

Propagation of English Culture in Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease*

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with Chinua Achebe's (1930-2013) *No Longer at Ease* (1960) which depicts the dissemination of English culture in Nigeria and its effects on the life and identity of Obi Okonkwo, the Western educated male protagonist. The focus of this paper is on the dissemination of English culture and submission of Nigerian culture in order to represent the inferiority of Nigerians. Edward Said's (1935-2003) attempts regarding Orientalism and Frantz Fanon's (1925-1961) issues relating inferiority of the indigenous people caused by colonization are used in this paper. The colonisers affect the life, mind, culture, and identity of the colonized through various ways such as education, religion, and language. The Qualitative Research Methodology has been used in this paper to gain a clearer perspective of the main issue. Many other articles discussing about the literature namely- "No Longer at Ease" & the biography of author- Chinua Achebe were also studied. The topic is analysed and studied from different points of view and finally a conclusion is given. There have been two major findings in this paper: (a) 43% of the "black" population believes that the people and their country would NEVER give them equal rights. (b) 50% of the same population believes that they will always be treated as inferiors or suspicious in public settings. The depiction of alienation and rootlessness forms a continuing thematic concern not only to Achebe but also to the writers like *Richard Wright, Frantz Fanon, Toni Morrison, Nyantara Sahgal, V.S Naipal etc.*

Keywords: *Binary Relation, Acculturation, Colonization, Cultural Transformation, Cultural Dissemination, Orientalism, Stereotyping*

Introduction

Albert Chinualumogu Achebe (1930-2013), generally known as Chinua Achebe, was born in Ibo village of Ogidi in southeastern Nigeria. Although Achebe's parents converted to Christianity, but they also admired their traditions. Therefore, his childhood was regarded by rich ambivalence of heritage. He was accepted at the University College in Nigeria on a scholarship. At first, he studied medicine, but he changed it to English-like the protagonist of *No Longer at Ease* (NLE), Obi.

This paper is a review of Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* through the filter of Orientalism. The orientalist's notions about Africa and the colonialist's attitude towards Africans are analyzed. In addition, the effect of colonialism and imperialism on the minds of the black characters will be studied and it will be shown how Western orientalist and colonialist education shape the "self image" and identity of the blacks.

No Longer at Ease is about a civil servant who is finally corrupted by the corruption of society of Lagos. The protagonist is Obi Okonkwo, a grandson of Achebe's first protagonist in *Things Fall Apart*. Obi is struggling against many obstacles. He is trying to live a decent life while he is trying to satisfy his family, his home village, and larger society. Unable to make a balance between his values and the expectations of the society, Obi experiences a total breakdown.

Background of the study

Through the theories of Edward Said (1935-2003) and Frantz Fanon (1925-1961), this paper shows how colonisers influence the identity and culture of the colonized nations. These critics try to examine the colonized people as the victims of Western hegemony, and investigate the ways in which colonial discourse acted as an instrument of power. Western writing about the Orient represents it as weak, irrational, and feminine in contrast to the strong, rational, and masculine West.

The binary relation is based on a psychological desire to create a cultural hierarchy between East and West. This binary opposition is reinforced by the stereotypical images and archetypes that are constructed by literary texts and historical records about the East. In *Orientalism* (1978), Said argues that the cultural inferiority of the Orient is attributed to the nature or 'essence' of the Orientals. Said uses the ideas of power and knowledge, which are analyzed by Michel Foucault (1926-1984). Said finds out beyond the knowledge about the Orient, which is produced by European hegemony. This knowledge is not

authentic, which privileges the culture of the European, and marginalizes non-European. Another significant issue, which makes the black to accept the superiority of the white culture is the colonizers' own discursal patterns and their stereotypical images of Africans.

Research Objectives

1. To focus on the dissemination of English culture and submission of Nigerian culture in order to represent the inferiority of Nigerians.
2. Depicting how colonialism and Western orientalism produce stereotyped images of Nigerians and Obi as corrupt.
3. To show the effect of colonialism and imperialism on the minds of the black characters and how Western orientalist and colonialist education shape the "self image" and identity of the blacks.
4. To examine the colonized people as the victims of Western hegemony, and investigate the ways in which colonial discourse acted as an instrument of power.

Research Questions

1. What was the reason behind the concept of "Blacks" being considered as the slaves and "whites" as their masters just because of their racial profile?
2. How does the colonizer impose his/her superiority on the natives who try to assimilate themselves with the colonizer?
3. Does Chinua Achebe showcase the difference between two cultures & puts emphasis on the superiority of English culture?
4. How did these features engrave great negative impressions on the minds of Nigerians & their respective communities?

Statement of the problem

Colonialism can be explained as the control and domination of one country over other countries, not only over lands, but also over the language, religion, values, thought process and lifestyle of the people. In human history, colonialism can be observed as the destruction of cultural heritage and value systems of indigenous people. A man's alienation means his dehumanization, his estrangement from his own community, society and eventually from his own self. In the words of Sidney Finkelstein alienation is "a psychological felt toward something seemingly outside oneself which is linked to oneself, a barrier erected which is actually no defense but an impoverishment of oneself". The protagonist as an alienated human being or outsider is a re-current character in post-colonial writing. The protagonist in such writing began to alienate from his culture, community and society due to some alien forces and western-education.

