chaotic events by Achebe necessiates a continuation of the story with further solutions in a critical way, and as an implication to this, Odili puts the situation forward with these lines:

> The people themselves had become even more cynical than their leaders and were apathetic into the bargain. 'Let them eat', was the people's

> opinion, 'After all when white men used to do all the eating did we commit suicide?' Of course not. And where is the all-powerful white man today? He came, he ate and he went. But we are still around. The important thing then is to say alive; if you do you will outlive your present annoyance. The great thing, as the old people have told us, is reminiscence; and only those who survive can have tomorrow. Your son may bring home your share. (*AMP* 133)

However, the result is "unruly mobs and private armies having tasted blood and power during the election had got out of hand and ruined their masters and employers. And they had no public reason whatever for doing it" (*AMP* 133). Achebe's such a dark ending was finalized with an event in parallel with the real history in Nigeria. That is, the struggles of complete independence had failed. Odili shares the moment of despair as follows: "the Army obliged us by staging a coup at that point and locking up every member of the Government. The rampaging bands of election thugs had caused so much unrest and dislocation that our young Army officers seized the opportunity to take over" (*AMP* 135). As for Nanga, he is reported to be arrested trying to escape by canoe dressed like a fisherman. Despite all, Odili foresees further gloomy scenarios as he believes that "a coup might be followed by a counter coup" (*AMP* 136). Though declining, everyone kept their existing hopes and went on fighting. Achebe wants to underline that hopes never cease to generate. Odili struggles to benefit from all those early independence year occurrences, and has some new expectations and objectives in life such as "to release Eunice from jail and pronounce Max a Hero of the Revolution" (*AMP* 136). All in all, "eat-and-let-it-eat regime" (*AMP* 137) is to be shaken and Achebe's legendary ending through the eyes of the colonized points at new actions to take and build up the necessary consciousness for peace accordingly.

The reason for providing such many details regarding the postcolonial panorama could be explained on the grounds that the situation is indeed an emergency and the pattern of the colonized as opposed to the colonized is not a solution at all. Coups, civil wars and bloodshed across the country cannot be the answer to the emergency. Indeed, as the vague conclusion of the novel, among the most critical events of the novel regarding the colonized is the military coup. To illustrate, the novel has a

somehow problematic ending and leaves so many questions unanswered. In such a critical age, it is not even clear whether Achebe proposes a solution or notifies his people. In this regard, Njoku comments on the vague resolution of the novel with these words summarizing the series of all the events:

> *A Man of the People* ends in a confusion, a diastor, or simply, it ends 'in the confusion of political melodrama', while Odili, the narrator, is in the hospital. Max, Odili's associate, is killed by an election jeep belonging to Chief Koko, one of Chief Nanga's ministerial associates. Chief Koko is, in turn, shot and killed by Eunice, Max's girlfriend. Subsequently, a heavy fighting breaks out between the bodyguards. Chief Nanga tries to disband his private army, but all in vain. Nanga's private army goes on a rampage. A state of anarchy follows. In this confused state of things, the Prime minister aggravates the situation by reappointing Chief Nanga back to the cabinet office as Minister of Culture. The thuggery becomes so extreme that the army had to step in to stage a coup d'état. (101)

As a result of the coup, Achebe presents an unchanged society, and insecure atmosphere persists to a great extent. Therefore, it might be argued that Achebe is not trying to provide a solution to the colonized with such an ending. Achebe suggests that liberation in real terms has nothing to do with deposing the leaders; rather, it should be a process of maturation and social transformation. In *Chinua Achebe*, Ravenscroft comments on this issue with these words: "[i]n concluding a military coup as the climax to the political chaos, Achebe is far from suggesting a practical remedy, for he treats it simply as another self-interested action in the larger national 'game'" (36).

Looking through the perspective of postcolonial criticism on to the issue, as a matter of fact, the military steps taken in Nigeria had roots in colonial times. For instance, in *A History of Nigeria* Falola and Heaton remark that, in the early colonization period when Nigeria was not Nigeria as a country yet, "[f]rom Lagos the British made their way inland, slowly bringing Yoruba land under British rule. The first major coup in the hinterland occurred in 1886, when the British intervened to end the arduous Ekitiparapo War between Ibadan and the alliance of Ekiti, Ijesa, Egba, Ijebu, and Ife forces" (95). Intrinsically, the coups have been "an exit or temporary relief"

strategy in both colonial and post-colonial Nigeria. Besides, to cite from the real history to justify and make sense of the impact of Achebe's resolution, the summary of these early dark years of the independence are depicted by Robert Johnson as follows:

> The discovery of oil and natural gas could have forged a greater unity in Nigeria, through prosperity, but after independence on 1 October 1960, the old fissures remained. In 1964, all sides accused the other election rigging, and in January 1966, the army of the eastern region staged a coup d'état in the west. This prompted a counter-coup by the north and the installation of a compromise president. However, massacres of Ibos pushed the eastern region to declare itself an independent state called Biafra in May 1967. Military rule continued after the three-year civil war and the country was divided into 19 regions. (194).

A coup is a universal phenomenon, and with this novel Achebe addresses all the colonized and leaves room for improvement. Setting out his novel in the serene independence years and ending it in political turmoil, Achebe draws a journey of the colonized alongside the breathtaking and didactic events in parallel with the real life occurrences not only to justify a colonial legacy but also to urge people to obtain real independence by reclaiming the national dignity.

All of Achebe's novels are woven with the binary oppositions as a natural consequence of colonial background in Nigeria, but it is *A Man of the People* that is centred around the colonized and internal binaries most. However, this does not show that Achebe is unable to deal with the colonized in this novel. Looking at Achebe's implications, the colonizer keep existing in the background. Referring to Ngugi, as Morrison states in *The Fiction of Chinua Achebe*, "[o]n the historical level, the novel mark[s] a break with the earlier texts, in the sense that this is the first time Achebe completely turns his back on the colonizers" (119). It should not be interpreted as turning his back to the colonizer; rather, Achebe seems to turn his face to the colonized this time. Considering the early years of independence, it is quite natural that Achebe takes the colonized more seriously than the colonizer. Yet, when glancing at all the previous novels, Killam highlights that "certain of the themes which were prominent in the earlier books are here completely re-interpreted, most noticeably what we have

called the 'colonial theme'" (85). In this new (p)age, neo-colonialism is felt to a great extent not only because of the existence of the British, but also the Americans in Nigeria. In this respect, the fourth novel welcomes a wider scale of the colonizers. An American couple, Jean and John, visits Nanga and ironically their role is to discuss how to improve Africa's image in America (*AMP* 40). Achebe tries to notify a more serious trouble here; the independence has its costs and the fight against colonialism has turned into the fight against neo-colonialism. In their discussion, it is heard that "America may not be perfect, but don't forget that [they] are the only powerful country in the entire history of the world, the only one, which had the power to conquer others and didn't do it" (*AMP* 40). The postcolonial threat here probably comes from the shift in the balance of power relations. Again in parallel with the real history, Achebe shows that the British imperialism is on the decline, yet its legacy is enriched with neo-colonialism by the Americans who has held the power to dominate in the post-war years and Cold War period. Just like in the colonial period, Africa was seen as the land to be divided and ruled in the course of the post-colonial period. Achebe's message is that nothing has changed with a false independence, and people had better wake up before there is another possible bloodshed across the country, Africa or even in any other colonized territories. The imperialism in the new form jeopardizes the serenity and unity of nations. By all means, it could be argued that *A Man of the People* is full of didactic messages to take and it promotes the necessity of a final chance to change in Achebe's literary journey.

Concisely, it is worth restressing that, constituting the fourth masterpiece among Achebe's novels, *A Man of the People* is home to both grief and hope. It is a work of art to reflect what was wrong and how it could be possible that almost everything went in that way. However, Achebe's handling of this novel is not pessimistic at all, and all he tries to do is to inject hope by outlining the series of lessons for his people to take. By means of fiction, the narrative strength, ironies and political sarcasm, the portrayal of the colonized as inner obstacles, the colonizer and the new colonial order in the fresh independence years were all top notch and in great paralellism with the colonial history of Nigeria. The threats of the new age provide guidence to the people striving for unity,

and Achebe undertakes the role of nation builder yet again. Regarding the scope of the novels, Killam comments on the universality and quality of the novel with these lines:

> *A Man of the People* attracted considerable attention when it was published because the military take-over described in the closing pages coincided with the military take-over in Nigeria in January, 1966, the month of the novel's publication. The novel had, and still has, topicality. There is no necessary correlation between topicality and art: often a novel achieves the status of art when it transcends the local and the particular. The closing paragraph of the book suggests a generalization about human experience which the events of the novel have dramatized, however local these events have been. (95)

All in all at a glance, whether it is political, economic, military, or social, the origin of all the problems appears to be related to the colonial background and the new colonial policies implemented by the British in post-colonial Nigeria. As a consequence of this colonial experience, Falola and Heaton draw all the attention to a major point with these lines: "The underlying cause of all the problems that Nigeria [has] experienced [since] 1960s ... is often called the 'national question'[:] What is Nigeria? Who are Nigerians?" (158). The answer was clear; Nigeria became a state without a nation. Just as the new hopes were perishing when the colonial years were overcome, 'things fell apart' again in the new colonial era of Nigeria. Despite all, Achebe expresses his ongoing enthusiasm to find a solution with these lines: "My generation had great expectations for our young nation. After the war, everything we had known before about Nigeria, all optimism, had to be rethought. The worst had happened, and we were now forced into reorganizing out thinking, expectations, and hopes" (*There Was a Country* 227). Nevertheless, Nigeria became synonymous with coups, civil wars and corruption by all means. During the span of various military regimes, Nigeria was unable to develop and overcome its problems by completing a unified body with a national identity in a real sense. In an interview condcuted by Ernest and Pat Emenyonu in 1972, Achebe reveals how the topics and focus of his works may change yet the messages are sent to the common recipient, either the colonizer as the Western world as a whole or the colonized as the subaltern subjects of the postcolonial nations. In

response to the question "'[i]n *A Man of the People' would you say anything different about the masses whom you described as "the real culprits?*"', Achebe leaves a final comment as follows:

