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TRACING COLONIAL IDEOLOGY IN CHINUA ACHEBE'S THINGS FALL APART AND BUCHI EMECHETA'S THE BRIDE PRICE

Gökřen ARAS*
Serdar TAKVA**

Abstract

Inspired by the appetite to control world trade and naturally rich African and Asian countries, European powers started to dominate remote territories economically and politically in the fifteenth century. Although the main reason was to colonize other nations for their gains, European countries masked their colonial ideology claiming that they brought civilization to Africa, India for the first time. Europeans' attitude to justify their colonization continued throughout the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, thus creating new settlements where the slave and master discourse was created. In order to meet its demand for raw materials, Britain's domination and hegemony over the third world countries reached its peak in the nineteenth century and it exploited other nations both economically and culturally. Nigeria-exposed to British hegemony- is one of the countries whose natural resources were usurped and indigenous culture was oppressed. The indigenous Nigerian people were enslaved and forced to serve the white man. In the context of colonial reading, Nigerian writers Chinua Achebe and Buchi Emecheta handle the colonial history of Igbo society suffering from the oppression of the colonizer. The paper in this context, aims to display the colonial acts and their impacts on the colonized people through Nigerian authors' perspectives.

Keywords: Colonial Ideology, Igbo Society, Oppression.

*Assist. Prof. Dr. Atılım University, English Language and Literature Department, goksenaras@yahoo.com

**Dr Trabzon University, English Language Teaching Department, serdartaakva@gmail.com



1. INTRODUCTION

Colonial ideology as widely known is the full or partial control of a specific region by a superior power, occupying and exploiting that territory for economic gains. Colonial ideology is the result of imperial doctrine which hegemonizes *the rest* through political, cultural and social domination. Considered to be the outcome of imperialism, colonization is regional and suppresses other nations by the use of power. Colonial ideology is based on the oppression of remote areas and the first introduction of such domination starts with educational imposition exported by the Europeans. After the arrival of the educationalists, religious imposition emerges as a way to colonize *the other's* beliefs. As is clear from the constant occupation, *the self*, referring to *the West* sneaks into the local institutions of other nations and they seize the lands by the next arrivals, officers and other administrators. Step by step, economically attractive territories are colonized, their sources are exploited and indigenous culture is imposed.

European colonization of Africa and India started in the fifteenth century. The first colonial acts were to control the trading routes and then to lead world commerce. Portugal, Holland, France and then, Great Britain played prominent roles in the colonization of different parts of the world. Represented as backward and incapable of governing themselves, nations from Africa, India and the Far East were forced to work for the White and millions of them were shipped to different parts of the world to work as slaves. Considering Africans and other nations barbaric, uncivilized and illiterate, European powers justified their occupation claiming that they would civilize *the others* and share the cultural values with them:

Africans and other colonized peoples were seen as mentally and physically adapted only for menial labour or routine clerical positions. Such justifications had been used throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to justify the enslavement of millions of Africans to work in the sugar and cotton plantations of the Americas; colonial settlers and governments continued to maintain that the people they colonized were incapable of self-government or of putting their land and its resources to good use. (Innes, 2007, 8)

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, as Said mentions; "imperialism was considered essential to the well-being of British fertility" (1994, 107) so Britain emerged as the sole country to dominate the countries from Africa to India and the Caribbean through colonial acts. The main idea behind the colonization was to reach raw materials in order to meet the demands of industrialization. Victorian Period in this context is a turning point in the history of Britain since it led to a rapid expansion which then resulted in the hegemony of African, Caribbean and Indian nations: "For the British, the post-18 period, or more specifically the time of Queen Victoria's reign (1837-1901), represented their great age of colonization. By 1815 the nation had established itself as a dominant power in the world, a pacemaker of European industrialization and expansion" (Boehmer, 2005, 28).

Colonization caused the two poles to encounter and the first interaction as Fanon remarks; "was marked by violence and their existence together--that is to say the exploitation of the native by the settler--was carried on by dint of a great array of bayonets and cannons" (1963, 35). The new settler used violence as a way to dominate the indigenous people and in case of defiance, they were suppressed by the superior power. In the context of colonial doctrine, Great Britain used its prowess to hegemonize the countries of Africa one of which is Nigeria and it is possible to trace colonial hegemony through Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Emecheta's *The Bride Price*. Both novels provide some insights about how Nigeria was colonized and its unique culture was ruined by the outsider.

