

Tribhuvan University

Cultural Hybridity in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, Tribhuvan University, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts in English

By

Rukmagat Kafle

Roll No. : 334/064-65

T.U. Regd. No.: 13225-94

April 2013

Tribhuvan University
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus
Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “Cultural Hybridity in Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus*,” submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, Tribhuvan University, by Rukmagat Kafle has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of Research Committee:

Chiranjibi Kafle

Supervisor

External Examiner

Chiranjibi Kafle

Head

Department of English

Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus

Date: _____

Acknowledgements

I cordially owe deep and profound gratitude to my teacher and thesis supervisor Chiranjibi Kafle, Head, Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, for his inspiration, encouragement, and creative guidance at every stage during this research.

I am equally grateful to Saroj Sharma Ghimire, Director, M. A. English Program, Department of English, Dillibazar Kanya Multiple Campus, Kathmandu, for encouraging me with his scholarly comments and suggestions while preparing this thesis.

I am also indebted to my wife Ratna Bhattarai Kafle, my beloved children Rustam Kafle and Richa Kafle, and my parents Shiva Lal Kafle and Bishnu Maya Kafle, for creating academic environment for me. I am thankful to K.P. Bhandari, publisher of Bauddik Darpan Publication, Kathmandu for his inspiration to continue my study. And I remember my colleagues at Dillibazar Kanya Multiple Campus, Kathmandu, and all well-wishers who provided their direct or indirect support to me while doing this research.

April 2013

Rukmagat Kafle

Abstract

Purple Hibiscus discovers the breakdown of the family authenticity with cultural hybridity under the influence of Christian religion in postcolonial Nigeria. It further exposes the two cultural extremes of traditional Igbo culture and of Western Christian culture in the postindependent scene of the 1990s. For example, Papa Nnukwu celebrates Igbo tradition, while Eugene follows Christian tenet blindly. The novel criticizes the Eurocentric and exclusive Catholicism of previous generations, and demands respect for Igbo spirituality. No attempt is made to recover traditional religion in everyday life or to acculturate Catholicism in religious practices that are never essential to the majority of people. Kambili and Jaja, the main characters, are in repression by their own father in their home due to the religious dispute. The other characters like Ifoma, father Amadi, Kambili and Jaja admire own Igbo culture while accepting it with Christian culture. They together strengthen their culture and find their identity in fusion.

Purple Hibiscus is a complex tale of Kambili, a young girl growing up in Nigeria, in between the old “pagan” ways and her Catholic upbringing. Her life is structured and ruled by her strict Catholic father. However, a trip to visit her Auntie in another town shows her another way of living. Kambili has trouble accepting this alternative lifestyle and feels torn between the two. With the help of her brother, auntie, cousins, and a priest, she begins to see other ways of thinking and acting than her father expects.

Contents

Letter of Approval	<i>i</i>
Acknowledgements	<i>ii</i>
Abstract	<i>iii</i>
Chapter I. Culture, Hybridity and Identity Crisis	1-7
Chapter II. Cultural Hybridity and Postcolonial Theory	8-30
Cultural Hybridity	8
Postcolonial Resistance	23
Chapter III. Cultural Hybridity in <i>Purple Hibiscus</i>	31-56
Multicultural Ethos	31
Mimicry, Resistance and Postcolonial Identity	41
Chapter IV. Conclusion	57-59
Hybridity as a Source of Postcolonial Cultural Identity	57
Works Cited	60-61