> No, I would not change at all. The masses have not changed. If I were writing the book today, the setting would be different. The charming thing about Africa is that yesterday is so different from today already, and this creates a problem for writers because some of the problems you discuss are no longer problems. Things have moved so quickly. For example, *A Man of the People* with today's, [1970s], setting would feature the army instead of politicians. But the masses would be as cynical ... The whole point of being a leader is that, in spite of the cynicism or the despair of the masses, it is your job to do something for them. (Lindfors, *Conversations* 43)

The implication here is that on the way to nationhood, when there is a serious need for change as opposed to colonialism, Achebe, as 'the real Man of the People', shows that he once more leads the masses to this end. Thus, while *A Man of the People* was supposed to trigger a change about the share of power relations democratically, the final step *Anthills of the Savannah* in Achebe's pentalogy covers the next period involving the army and the policies of the progressing age as a last chance to change things back eventually. Overall, once again through *A Man of the People*, it could be stated that Achebe's mastery in employing an ironical and satirical narrative to trace colonial history, exhibiting astonishingly realistic details of the neo-colonial age and drawing the characters fitting greatly in the age being described, enable him to reach the subaltern subjects for building a nation urgently. However, to this end, literally a permanent solution requires one final step to take collectively, and *Anthills of the Savannah* presents itself accordingly.

3.5. Postcolonial Period and Decolonization: *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987)

Embarking on a long journey with his novels that host optimism and promising days inside, Achebe eventually demonstrates the most recent contemporary days of Nigeria. He diligently presents the modern gloomy history of the postcolonial era to urge his people to search for light and eternal relief once again as a last resort. *Anthills*

of the Savannah is the final piece of the pentalogy, and Achebe successfully demonstrates how fiction could make an impact by creating awareness among the people of the postcolonial world today. The novel appearantly seems to be the continuation of the neo-colonial initiatives and a picturesque depiction of the postcolonial agonies dominant in the previous novel *A Man of the People*. Rather than being a novelist who focuses on destructive impact of colonialism on nationhood as in the earlier four novels so far, Achebe turns into a teacher helping evaluate the current conditions across the country and explore the long-desired days of independence in *Anthills of the Savannah*. He tries to show what kind of responsibilities the people of Africa possess in a postcolonial age and how they are expected to perform their duties. Having similar concerns with *A Man of the People*, the novel appears to be a political and ideological work. Extending the structural time sequence, Achebe deals with further issues such as corruption, strict rule, military regime, leaders, materialism, and investigation into new optimism. As the last step of the five novels, it is built on a positive future and solution surrounded by political and cultural dilemmas in that the novel can be treated as the study of mismanagement, governmental ir/responsibilities, leadership and manipulated atmosphere far from unity. In the interview "Achebe and the Bruised Heart of Africa" (1987) conducted by Chris Searle, Achebe confirms that neocolonialism is an important theme in the work and defines it as "a portmanteau word for all kinds of illnesses; it's a real thing, it's colonialism re-grouping and coming back using local jokers as leaders" (Lindfors, *Conversations with Chinua Achebe* 158). What is clear is that colonialism is still, as has always been, at the heart of Achebe's final novel and thus is the major focus of his chronicle in general. Throughout the journey with his novels, Achebe had always believed in the power of possible mechanisms as opposed to the dark colonial history and its traces. In this sense, Ojinmah states that the novel "encapsulates both Achebe's original views and concepts on the role of the artist in African societies, as contained in his earlier fictions and essays, his disillusionment and despair at what we have made of independence, but most importantly, it propounds a remedy for what he has come to see as a political impasse" (84).

Anthills of the Savannah is a clear extension of the earlier novels and it appears to be the conclusion, the expected resolution of Achebe's whole argument in his

pentalogy. It is a novel of the 1980s and this means that Achebe seems to have stopped writing for almost twenty years full of political turmoil, military coups and a big civil war, the Biafran War. However, it is known that Achebe kept on thinking how to get rid of the colonial ties and liberate his nation by addressing social ills in Nigeria throughout those painful years. In the interview conducted by Jane Wilkinson in 1987, Achebe verifies that all his novels are related to one another by commenting on his fifth one as follows:

> What I am trying to do is look at the story of Africa in the modern world, looking at it from different angles, according to what's happening at the time, according to what I've just been through, according to what I have just learned, or even just to be different from the way I looked at previously ... and yes, I think [the novel] projects more explicitly into the future, in the sense that it ends specifically with the birth of a new generation and with the possibility of some of the survivors picking up something from the wreck of their recent past that may help them as they make their way into the future. (Lindfors, *Conversations* 145)

Unlike the earlier works, Achebe voices multiple perspectives with his major characters and tries to provide an ultimate solution. Each of the main characters - Sam the Excellency, Chris, Ikem and Beatrice - are involved in the story with their own angles and inner voices. They recount the roles of victims and victimizers amid the postcolonial tensions, and thus, the reader has a chance to decide on the right path. "Indeed, in trying to map out new spaces for the nation, Achebe's main characters have to interrogate the past they shared, must often revise the meaning of that past in order to explain the choices they have made in the present" (Gikandi 129).

Glancing at the context of the novel, in the background, Achebe depicts a failed state and an alternative state. Under such circumstances, it can be argued that the major voices in the foreground serve to figure out the proper nature of nationhood. Sam the dictator, Chris the Minister for Information, Ikem the Editor of National Gazette, and Beatrice the Senior Assistant Secretary in the Ministry of Finance are all graduates of London University. Previously, as Anderson emphasized in *Imagined Communties* (39, 116), education is the means of gaining consciousness and Achebe believes that it is a

prerequisite for becoming an ideal nation. Achebe's having intelligentsia in the foreground is not a random issue. They are brilliant intellectuals of the time covered in the novel, but they all face alienation at home. They are trapped in the ruler and ruled relationships, a political crisis, and military regime, and thus struggle to find the proper way for the national salvation. The characters know each other well and share a common past. Sam is the Sandhurst-trained military head of the state while Christopher Oriko is Sam's childhood friend and a commissioner of information in Sam's cabinet; Ikem Osodi is the editor of the goverment-owned National Gazette and Sam's friend, and Beatrice Okoh having an affair with Chris is a higher ranking government official. From the perspective of postcolonial theory and criticism, all the characters are clear representations of a hybrid culture. They are all in-between characters in Bhabha's terms, and the novel is woven in-between the relations of these voices. In this respect, Sallah and Okonjo-Iweala state that "since the novel is set in the politically and economically complex period of the 1980s, Achebe is not satisfied with one person['s] narrative, employs a cross-section of perspectives" (118). Though the setting, time and place, seems fictional, Innes puts forward compelling explanations on this matter:

> *A Man of the People* ends with a military coup; *Anthills of the Savannah* begins after a coup has taken place - and ends with another. But the situation and mood is that of Africa - more precisely West Africa - in the 1980s rather than the 1960s, for the easy optimism and the more vulnerably youthful cynicism which characterized those early years of a deeply diseased society and a more profound determination to understand and cure the illnesses. ... [And] Kangan is a very thinly disguised Nigeria, although, as the name suggests, its politics, its problems, and its political/literary debates are applicable also to Ghana, the Cameroon, and a number of other African states. (*Chinua Achebe* 151-152)

As a matter of fact, Achebe confesses that he decided not to call the country Nigeria "to have the possibility of applicable elsewhere. ... This in itself becomes a metaphor on a big scale, not just for one country but for a whole continent" (Lindfors, *Conversations* 148).

Just like he did in the previous novels, once more, it can be argued that Achebe adresses the whole postcolonial world and Africa rather than just Nigeria in his final novel. In *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, Ashcroft et al. resemble postcolonial written texts to social institutions (298); and this time with *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe creates the largest social institution ever. In this respect, as argued in "Postmodernism or Post-colonialism Today" by Simon During, postcolonial theory is a need for the colonized societies worldwide (125). It is a need for the victims of imperialism, that is, it is a need for subalterns. Postcolonial texts help construct healthy identities. In this respect, *Anthills of the Savannah* is an impeccable postcolonial novel with critical functions inside for the people at large. In addition, Gagiano also notes that, similar to *A Man of the People*, *Anthills of the Savannah* is also a prophetic work and it is "the study of power by terror. It is the author's most inclusive analysis of a modern authoritarian African state and the society that it harms and frightens" (100). In this sense, the novel is the last wake up call to be able to keep track of the suggested path. In spite of the long standing colonial years and the neo-colonial phase as well as the internal clashes dominated by the external forces, Achebe displays a great commitment to the future of his country with *Anthills of the Savannah*. Through elaborated narrative codes to decipher and a meticulous focus on the depiction of the colonized characters trying to free themselves from imperial constraints and ploys, he draws an unprecedented luminary portrait including yet again the historical details in alignment with the contemporary days of Nigeria and Africa in general.