Chinua Achebe, one of the most prominent postcolonial writers, was the child of a Nigerian family who was converted to Christianity. Nigeria was colonized by British forces before he was born and the native culture was exposed to systematic corruption. Since he was educated in English he could express his ideas related to colonial exploitation of his country and the oppositional voices rejecting the Europeans' idea that African people needed to be civilized by an upper force. Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* to some; is a story representing the texture of a colonized nation that has fallen apart. The novel depicts the first arrival of the colonizer then the conflicting co-existence of the two poles (the oppressed and the oppressor). Achebe's fiction handles the tribal values of Igbo society and the courageous wrestler Okonkwo who represents nobility and a



respected authority among his people and also the changes caused by the colonizer's penetration into the Nigerian society. The novel thematizes the defiance on one side and the compulsory surrender on the other since the Igbo society is suppressed and the protagonist is pushed to commit suicide.

Buchi Emecheta, a female writer, an Igbo Nigerian, and a Londoner as well, in her novel *The Bride Price* presents the story of a Nigerian female character Aku-nna, and her love for a former slave, but now a teacher Chike Ofulue, and her tragic end, in other words, her double colonization as both a Nigerian figure and a woman. The novel is a critique of colonization which limits particularly female characters struggling to build their identities, who are doomed to fail in African culture and space exploited by British culture and ideology. The novel revolves around the colonial impact detected especially in the colonization of Aku-nna, who is not allowed to get married to the man she loves and whose life is determined by the bride price she costs. She is a commodity to be sold and exchanged and her marriage with a former slave is not accepted by Okonkwo and the bride price is not paid; however, it is Aku-nna who has paid the price with her life in childbirth. In the words of Osa; "Even on her deathbed, however, Aku-nna insists that her marriage has been a happy one and that the choice of the name "Joy" should reflect the happiness of the union" (1988, 174). The postcolonial novels, *Things Fall Apart* and *The Bride Price* are contextualizing the Nigerian suppression by Britain and they are of paramount importance since they invite colonial reading.

2. TRACING COLONIAL IDEOLOGY IN CHINUA ACHEBE'S THINGS FALL APART AND BUCHI EMECHETA'S THE BRIDE PRICE

Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) details the colonial ideology in Nigeria through the Igbo society and the tragic events brought by the intruder's repressive authority. Written at the time when Nigeria was about to proclaim its independence, *Things Fall Apart* is not only a story about the dignity of African culture but also "about the democratic roots in Igbo culture" (Rhoads, 1993, 62) which was captured by the British ideology of colonization. From the beginning to the last part of the novel, one can see how the Nigerian way of life is broken into pieces, confusion and chaos. As stated by Kenalemang; "the people of Umuofia are separated into two groups immediately following the arrival of the white missionaries in their land" (2013, 8). The first colonial act is launched by the arrival of the missionaries and through the construction of churches, they convert the people of Umuofia to their religion. Thus, they create two opposing groups; the followers of Igbo culture and the ones who have been converted to a new religion. The "man of commanding" (Achebe 61) claims that what the people of Igbo culture worship is wrong and the new God is the creator of all the world:

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...None of them was a man of title. They were mostly the kind of people that were called efulefu, worthless, empty men. (Achebe,1959,60)

The advent of the missionaries as suggested by Achebe causes "a considerable stir in the village of Mbanta" (1959, 61) and the peaceful atmosphere begins to change. As a retaliation, one of the missionaries had been killed in one of the villages and the iron horse, representing the technological devices to invade the territory, is tied to a sacred tree. The white man uses his power to control the fantasized world of the Africans and continues to establish more institutions to occupy their values.

