

Interplay between Tradition and Modernity in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*

The aim of this research is to explore the significance of Nigerian tradition and native people's struggle to keep their social unity intact. This research investigates how Western Imperial power and cultural hegemonies were established generally in Africa and particularly in Nigeria and also studies their consequences with reference to Chinua Achebe's Arrow of God. The research ponders into how the conflict arises due to the need to adhere one's traditional faith and the compulsion to yield to change. The Nigerian religious society faces the devastation and disruption of their cultural unity with the hand of colonialism. It accumulates the pain and suffering, troubles and tribulation, acceptance and rejection of native people. Taking theoretical insights on the significance of tradition by Ziauddin Sardar and critique of colonial hegemony proposed by Ashis Nandy respectively the research analyzes how Nigerian people were brain washed by white people and how Nigerian perceived the arrival of colonizing order. This research portrays the significance of tradition and communal value in Nigerian society and possible needs of modernity with continuum of tradition.

Key Words: Tradition, Modernity, Cultural disjuncture, Ambivalence, Alternative modernity.

This research entitled "Interplay between tradition and modernity in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*" investigates the effect of interplay between tradition and modernity in Nigerian Igbo society and demonstrates the disrupting effect of colonial power upon the African tradition. Achebe appears to be ambivalent due to the mixture of two cultures. He shows the interconnection of both tradition and modernity however his major focus is to highlight the significance of Nigerian myth, tradition and rituals. Achebe presents his people's history with strength by describing Igbo festival, the worships of their god and practice in their rituals, ceremonies, their rich

culture and other social practices. The new picture of Nigeria can be seen through native's culture, tradition, myth. It is true that Achebe prefers modernity but with continuum of tradition Achebe's this view reflects through the protagonist, who admire English language to protect and expand his own tradition. The overall focus what this research proposed is glorification of Nigerian tradition over Christian culture. So there is the interplay between tradition and modernity as well as the projection of the strength of Nigerian tradition.

Achebe's *Arrow of God* (1964) depicts the Nigerian Igbo people's history, their tradition and folklore. Achebe as Nigerian postcolonial writer glorifies the native tradition, myth and rituals. To show the communal power this has deep connection with their history. At the same time Achebe has seen ambivalence being born in Nigeria and get education in Europe; he both admires and rejects western worldview and native worldview. Achebe wants his people to be educated and powerful like white people but does not prefer complete conversion of Nigerians into Christianity.

Arrow of God is set in 1920 Nigeria, during the time when colonial influences and British colonial rule and the inroads of missionary's activity began to be felt. During that era many Nigerian began turning away from their tradition, religion and become Christian. Igbo rural life during the transitional time, the old culture slowly gives way to new cultural norms and belief systems and send their children to mission school to get more Western education. Directly or indirectly Westerners impose their values, religion and culture upon non westerners. Non westerners are somehow attracted and somehow denied Westerners philosophy, thought and their language. When the colonizer came into Nigeria the social unity of Igbo's people has been disrupted and both resistance and acceptance took place simultaneously. Taking this point the researcher will examine the impacts of changes and tradition on

Nigerian Igbos society and native people's struggle against British hegemony in order to maintain their identity. The study draws concept from Ziauddin Sardar's *Postmodernism and other* and also will draw the ideas from Ashis Nandy, critique of western hegemony. To show how myth and tradition really matter to get pure identity of people and the way non-westerners the postmodern assaults and survive with their histories, identities and culture intact.

The confrontation of two cultures brought disorder within Nigerian society. When Igbo people with their beliefs and customs are confronted by those of Europeans or white missionary, Igbo people are caught up between resisting and embracing change and they face the dilemma to determine how best to adopt the reality of changes. Some of the Igbo people are excited about new opportunities but others for instance like Ezulu are afraid of losing their social status and tradition. The Igbo culture is very distinguished in its customs and rituals and this had strong social implication and spiritual significance which the colonizer fails to appreciate. The New Pumpkin Festival cleansed them from various sins. The New Yam festival was the celebration of New Year. These and numerous other ceremony, rituals and costumes brought the village people together and serve the purpose of social unity. Ezulu the Chief priest of the Ulu, the most powerful god of Umuaro people is designed to a special status in the society and it is difficult to study him apart from tradition.

This novel *Arrow of God* has received a number of reviews from multiple perspectives such as national, cultural, political and colonial and postcolonial parameters. Some critics have studied the novel as a tragedy, all about tragic flaw of protagonist Ezulu in terms of assimilation of change in society. Akuebe asserts "Ezulu is not only complex but also an ambiguous character. He is "ambiguous because his motives are always mixed and spring from numerous, often conflicting,

interest lactated in part by his personal derives and in parts by the demand of his priestly office"(119). He believes that Ezulu is proud and stubborn but at the same time model of integrity. Ezulu's enemy Nawaka sees him as a power monger, and Captain Winterbotta sees him as a man of indignity who could stand up for truth. Different writersinterpretEzulu's character in multiple perspectives. Owen Mordaunt describes how the Nigerian author Chinua Achebe deals with the problem of personal conflict in his novel *Arrow of God*. Owen Mordaunt states," Ezulu comes in to conflict with himself in a quest to hold power despite his high age and the breakthrough of the British colonial administrators" (153). According to him Ezulu wants to control both his people and the British Administrator Ezulu believes that clan will silently follow him and the British will respect him. But the things happen differently because Ezulu very badly defeated on the hand of colonialism and as well as on the hand of native people.

