

Chapter Seven

From Nwana to Adichie: Britishness goes full circle in Nigerian Literature

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According to Ayandele,

The intrusion of the White man into Nigerian society in the 19th century was a new experience for people beyond the coast. Caught by surprise and mystified that there were peoples with pigmentation different from that of Africans, many Nigerian communities initially doubted the White man's humanity and had deep-rooted distrust for him. ... By the end of the 19th century, Nigerian communities were to realize that the wearer of white skin, whom they at first pitied and looked upon with contempt, was a superman who was bent on becoming their ruler.¹

Since those early years of British contact with Nigeria, Nigerian literature has been reflecting on the changing persona of the British in the country through its frequent inclusion and handling of British characters. In doing so, it had to take into account the multiple faces presented by the British explorers, missionaries, traders and administrators who pursued different aims and objectives, in a country equally characterized by a huge variety of cultures and local traditions. It painted them both individually and as a group, revealing their initial prejudices, but also their gradual acculturation and understanding of local cultures through their interaction with Nigerians, as they trod through unchartered territories and got gradually attached to the country they once considered as a possession. This representation of the British will be considered here from the Igbo point of view, based on novels written in Igbo, Pidgin and English between 1933 and 2006. This study will track changes in Nigerian writers' perception of Britishness, from the prejudiced or accommodating colonial

administrators and district officers of *Omenuko* to the city girl's husband of *People in the City*, from the young female teachers of Emecheta's school to the arrogant university professors sketched by Ike and the lonely journalist that dominates Adichie's second novel. Focusing on the last of these novels, this chapter will then reveal a significant shift in the presentation of British attitudes and interests, with the central character of Richard Churchill, the young journalist from Shropshire, standing out as very different from his compatriots. He desired to see the country, and his move away from the partying Lagos to the University of Nigeria in Nsukka gradually leads to his transformation as he falls in love, learns Igbo and chooses to stay in Igboland through the war years. He ends up writing an essay to denounce the British stand on the civil war – *The World Was Silent When we Died*, embedded in the novel. This latest write-up, while echoing Achebe's district officer's monograph on *The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of the Lower Niger*, stands in sharp contrast with it, as its author now takes sides with the embattled Biafrans.²

Colonial figures

The first foreigners who settled in Igboland in the late 1850s were missionaries. The Church Missionary Society (CMS) settled in Onitsha in 1857. Its British evangelical missionaries were later joined by French catholic missionaries from the Holy Ghost Fathers in 1885. The Eastern province became part of the British Empire on 5 June 1885 but on the ground, the British presence only became effective in 1891. Yet *Omenuko* (1933), the first Igbo fiction, makes no mention of missionaries, portraying the colonial administrators instead. Written by Pita Nwana, it starts towards the end of the nineteenth century and ends with the hero's return to his ancestral village at the end of October 1918; the last chapter mentions the great 1929 depression, dating the end of the story to 1930. The novel straddles two generations, giving readers a hint of the British progressive takeover of Igboland, with most of the narrative

covering the years 1910-1920. It is interesting to note that Nwana presents the British as far removed from village life, where they hardly intervene. This sense of distance has been discussed by a number of observers. Ayandele notes that ‘not a single convert was made for a generation by the CMS Niger Mission’ and that at the beginning of the twentieth century, ‘knowledge of the interior East of the Niger remained rather sketchy’.³ According to Basden, in 1900, ‘foreign influence had not appreciably affected Onitsha. Very largely, the people and the country were as they had been for generations’.⁴ Igboland continued its resistance to the colonial administration well beyond 1914 and the British relied on indirect rule to manage the affairs of the colony.