In the colonial context as suggested by Fanon; the colonizer maintains close contact with the natives and advises them not to bulge "by means of rifle butts and napalm" (1963, 38). The missionaries are aware of the fact that building churches would not result in the complete hegemony of the Igbo people and come to the conclusion that a frontal attack was necessary. For that purpose, they start to construct schools and a little hospital which later leads to the resistance of the Igbo society. Throughout time, the white man's ideology produces very quick results and more people aged thirty or more go to school after working on their farms in the morning and going to school in the afternoon. Mr Brown, the most effective missionary in the territory, can manage to "make one a court Messenger or even a court clerk" (Achebe,1959,75) and even a teacher in a very short period which facilitates the spread of more schools and churches in which it is possible to see more occupied Africans. Mr Brown's philosophy of the co-existence of churches and schools as stated by Achebe; "went hand in hand" (1959, 75) and "Mr Brown's mission grew from strength to strength, and because of its



link with the new administration it earned a new social prestige" (Achebe,1959,75). At the first glance, the mission of providing the people with educational facilities may seem to be an innovation introduced by the white man but it soon turns into the corruption and pleasure (Fanon,1963,165) of those in power which is clear evidence of the postcolonial national unrest in the formerly colonized countries and the change of cultural customs or "national aboriginality" (Jweid, 2016,534) belonging to the natives of the land.

Being one of the unique features of the African community, the judicial system, based on the mutual dialogue, stands out as a value to solve conflicting issues both in the Umuofia and the nearby villages. In case of any problematic matter, the elder and the respected members of the clans like Okonkwo negotiate and decide upon a possible but logical solution. In order to exemplify the potential power of cultural strength to prevent bloody incidents Achebe provides the readers with the exchange of Ikemefuna, a young lad, sacrificed by their neighbours to avoid blood and war. Clearly presented, the judicial system is not as primitive as the Europeans claim but they replace the mentioned system with their judicial philosophy.

As detected from the novel, as a reactionary attitude to dismiss the outsider Okonkwo encourages his people to defy the invasion and burn a church down. Described as the great wrestler, Okonkwo considers the indigenous strength to be a way to refuse ultimate slavery but they are caught and imprisoned and they are not even given food and drink. The six men, claimed to be responsible for the fight against the white man, are handcuffed, doomed to suffer for their effort to free themselves and exposed to physical abuse and insult: "You are not satisfied with your crime, but you must kill the white man on top of it. "He carried a strong stick, and he hit each man a few blows on the head and back" (Achebe,1959,81). The following lines point to the judgement of the natives according to the Europeans' rule:

We shall not do you any harm," said the District Commissioner to them later, "if only you 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 own country under a great queen. I have brought you here because you joined together to molest others, to burn people's houses and their place of worship. (Achebe,1959,80)

The novel's protagonist Okonkwo is Achebe's focal character through whom he tackles the devastating effects of colonization of the third world countries. First of all, his first son, Nwoye, is converted thus, alienated to his people and culture. Then, he is forced into exile which refers to the gradual punishment of the colonized. Finally, Okonkwo is given as the desperate fighter against the oppression since he loses his belief in his people's courage to join him in an uprising. After the release of the clansmen, they have a meeting during which white man's messengers arrive and ask them to desist. Okonkwo kills one of the messengers and lets the others escape. The event displays Okonkwo's determination to rebel against the occupier on one side but on the other makes him understand the passivity of his people to battle. As a result, Okonkwo commits suicide in his land and his people "came to the tree from which Okonkwo's body was dangling" (Achebe,1959).

Buchi Emecheta's *The Bride Price* (1976) is a portrayal of Nigerian culture and colonial ideology which leads to suppressed individuals. As detected in the novel, the place Aku-nna and her family live is full of traditions and customs. The following quotation is a reference to the African tradition, and the bleeding of a woman which is the symbol of womanhood and the time for marriage, and a very debatable tradition of cutting a piece of hair:

She turned round quickly and saw the blood. At first she thought that she had hurt herself. Then she realized what was happening to her. She had heard the women talk about this bleeding. When they were bleeding like this, women were 'unclean' and for those few days each month, there were a lot of things they were not allowed to do. 'So now I am a woman too,' she thought. 'I can be married. Any man can cut a piece of my hair and carry me away.' That was the tradition. That piece of hair made the girl his, forever" (Emecheta, 2000, 41-42)

Most of the customs and social occurrences are also associated with the white man and his traditions, and insatiable ambition for gain as well. For instance, the war and the inability of the white man to war and thus his exploitation of the African soldiers in the war are narrated in the novel as follows: "It was the effect of the war. Her uncles had told her that. The white men could not fight in Burma,' they told her. 'It was too hot and wet for them. So they sent West African soldiers instead. Your father was lucky to come home alive. Many



African soldiers died - but not from the bombs. They died of disease and fever and poisonous insects” (Emecheta, 2000,4).