Considering Achebe's responsive style as a postcolonial writer, despite displaying various analogies with the earlier novels, Achebe's narrative *Anthills of the Savannah* does not depict the past and today, but this time the future. In this respect, Achebe uses the last chance to achieve his longstanding ideals addressing the postcolonial identities via his distinctive narrative power. In *Colonial & Postcolonial Literature* Boehmer argues that postcolonial writing is nationalist writing with the functions of controlling, self making, and form giving (196). Indeed, Fanon also maintains in "National Culture" that postcolonial literature is a literature of combat for national consciousness, and it is the will to liberty (155). Thus, Achebe undertakes the greatest responsibility so far. The source of the textual strength, in the first place, comes

from its multiple narrative style. Achebe hosts various narrators so that there could be more eyewitnesses to judge the day and the existing troubles. The same scenario is evaluated by different voices and accordingly the reality is expected to be uncovered. In this way, the national spirit could be awakened and the path to a promising future could be eluminated on. In *Reading Chinua Achebe*, Gikandi comments on the novel with these words by referring to the narrators: "Although the narratives of the three characters are concerned with common themes - the condition of the nation, issues of power and domination, the failure of national consciousness - their approach to these themes is distinctive" (140). It seems that Achebe's deliberate use of multiple major voices serve the understanding of the novel from different perspectives to a great extent and they all contribute to the construction of the re-emerging nations like Nigeria by presenting possible solutions. While Sam poses threats to the nation itself, Ikem and Chris represent the struggles to unite as a nation. In addition to these voices, "in his detailed representation of Beatrice, as both narrator and character, Achebe also seeks to narrate a salvational perspective" (Gikandi 145). In this very last piece of the pentalogy, Achebe's narrative presenting Beatrice to find the truth is of paramount significance. To clarify, Gikandi further argues that "[w]hile Chris and Ikem were engaged in retrospective narratives which would end with their silence, [Beatrice] begins from the moment of silence and looks toward the future" (146). Apparently, each narrator is a precious component of Achebe's narration and they are the embodiment of distinctive ideals signifying Achebe's thoughts. By giving a chance to these multiple perspectives to express their voice, Achebe distances himself to provide the reader with more insight through the inner judgements of the major characters.

Apart from the variety of perspectives to reveal the alternative notions, Achebe draws attention to a couple more issues as part of his narrative. Once more, the matter of language is profoundly highlighted. Achebe provides liguistic diversity in his style and the variety of language forms creates the rich texture of the novel. However, Achebe introduces the possibility of disintegration behind this richness at the same time. In this respect, Achebe's employing such heterogeneous discourse could yield clues as to the grounds of troubles in national unity. While Pidgin seems to be the dominant language,

the variety of languages urge Achebe to signal the loss of a crucial element binding the nation together.

Travelling deep into the novel, Achebe also makes use of storytelling to add sublayers to his major argument. In a reply to the question why does Achebe find it necessary to make the story such an issue, Gikandi underlines "the fact that works need commentaries on the way they should be read because their meanings are often censored by the other historical factors that accompany the invention of narrative", that is, the meta-commentary role in narration "might help us recover the hidden objects of our contemporary history" (131). In this respect, Achebe benefits from the stories to further elaborate on the facts to be transmitted for future days. To illustrate, as Khayyoom notes in *Chinua Achebe*, "the story of tortoise and the leopard ... suggests the struggle of the people of Abazon against the repressive and tyrannical military regime of Kangan and inspires a section of the elite like Ikem to become conscious of their role and 'higher responsibility' in changing the set up and remoulding the society" (31). In other words, having symbolic values, the stories in Achebe's narration seem to serve to fulfill his ideals to transform postcolonial days and guide his people onto their ultimate path; that is, they accordingly help Achebe create national consciousness.

Furthermore, keen on poetry and poetic language, Achebe also involves verse style in *Anthills of the Savannah*, and Ikem's poem 'Hymn to the Sun' includes significant issues to be touched on by Achebe. In *Reading Chinua Achebe*, Gikandi argues that the use of poems in the novel "is a sustained lament for the death of the nation and the catastrophe that has come over its people" (137). References to national feelings, such as Achebe's in each narrative, are directly related to his overall mission to reconstruct his beloved country and stand strong. Reinforcing his prime mission, last but not least, myths and symbols in this final novel are an indispensible part of the rebuilding process as well. As Khayyoom explains, "[i]n *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe in chapter eight uses the myth of Idemili and incarnates woman as the daughter of Idemili, to uphold women dignity and significance and place in the present politics and power structure and assign them a greater role in keeping peace and social morality" (93). Magnifying the role of women in the novel, Achebe seeks for a complete unification. He merges the myths and symbols with historical facts to provide

sound steps for all. The greatest symbol of the novel, the title itself, involves serious implied connotations. The importance of the anthills of the savannah is emphasized by Achebe himself in an interview with Jane Wilkinson (1987) as follows:

> If you go to the savannah country, after a fire you will see that this is really all that's left standing, these very interesting structures. So the people say these are the remnants, these are the survivors. When the rains come, the new grasses will grow - there's no problem there - but will they have a memory? There's no way they can know about the fire of last year because they were not there and they're likely to think that the world began with them, that the world is always green. (Lindfors, *Conversations* 148)

The structures symbolize the ties of the day connecting the past to the future and Achebe implies the value of holding on to the future. In *Achebe, Head, Marechera: On Power and Change in Africa,* Gagiano also sees the title as the central symbol of the novel: "The anthills indicate the stubborn earth; the quality of endurance that resists the assaults of power and its fierceness ... Since they are small pillars of earth, these anthills call to mind the power and wonder of metaphor and of hope" (105). Considering the symbolic implications of the title, it could be seen as the driving force of the novel to present Achebe's resolution behind the enriched optimism towards a consistent bright future. In this way, employing a rich and heterogenous narrative, Achebe seems to defy the alienated past and injects hope within the frame of a realistic panaroma.

Illustrating a postcolonial scenery, Achebe deals with the recent history of the country with incredible accuracy. The dramatic situation of the postcolonial age is hinted at in the very opening pages of the novel. If there is an issue to "swallow and digest" (*AS*[7] 1), it is apparent that the people are on the brink of yet another turmoil just like at the very end of *A Man of the People*. These postcolonial days are just part of the colonial days in the past and continuation of "a game that began innocently enough and then went suddenly strange and poisonous" (*AS* 2). Achebe stresses that the change is quite negative. Although it is noted that it is "only a passing phase", the portrait is a

[7] *AS* is employed to refer to *Anthills of the Savannah* in this study.

painful one. The regime and the side effects are implied saliently: "And now the times had come round again out of storyland. Perhaps not as bad as the first times, yet" (*AS* 30). In contemporary Nigeria, the colonial days are far away, but the extension of them keep influencing the country deeply. As Achebe's each novel turns into a factual documentation from fiction, the storyland becomes a documentary in service of the postcolonial people. The tense atmosphere is fed by violence across the country Kangan, and it is known that violence is the inheritance of colonial rule and modern day tensions. However, as one hymn verse summarizes the condition, "the worst threat from men of hell [m]ay not be their actions cruel[.] Far worse that [the colonized] learn their way [a]nd behave more fierce than [the colonizer]" (*AS* 39). From the perspective of postcolonial criticism, as has been stressed previously, hybridity is a postcolonial condition and mimicry dominating the society can be threatening when manipulated. That is to say, unable to form the ideal identites and not being aware of the traits copied from the colonizer, they mirror the actions of the white man. It is seen that danger comes from inside and internal threats as replicas of the colonialist mind pose serious menaces against the serenity of the country. If it is a time when "public executions were such a popular sport" (*AS* 39), the situation seems much more than just being serious. It is known that soldier-turned politicians are the rulers of the country and the approaches fed by their background are moving people further into troubles. The destinies of post-colonial African countries are determined by such false leaders. "[T]wo people starting off even as identical twins in the morning might quite easily find themselves in the evening one as President shitting on the heads of the people and the other a night man carrying the people's shit in buckets on his head" (*AS* 168). Therefore, Achebe intends to illustrate that even after the independence, nothing went right and failures just followed one another.