Significance of the study

The title of the novel relates mostly to Obi and his predicament. He finds that he is "no longer at ease" inside African society, where bribes are taken, where he is shunned for wanting to marry the woman he loves because of his ancestry, and where he is looked down upon because he has trouble relating to the people from the village where he was born. He is not "at ease," either, however, within British sectors of society. He is able to speak fluent and good English, he is able to analyze and discuss, but he is unable to relate to someone like Mr. Green. He also feels himself, like other Nigerians, as is evidenced in the retrospective scene about London, a stranger in a strange land while in England.

He misses Nigeria and is in fact nostalgic for her when he is away. He understands what he must do for his country and that she is important; however, his return is different from memory. Memory is, in many ways, shattered when he revisits Lagos and his old home of Umuofia. Furthermore, by the end he finds himself uneasy with his lot in life: he is broke, he has lost Clara and his mother and has given in to taking bribes. Finally he feels guilt for this but it is too late.

There is also the irony of Obi's name, which means "the mind is at last at rest." It is supposed to mean that his father's mind is at rest because he was born a boy after so many girls; however, when juxtaposed against the title of the novel it becomes the greatest irony of the novel because Obi is, of course, never, himself, "at rest." The title is perfect because it describes a generation of Africans, in this case Nigerians, that find themselves living in between worlds, cultures, and on the verge of a post-colonial world.

Literature review

Chinua Achebe's novel *No Longer At Ease* describes the twilight zone between the British rule of Nigeria and the country's independence. It is a transitional period during which the Whites are leaving the country and the natives are getting responsible for their own lives; colonialism is giving way to a post-colonial situation. Nigerians are now forced to negotiate the claims of both colonial modernity and their previously degraded African mode of life. The period of transition is one in which binary oppositions (colonial vs. African, modernity vs. tradition) seem to be collapsing, unveiling what Mudimbe calls "the strong tension between a modernity that often is an illusion of development, and a tradition that sometimes reflects a poor image of a mythical past"

No Longer At Ease was first published in 1960, the year of Nigeria's independence from England. This is significant because it is a novel that pertains to a trend of literature called post-colonial literature that still survives. There are many issues that arise out of post-colonialism, issues that authors and writers around the world have had to deal with. Africa, India, and the West Indies all have come out of the colonial era with a new literature that must address the problems that colonialism left behind. Some of the problems in post-colonial regions concern language, education, the conflict between traditional ways and Western or European ways, the presence of the English, and corruption. Those who later moved into the land of the colonizer (for instance, Obi, while studying in England) experience an entire set of new problems such as nostalgia for home, memory, and the desire for the homeland.

Fanon argues:

I begin to suffer from not being a white man to the degree that the white man imposes discrimination on me, makes me a colonised native, robs me of all worth, all individuality, tells me that I am a parasite on the world, that I must bring myself as quickly as possible into step with the white world, that I am a brute beast, that my people and I are like a walking dung-heap that disgustingly fertilises sweet sugar cane and silky cotton, that I have no use in the world.

Fanon, in *Black Skin, White Masks*, consistently argues that the encounter of black and white people does not lead to the assimilation of black and white identity. For one thing, the white community does not allow the black community to become integrated into their supposedly superior culture. If such a thing happens, the colonizers' claim to political domination and economic exploitation becomes null and untenable. No genuine equality can be allowed, although some moments of controlled similarity will always be allowed to create momentary relief among the blacks. Unlike those theorists who argue for the possibility of assimilation and equality, Fanon advocates a revolutionary and radical response on the parts of all oppressed and marginalized groups to return to one's traditions and values, and to reject the settler's value:

Thus, the native discovers that his life, his breath, his beating heart are the same as those of the settler. He finds out that the settler's skin is not of any more value than a native's skin; and it must be said that this discovery shakes the world in a very necessary manner. All the new, revolutionary assurance of the native stems from it. For if, in fact, my life is worth as much as the settler's, his glance no longer shrivels me up nor freezes me, and his voice no longer turns me into stone. I am no longer on tenterhooks in his presence; in fact, I don't give a damn for him. Not only does his presence no longer trouble me, but I am already preparing such efficient ambushes for him that soon there will be no way

out but that of flight. The colonized prepared to reject the settlers. The native elites, who were educated in the colonizers' culture, played an important role in decolonization and independency.

Frantz Fanon in "Black Skin, White Marks" locates alienation within the colonial situations, and maintains that the colonized is alienated not only from his colour and the traditional community, but from his very being as a black person because the Black man has no ontological resistance in the eyes of the Whiteman.

Thus, such people become strangers in their own nation and are called black white men. After getting western education and Western thinking there began a transformation of the native in to something other himself-a westernized native. Native people began to adopt western practices and culture. They forget their own identify. They started mimicry of the white men and their culture. This alien civilization and their education bring a sense of alienation in Nigerian youth. Achebe describes the pathetic situation faced by those born at the crossroads of culture and therefore unable to allegiance neither to their own native values nor to the values inherited by them by being exposed to the Western materialism.