The traditions related to the white man, which are also a great effect on their culture and life, are explained in the following quotation: “Ibuza was on the western side of the River Niger. Its inhabitants were Ibos and followed all the Ibo traditions. Even those who left their village to work in the white men’s world took their traditions with them. According to these traditions, Ma Blackie spent nine months in her special mourning hut. Then a new hut was built for her and she became Okonkwo’s fourth wife” (Emecheta, 2000,27).

It is evident that Western culture has a direct influence on the local culture. What’s more, the Christian schools were also under the control of the white man, the slaves were abused and mistreated by the white man though they were able to be wealthy and strong later:

That was another tradition. In the old days, when the white men first started their Christian schools, the local free men had no use for them. They sent their slaves to school to please the white men, while their own free-born sons stayed at home and followed the old traditions. Later events showed, however, that it was these educated slaves who got the top jobs. The sons and grandsons of these ‘slave’ families were now so rich and powerful that they seemed to command the respect of everyone. (Emecheta, 2000,28)

The reference to the white man and the system of education in the novel is narrated as follows: “‘Be quiet!’ said his mother. ‘What rich man is she going to marry? The son of a slave, who teaches at her school? Can you be sure that her mother will not keep the bride price for herself? You forget that her mother was married in the church. She was educated by the white men and she knows their laws. Oh, you forget many things, my sons’” (Emecheta, 2000,31-32).

The white man’s law, marriage dichotomy and the bride price in the novel are further explained in the following quotation:

What about Nna-nndo?’ said his mother. ‘A few days ago Ma Blackie told me that she wanted him to go to college. How will she pay for that? The white man’s law will be on her side if she demands her daughter’s bride price to pay for her son’s education. So, you had better tell your father to stop dreaming about bride prices. Who will want her anyway? She’ll never have children; she’s too small and thin. And she’s not even a woman yet! (Emecheta, 2000,32)

However, it is also seen that Aku-nna and Nna-nndo get used to the white man’s traditions though it is not an easy process for them: “After a year, Aku-nna and Nna-nndo had become used to Ibuza. At school they learned the white man’s ways. Then they came home to the countless, unchanging traditions of their own people. They were trapped, like two helpless little fish, between the two sets of traditions” (Emecheta, 2000,36).

It is apparent that in Nigeria there is a reference to the hybridity of customs and traditions which also refer to the cultural transformation. The western ideology of creating traditions and individuals in-between are employed in the novel as follows:

Most ceremonies in Nigeria combine European customs with native ones. Ezekiel Odia himself was a Christian and a churchgoer, but he always called in a native medicine man when he wanted one. Ezekiel’s funeral was like that too, with both native and Christian ceremonies. In Nigeria mourning is an art. You do not just cry; you shout and sing about all the good things the dead person did in his lifetime. Some people are such good mourners that they are paid to mourn for complete strangers. (Emecheta, 2000, 12)

The white man seems to offer peace and harmony for the African culture. His discourse suggests felicity, but the implication happens to be different:



Afterwards, the white man in the white suit, who was in charge of the church, spoke to them all. His name was Father Osborne, and he came from England. But he was certainly not speaking English. Then Aku-nna caught a few words, and she realized that this big, kind man with the sun-burned face was trying to speak Ibo, her own language. He welcomed them all to school after the holidays and hoped they would all work hard. He hoped all their families were well. 'Please give my personal greetings and best wishes to everyone,' he said. The whole school clapped and cheered. Father Osborne's Ibo was a little odd, but he had said the right thing, after all. (Emecheta, 2000,36)

The irony is clearly detected in Father Osborne's following words as well: "In the sight of God, we are all the same.' That was what A Father Osborne said, and that was what all good Christians believed. But in the eyes of his own people Chike still belonged to a family who had once been slaves, and no free man would allow a slave to marry his daughter" (Emecheta, 2000,37). Within this framework, the position of the slaves and the discriminated attitude towards them in the novel are explained as follows:

In the slaves too are a subaltern group a minority who can claim few privileges to themselves, represented by Chike. The irrational discrimination whereby Africans demean a sect of their own community by naming them slaves or osu is castigated by Emecheta. The attitude of the free born natives of Ibuza to a relationship with a slave born is presented throughout the novel, right from the initial warning given by her friend Ogugua to Akunna to the heart-rending wails of her mother, who, in spite of her liking for Chike, bewails her lot in being saddled with such a daughter. (Johnson, 2017,33)

In this respect, Johnson (2017) adds, "It was considered the greatest insult that could befall a family of good ancestry to be despoiled of it with the blood of slave origin" (34).