As for the main body of the fiction, when the facts of the day and the fiction of Achebe are compared and contrasted, Achebe's astonishing attachment to reality presents a much clearer picture of the situation. Nigeria has failed to find the right way to govern themselves as both the military and civilian rulers have been the bearer of disease in the blood vessels of society. That is to say, as Falola and Heaton underline in *A History of Nigeria*, "[m]ilitary regimes have been every bit as corrupt as civilian

regimes as well. ... For much of Nigeria's post-independence history, the massive inflow of oil revenues and external loans has facilitated the corrupt and irresponsible management of public funds that has characterized both civilian and military governments" (9). This is one of the most serious problems in Achebe's eyes both in his fictional and non-fictional works. In *There Was a Country*, he reveals the astounding fact that corruption has gotten worse and worse in the post-colonial period of the country (249). To highlight this unpleasant outcome, Achebe applies facts provided by the authorities: "The World Bank recently released numbers indicating that about $400 billion, ... approximately the gross domestic products of Norway and of Sweden ..., has pilfered from Nigeria's treasury since the independence. ... In other words, Nigeria's corrupt ruling class stole the equivalent of the entire economy of a European country in four decades!" (249). Today, however, in Achebe's evaluation of post-colonial Nigeria in the course of the neo-colonial period, the solution lies basically in the development of the leaders (253). In a striking analogy with this historical context, the common source of all problems and the broadest picture of the existing atmosphere dominating *Anthills of the Savannah* is put into words as follows:

> The prime failure of this government began to take on a clearer meaning ... It can't be the massive corruption though its scale and pervasiveness are truly intolerable; it isn't the subservience to foreign manipulation, degrading as it is; it isn't even this second-class, hand-me-down capitalism, ludicrous and doomed; nor is it the damnable shooting of striking railway-workers and demonstrating students and the destruction and banning thereafter of independent unions and cooperatives. It is the failure of our rulers to re-establish vital inner links with the poor and dispossessed of this country, with the bruised heart that throbs painfully at the core of the nation's being. (*AS* 130-31)

Similar to the stance in *A Man of the People*, Achebe magnifies various troubles among which is the main problem of leaders ruling the country. Either to notify the dangers or to suggest a plausible route to follow as a solution, he handles with the identities of the postcolonial age meticulously. Unlike the characterization scheme in the previous novels, Achebe in *Anthills of the Savannah*, neither primarily focuses on the colonized

as opposed to the colonizer pattern, nor the colonized vs. the colonized organization; rather, he presents a brilliantly realistic atmosphere in which different colonized voices embody distinct characteristics and roles completing each other. In Achebe's portrayal of the major colonized characters, still, the internal clashes become apparent and various angles with compelling implications are suggested in a mastery of coherence.

What Achebe focuses on at the heart of the novel is the problematic ruling and related problems centering around Sam and his associates, and they are well performed enough to create a consciousness of being self-devoted to the welfare and future of the country. Apparently, Achebe is quite critical of the rulers on the basis that "[d]ays are good or bad ... now according to how His Excellency gets out of bed in the morning" (*AS* 2). One of the major problems of the living in the post-colonial age is that personal traits and moods are likely to cost heavily for the whole community; that is in this case, the agenda of the rulers might easily be turned into the unfortunate destiny of the common people. This is one of the reasons why Achebe represents the public as the absolute source of power, and thus the army "find[s] the unarmed civilians such a threat" (*AS* 12) and there is "no other explanation for [Excellency's] quite irrational and excessive fear of demonstrations" (*AS* 12). Surprisingly, Sam sees the colonial powers as part of his power and even he lies to the public demanding a meeting with him: "Find some nice words to say to them. Tell them we are tied up at this moment with very important matters of state. You know that kind of stuff ... Tell them, if you like, that I am on the telephone with the President of United States of America or the queen of England. Peasants are impressed by that kind of thing, you know" (*AS* 16). Achebe demonstrates that post-colonial age is partly the extension of a colonial era, and the inherited ties enlarges the gap between the rulers and the public, which jeopardizes the idea of a unified nation. The rebellions in Abazon province constitute a clear instance to this since the Abazonian people there "were the only ones whose Leader of Thought failed to return a clear mandate to [the] Excellency" (*AS* 17). The modern day country is shaken by the misrule and is manipulated by diversity just like the pre- and post-independence days. However, nothing is broadcasted on TV; and besides media, the strict rule dominates all areas of life.

All the same, "to say that Sam was never bright is not to suggest that he was a dunce at any time in the past or that he is one now. His major flaw was that all he ever wanted was to do what was expected of him especially by the English whom he admired sometimes to the point of foolishness" (*AS* 44-45). He is the embodiment of a complete puppet. Achebe implies the colonial inheritance and its destructive force once more with the reflection of such plagued rulers. The fascination of the British ways provide no fruitful results and Sam's imitation of the English is a serious threat as "a budding dictator might choose models far worse than the English gentlemen of leisure" (*AS* 47). In this respect, from a postcolonial perspective, Sam displays an outstanding example of mimicry and reveals himself to be purely a hybrid identity. This seems like the portrait of post-colonial days in full sense and Achebe wants to underline the major points to guard his people against the likely menaces. To illustrate the failure of Sam's rule properly, following Chris's resignation notice, Sam expresses how serious the postcolonial situation is in the country: "Resignation! Ha ha ha ha ha. Where do you think you are? Westminster or Washington DC? Come on! This is a military government in a backward West African State called Kangan" (*AS* 133). It is apparent that any African nation with military regime fed by colonial inheritance is the possible implication here and there needs to be a solution to overcome these contemporary dark days. As a result, the more suppression goes on, the further the military government gets into crisis; and Achebe signals a major malady of the contemporary life through the representation of 'The Excellency'. According to Bhabha, hybridity could be seen as the act of reconsidering the negative aspects of colonialism and colonial identity (*The Location of Culture* 159); and as for Ashcroft et al., development of hybridity depends on the qualities such as linguistic, racial, religious, cultural and political (*Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* 123). In this respect, Achebe, as a postcolonial writer, displays a great instance of both mimicry and hybridity via Sam the Excellency.

Among the major voices of the age, Chris is another colonized who is transparently characterized by Achebe to convey the underlying messages of the novel from a different angle. Achebe's characterization of Chris presents significant details regarding the ideal identity to stand upright in a post-colonial world, and thus Chris sets a great example through his personal experiences. In *Achebe and the Politics of*

Representation, Ogede discusses that "[p]erhaps the melodramatic portrayal of Chris shows that in *Anthills of the Savannah* Achebe does not see creative writing's value as residing primarily in its aesthetic considerations, but rather in its ideological significance. The example of committed literature is in its message, which should assist the liberation movement" (94). Furthermore, in *Hopes and Impediments*, Achebe also puts a great emphasis on the fact that literature is a kinetic energy necessary for social transition and change (167). In this respect, it is clear that Chris is one of the ideological tools serving Achebe rather than constituting a literary function. Chris, as an inspired and enlightened entity, displays an influential development reflecting the change. Achebe's initial portrayal begins with a character who is opportunist enough to harm people around. Even the Excellency's words signify the inappropriateness in Chris's initial standing: "These people believe in rainmakers and so let's go ahead and exploit their ignorance for cheap popularity. That's exactly what you are telling me to do, Chris" (*AS* 4). As the representation of an identity with colonial inheritance, Achebe presents a distinctive figure. Despite being quite close to Sam, the fact that "Chris is [not] one hundred percent behind [the Excellency]" (*AS* 21) hints of the possible progress in his character. In this respect, "Mr. Smart" (*AS* 63) is actually the embodiment of high valued perspectives in clash with rulers like Sam:

> Nations were fostered as much by structures as by laws and revolutions. These structures where they exist now are the pride of their nations. But everyone forgets that they were not erected by democratically-elected Prime Ministers but very frequently by rather unattractive, bloodthirsty medieval tyrants. The cathedrals of Europe, the Taj Mahal of India, the pyramids of Egypt and the stone towers of Zimbabwe were all raised on the backs of serfs, starving peasants and slaves. Our present rulers in Africa are in every sense late-flowering medieval monarchs, even the Marxist among them. (*AS* 67-68)

At this point, Achebe's voice begin to be heard and a social criticism appears on the stage. In this comment, the summary of African nations made by Chris could urge people to evaluate the current situation and look for possible solutions. Thus, Ikem calls Chris as "Bloody reformist" (*AS* 68). That is to say, he is there to be part of the change.

Indeed, Achebe portrays Chris as such a critical character that the more he reveals about himself and his path, the more threats engulfing his personal security begin to appear as in the following lines:

> ... at six o'clock came a police statement declaring Mr. Christopher Oriko, Commissioner for Information wanted by security officers in connection with the recent coup plot and calling on anyone who had information concerning his whereabouts to contact the nearest police station and warned citizens that concealing information about a coup plotter was as serious as failing to report a coup plot or taking part in a coup plot; and the penalty for each was death. (*AS* 171)

Achebe shows that the strict regime itself is an immense threat for people, yet trying to figure out the possible ways for better days; for sure, a coup is even a greater menace. Under these conditions, various angles may guide people to safety. Chris's involvement in such a plot might give the idea that the sky is not blue enough and something must be done urgently. Thus, "he had turned hunter from hunted [eventually]" (*AS* 173) and had a seemingly allegorical journey to Abazon at the end. Then it was taken as a guerilla country since "it was a province of unspecified and generalized disaffection to the regime" (*AS* 180). Emmanuel, the president of the student union, and Braimah, the taxi driver, are the companions of Chris on the way to the land of comparison and contrast. Indeed, what Achebe attempts to provide here is nothing more than an exhibition of alternative setting for the people of the future. The journey to the North is conducted in disguise and they ran after innocent hopes in Abazon where Ikem comes from originally (*AS* 180). The check points, strict regime, police officers, army and the followers during the journey compose the miniature of the country and signify the salvation path. To plant further hopes, they need to carry on as hard as they could; and indeed Achebe portrays a sentimental ending with such comrades looking to get rid of each kind of impediment blocking the freedom in a real sense. "Chris, gazing out into the empty landscape, had become aware of the anthills" (*AS* 195) and he got the full understanding of what a unified nation means. Amid the ongoing and deepening chaos in the country, he was shot dead smiling and eventually handed over the mission to the companions and to the promising youth.