Research methodology

First, the topic was chosen and the primary source was text of the novel which is interpreted to find out racial conflict and the concept of post apartheid & Acculturation prevailing in and around African Countries .Many other articles discussing about the literature namely- "No Longer at Ease" & the biography of author- Chinua Achebe were also studied. The topic is analysed and studied from different points of view and finally a conclusion is given. The qualitative method of research has been used as the method of subjective interpretation of the material.

Type of research

Analytical research: This project is based on analytical type of research as the critical analysis of the topic has been done using the already available information taken from books and web.

Data type

Primary data: Primary data is the data collected by the investigator himself / herself for a specific purpose. In the same way, the features of racial differences/

discrimination, colonisation and the concept of the dissemination of the culture have been taken out after reading “No Longer at Ease”

Data collection method

Data collection tools used in this project includes web-based literature review and observation methods.

Results and Discussion

Colonialism can be explained as the control and domination of one country over other countries, not only over lands, but also over the language, religion, and lifestyle of the people. In human history, colonialism can be observed as the destruction of cultural heritage and value systems of indigenous people. Ania Loomba defines colonialism as “the conquest and control of other people’s land and good”. Edward Said argues that colonialism is the result of imperialist operation, which suggests an unequal relationship. One of the main purposes of colonialism is to change the life of indigenous people. Said is against stereotypical representations of non-Europeans in general terms as ‘Black,’ ‘Oriental,’ etc. For him, these general descriptions humiliate the complexity and variety of other cultures and reduce them to a few negative concepts. For him, these negative notions are meant to represent the non-Europeans as inferior to Europeans and this hierarchy is used to justify colonialism and domination of West over East.

ACCULTURATION

John Widdup Berry is a psychologist known for his work in two areas: 1. ecological and cultural influences on behavior and 2. the adaptation of immigrants and indigenous people following intercultural contact. The first is broadly in the domain of cross-cultural psychology; the second is in the domain of intercultural psychology.



Figure 1 showcases John Widdup Berry.

Intercultural psychology

He has examined the psychology of **Acculturation** and intercultural relations, and has developed the concepts of *acculturation strategies* and *acculturative stress*.

The concept of **acculturation strategies** refers to some different ways for how groups and individuals seek to live together, using the four concepts of *integration* (engaging both cultures), *assimilation* or *separation* (engaging only one or the other culture) and *marginalisation* (engaging neither culture). The outcomes of these ways of intercultural living have been described in terms of three forms of adaptation: *psychological* well being; *sociocultural* competence; and *intercultural*-relations.

The concept of **acculturative stress** was developed as an alternative to culture shock; this concept uses the stress, coping and adaptation framework to describe the challenges encountered during the acculturation process. He has published research books dealing with these issues between 1977 and 2017. He is much involved in the application of research findings in both of these areas to the development of policies and programmes in the domains of education, immigration, multiculturalism and wellbeing.

Berry's Model of Acculturation

Culture shock and the stages of culture shock are part of the acculturation process. Scholars in different disciplines have developed more than 100 different theories of acculturation (Rudiman, 2003); however contemporary research has primarily focused on different strategies and how acculturation affects individuals, as well as interventions to make the process easier (Berry, 1992).

Berry proposed a model of acculturation that categorizes *individual* adaptation strategies along two dimensions (Berry, 1992). The first dimension concerns the retention or rejection of an individual's native culture (i.e. "Is it considered to be of value to maintain one's identity and characteristics?"). The second dimension concerns the adoption or rejection of the host culture. ("Is it considered to be of value to maintain relationships with the larger society?") From these two questions four acculturation strategies emerge:

- **Assimilation** occurs when individuals adopt the cultural norms of a dominant or host culture, over their original culture.
- **Separation** occurs when individuals reject the dominant or host culture in favor of preserving their culture of origin. Separation is often facilitated by immigration to ethnic enclaves.

- **Integration** occurs when individuals are able to adopt the cultural norms of the dominant or host culture while maintaining their culture of origin. Integration leads to, and is often synonymous with biculturalism.
- **Marginalization** occurs when individuals reject both their culture of origin and the dominant host culture.

Studies suggest that the acculturation strategy people use can differ between their private and public areas of life. For instance, an individual may reject the values and norms of the host culture in his private life (separation) but he might adapt to the host culture in public parts of his life (i.e., integration or assimilation). Moreover, attitudes towards acculturation and the different acculturation strategies available have not been consistent over time. For example, for most of American history, policies and attitudes have been based around established ethnic hierarchies with an expectation of one-way assimilation for predominantly white European immigrants (Fredrickson, 1999).

The metaphor of the melting pot has been used to describe the immigration history of the United States but it doesn't capture the experiences of many immigrant groups (Allen, 2011). Generally, immigrant groups who were white, or light skinned, and spoke English were better able to assimilate but immigrant groups that we might think of as white today were not always considered white enough. For example, Irish and Italian immigrants were discriminated against and even portrayed as black in cartoons that appeared in newspapers and it wasn't until 1952 that Asian immigrants were allowed to become citizens of the United States (Allen, 2011).