To legalize the power they exercised over their fellow countrymen, each of those recognized as chiefs by the colonial administration was given a certificate to that effect. This certificate was known as a ‘Warrant’ and the chiefs came to be popularly known as ‘Warrant Chiefs’.⁵ Having put into place this system of indirect rule through warrant chiefs, the British left the people to govern themselves and, whenever they met with delegations of village elders, showed prudent respect and appreciation for local customs. The novel is the life history of Omenuko, a local trader and the hero of a rags to riches tale – he works his way out of poverty into immense wealth; when tested by a mishap in which he loses all his goods in a river, he sells some of his load carriers and apprentices into slavery to buffer himself, and later flees to seek refuge in another village. There he gets into local politics, becomes a Warrant Chief and eventually redeems all the people he sold. He then returns home and spreads his wealth around. The relationship between the colonial District Commissioner (DC) and the Warrant Chief is portrayed as cordial: they enjoy semi informal chats and interact as equals.⁶ Omenuko’s leadership benefits immensely from the DC’s good will: the man is instrumental to Omenuko’s success, gives him his warrant and later supports his chieftaincy.

Omenuko on his part uses the DC as an ally against his envious compatriots, courts his favour and manipulates him and the power behind him to his advantage.

Subsequent novels, several of them focused on the same colonial past, present a very different and more diverse picture of the British. In Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958), set in the last years of the nineteenth century, the whites, represented here by both missionaries and administrators, have imposed their presence and taken the upper hand in Igbo village affairs, to the detriment of villagers. From his exile, Okonkwo first hears about the coming of the British. Rumour has it that they are 'strange', even 'mad', and certainly having 'no sense'.⁷ Why? Probably because reports about their behaviour seemed to indicate that these strangers were unpredictable and difficult to understand. The fact that missionaries, traders and administrators all came from the same Europe, yet sometimes behaved very differently, did not make matters easier. This impression of strangeness is mainly derived from day to day observation of these foreigners' behaviour. Villagers report the white man as saying 'that our customs are bad'; Rev. James Smith 'saw things in black and white. And black was evil'.⁸ Most of those missionaries show they not only deliberately ignore the tradition and customs, but go against them and encourage locals to do the same. They teach converts 'to get rid of all the customs that were not good and praying to idols'.⁹ They build their church in the evil forest, take on abandoned twins and challenge the python worship. After meeting the white evangelists, Nwosu goes fishing in the lake that was taboo and clears the evil forest.¹⁰ Some of the colonial officers may appear more liberal than others: Achebe's DC asks his guards 'to treat the men with respect because they were the leaders of Umuofia', but he later puts the village elders in jail for destroying the church.¹¹ Using divide and rule tactics, the colonial master sows division in the midst of the African community: 'Now he has

won our brothers and our clan can no longer act as one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart'.¹²

While *Omenuko* and *Things fall apart* focused on village affairs and presented the British as powerful, yet peripheral, later novels gradually penetrate expatriate circles and describe Europeans as prisoners of their walled compounds and homes partly furnished with imported items, enjoying English dishes they trained their stewards to cook, staying in big cities like Lagos or secure settlements and seldom exploring the interior. Usually sent by their Church or Government, the British perceive themselves as members of a select club. Always presented as part of a group, they stick together in spite of their class, educational and other differences, each one hoping to be like those men who 'have made the Briton the law-maker, the organizer, the engineer of this world'.¹³ They spend their leisure time in their homes, throwing parties for other expatriates, or in select clubs such as the old regimental mess of Okperi, reserved to Europeans where they exchanged derogatory comments and negative views about the natives. They are portrayed as often arrogant, pompous, condescending and persuaded, like Prof James Brown¹⁴, that they belong to 'a higher culture' and that the 'natives' are just 'like children'.¹⁵

Communication continues to be a major hindrance in the uneasy relationship between the British and the Igbo. The British use interpreters to talk to the natives; they either despise the Igbo language or find it too difficult and refuse to learn more than a few phrases, contented with speaking pidgin to communicate with their servants. After all, even Ugwu considers English as 'a superior tongue, a luminous language ... rolling out with clipped precision.'¹⁶ Achebe had already put in writing what the locals, on their part, thought of those strangers who do 'not even speak our tongue'.¹⁷ This behaviour is encouraged and facilitated