Echoing Achebe and his ideals, Ikem is as equally important as Chris; and he is the representation of optimism and leads the way to overcome the deterioration of the issues running across the country. Unlike Chris, he displays a consistent posture and sticks to his ideals regardless of the threats that are likely to cost his life. What Achebe presents at the very beginning of the novel is an enlightening figure, and likewise he is the one to generate further enlightenment at the very end even at a time when he is about to close his eyes for good. Briefly, he is the editor of the national *Gazette* and he is described as "a literary artist" (*AS* 11). Associated with the ideal world through his ideas and writing, Ikem appears to be the voice of Achebe. "Passion is our hope and strength, a very present help in trouble" (*AS* 35) reveals Ikem, and he stresses the significance of standing upright in the struggle against the threats. Craving for writing freely, just like Chinua Achebe, Ikem reflects his ideas through the writings and believes that "[t]he pen is mightier than the sword. With one sentence of your sharp pen you can demolish anybody" (*AS* 120). The one to hire Ikem to the gazette, Chris is at odds with Ikem's liberal ideals. In the same way, Ikem the "mind-reader" (*AS* 42) is not content with Chris's being a toy in the hands of a 'dictator'. According to him, "[w]orshipping a dictator is such a pain in the ass" (*AS* 41). It is clear throughout the novel that Chris and Ikem do not get on well with one another, and this opposition unearths the messages to be conveyed. Achebe is well-aware of the roles of both characters throughout the novel and develops them accordingly. Ikem seems to be "a fantastic writer" (*AS* 83) and the strength of his pen reminds the analogy with the creator of the novel itself. He is a questioning man and hates "partisans, patriots, and party-liners" (*AS* 92).

Throughout his progression amid the chaos of a corrupted setting, Ikem ends up being the source of sparkling hope and awareness for the society struggling in a neo-colonial age after the series of traumatic colonial periods. To this end, for example, Ikem's lecture 'The Tortoise and the Leopard' plays a pivotal role in the novel. It is "a political meditation on the imperatives of struggle" (*AS* 141). During this twenty-twenty five minutes clearly Marxist oriented talk with some Fanon references (*AS* 146), the listeners such as the farmers, workers, students, and unions get involved more and more as it is purely on the questions and answers of the fundamental problems of the third

world dictatorship. In this climactic part, Achebe discloses the core of the ideals in his works and hints of the conclusion through Ikem's words consisting of the ideas of general enlightenment by forcing people to examine the conditions (*AS* 146). He does not only blame capitalism but also imperialism referring to the ills of neo-colonial period. In *Postcolonial Literatures*, Parker and Starkey also highlight that the text of the lecture is a "revolt against the imprisoning nationalism" (10). The intention is to develop the habit of skepticism (*AS* 148) and consciousness of troubles hindering the nationhood and unity desired since the first sparkle of national revival presented by Okonkwo in *Things Fall Apart*. Once more, Ikem echoes Achebe's ideals with these words: "Writers don't give prescriptions. They give headaches" (*AS* 148). The logic behind writing as a postcolonial artist is to appeal to the public, and Achebe is known to strictly oppose to the Art for Art's sake approach (*Morning Yet on Creation Day* 19). The sense of belonging and unity is likely to lead people to kill the pain and live in serenity. Despite the troubles and chaos of a neo-colonial country that "only God can save" (*AS* 153), Ikem's ideals create a huge impact triggering a change in society. Students deliver 2000 copies of his talk and let everyone know about Ikem's route. As a consequence of his struggles, Ikem is announced as "traitor and plotter" (*AS* 155) and his acts eventually cost his life (*AS* 158). In *Achebe and the Politics of Representation*, however, as Ogede notes, "Ikem has realistic goals for his community. His aspirations for his people are basic and do not require any heroism to attain" (90) and thus, he is likely to win the fight as Achebe intended himself. Having associated already, postcolonial criticism has to do with the concerns of Marxist criticism. In accordance with the analogy between both literary criticism, analysing the manners and ideological stance of the character, Ikem could be said to display a Marxist orientation just like the Cool Max of *A Man of the People*. Achebe demonstrates that he is the symbol of the fight against the never-ending colonial order. In this respect, he is indeed the heart of the resolution alongside Beatrice to be presented next.

Beatrice, called as "BB" by friends (*AS* 76), is possibly the most influential female figure in Achebe's novels and she is the female voice of Achebe and part of the resolution itself. Looking through the perspective of postcolonial theory and criticism, as Ashcroft et al. discuss in *The Empire Writes Back*, postcolonialism is also related to

feminist theory on the basis of reinstating marginalized people and women (175). Besides this, in Spivak's terms, the subaltern issue is a staple topic for postcolonial theory. She argues that subalterns as women as well as all the colonized face the problem of representation in the works driven by the Eurocentric approaches. She believes that subalterns are the construction of socially authorized language, that is, such identities are unable to represent themselves. Although Achebe tried hard to reverse the situation in the previous novels, it is in *Anthills of the Savannah* that he is said to have eventually succeeded in presenting the women in the ideal way, and thus making their voice heard via Beatrice in a stunning way. Women are not subalterns anymore as in Antonio Gramsci's term. That is, subaltern is not an inferior rank any longer. The association of Beatrice with Chris and Ikem constitutes a major point of interest in such a novel written for the resolution of the whole story concluding the chronicle by Achebe. Unlike the partly silent, subaltern, women in the previous novels covering the colonial period, women are highly valued and they are regarded as critical parts of the resolution for the nation in *Anthills of the Savannah*. In this, Beatrice is the responsible person, and Ikem is grateful to her for giving "insight into the world of women" (*AS* 82). It could be argued that the qualities and duties attributed to Beatrice pose the significance of gender roles and collaboration in society, that is, she represents the last call of the fact that national unity had better be achieved in each areas of life urgently.

Discussing the key role not only in *Anthills of the Savannah*, but also in the whole pentalogy of Achebe, various authorities feature Beatrice in an earnest way. Elaborating on her critical role, Ojinmah discusses that "Beatrice's function is not only as a narrative voice, articulating and projecting Achebe's new vision of the role of women in the 'days ahead', but she serves to moderate between the views of Chris and Ikem, and more importantly, to sharpen and focus Ikem's, and consequently, Achebe's proffered solution" (102). Achebe puts her forward in the closing pages of the novel more and she is the ultimate witness to the fate of the tragic nation suffering from colonial experience throughout the history. In spite of all the happenings from the beginning to the end, she is the portrait of gracefulness and embodiment of numerous positive qualities. In *The Fiction of Chinua Achebe*, Morrison refers to her with the

opposite qualities of corruption, apathy, oppression, and discontent: "she seems to embody nobility, dignity, and clear-sighted intelligence" (152). Both for the people surrounding her in the novel and for the people trying to understand the novel and Achebe, she holds a crucial place. In "Knowledge and Power, the Story and the Storyteller: Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*", Robin Ikegami argues that "[h]er analyses of Ikem and for that matter of Chris as well, are without the kind of undercutting irony of contradiction we find in the other narrations; indeed, her analyses generally prove accurate" (73). It seems that Beatrice is the means of comprehending the occurrences with further rationalism and accuracy. Her dialectical and didactical approaches as well as skepticism (*AS* 81) help convey the more plausible judgments and lessons. Referring to her significant role in the novel, Ikegami adds that "Beatrice's storytelling represents a movement toward a creative amalgamation of facts and passions, past and present, people and ideas. She continually insists on the reconstruction of either/or situations, but it is not an insistence that comes out of the stereotypical female-as-peacemaker model" (76).

Unanimously, what Achebe displays is that, she is a favoured figure of the novel, even His Excellency enjoys her standing and presence to a great extent: "She is a Senior Assistant Secretary in the Ministry of Finance - the only person in the service, male or female, with a first-class honours in English. And not from a local university but from Queen Mary College, University of London. Our Beatrice beat the English to their game. We're very proud of her" (*AS* 68). As for the meaning of her name, Achebe employs Beatrice for the purpose of creating irony. She herself confesses that "I must mention that in addition to Beatrice they had given me another name at my baptism, Nwanyibuife - A female is also something. Can you beat that?" (*AS* 79). Indeed, she beats that and her central role is felt throughout the work. With confidence, Beatrice is able to look at the broad picture critically in a natural and rational way: "The women are, of course, the biggest single group of oppressed people in the world and, if we are to believe the Book of Genesis, the oldest. But they are not the only ones. There are others - rural peasants in every land, the urban poor in industrialized countries, Black people everywhere including their own continent, ethnic and religious minorities and castes in all countries" (*AS* 90). This is the reason why she is the voice of all and part of

the whole. Achebe's intentional use of such a conscious and powerful female figure is the part of the entire picture in his works. In "Achebe's Women: Mothers, Priestesses, and Young Urban Professionals", Catherine Bicknell comments on Beatrice with these words: "What distinguishes Beatrice most from the women who have preceded her in Achebe's fiction is her self-awareness and her ability to direct her own life. Beatrice is the first of Achebe's characters to engage in self-analysis" (129). Achebe meticulously demonstrates that she is not a subaltern anymore; she manages to represent not only herself but also all the colonized people. In this respect, she can be taken as the analytical voice of all in the novel and even of the ones beyond the novel.