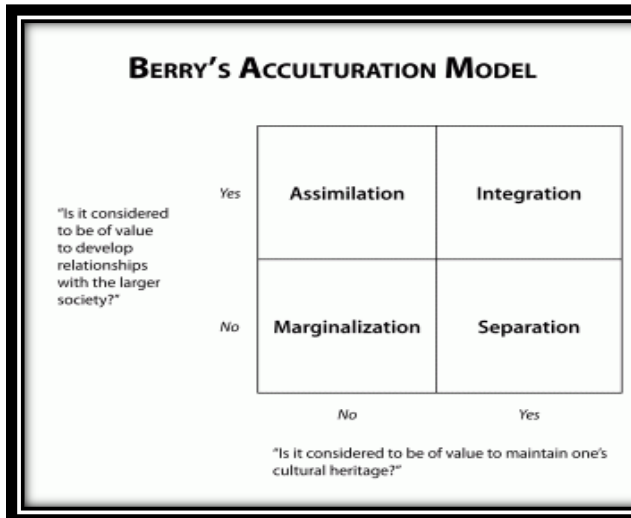


Figure 2 showcases the current depiction of Berry's Model of Acculturation.

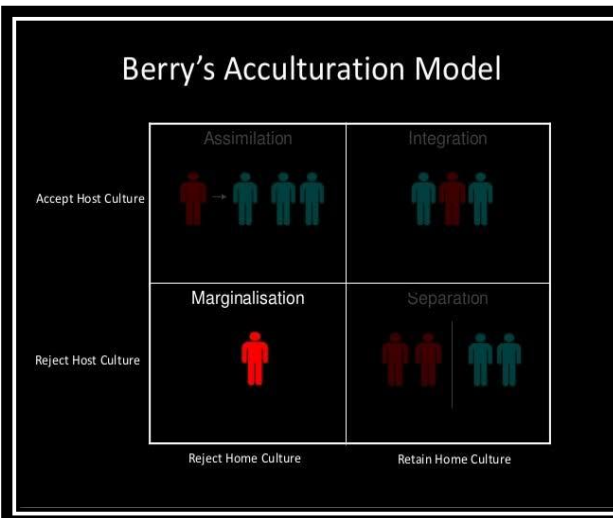


Figure 3 portrays the pictorial explanation for the same.

Loads of surveys have been carried out in order to calculate the level of threat and insecurity that blacks face till date.

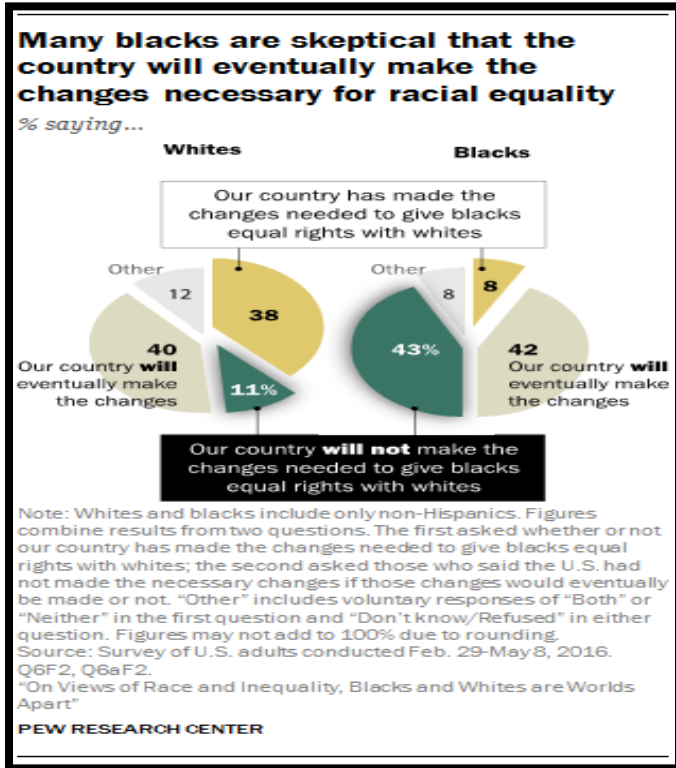


Figure 4 depicts the % of whites & blacks being skeptical about the country making necessary changes for racial equality.

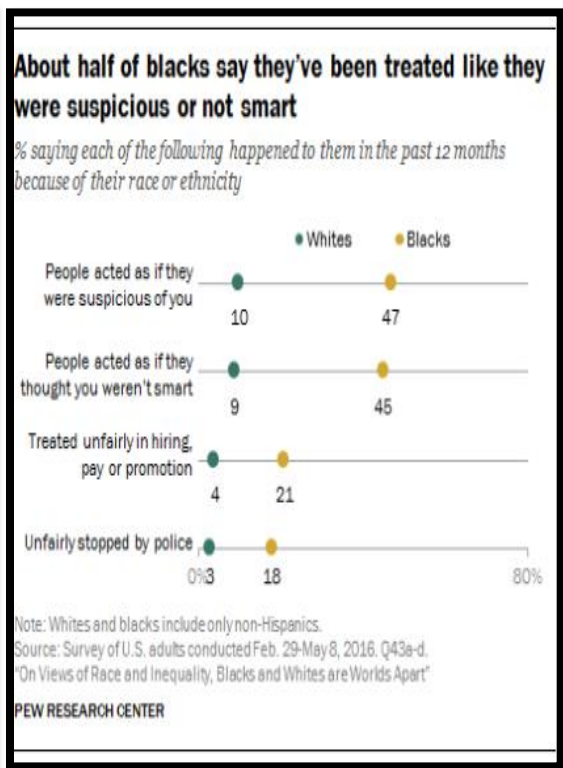


Figure 5 depicts the percentage of blacks confirming that they've been treated like they were suspicious or not smart in comparison with the whites.