by the fact that the British find themselves in a relationship often new to them, of master-servant, priest-layman or teacher-pupil, enjoying an intellectual, financial and social superiority they often did not enjoy in their home country. The British on their part are often not faring better in their relationship with their own superiors back home, with their reports ignored and their advice ‘constantly overruled by starry-eyed fellows at headquarters’. As Winterbottom puts it, it is all ‘words, words, words’.¹⁸ Communication difficulties mean that colonial officers and other Europeans end up being first and foremost defined by their actions. Missionaries spread the gospel, build schools, win converts, send evangelists to remote areas and often lose their lives in the process. District Officers administer the region allocated to them, settle disputes and organize forced labour, with the help of warrant chiefs like Omenuko. They are all consequently appreciated for the material improvements they bring: hospitals, schools, roads and other amenities – a generosity that leads locals to believe that the strangers came from the sky and that, according to Emecheta, ‘going to the United Kingdom must surely be like paying God a visit’ (HAW 24).¹⁹ Some of the Brits sketched in the literature show some degree of interest and respect for the cultures they have come to influence, even though this often condescending interest is usually motivated by a desire to rule more effectively. The first DC presented by Achebe is ‘a student of primitive customs’ and prepares to write a book on Igbo culture. ‘As he walked back to the court he thought about that book. Every day brought him some new material. The story of this man who had ... hanged himself would make interesting reading. ... He had already chosen the title of the book, after much thought: *the pacification of the primitive tribes of the lower Niger*’.²⁰

Arrow of God (1964) is set in the 1920s, when the number of Brits gone to Eastern Nigeria ‘to answer the call’²¹ and represent their Government had increased. In the novel, the British presence at their headquarters in Okperi numbers five. The five on Government hill are:

Clarke, the ADC, fresh from Britain; Roberts, in charge of the police; Wade who supervises the prison and Wright from the Public Works Department. The first to be mentioned is Captain T. K. Winterbottom, 'a hardened coaster' with 15 years of Nigeria and the local title of *Otiji Egbe*, breaker of guns, acquired after he ended a local war by confiscating all the guns.²² 'Determined to do his duty', and proud of his country's achievements, Winterbottom 'would not now exchange the life for the comfort of Europe' in spite of finding Nigeria 'demoralizing'.²³ He reads former Liverpoolian DC Allen George's *Pacification of the primitive tribes of the lower Niger* mentioned at the end of *Things Fall Apart* and offers it to read to his new assistant Tony Clarke, who replaces another Brit who died of cerebral malaria. Clarke, the Cambridge-educated son of a bank clerk, has sympathies for Igbo customs. Women too had answered 'the call': Dr Savage 'the severe and unfeminine missionary doctor ... locally known as Omesike, one who acts with power' is in charge of the local hospital.²⁴

No Longer at Ease (1960) completes the two earlier novels by covering the years immediately prior to Independence, with the British still recorded as a people who 'claimed to teach other nations how to live'.²⁵ William Green, the colonial administrator, aptly represents the colonial officers of those last days before Independence: he arrived with noble intentions but soon gets sidetracked by his prejudices and ignorance of the culture, and ends up considering Africans as corrupt and inferior. The novel is the fruit of Achebe's desire to 'revaluate [his] culture' in the face of that criticism.²⁶ The three novels, acknowledged by their author himself in 1962 as constituting 'only one, a kind of trilogy', at a time when he was still writing *Arrow of God*, thus bring readers up to Nigerian Independence.²⁷

Ulasi's *Many Thing You no Understand* (1970), set in the 1930s, fills the chronological gap left by Achebe's trilogy and centres around a case of head-hunting following the local chief's