Above all, it is apparent that Achebe is the epitome of the each voice and he is the creator of the enriching ideals to eventually turn into an everlasting nation. From the colonial ties stretching from the striking days in *Things Fall Apart* to the distinctive ending of *Anthills of the Savannah*, as a creator in the background, Achebe projects final striking details to conclude his voyage of liberating the nation. It has been demonstrated that the fourth novel, *A Man of the People*, ends in uncertainty and requires an immediate solution about the rulers and the destiny of the country. *Anthills of the Savannah* is also looking for options on leadership and future of a nation in a new notion. On this matter, in "Chinua Achebe: the Wrestler and the Challenge of Chaos" Chidi Okonkwo discusses the two novels with the following words:

> Both novels therefore strongly imply that part of the problem with the leadership springs from their path to power. None can lay a genuine claim to a popular mandate, a genuine vision, or a special equipment for leadership. Ultimately, this raises the question of the legitimacy of the political power exercised by leaders who come to power through such means. Though each coup d'état terminates an evil regime, it provides no assurance of a better leader or era succeeding the present. (94)

This is the real ground behind Achebe's decision to provide both implicit and explicit details as the last words to state and put into effect in the coming days and decades. The need for a responsible government and a conscious nation is to be signaled via the elaboration of ideological bases in this novel. Thus, "[r]eform may be a dirty word then but it begins to look more and more like the most promising route to success in the real

world" (*AS* 91). From the earliest writing to the last piece of Achebe's pen, change seems to be at the center of all solutions, but *Anthills of the Savannah* is the one that pushes this assertion a step further as the final novel hosting Achebe's utmost implications.

Following the diversities and antagonisms in the novel, Achebe reflects the Great North Road as a way of change and transformation. The road is enriched with symbolic values and profound details; as the journey continues further into the North, Achebe's voice begins to fade away, the imminent end appears on the horizon. It is the voyage from "the rainy country slowly towards the land of droughts" (*AS* 191), yet hope exists in the anthills of the savannah "[b]ecause no one can rise and march south by starlight abandoning crippled kindred in the wild savannah and arrive stealthily at a tiny village and fall upon its inhabitants and slay them and take their land" (*AS* 194). It can be inferred that less tension, more diversity and further unity is the ideal Nigeria to be born. Life in this 'storyland' is "not as bad as the first times" (*AS* 194), the colonial ploys should be avoided and external manipulations need to be defied urgently. Similar to the ending of the previous novel *A Man of the People,* Achebe is quite critical in *Anthills of the Savannah* as well. There appears another crisis to overcome, and thus common sense and consciousness are the fundamental needs to exist as a nation. Achebe informs that an irresponsible government and 'carpe diem conduct' dominate the country, the outbreak of a coup is an imminent threat. Thus, not surprisingly, the journey to the north presents yet another COUP (*AS* 196) disrupting the inconsistent order. One of the officials interrupting the journey discloses the portrait of gap in the country even after such a hindering experience on the way to the unity: "As the government done fall now, na who go drink the beer? So we self we de stand for sun here, no water to drink; na him God send us small beer to make our own cocktails party" (*AS* 197).

Achebe struggles to depict everything in pure objectivity as a last resort, and puts forward the probable options to get out of the colonial malady inherited in the blood of the people and culture of the nation. 'Divide and rule' brings no benefit to anyone but to the colonizer. It could be argued that Achebe's Nigeria seems to be a country to be exalted with its distinctive diversity rather than feeding enmity against each other, and coups are not among the rational solutions at all. The plotters and the

ones favour such steps reveal the reason why it is irrational enough: "Make every man, woman, and child and even those them never born, make everybody collect twenty manilla each and bring to me and I go take an go England and negotiate with IMF to bring white man back to Kangan" (*AS* 198). In these final pages, Achebe strikingly brings forward neo-colonialism with further emphasis and notifies the likelihood of the persistent colonial life: "[t]he deepening crisis in the country" (*AS* 203) should urgently cease to exist. The point is to find and follow the right path, and Achebe seems to bring up Ikem's path as the eventual step.

Standing for the final steps to take, the child naming ceremony with a great symbolic value at the end is the moment of planting seeds to blossom into a bright future. The girlfriend of Ikem's, Elewa's child is named by Beatrice: "There was an Old Testament prophet who named his son *The-remnant-shall-return*. They must have lived in times like this. We have a different metaphor, though; we have our own version of hope that springs eternal. We shall call this child AMAECHINA: May-the-path-never-close. Ama for short" (*AS* 206). Achebe draws an amazing story of change from 'A-girl-is-also-something'[8] to 'May-the-path-never-close'. Indeed, "[i]t's a beautiful name. The Path of Ikem" (*AS* 206). In his article "Chinua Achebe: the Wrestler and the Challenge of Chaos", Chidi Okonkwo comments on the naming ritual with the following words:

> Obviously the nucleus of a new nation, this gathering is the grand resolution towards which Achebe's fiction has been moving: a national community harmonising the various ethnic cultures created by colonial masters all over Africa. 'Amaechina', the name of Elewa's baby, rendered in English as 'may the path never close', is both a prayer and a resolve that the new order should not again disintegrate in chaos, that the champion of the era in the throes of birth may overthrow the forces of chaos an break the apocalyptic cycle of the gyre. (94)

In spite of the purely settled colonial life and existence of the colonizers or the supporters of the neo-colonial atmosphere in the country, Achebe draws such an influential conclusion. It is possible to see "too much trouble in Kangan since the white

[8] 'A-girl-is-also-something' is the meaning of Beatrice's name in *Anthills of the Savannah*.

man left because those who make plans make plans for themselves only and their families" (*AS* 212), yet the legacy is not invincible as long as the path set by Achebe never closes. Considering the post-independence period and decolonization years, it seemed to be a bloody process with a painful liberation era full of almost "75 coups in around 30 years" across the postcolonial world (Betts 69). However, as Woddis previously argued in *Introduction to Neo-Colonialism*, decolonization is the most profound historical process for the colonized (51); and thus Achebe displays an amazing exemplary role through literature to manage the whole process.

All in all, what is reflected in the novels of Achebe is the chronicle of the historical facts and disguised truths in the colonized countries. Placing Nigeria at the heart of his struggle, Achebe addresses all humanity and colonized nations. His didactic novels embedded with guiding implications help nation recover from the ills of the past, avert the games of the present, and guard against the threats of the future. That is, Achebe's mere intention in his novels is to lead a nation under the umbrella of the same ideals. Each novel is part of the same chronicle and is a continuation of one another. Rather than looking back into the past, they all focus on the promising days of the future. *Anthills of the Savannah*, the last masterpiece, is the last call to enact the codes of the path cleared up by Achebe. In alignment with the figures, ideas and events of the day, Achebe presents multiple perspectives in this final work and leaves room to compare and contrast between them. As a matter of fact, Sam, Chris, Ikem, and Beatrice are all part of the same notions provided by Achebe. A chance through their perspectives is provided to assess the ideas and ideals of the neo-colonial age and live up to the expectations of the modern day postcolonial nations. That is, the message is clear; colonialism is not over, it is even in a more sinister stature and the need for immediate action is factual rather than fictional. In other words, *Anthills of the Savannah* is the portrait of real life experiences to unite for those who are unable to opt for at the gates of the 'road not taken'.

"*Anthills of the Savannah* can be seen as both a summation of the themes and techniques explored in the previous novels, and a new departure" (Innes, *Chinua Achebe* 170). In this respect, it can be professed that all five novels are elaborated with intermingled themes and serve the same mission of unification, and above all *Anthills of*

the Savannah is a unique resolution of the chronicle for the colonization process in Achebe's stunning *pentalogy*. Eventually, looking at the realities, it could be argued that Nigeria is not exactly a neo-colonial or post-colonial country today; however, it seems that Nigeria deserves some credit to get the best out of all the mess as a modern state after such a dark colonial history full of abiding sorrows. For this cause, finally, once more and for all, it is worth noting that Achebe will continue to be the chronicler and torch of the past, present, and future not only to re-generate the dignity of the indigenous society, but also to illustrate literally the whole iceberg by *writing back* as opposed to the Eurocentric approaches that show only "the visible tenth of an iceberg [on a typical colonized territory]" (Achebe, *Morning Yet On Creation Day* 48).

CONCLUSION

"Chinua Achebe's Novels as the Chronicle of Colonialism in Nigeria", the title of this study, could be considered as the synthesis of the whole argument from the very first to these final pages. Indeed, to illustrate the agonies of the colonization process frankly just like in any postcolonial study, primarily colonialism at the heart of all the issues throughout Achebe's pentalogy has been dealt with from different perspectives employing the postcolonial theory and criticism. Glancing at the study as a whole, the first chapter is the background of the study and focuses on postcolonial theory and criticism. It consists of four parts dealing with the historical context, colonialism and postcolonialism, postcolonial theory and criticism as well as a terminological base, and colonialist and postcolonial texts in turn. The second chapter hosting 'Chinua Achebe as a postcolonial voice' presents personal details as to the hero of this study, an ideological bases of being a postcolonial identity, the rise of a literary giant to subvert the existing Western norms and a brief introduction to the pentalogy of Achebe. To put it in another way, while the first and second chapter have been an exciting preparation process to set out on a colonial journey with Achebe's five matchless novels, the third chapter in which the theory has been intermingled with the practice through a critical process, has elaborated on the major argument thoroughly.

In this study, every aspect of Chinua Achebe's five novels, *Things Fall Apart*, *Arrow of God*, *No Longer at Ease*, *A Man of the People*, and *Anthills of the Savannah* have been profoundly analyzed. The study has aimed at demonstrating the traces of colonialism in alignment with the actual history so as to bring about a change in the perceptions of both the colonizer and the colonized. In other words, the study has aimed to illustrate Chinua Achebe's address to the colonized for the role of identity construction in the *nation building project* as well as replying to the colonizer with a peculiar agenda of the *writing back process*. That is, the justification of the existent indigenous order and unique cultural traits, the study of language and distinctive narrative modes as a counter discourse, and the characterization of the colonized and the colonizer as the representatives of a colonial and postcolonial world, have been examined in order to prove to contemporary readers that there are two sides to every story. While achieving this purpose, postcolonial theory and criticism have been

employed with a specific focus on the analysis of postcolonial issues such as culture, nation, discourse, language, identity as well as the application of postcolonial terms such as ambivalence, hybridity, mimicry, subaltern and appropriation. In this respect, postcolonial theory and criticism has been employed to amend the misconceptions, justify the realities, reclaim the indigenous rights and represent the colonized as they exist with their own exclusivity.