Orientalism, Stereotype and Image of Colonized Africa

During colonization, the colonizers create the image of the orient or non-Europeans in different ways. Said, in Orientalism, asserts, "the Orient (Third world countries) has helped to define Europe (or the west) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience [...] The Orient is an integral part of European material civilization and culture". He claims that the history and culture in the Oriental countries depend on their connection with the West; consequently, such dependency makes their self-image. The colonizers situate the colonized in their own ways; therefore, the colonized never identify him/her self with the colonizers that enable them to expand their culture and attitude.

One significant aspect of Achebe's novel is its description of British colonialists' attitude towards Nigeria and Nigerians. Achebe poses Mr. Green,

Obi's boss, as the representative of British colonialists in Nigeria. As Obi, the protagonist of the novel, imagines, Mr. Green resembles the British characters in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899). Prior to his contact with Africa, Mr. Green had imagined and portrayed the 'dark' continent. His created image of Africa and its stereotype cast a land with dark colours and thick bushes waiting for the arrival of human and establishment of civilization. As Obi imagines, Mr. Green must have become very disappointed with real Nigeria when he arrived in the country for the first time, since the land was not as dark and bushy as he had imagined. However, Mr. Green continued to adhere to his false beliefs about Nigeria and whenever people and situations failed to satisfy his expectations, he started cursing and swearing:

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 headhunters performing weird ceremonies and unspeakable rites. But when he arrived, Africa played him false. (NLE 107)

This story proves Said's description of Orientalism as a field of knowledge comprising imaginary lands, not real lands. Said argues that Orientalism is not concerned with "correspondence between Orientalism and the Orient, but with the internal consistency of Orientalism and its ideas about the Orient". According to Said, as the ideas about the Orient have always been imaginary and formal, they create a seamless follow of all writing genres, from sociology to literature, and from philology to historiography.

In the opening chapter of the novel, Mr. Green is playing tennis with a member of the British Council. Meanwhile, during which he discusses the case of Obi and his acceptance of bribes. Mr. Green is not surprised at Obi's behaviour because, according to him, "the African is corrupt through and through":

I cannot understand why he did it," said the British Council man thoughtfully. [...] "I can," said Mr. Green simply. "What I can't understand is why people like you refuse to face facts." Mr. Green was famous for speaking his mind. He wiped his red face with the white towel on his neck. "The African is corrupt through and through". (NLE 3)

This scene illustrates only one of the many scenes of Mr. Green's attitude towards Africa as the negative counterpart 'other' of Europe. He is a typical colonialist who has a firm belief in the positive effects of colonialism. According to him, Britain has done its best to bring "education" to Africa, and he laments the fact that the Education in England has not improved Obi and Nigeria. He tells Obi, "I think Government is making a terrible mistake in making it so easy for people like that to have so-called university education. Education for what?" (NLE 116).

By reminding Obi of his debts, Mr. Green tries to play the role of a protector for Obi. According to Said, orientalists imagined the Orientals as lazy and ineffectual in order to justify their own role as colonizers. As Said argues in many cases, 'irrationality' and 'laziness' are among the attributes that the Orientalists usually attach to the Orientals. Accordingly, by trying to manage Obi's financial affairs, Mr. Green is satisfying his own wishes. He likes to consider Obi as a lazy and irrational. In this way, he justifies his own stay in Nigeria. In other words, he thinks that the Nigerians need him and other colonisers, because they cannot manage their own lives.

Corruption and guilt are the colonized characteristics, in contrast, the colonisers are right and justice, and "the native is always presumed guilty" (Fanon 53). Achebe skillfully depicts the sense of guilt among the Ibo people. Obi, who is accused of bribery, does not feel pity in the court. The courtroom is full of the people who left their job to hear the vote; some of them pay money to doctors to obtain paper of illness for that special day. Such corruption, like bribery, pay money for certificate paper, and abortion are interwoven in a colonized nation, justifying their deserve punishment.

Master/Slave: Binary Relation among Characters

According to Hegel, for each slave group, there should be a master one. The master in order to recognize himself needs and wants slave's existence and if there is no slave, there might not be a master. Master and slave identify their being in the relation of each other; therefore, the existence of the master depends on the existence of the slave.

As Obi tells readers, the times of Mr. Green are different from early colonial days when a British official was free to treat Africans as he liked. However, Mr. Green is blind to the changes in Nigeria and continues to use the lens of a typical colonialist's mentality to see the world. For example, when he orders beer, he tells one of the men near him to bring "one beer for this master" (NLE 4). The encoded master/slave expressions in his diction, shows his colonial mentality and his false image of the Nigerian people. This way of self-expression corresponds with Said's definition of orientalism as a kind of knowledge, which remains blind to historical changes.