death, with two British officers on the case, the younger one very concerned, the other one, with a longer experience of Nigeria, very reluctant. The novel opposes two very different ways of dealing with the locals: the young Assistant District Officer (ADO) MacIntosh, fixed on high moral grounds, is bent on showing a better way to the people; as for the DO Mason, with fifteen years of rural life in Nigeria and a diet of pepper soup, ‘rice and stew and egusi soup [that] hasn’t affected [him], he prefers just letting people go on with their way of life and trying not to interfere, while studying them.’²⁸ One interesting point highlighted in that novel is that knowing the other’s language can change a situation – and the fact that the DC can speak pidgin does not help him understand Igbo. The whole novel is written in Pidgin English, setting the issue of language at the centre of the plot. Pidgin is presented there as a middle ground that gives the British the false impression they communicate and penetrate the Igbo mind. The man whose brother was beheaded in preparation for the chief’s funeral went to report the murderers in writing to the DO – ‘If Sylvester no speak ADO language he no for go to lodge complaint to ADO ear, he for come to us elders ... But with church and school now, any young man who speak ADO language fit go to him’.²⁹ For Ulasi, white men are strong but they too are human and juju can affect them just the same. In the end, the ADO loses his sanity and the DO is lured into a deadly trap. The last words he will hear will be: ‘many thing you no understand here, Mr DO ... And I no think say you go fit understand them if you live here for one hundred year!’³⁰ In an interview in 1969, Achebe, in response to a question about his portrayal of Europeans who came to Igboland, sums up his thoughts and those of other writers on the colonial masters: ‘I think they were very ignorant. And that’s very bad, you know, when you are trying to civilize other people. But you don’t really need to be black-hearted to do all kinds of wrong things. Those who have the best intentions sometimes commit the worst crimes’.³¹

Independence and the British lingering presence

Reflecting on the first years of Nigerian independence some thirty years later, Osaghae notes that, at the time, 'relations with Britain and the West were conducted in a manner that sometimes casts doubts on the country's independence.'³² In the 1960s, there were still a good number of expatriates among secondary school teachers, as in Emecheta's *Methodist Girls' High School*: Miss Davies, the Welsh music teacher; Miss Osborne from Scotland; and Miss Humble, the young English teacher with her MA in English from Oxford. Emecheta recalls that Miss Humble loved her language to the exclusion of others and 'probably felt that [it] was too good for the likes of me to want to use as a means of expression.'³³ Only a few expatriate priests were left in Igboland; primarily employed as part of the growing Nsukka academic community, they were expected to lend a hand in nearby parishes.³⁴ In Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* (2004), Father Benedict insists on Latin only for the Mass, with clapping kept to a minimum. The white priests' attitude is still globally presented as misleading as their teaching transforms the father of the house into a cruel man, a criminal, wife-beater and child molester.³⁵

People of the city (1954) was the first Nigerian novel in English to reflect on the growing, 'modern' Nigerian city life; published in Britain, it gained international acclaim. In opposition to the practice alluded in *Arrow of God* (1964), and in answer to that novel's question: 'How widespread was the practice of white men sleeping with native women?'³⁶, it was equally the first to bring together (albeit briefly) an interracial couple: Grunnings, a British engineer who left a wife and children in England marries Beatrice, a city girl, according to native law and customs. He seems to care about her, but never takes her with him on his vacations to Britain; Beatrice, on her part, considers that Grunnings 'can never be

a real husband' and after giving him three children, decides to leave a life she finds boring, to go back to the city streets.³⁷ The publication of Achebe's first novel four years later eclipsed Ekwensi's contribution and put the focus back on traditional Igboland and colonial British figures who still ruled - by proxy.

Fifty years later, the creation of Richard Churchill, one of the main protagonists of Adichie's second novel, presents readers with a complete departure from earlier depictions of Europeans. Born in a Shropshire village, he lost both his parents aged nine, was raised by an aunt in London and does not have many happy childhood memories. He says of himself: 'I've always been a loner and I've always wanted to see Africa, so I took leave from my humble newspaper job and a generous loan from my aunt'.³⁸ Unlike his predecessors, he does not travel to Nigeria on a Government or Church mission but leaves on his own, running away from his orphaned past.

New Brits for a new country

Igbo culture rates behaviour as being far more important than looks, and this could explain why details of the Europeans' looks are rather sketchy and conventional in the novels studied: a face that has 'the colours of condensed milk and a cut-open soursop' with a 'British nose ... pinched and narrow', a 'pale and thin' figure.³⁹ Richard Churchill cannot deny his 'stained-glass blue' eyes that betray his northern origin, but soon gets a tan and wants people back home 'to see him, the man he had become after his years here: to see that he was browner and happier'.⁴⁰ Like other Brits before him, he is initially perceived as strange by Nigerians - but for entirely different reasons: because he does not correspond to the stereotype of the typical European. 'He did not want to be shown around; he had managed well on his past trips

abroad'.⁴¹ He travels on his own, fulfils his dream of visiting the Igbo Ukwu archaeological site, reads and enquires about Igbo customs with the vague idea of a book about Nigeria in mind, and learns how to greet and how to behave in a gathering or when going on a condolence visit. Although he appears at first as just another colonial anthropologist, he will eventually prove to be genuinely interested in people and their culture, rather than on a purely scientific mission. This explains why he does not take any recordings or photos at Igbo-Ukwu, an attitude that leaves the locals asking: 'what kind of white man is that?'⁴²