Throughout the study, an inductive method has been followed with an aim to reach the whole. While integrating postcolonial theory and criticism in accordance with Achebe's ideological stance into the novels, three major points of discussion in each novel emerges to complete the whole frame. In the first place, the exploitation of language, discourse and narrative style adopted by Achebe throughout all the novels present distinctive features and various implications as to their being postcolonial texts. Achebe appears to manipulate the colonial language by assigning new qualities and reshape the language to build up new identities appropriating the self to the needs of the changing conditions. The traditional elements such as proverbs, stories, songs, myths, local lexis serve to remove the barriers causing the lack of understanding among his people to free themselves from the influence of colonial hegemony and help the native regain self-confidence in themselves. In this respect, Achebe is believed to form the language and discourse to the needs of the age so as to deconstruct the silenced image of the colonized. Regarding the frequent use of Pidgin English, it is no more than adopting the colonial language in order to appropriate. That is to say, besides giving a local colour to the language so as to appeal to the colonized specifically, Achebe makes use of Pidgin with communicative function to address all alongside a strong emphasis on the historical realities pertaining to the coming of an alien language and culture to the indigenous land. In addition, as opposed to colonial discourse, the use of postcolonial discourse and the narrative richness in each novel function to prove realities pertaining to the misrepresented or underrepresented Africans in colonialist texts.

Studying the narrative qualities of Achebe, it could be concluded that they represent matchless characteristics appropriate to the changing conditions of a world in transition. *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God* are densely enriched with traditional elements such as proverbs, tales, stories, idioms, songs as well as ironies. Besides, both

novels use a third person narrative to glance at the first interactions with the colonizer. In addition to such common features, while *Things Fall Apart* opens with W. B. Yeats' "Second Coming", which is a stunning intertextuality for introducing the text, *Arrow of God* is presented as a dark drama with symbolic implications. In an analogy to these two novels, *No Longer at Ease* is woven with a rich texture including the use of further intertextuality, that is, the use of "The Journey of the Magi" by T.S. Eliot. However, traditional elements begin to fade away in *No Longer at Ease*; instead, symbolic devices of the modern day and the use of Pidgin are preferred by Achebe to better reflect the age and changing conditions. When it comes to *A Man of the People* and *Anthills of the Savannah*, while in the former first person narrative is employed to experience the realities and act accordingly to make sense of the fiction thoroughly, in the latter multiple voices are heard with the use of more than one narrator to witness the realities and have a better grasp of the whole colonization process. On the one hand, *A Man of the People* is the embodiment of an ironic discourse, a political satire, and also the use of proverbs sharpens Achebe's discourse employed in this novel. What is more, yet again, Pidgin is a stable reality of the postcolonial phase in Achebe's chronicle. On the other hand, poetic language and some crucial poems, storytelling, myths and symbols constitute the strengths of Achebe's narrative in the final novel *Anthills of the Savannah*.

Taking all the novels into consideration, Achebe's move from the intense use of traditional elements to the frequent use of modern elements such as Pidgin in his narrative is in direct relation to the chronological development of the novels according to the evolution of colonialism. That is to say, *Things Fall Apart*, *Arrow of God* cover the traditional period in the course of the colonial establishment, while *No Longer at Ease* is the gate opening to the cosmopolitan setting that displays a considerable amount of shift in traditional values. On the other hand, *A Man of the People* and *Anthills of the Savannah* are purely the postcolonial novels of a neo-colonial age when there exists no trace of conventional elements any longer. Besides, Achebe's shift from the third person to the first person narrative and eventually to the multiple narrators holds critical implications as have been aforementioned. After all, it could be argued that Achebe's professional conduct of language, discourse and narrative modes just reflect the realities in the course of the specific phases of colonialism and answer back to the colonialist

discourse accordingly. Contributing to the national awareness during all the decolonization process via his influential pen in this way, Achebe calls out to both his own people and the West once more.

Throughout these grand narratives, the cultural analysis is of premium importance in postcolonial studies as well. Considering the prolonged colonial age in Nigeria, the impact of the colonization process on culture is among the most critical issues to address in Achebe's novels. While Achebe presents a well-established indigenous order and plenty of cultural details such as kola nut breaking custom, a new Yam Feast, wrestling as entertainment, 'Egwugwu' as the existing judiciary system prior to colonialism in *Things Fall Apart*, the traditional society begins to degenerate with the coming of the white and the establishment of indirect rule in *Arrow of God*. Thus, compared to *Things Fall Apart,* Achebe is critical of his own culture on the grounds that it embodies weaknesses such as the internal clashes and discrimination, superstitions, and susceptibility to external influences. As it comes to the years of high tension on the eve of the independence period, Achebe portrays an ambiguous cultural atmosphere in a modern setting far from traditional values any more, and people are *No Longer at Ease*. In this third novel, different from *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, traditional culture and indigenous values are on the decline, while modern day culture is shaped by the permanent colonial rule, it clearly increases. In *No Longer at Ease*, Achebe appears to criticize the loosing ties and deals with gender and class discrimination culturally in the background. That is, Achebe presents the reasons why colonialism gradually keeps transforming the country, and thus wants to raise consciousness on this issue. Next, considering the degenerative impact of colonialism on culture, Achebe does not even bother to focus on cultural elements any longer in the neo-colonial age and postcolonial stage throughout *A Man of the People* and *Anthills of the Savannah* respectively. While the former is home to countless problems as opposed to the new face of the colonial system, the latter is the novel searching for a common solution to all its existing troubles. Overall, the cultural codes, indigenous elements, and local flavours in Achebe's novels justify the presence of unique values possessed by the people living in harmony. Indeed, they exist not only to be retained by the colonized, but also to confute the deceptive claims of the colonizer in this way.

Most importantly, Achebe's lifelike characterization throughout his masterpieces with striking details and a closeness to the real identities of distinctive periods in history could be the most efficient way to present a final word in this study. The most praiseworthy point here is that Achebe does not only portray the colonized, but also the colonizer with stunning details and astonishing accuracy compared to the actual colonial history and the inhabitants of the era in question. Looking from a postcolonial perspective, the members of both sides exist hand in hand somehow in distant territories and the contact zone between both cultures leads them forcefully to establish new identities. In this respect, displaying a didactic approach to give and get lessons from the process, Achebe attains the greatest chance ever to work on establishing the ideal nation and writing back to the West with pure realism. In an attempt to determine the shared qualities of each character of each novel on the side of the colonized and colonizer, it is worth stressing that, Achebe uncovers the realities and helps the process of decolonization. In doing so, he reflects the factual attributions of the age through his characters not only to voice the silenced identities among the colonized and to reveal the hypocrisies of the colonizer, but also to provide insight into the ideal identities with which to carry the nation forward step by step as opposed to fallacies of the colonized once more.

In *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe presents Okonkwo as a powerful figure in opposition to the descriptions of the Africans in colonialist texts. While Okonkwo represents the indigenous order and resistance against colonialism, Obierika reveals the ideological implications of Achebe to avert the impending dangers, and this sets forth the idea that there should be a well-balanced order between the actions and thoughts in order to flourish together. While Okonkwo is the ideal model for the colonized, Obierika appears to be an alternative critical and rational voice. On the other hand, missionaries, soldiers, administrative staff such as Mr. Brown and Mr. Smith are represented purely with colonialist mentality, which is reflected through their discourses and violent acts to pacify the nation subtly. They basically form the ideological base and the road map of the colonization process. As the characters of the welcoming years of colonialism in Nigeria, Achebe both provides role models for the colonized to preserve the self and spoil the plans of the colonizer by revealing the insidious plans of

exploiting the diversity on the indigenous Igbo land. That is, *Things Fall Apart*, at the turn of the 19th century through the first generation colonized characters, signifies the first emergency to combat colonialism in every aspect.