Being a former slave not only causes deprivation of emotional bond but also constant prejudice and discrimination despite their wealth, education and respectable status: "Chike's father, Ofulue, had been a teacher too. He had four wives, all from nearby towns, and he had enjoyed a comfortable, successful life. The people of Ibuza never forgave him for this and never, for example, allowed him to become a chief. 'When the son of a slave becomes a chief,' the freemen said, 'then we know that the end is near!'" (Emecheta, 2000, 37). The conflict or the transformation or the relation concerning the two cultures, customs, the East, and the West in the novel, and the encounter with the new cultural structure, thus the effect of British colonization, are summarized as follows:

Western principles and mores slowly seep into the land – some of them good for the country but some detrimental to the future of the people. Thus the collision of cultures could be said to bring about an amalgamation of the two civilizations- East and the West. Chike is the offspring of Westernized Africa and the seeping in of European outlook and mode of living into Africa Iboland. The impact of the colonial invasion of the land and the adaptation of native culture to it are vividly delineated in the initial chapters of the novel. Akunna's father is presented as the sorry remains of Nigerian collaboration with the imperial power in fighting Hitler. The British who could not bear the swamp in Burma made the West African soldiers stand in for them. Many of them died from the miserable conditions they were subjected to and her father barely escaped with a very badly affected leg, which despite the injections of the railway doctor and the incantations of the tribal dibia, drove him on to death. This mixing up of both traditional and western modes of living is again seen in the dreams Akunna has of her future marriage. (Johnson, 2017,34)

It may be pointed out that the novel portrays the issue of cultural transformation as stated below: "*The Bride Price* interconnects the myth, marriage and literature of Africa. The clash of cultures remains the most widely studied theme in African literature. The white man's prejudice and discrimination, the native's struggle to uphold his identity – these seem to have a centre hold on most of the studies" (Jha, 2017,182-183). Jha furthers the statement: "African literature has most commonly been viewed as a literature of identity. In the postcolonial light especially, literary critics as well as readers have long been preoccupied with the native tradition versus the colonists' idea of civilization. What, however, has remained a constant motif in the African literature is the stronghold of myth" (2017,183).



As stated before, in terms of following the two cultures, the traditions related to the burial of Ezekiel are narrated in the novel as follows:

It is through Ezekiel's funeral and burial that Emecheta first exposes some of the clashes between traditional society and the influences of British colonization. She tells the reader that Ezekiel was buried as he had lived "in a conflict of two cultures." She then relates the burial practices and beliefs of the traditional culture, which have been infiltrated by the belief in heaven and hell as preached by the Anglican ministers. Fearful of offending any of the gods, the Ibo people follow the ceremonial dictates of both cultures. (Jha, 2017,185)

With regard to the notion of culture, Barthelemy (1989) points out the desire of Aku-nna to belong to the Western culture, but her inability to do that and her adopting the way of her culture:

Desperately Aku-anna tries to escape the ancestral past, but after her father's death, she never completely returns from her sojourn into ritual time. No matter how strong her desire to live in Western time, to live a modern, Western life, Aku-nna cannot entirely jettison her respect for and belief in the ways of her people. After all, she "unknowingly set out to eradicate" the traditional superstition. (563) Barthelemy (1989) also notes that, "Although the novel's sympathy for Aku-nna remains uncompromised and undiminished, she dies a victim of dangerous and seemingly uncontrollable confluences" (563).