During his first few months in Lagos, Richard slides into a brief relationship with another Brit, Susan, a young lady slightly older than him who 'spoke with authority about Nigeria and Nigerians.' He moves in with her at her invitation and, while in Ikoyi, meets other whites, 'mostly English, ex-colonial administrators and business people from John Holt and Kingsway and GB Ollivant and Shell BP and United Africa Company. They were reddened from sun and alcohol' and 'discussed cricket, plantations they owned or planned to own, the perfect weather in Jos, business opportunities in Kaduna.'⁴³ He finds himself performing very poorly at those parties, where he feels out of place: 'This was expatriate life. All they did, as far as he was concerned, was have sex with one another's wives and husbands, illicit couplings that were more a way of passing heat-blanced time in the tropics than they were genuine expressions of passion'.⁴⁴ After moving to Nsukka on a research grant, he carries on with the same attitude, and frowns at the Enugu-based Brits 'still going off to play water polo and have cocktails at the Hotel Presidential' while soldiers fight at the door of Biafra's capital. At the time, Nsukka 'was full of people from USAID and the Peace Corps and the Michigan State University', yet he never sought to join them.⁴⁵ A rather shy and reserved person, he felt comfortable with the fact that Odenigbo and his fellow lecturers 'were casually accepting of him [and] did not pay him any particular attention'.⁴⁶

Keen to learn the Igbo language, he seizes every occasion to practice, first with the stewards who did not care ‘whether or not he got the tones right’, then with people, any time and everywhere.⁴⁷ He feels greatly encouraged and honoured whenever people appreciate his efforts, as he takes it as a major sign of his integration. He tends to think poorly of himself and easily takes the position of a pupil, learning the language and the customs from people around him, even those below him on the social ladder. He enquires from his gardener about medicinal herbs to help with his nervous impotence, asks the steward Ugwu to take him to his hometown masquerade festival, goes there and asks many questions and interviews people. During the war, he will be faced with the fact that he can be used: unlike *Omenuko*’s DC, Richard perceives the manipulation attempt, because he understands the people and their language. Although his first reaction is to refuse to comply, he eventually understands the view shared by Biafran leaders and, because he really considers himself as a Biafran, eventually accepts to write for the Propaganda Directorate: as they explained, people ‘will take what you write more seriously because you are white. Look, the truth is that this is not your war. This is not your cause. Your government will evacuate you in a minute if you ask them to. So ... if you really want to contribute, this is the way that you can’.⁴⁸

He has very basic needs and likes the sparsely furnished Nsukka guesthouse – two arm-chairs, a single bed, and bare kitchen cupboards - where he ‘felt instantly at home’. His steward boasts of a substantive experience of serving foreigners and only cooks foreign recipes. But Richard, who buys his groundnuts from hawkers and knows everything about haggling, considers that ‘Nigerian food is quite all right’ – he actually ‘disliked the food of his childhood, the sharp-tasting kippers full of bones, the porridge with the appalling thick skin on top like a waterproof lining, the overcooked roast beef’.⁴⁹ We see him enjoying

Odenigbo's pepper soup so much that a fellow lecturer concludes that 'this is proof that Richard was an African in his past life'.⁵⁰ Unlike Winterbottom, initially 'so depressed by the climate and the food', Richard never feels homesick, except for the day, in Port-Harcourt, where Kainene's humid garden reminds him 'of the crumbling house in England', 'the tall poplars and willows ... and the fields'.⁵¹ The fact that he associates these memories with those of his deceased parents is a clear indication that the land he evokes there only lives in his memory. His cousin Martin summarizes Richard's move in a letter: 'Is 'going native' still used? I always knew you would!'⁵²