According to Said, the continued insistence on "Oriental backwardness" strengthens the superiority of Western civilization and serves as a justification for the West's imperialist and colonialist projects on a humanitarian basis. This higher-lower status relation is based on a psychological desire to create a cultural hierarchy between West and East. Meanwhile, the loaded stereotypical

images in the literary texts composed about the Orient have reinforced the double-edged classification.

Mr. Green has a habit of reminding Obi of his debts and bills. For him, even the “educated” Africans are not civilized enough to have a program for their life and think about tomorrow. He tells Obi, “in a country where even the educated have not reached the level of thinking about tomorrow, one has a clear duty” (NLE 95). As Obi thinks, Mr. Green seems to love Africa, since he is spending all his time working in this country and concerning for its people, including Obi. However, as Obi truly realizes, Mr. Green does not like the real Nigeria, but the Nigeria of his imagination. He likes the Nigeria of thick bushes, dirty natives, and submissive servants. He likes his office, because his submissive workers, stewards, and messengers who give him a pleasing self-image as a colonial master surround him.

Mr. Green is reluctant to accept and love educated people like Obi, since they refuse confirming his belief in Africa’s backwardness. Interestingly, when Obi is accused and caught for accepting bribes, he celebrates the event because it proves his opinion towards Africans as corrupt and unchangeable. According to Green, Nigerians go to Universities “to get as much as they can for themselves and their family. Not the least bit interested in the millions of their countrymen who die every day from hunger and disease” (NLE 116).

Mr. Green is patronizing and proud. His treatment of Nigerians reminds Obi of a certain British man, a school inspector, whom Obi had met during his school days. Obi remembers a day in school when the British school inspector slapped a Nigerian headmaster in front of the students as punishment for the headmaster’s failure in an official matter.

For Obi, Nigeria has changed and white men can no longer act as boldly as they did in those days. “That was twenty years ago. Today few white men would dream of slapping a headmaster in his school and none at all would actually do it. Which is the tragedy of men like William Green, Obi’s boss” (NLE 65). In those days, ‘old African’ men were submissive, because they worshipped white men. The new generation of Nigerians, Obi included, have a higher self-respect and no longer accept English men as their masters.

However, Mr. Green cannot recognise the difference between the new generations of Nigerians and the generation of the headmasters. He openly criticizes the educated Nigerians and insists that education of Africans is a waste of time, since they are unable to improve themselves. His treatment of Obi, shows his pride and his disgust of Obi as an educated African:

Mr. Green thinks of Nigeria as a typical oriental society bare of history or historical progress. The predominance of corruption and laziness cripple the

society to change and recover from the evil of poverty and backwardness. Such a disappointing image of the 'Orient,' as a society without history, persuades some critics to conclude that the social change can be achieved merely by the hands of colonial powers.



Figure 6 displays a Zanj slave gang in Zanzibar (1889)

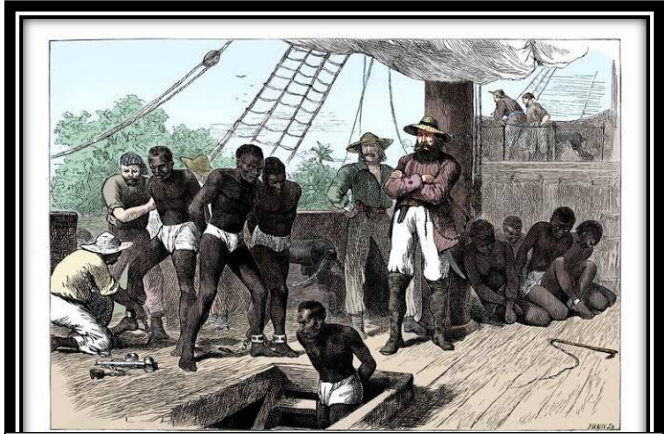


Figure 7 shows images of Enslavement and the Slave Trade.

Propogation of European Culture

Understanding a society's traditions and belief equals understanding its cultural identity. In fact, every nation is a set of traditions and customs that construct the individuals' life style. Tribal and colonized nations have been transformed because of their cultural alienation of their traditions. This change can be attributed to colonization due to its domination over a country in general, and over its culture, in particular.

The wave of European cultural invasion over non-Europeans disturbs the stability of the traditional culture. The dominated power of the colonizers unfolds in two ways. First, it expands its trade, Christianity, and education, and transforms the indigenous people's cultural identity. Simultaneously, the culture of the colonized is changed and a new culture emerges. Albert Memmi, in *The Coloniser and the Colonised* (1991), argues that the colonizer imposes his superiority on the beliefs and culture of the natives. During colonization, the colonizer becomes "an illegitimately privileged usurper". According to Memmi, the colonizer continues this condition, which brings his superiority.

One of the significant themes in Achebe's narrative is the stream to show that the experience of colonialism and the dissemination of European culture in Nigeria have influenced the formation of the new cultural identity and distortion of African people's self-image and cultural identity. As Achebe shows throughout his novel, European education, especially when it concerns the study of African

culture and people, is thoroughly through the lens of Orientalists, it is based on an essential difference between Europeans and non-Europeans.