Arrow of God, on the other hand, is the novel reflecting the time when colonialism already managed to penetrate into the land and indirect rule was established to maintain the colonial system itself. The title character Ezeulu symbolizes the victims of ambivalence as a result of the disruptive colonial system, and he is also the notification of a persistent *falling apart*. Stuck in between the deteriorating traditional order and the new colonial culture, Ezeulu is the portrayal of the in-between characters. Unable to balance the self, the ambivalent acts and notions dominate the destinies of the identities during the early decades of the 20th century colonialism. From the perspective of postcolonial criticism, unlike the characters of *Things Fall Apart*, Ezeulu is the product of the contact zone between the colonizer and the colonized. In other words, he is the symbol and embodiment of mild resistance, and thus displays ambivalent acts as a hybrid identity. As for the colonizer, The Lieutenant Governor Winterbottom represents the legacy of colonialism in Nigeria. Besides the missionaries and violent soldiers as well as the administrative staff on the increase, Achebe demonstrates the transformation of the society from its falling apart to fallen apart stage via the characterization of the colonizers like Winterbottom. What Achebe appears to achieve in *Arrow of God* is that colonialism is a reality now and it is the major source of the existing ills under such an ambivalent atmosphere triggered by the colonization process. Not only does Achebe attempt to address the colonized to make them conscious of the manipulative acts at the time, but also he writes back to the colonizer to justify that they are the main culprits of the reason why things keep falling apart in *Arrow of God.*

No Longer at Ease is set in modern-day Nigeria and presents not only the clashes among the second and third generation colonized, but also the clashes between the colonized and the colonizer of the modern era. In this regard, the modern day troubles are out of control then and the characters as the reflection of the mid-20th century are no longer at ease at all. As the grandson of Okonkwo from the first generation in *Things Fall Apart*, Obi is the symbol of a national awakening and the intelligentsia as the representative of the first Western educated generation character in

the course of the whole colonization process in Achebe's novels. The problem Achebe displays, however, is that Obi is depicted to be torn apart between the colonial and traditional culture which is about to vanish due to the systematic success of colonialism and his ambivalent upbringing. Considering the hybridity and ambivalence dominating the characters of the second generation in *Arrow of God*, Obi as the representative of the third generation also appears to be the natural product and the integration of both cultures, and thus is the symbol of inevitable hybridity. He is not necessarily either a devout proponent of national unity or an assimilated outcome of the colonization process and Westernized education. At this stage, Achebe reveals that, Obi falls prey to the emerging modern day troubles such as bribery and corruption as a direct result of the colonial inheritance dominating the culture of daily lives. When looked at from the perspective of the postcolonial criticism, as a hybrid identity, Obi presents appropriation as well. That is to say, the Westernized education, the use of rational mind and logic, benefitting from the Western school of thoughts and gaining chance to compare and contrast both cultures and countries, all empower him to develop a national consciousness and function for the interests of the colonized on the eve of independence. The colonizer characters, on the other hand, such as Mr. Green and Macmillan are the manipulative forces behind the change and serve as a transition from traditional values to the dependence on the external interferences. In comparison to the colonizer characters in the previous novels *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, they exist not just as administrative staff, soldiers, or missionaries. Rather, Achebe illustrates the colonized with various professional occupations, and this justifies the shift in the colonial system in all aspects. Regarding all these characters, *No Longer at Ease* is home to the pains of a struggle towards a national awakening on the eve of the in/dependence to come; and through characterization of the both sides, to provide solutions, Achebe is the chronicler of those years full of their implications of the possible decolonization process.

A Man of the People covers the early in/dependence years in a neo-colonial age as opposed to the decolonization initiatives in vain. Considering the achievement of liberty, Achebe's characters are the products of a postcolonial era in this novel. In this respect, through the characters of the post-independence period in a darker age called

neo-colonial, Achebe frankly summarizes the whole story. Focusing on the colonizer in the background as a natural consequence of the so-called independence gained, Achebe's major concern is the colonized characters in conflict with one another. That is to say, the characterization pattern in this novel startlingly proves the ongoing colonization phase with a new phase. Chief Nanga is the embodiment of colonial inheritance, and thus, appears to be a puppet for the colonizer. Supposed to be free yet unable to lead such a life instinctively by himself, he is the portrait of mimicry as a man of the ruthless system rather than being a man of the people on his own with free will. Through the characterization of Nanga in ambivalence, Achebe deals with various post-independence period troubles such as false leadership, coups, civil wars and corruption dominating the identities of the era as well as the underlying reasons. In contrast with Chief Nanga, Mr. Odili Samalu is the ideal voice to be heard by the masses. As an intelligentsia with national consciousness believing in the power of people and unity for the peaceful days ahead, he represents the opposite pole in politics. In this respect, what Achebe intends to convey is that ideal identities of an independent nation should find the solution by uncovering the hidden reasons behind the current situation rather than wasting time increasing the polarity within the society by destroying the self by itself. As opposed to the corrupted and ambivalent manners of Nanga, Odili is the symbol of idealism; paradoxical cases, ironies, some certain flaws dominate him though. That is to say, being a blurry replica of the colonized and the colonizer, he presents a hybrid postcolonial identity as well. However, through appropriation, Odili manages to benefit from the colonization process just like *No Longer at Ease*'s Obi did, and eventually turns into the embodiment of Achebe's ideals and voice. Throughout *A Man of the People*, Achebe is in search of an unanticipated trouble at the centre and attempts to manage the perceptions of the colonized so as to raise awareness on this matter. That is, when the internal tensions are taken into consideration, Achebe, with the characterization of *A Man of the People*, touches on the issue of a grave question: the question of how to overcome the problem of being a state without a true nation.

Anthills of the Savannah is not only an answer to Achebe's above question, but is an absolute resolution to all the accumulated problems created by the colonization process from the pre-colonial days in *Things Fall Apart* to the contemporary days in this

final novel. Unlike he does in the previous novel, Achebe benefits from the multiple voices throughout the novel. Around some certain central problems similar to the ones in *A Man of the People*, Achebe provides the reader with multiple perspectives to see the whole frame in darkness. Yet again, the pattern of the colonized in struggle with the colonized characterization is used. However, this time, the colonized as the symbol and centre of postcolonial troubles have to face a couple of intelligentsia members with bright ideals and personality traits, and thus, once more Achebe aims to disclose the realities leading to think outside the box for a complete awareness about the way to nationhood. To be more precise, Sam is the problem at the heart of the novel and he seems to be the duplication of Nanga in *A Man of the People*. That is to say, mimicry just goes on being part of daily life in a postcolonial setting, and Sam symbolizes the identities of the era as the pawn of the contemporary day manipulations fed by the colonial inheritance. Apparently, the postcolonial tensions have come to such a critical point that, through Nanga, Achebe displays that postcolonial ambivalence inevitably ends in the corrupted manner of a split identity. On the one hand, Chris and Ikem are used to provide a direct comparison and contrast chance to see the events from both a negative and a positive point of view. They are the voices of the intelligentsia. As Obi in *No Longer at Ease* and Odili in *A Man of the People* did, they carry on performing the duties assigned by Achebe. On the other hand, Achebe eventually depicts a female voice, Beatrice, as the person who is not a subaltern any more. She signifies the balance between all the probable implications of the novel so as to introduce the rational solutions to complete the nation-building process. By employing appropriation yet again, these final voices help make the best out of the colonial experience. Accordingly, all the characters of *Anthills of the Savannah* are holders of critical roles, and as opposed to one of the most pessimistic subject matter at the centre, Achebe finalizes his literary journey full of optimism by putting his prime wish AMAECHINA into words once more and for all: "May-the-path-never-close" (*Anthills of the Savannah* 206).

In conclusion, Achebe's chronicle as a pentalogy that is composed of *Things Fall Apart, Arrow of God, No Longer at Ease, A Man of the People, Anthills of the Savannah* presents a literary festival in which the realities as to the actual history through factual documentation are uncovered with didactic purposefullness. From the first to the last

novel, embarking on a journey from traditional values and indigenous order, travelling through ambivalence, hybridity, mimicry, and arriving at a destination where the subjects are not subaltern anymore, Achebe leaves unforgettible masterpieces behind. In doing so, addressing both his own people and the Western people having Eurocentric approaches, as an objectively dedicated voice of the postcolonial world, Achebe undertakes the role of an awakener to report that Africa hosts a complex and dynamic system and the society is not primitive or not under-developed either. Indeed, throughout his novels, Achebe depicts the historical and cultural background of the African people as a response to those who maintain that Africa had no history and civilization. In this sense, Achebe's novels are the exploration to rediscover the indigenous background to help regain a dignity. Through both praise and criticism, Achebe displays an active role and a great commitment in the development of national consciousness. As opposed to the manipulations throughout the colonial history, by travelling to different phases of the colonial rule, Achebe deconstructs the inferiority complex and othering created by the colonial rule itself. While achieving this throughout a literary journey, postcolonial theory and criticism has been the major tool to unearth the complexities pertaining to daily life in the pre-colonial, colonial, neo-colonial and postcolonial phases. Ultimately, as a personal judgement, it could be stated that the intention of analysing Chinua Achebe's novels reflected in the course of these periods from a postcolonial perspective has been to underline the the difficulties that postcolonial subjects have had to face during the interactions of a never-ending colonization process, and to better judge the world in which the colonizer and the colonized live side by side and hand in hand; that is, the purpose has been to enlighten the whole process from both perspectives by handling the problems more objectively in order to live in peace within a framework of mutual understanding perpetually.

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ÖZGEÇMİŞ

Oktay Mutlu 1988 yılında Bulgaristan/Kırcaali'de doğmuştur ve 1990 yılında Türkiye/İzmir'e göç etmiştir. İlköğretim ve Lise eğitimini İzmir'de tamamlamıştır. Ege Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü'nden 2010 yılında mezun olmuş ve aynı yıl içerisinde Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi'nden İngilizce Öğretmenliği Pedagojik Formasyon sertifikasını almıştır. Yüksek lisans eğitimini Ege Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı'nda tamamlamış ve tez çalışmasını 2019 yılında savunmuştur. 2010-2014 yılları arasında Ege Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksek Okulu'nda İngilizce Okutmanı olarak görev almıştır. 2014 yılından itibaren Akın Dil Eğitim Merkezi İzmir Şubesi'nde İngilizce öğretmenliği mesleğine devam etmektedir. Ayrıca 2018 yılından bu yana National Geographic Learning ELT yayınlarını temsilen Türkiye/Ege Bölgesi'nde Eğitim Danışmanı olarak hizmet vermektedir.