Whenever Richard does something, it is in response to a request for help, and he enjoys acting as a bridge-builder – as when he serves as a guide to foreign journalists. He does not play politics, and is portrayed as a plain and simple-minded person. In particular, he never tries to influence people around him. His sole aim seems to be accepted as part of the population and each time he moves one step ahead towards this goal, he feels very happy. His progressive integration is signposted first by his leaving Britain for Lagos; then by his breaking away from Susan – a relationship she had initiated and led. Then there is his moving from Lagos to UNN and his later decision to identify with the Biafrans, leave Nsukka at the start of the war and join Kainene, the young Igbo lady with whom he fell in love while in Lagos. These successive decisions will be sealed at the end of the war by his rejoining the staff of the University as a researcher in the new Institute of African Studies – a decision he did not have to make, as Kainene never returned from an incursion across enemy lines in the last days of the war. This last decision, taken independently, ends Richard's quest: he has found his place.

It took the young Brit a whole novel to settle down - he did not seem to have anything to offer. The only real activity with which he is constantly associated is the writing of a book, for which he gets a scholarship and a lot of attention, does not come to anything in the end. He finally recognizes that 'the war isn't [his] story to tell' after all – a young houseboy will take over the writing of the book and change its title to that of 'Narrative of the Life of a Country'.⁵³ This apparent lack of material contribution shifts the focus to his character and the real purpose of his stay in the country. So why is he there? He is the catalyst that reveals the true character of people around him: his encounters with Major Madu, for example, reveal the Igbo officer as a rival whose ultimate aim is to take Richard out of the picture. Richard has a better insight into Nigerian politics, but 'the man made him feel inconsequential'.⁵⁴ More importantly, Richard's presence gives this novel on the Biafran war an international dimension. He is the only character able to compare the war with other killings he knew about - the previous massacres of Igbo people in the north, the bombings of German towns by the British at the end of World War II and the Rwandan massacres of the early 1960s. He represents a new generation of foreigners who, like the Count Von Rosen, come to a now independent country to learn and help, on an equal footing with the people.⁵⁵

Conclusion

Even though one could argue that Richard's fate was prepared by his personal history, the main factor that led to his personal transformation was his passion – his unreserved admiration for the culture that produced the roped pots of Igbo Ukwu, his love for a girl that stood out as different, and his empathy for a country he helped through the pangs of birth. In his own words, 'he would be Biafran in a way he could never have been Nigerian – he was here at the beginning, he had shared in the birth'.⁵⁶ Through his war experience, the British

orphan discovers and embraces a new-found identity, whilst offering Nigerians he meets, the occasion to discover their own identity through their interaction with him.

Through the evocation of the country's past history, the re-living of past struggles and shattering intercultural encounters, behind the multifaceted presentation of the British, Nigerian literature had been seeking to retrieve a lost identity. As Achebe put it in 1980, In fact it has been said that three or four hundred years ago we were taken out of our history and dumped into someone else's history. We lost the initiative – the historical initiative – and therefore for us it is a question of life and death that we recapture that initiative, and we situate ourselves again in the mainstream of our own thought and feeling and experience and perception. This is why it is very important that we understand who we are.⁵⁷

With Richard Churchill, Adichie produced that last link in the chain – the one who gives its history back to Nigeria.

¹ E.A. Ayandele, 'External Relations with Europeans in the Nineteenth Century: Explorers, Missionaries and Traders' in I. Obaro, ed., *Groundwork of Nigerian History* (Ibadan: Heinemann, 1999), 367-368

² Whereas the colonial essay is published, Richard's write-up will not progress beyond the first chapters – another difference between him and the colonial British.