While analyzing *The Bride Price*, it is also worth referring to Iweriebor's article (2011) titled "The Colonization of Africa":

Between the 1870s and 1900, Africa faced European imperialist aggression, diplomatic pressures, military invasions, and eventual conquest and colonization. At the same time, African societies put up various forms of resistance against the attempt to colonize their countries and impose foreign domination. By the early twentieth century, however, much of Africa, except Ethiopia and Liberia, had been colonized by European powers. (1)

As is known, the ideology of colonization is mostly based on wealth and power and thus economic, political and social reasons as explained below:

The European imperialist push into Africa was motivated by three main factors, economic, political, and social. It developed in the nineteenth century following the collapse of the profitability of the slave trade, its abolition and suppression, as well as the expansion of the European Capitalist Industrial Revolution. The imperatives of capitalist industrialization – including the demand for assured sources of raw materials, the search for guaranteed markets and profitable investment outlets – spurred the European scramble and the partition and eventual conquest of Africa. Thus, the primary motivation for European intrusion was economic. (Iweriebor, 2011, 1)

However, it is also pointed out that "The European imperialist designs and pressures of the late nineteenth century provoked African political and diplomatic responses and eventually military resistance" (Iweriebor, 2011,2). Iweriebor (2011) adds that, "Naturally Africans resisted and insisted on the maintenance of a system of commercial interaction with foreigners which expressed their sovereignties as autonomous political and economic entities and actors" (2).

The fight of African societies against European imperialism and the inevitable result of this defiance are described as follows:

It is quite clear that most African societies fought fiercely and bravely to retain control over their countries and societies against European imperialist designs and military invasions. But the African societies eventually lost out. This was partly for political and technological reasons. The nineteenth century was a period of profound and even revolutionary changes in the political geography of Africa, characterized by the demise of old African kingdoms and empires and their reconfiguration into different political entities. Some of the old societies were reconstructed and new African societies were



founded on different ideological and social premises. Consequently, African societies were in a state of flux, and many were organizationally weak and politically unstable. They were therefore unable to put up effective resistance against the European invaders. (Iweriebor, 2011,3)

It is also stated that, “By 1900 much of Africa had been colonized by seven European powers – Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, and Italy. After the conquest of African decentralized and centralized states, the European powers set about establishing colonial state systems” (Iweriebor, 2011,3). Within this frame, how the British colonial system works in Nigeria is explained in the following quotation:

In Nigeria, the Gold Coast in West Africa, and Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika in East Africa, for example, Britain organized its colonies at the central, provincial, and regional or district levels. There was usually a governor or governor-general in the colonial capital who governed along with an appointed executive council and a legislative council of appointed and selected local and foreign members. The governor was responsible to the colonial office and the colonial secretary in London, from whom laws, policies, and programs were received. He made some local laws and policies, however. Colonial policies and directives were implemented through a central administrative organization or a colonial secretariat, with officers responsible for different departments such as Revenue, Agriculture, Trade, Transport, Health, Education, Police, Prison, and so on. (Iweriebor, 2011,3).

3. CONCLUSION

Things Fall Apart handles the first encounter between the occupier and the occupied and the arrival of the missionaries. Using violence as a way to colonize the indigenous people of Igbo society, the colonizer starts to *impose* his religion and education on the local people. The colonizer dominates Nigerians, and they are converted which leads to alienation and uncertainty. Not only are they converted but also judged according to a system which is representing the overwhelming authority of the Europeans. Like Emecheta’s *Bride Price*, *Things Fall Apart* employs suffering, death and despair caused by the sudden and systematic exploitation of Nigeria. Both novels, display how colonial thinking transforms the values peculiar to a specific society and creates enslaved people who are pushed to serve the white master. In the light of the explanations that have been presented, it can be said that the notion of slavery is depicted in both novels. The impact of the British colonization is still felt, and most of the characters experience the dichotomy of belonging or estrangement. For example, Chike in *The Bride Price* experiences in-betweenness. He belongs to nowhere; he is neither a slave nor considered to be a teacher. On the other hand, Aku-nna belongs to nowhere due to the uncertainty and clash of cultures, native traditions and double colonization as a female character. Her mother is depicted to have existential concerns as a woman and a mother as well. Most of the characters, especially the female characters are all doomed to suffer. Though the characters try to keep both Western and African traditions they are still colonized. It is obvious that there is nothing apart from death, suffering, and despair no matter how hard these characters try. So, mainly designed by the male authority, the custom of the bride price, mourning, and cutting a piece of hair, commodification and enslavement of women, the perception of slavery, polygamy, such class distinctions as *osu*, *obi*, all bring unhappiness, estrangement, downfall and frustration on the part of these characters. Thus, the devastating effects of the so-called ideology of “civilizing others” are apparent in postcolonial writing and both novels provide significant details of understanding the physical and mental colonization of other nations.

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