Western orientalists have represented Europeans as civilized, educated, and powerful while non-Europeans as backward, lazy, and powerless. This kind of image-formation is enlarged by the experience of colonialism, thus, it affects the mentality of both colonizers and the colonized. Achebe's portrayal of the black characters discloses the line of thinking in Nigerians, especially those who are similar to Obi, studied in and graduated from the British universities have some of Mr. Green's illusions in common.

Obi is a typical educated young man who has a firm belief in the positive effects of European education on Nigeria. He has no respect for "old Africans" whom he considers as the roots of all problems in Nigeria. The term old Africans in his viewpoints refers to those Africans who still occupy some offices and lack ample education and skill to cope with the circumstances of modern Nigeria:

Obi's theory that the public service of Nigeria would remain corrupt until the old Africans at the top were replaced by young men from the universities was first formulated in a paper read to the Nigerian Students' Union in London. But unlike most theories formed by students in London, this one survived the first impact of homecoming. (NLE 38)

Two distinct reasons can be recited for Obi's disrespectful treatment towards old Africans. The first reason stems in the debris of relationship between the whites and the blacks, which was based on master/slave relationship. For example, the relationship between Mr. Omo and Mr. Green reminds him of the relationship between the black headmaster and the white school inspector in Obi's school days. Mr. Omo is a typical old African, a submissive servant who calls Mr. Green as his master. The second reason of Obi's hatred of old Africans reverberate his firm beliefs that ring the importance of education and insignificance of African traditions and culture. Obi himself does not realize the depth of his Westernization. Although he loves his country, he is deeply attracted by European culture and when he returns from England he can no longer retains a peaceful relationship with his family, the Umuofia Progressive Union and the whole culture of old Nigeria.

In some ways, Obi looks like Europeans rather than the Ibo. He does not allow Umuofia Progressive Union, his father, and his tradition to pass an opinion on his decisions. He decides on his education and marriage. His European education alienates him from his people:

- 'You cannot marry the girl,' he said quite simply - 'Eh?'
- 'I said you cannot marry the girl.'

- 'But why, Father?'

[...] 'But all that is going to change. In ten years thing will be quite different to what they are now.'

[...] Obi repeated his point again. What made an osu different from other men and women? Nothing but the ignorance of their forefathers. (NLE 132-34)

Obi's parents are hurt as he disobeys their tradition. Osu is an outcast in Nigerian traditional culture to marry him/her is forbidden. Obi is European in his beliefs and he is ready to marry an osu. However, the society and his parents perplex Obi's thoughts, and he is caught between two worlds, Christianity and modernity or to convention and tradition. Here the cultural conflict has multiple dimensions.

In the tribal society, there is no mention of adultery, and marriage connects to polygamy. Nevertheless, in *No Longer at Ease*, Achebe shows the problem of marriage among Western educated elites and for the first time depicts the sexual affair- outside of marriage- between Obi and Clara. It is due to their Westernized education and European life style. This novel displays a record of the conflict between Ibo's society and colonial domination that attacks on personality, psyche, and identity of an African character.

Another sign of the spread of European culture in *No Longer at Ease* is the natives' attitude toward government. "In Nigeria the government was 'they'. It had nothing to do with you or me. It was an alien institution and people's business was to get as much from it as they could without getting into trouble" (NLE 33). Because most of the people in Umuofia or tribal society do not take part in government, they do not have a sense of belonging. The people of Umuofia call the person who has a job in government as a holder of "European post" (NLE 92). Therefore, the mind of such people always struggles with Europeans and their cultural superiority.

European Education as a Way of Cultural Transformation

Through educational system, the myth of inferiority complex is internalized by the colonized. It means that the colonizers form the knowledge of their colonies. In such a process, the colonized begins hating his selfhood, language, history, religion, and values. Therefore, the native elites accept the colonizer's attitude, morality, and values. In a colonized country, European system of education trains native elites in a way to reject their traditional rules. The elites set a touchstone of the colonizer's value system as a scale to evaluate their assimilation within such a system. Self- esteem for the elites is the decolonization of mind and identity of the colonizer's bandage and the development of a real tribal and cultural identity.

Educated people play an important role in tribal colonized society. In Achebe's Nigeria, education is considered as greatness and villagers compete with each to send their sons to European countries. "Titles are no longer great, [...] Greatness is now in the things of the white man. And so we too have changed our tune. We are the first in all the nine villages to send our son to the white man's land" (NLE 54).

As Obi returns from England, he exhibits the first signs of his disrespect toward the local tradition, and he reshapes his previous belief that the Nigerian education system is capable of changing the society for better. Meantime, despite his family and Umuofia Progressive Union's contest, he decides to marry Clara that is another step in overlooking tradition.

Joseph, Obi's friend, stunned by Obi's behaviour, tries to put it in Obi's mind that education and educated people are unqualified to cause revolution and they are only "pioneers":

"Look at me, Obi." Joseph [...] "What you are going to do concerns not only yourself but your whole family and future generations. [...] In future, when we are all civilised, anybody may marry anybody. But that time has not come. We of this generation are only pioneers." (NLE 75)

Joseph believes that all aspects of reform in Nigeria should be calculated and cautious. In contrast, Obi hastens to put the new values in the place of old ones. Obi accuses Joseph of having a colonial mentality and tells him that being a pioneer means that he should make great changes to the Nigerian society.