³ Ayandele, 'External Relations', 373

⁴ G.T. Basden, *Niger Igbos* (London: Frank Cass, 1966), 114

⁵ A. Afigbo, 'The Eastern Provinces Under Colonial Rule', in Obaro, *Groundwork*, 417

⁶ In the hierarchical order of the colonial service, 'the Assistant District Commissioner (Officer) was the lowest in the hierarchy and the Governor the highest. In between were the District, Divisional and Provincial Commissioners' See Afigbo, 'The Eastern Provinces', 415

⁷ C. Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (London: Heinemann, 1958)

⁸ *Ibid.*, 124 and 130

⁹ B.I.N. Osuagwu and E.C. Nwana, *The Story of the Life of Pita Nwana, Author of Omenuko* (Umuahia, Abia State: Ark Publishers, 1999), 7

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 8

¹¹ Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, 138

¹² *Ibid.*, 124

¹³ C. Achebe, *Arrow of God* (London: Heinemann 1964), 33

¹⁴ C. Ike, *Naked Gods* (London, Collins 1970), 88

¹⁵ Achebe, *Arrow of God* 38

¹⁶ C. Adichie, *Half of a Yellow Sun* (London: Fourth Estate, 2006), 22

¹⁷ Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* . 124

¹⁸ Achebe, *Arrow of God*, 56

¹⁹ B.Emecheta, *Head above water, an autobiography* (London, Heinemann 1986), 24

²⁰ Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, 147

²¹ Achebe, *Arrow of God*, 32. Achebe, the son of an Anglican catechist, carefully chose this religious expression, taken from the Bible and Jesus' call of his disciples, to draw a parallel between those who left everything and followed Christ into the mission field, and those who left the comfort of Britain and their families to go and 'civilize' that corner of Africa, even though they were not sent as religious missionaries.

²² Achebe, *Arrow of God*, 29. These Igbo titles and salutations acquired by foreigners, such as *Omesilicha*, meaning 'the one who entirely finishes his work', given to the missionary Basden, (See Basden *Niger Igbos*, xxii), recognized their ability and achievement; they also established them as co-opted members of the Igbo society.

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- ²³ Achebe, *Arrow of God*, 32
- ²⁴ Ibid. 150
- ²⁵ C. Achebe, *No Longer at Ease*, (London: Heinemann, 1964), 57
- ²⁶ B. Lindfors, ed., *Conversations with Chinua Achebe* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1997) 45
- ²⁷ Ibid. 7
- ²⁸ A. Ulasi, *Many Thing You No Understand* (London: Michael Joseph 1970), 163
- ²⁹ Ibid. 118
- ³⁰ Ibid. 188-190
- ³¹ Lindfors, *Conversations*, 30
- ³² E. Osaghae, *Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Independence* (London: Hurst, 1980), 51
- ³³ Emecheta, *Head Above Water*, 21
- ³⁴ The University of Nigeria, Nsukka, known as UNN, opened in 1960 and briefly renamed 'University of Biafra', was the first independent Nigerian university.
- ³⁵ C. Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus* (London: Fourth Estate, 2004)
- ³⁶ Achebe, *Arrow of God*, 103
- ³⁷ C. Ekwensi, *People of the City* (London: Heineman, 1963) 32
- ³⁸ C. Adichie, *Half of a Yellow Sun* (London: Fourth Estate, 2006), 62
- ³⁹ Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus* (London: Fourth Estate 2004), 4 and Achebe, *Arrow of God*, 29
- ⁴⁰ Adichie, *Half of a Yellow Sun*, 154 and 137
- ⁴¹ Ibid. 55
- ⁴² Ibid. 72
- ⁴³ Ibid. 53-5
- ⁴⁴ Ibid. 237
- ⁴⁵ Ibid. 182 and 76
- ⁴⁶ Ibid. 75
- ⁴⁷ Ibid. 113
- ⁴⁸ Ibid. 305
- ⁴⁹ Ibid. 72-3
- ⁵⁰ Ibid. 108
- ⁵¹ Achebe, *Arrow of God*, 30 and Adichie, *Half of a Yellow Sun*, 77
- ⁵² Adichie, *Half of a Yellow Sun*, 137
- ⁵³ Ibid. 424-5
- ⁵⁴ Ibid. 136
- ⁵⁵ The Swedish pilot Carl Von Rosen, briefly mentioned in the novel, gained international fame when, after helping with relief planes to Biafra in August 1968, he decided to fight on their side and used his private plane to inflict several defeats on the Nigerian army.
- ⁵⁶ C. Adichie, *Half of a Yellow Sun*, 168
- ⁵⁷ Lindfors, *Conversations*, 58