On the one hand, Obi's thinks he betrays his cultural heritage when he studies English literature. He loves his native language and at the same time, he is delightful with English language. Obi like the other elites is torn between his thinking in Ibo community and the new ideas, which are developed by his European education:

Four years in England had filled Obi with a longing to be back in Umuofia. This feeling was sometimes so strong that he found himself feeling ashamed of studying English for his degree. He spoke Ibo whenever he had the least opportunity of doing so. Nothing gave him greater pleasure than to find another Ibo-speaking student in a London bus. [...]It was humiliating to have to speak to one's countryman in a foreign language, especially in the presence of the proud owners of that language. They would naturally assume that one had no language of one's own. (NLE 49-50)

On the other hand, Obi's shifting from studying law to studying English literature indicates his devotion to English culture. Chapter three of the novel shows that Obi has a deep interest in the T. S. Eliot's poetry, a poet who believes in the superiority of the tradition of English literature and the values of Western

classics. Clara, who is alike Obi in studying in England, does not understand Eliot's poetry, but she enjoys movies made in the West. Accordingly, both of these characters are infatuated with the Western culture and its products.

Devotion to European culture, which is a product of colonialism, can be seen in the behaviour of many other black characters. The members of the Umuofia Progressive Union are very proud of Obi because, as they proudly repeat it, he was graduated from England. Obi's family and the people of his home village hold a feast for him and they are very eager to see how education in England has transformed Obi.

The reader can expect people's bewilderment of Obi's conducts, which resemble a person who has just graduated from an English university. When Obi returns from England, he decides to stay with Joseph instead of staying at a hotel room that the Umuofia Progressive Union has reserved for him. This decision surprises Joseph, because he thinks it is not proper for a man with a degree from an English university to stay in a friend's home:

"I'm moving out of this filthy hotel tomorrow morning and coming into your place."

Joseph was amazed, but also very pleased. He tried to raise another objection, but it was clear his heart was not in it.

"What will the people of other towns say when they hear that a son of Umuofia returned from England and shared a room in Obalende?"

"Let them say what they like." (NLE 36)

Here, Joseph represents the opinion of Nigeria's public and their estimation of European Education. Consequently, when Obi appears at his graduation ceremony, which is held by Umuofia Progressive Union, Joseph and others cannot hide their frustration over Obi's casual dress and his informal English. The president of the Umuofia Progressive Union, contrarily, is dressed for the occasion and gives speech in full and formal English raising the audience's enjoyment and appreciation. The audience's interest in the president's fluent English shows the extent of their attraction to the language of the colonisers.

In the same chapter and in another setting, when Obi and Joseph go to a restaurant, which is owned by an old English woman, Obi surprises Joseph by his preference of Nigerian food over English food. When Joseph expresses his surprise at Obi's taste, Obi tells him that he likes Nigerian food better, because he is tired of eating "boiled potatoes" (NLE 34). It seems that Obi himself is not fully aware of his status and prestige as a man who has just been graduated from an English university. The narrator mentions that this restaurant is a place

for English colonialists and well-to-do Africans who visit the place for English food. It is among the places where the educated and wealthy Nigerians go to visit Europeans and learn European ways of life.

Despite all concern for their country, educated Nigerians admire English men consciously and unconsciously. The black skinned Minister of the State, Sam Okoli, acknowledges the white men's part in helping Nigeria. At the same time, from his viewpoint, Nigeria belongs to the black and white men must leave it, though, he thinks that the white men enabled the black to rule their own country.

Conclusion

As shown in the previous sections, Achebe's depiction of Nigeria is very similar to what Edward Said's describes in *Orientalism*. Achebe has created a number of African and British characters and described their relationship and their attitudes towards each other in order to emphasize the dark aspects of colonialism. Among the British characters in the novel, the most interesting one is Mr. Green. As shown above, Mr. Green is the representative of British colonialists in Nigeria. According to Achebe, Mr. Green is alike the British colonialists in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Although he lives in Lagos and witnesses the progress in Nigeria, he still imagines Nigeria as a "dark" continent. For him, Africa is a primitive land dominated by darkness and thick bushes and needs the colonisers for light and civilization. However, Mr. Green is not alone in his illusions and he should not be blamed for his false notion about Africa. Like many other Europeans, he is affected by orientalist education and orientalist texts. As discussed above, the black characters, too, are affected by colonization. For example, Nigerian people's expectation of Obi as a person who has just been graduated from an English university shocks him and makes many problems for him. Because the Nigerians think too highly of English language, England, and its universities, they expect Obi to be a superman. This shows the inferiority complex of the Nigerians. The stereotypical depiction of Africa and African people has created a false and negative self-image for the black people. Therefore, the experience of colonialism and the exposure to European culture has distorted African people's self-image. Achebe shows that the European study of African culture and people is based on the aims and intention of Western orientalists; it is based on a binary opposition of Europeans and non-Europeans.

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