Society and community play vital role in Nigerian society. Communities provide sense of belongingness and buildmutualrelationship among people. Man makes a decision with the support of society and individuality is not given importance in Nigerian society. Owen Mordaunt describes "mancannot fight societies will and that the later can bring a man to insanity"(153). In this regard Mordaunt says that *Arrow of God* is not so much concerned with intertribal conflict but with the Chief priest of Ulu who is in the conflict with himself. Whatever external forces are brought to bear upon his life are there only objectification of what actually goes on inside him. The main conflict is seen in this novel When Ezulu the Chief priest of Igbo's God Ulu send his son Oduche to learn White man's religion. He sends his son to white men'sreligion on the assumption that the white man has come with great power and conquest. It was necessary that some people should learn the ways of his own deity.

He also wanted to learn white man wisdom. Mordaunt argues "Ezulu has an ulterior motive for sending his son to the mission school. It is really for personal gain not for the good of the society of which he is part. What motivates him is the deep seated fear of what he lacks: power"(156).

The above lines indicate that the man who is guided by personal or self-interest is badly defeated in Nigerian society. Through this novel, author tries to show the significance of communal values which dismantle the individual ethos. And finally leads towards insanity. Society's will is greater than individual. Throughout the novel we see him undergoes in anguish his authority, hunted by fear that his power is in danger of being challenged. Ezulu is type of character who will not give up the quest for solving his problem of authority; he will continue to probe, endeavoring to grapple the situation.

According to Cook, the novel, described "the limits of power in a system controlled by tradition"(156). No doubt he is intrigued by the power of white men. Mordaunt believes that whatever Ezulu did just because of personal gain. He put self interest before the traditional group. And finally his own self interest leads towards insanity. The fate of Ezulu is tragic one. Tragic in a sense that he is not permitted to live his own liking. His life is set out by community and it is the community who determined the behavior of Ulu Chris K. Awuyan examines Ezulu is one "who undermines his God and antagonized his people openly associating with new force"(214). Being chief priest of same God he undermines his own god and admired Christian religion. He does not totally abandon native religion but denies performing rituals on time. By doing so his native values were declined and Christian religion over showed it. During the conversation session of Ezulu and Akeube, Ezulu recites "I want one of my sons to join these people and be my eye there. If there is nothing in it

you will come back. But if there is something there you will bring home my share"(47).

Ezulu could not have been aware that he has compromising his position by using Oduche to join the white men's religion and school whose practice undermines the local tradition. In the past Ulu (the supreme god) protected Umuaro against hostile neighbors. But with the presence of white men, all their local traditions have become violable. Even Ulu seems vulnerable a fact signaled by the tolling of church bell that momentarily distract the Chief priest as prepares an annual rites. Ezulu is convinced that it only by understands their ways that he can challenge white man. He confides his close friend Akuebue, in a proverbial language. "Shall I tell you why I sent my son? Then listen. A disease that has never been seen before cannot be cured with everyday herbs"(134). This statements prove that Ezulu seeks information about strangers who have came uninvited in his land, The chief man assume that the power of white man largely derives from literacy.

Chris K. Awuyan enunciate " Ezulu seeks equilibrium coexistence between the indigenoustradition and the new forces"(215). Unfortunately he does not anticipate that the colonizer posting his own values as an absolute. Already some of the ancillary trapping of new culture has caused discomfort in Umuaro. Oduch's behavior leads toward more in catastrophic situation. Oduche unlike other family "were a singlet, and owns a slate and chalk and a wooden box supplies from the Christian mission" (160). While the rest of his family sit together during a story telling session. Oduche sits apart, completely absurd learning the alphabets from his new book AzuNau. It is the clear indication that Christian religion completely separates Oduche from his own religion. In this regard Christian religion became just a tool to dominate Nigerian people.

Seyed Mohammad Marandi and Reyhanesh Sadat Shadpour assert "Christianity as an ideological instrument was used as a tool for colonization"(48). The story of colonization regularly been narrated in literary works, the imperial power used different ideological instruments to control the colonized people indirectly. Ideological instruments like religion, media, and education makes people to accept the power of ruling class which has the great influences on the lives of the people. Marandi and Shadpour claims "the entry of Christianity in Africa was the cause of one of the most important cultural change in the history of mankind. Its consequences were spread of cultural and economic hegemony"(49). Missionary besides spreading colonialism had an important role to play in providing education and literacy to people. But the point is that this education is an effective element in the spread of colonialism.

As the novel starts Ezulu is peering in to sky looking for the moon. He is the Chief priest of Nigerian people. In the new moon Nigerian have two festivals the fest of Pumpkin leaves and the new Yam feast, through this festival Ezulu controlled planting, harvesting and the New Year fest. Although he was chief priest he had a crucial position among his people and had to make decisions for different occasions in the daily lives of the Nigerian. In fact the significant of religion is different from that of the colonizer. Nigerian religions are not monolithic entity to deal with as they contain a vast scope of diversity. In traditional Nigeria there was no word for religion and the reason is that religion was not separated from their lives. They said that to understand what religion in Nigeria is "we need only to look at common life in the continent their works, rituals in death and marriage, their interaction with the dead, are all considered as part of their religion"(50).

Ezulu's cooperation with white administrators along with the sending of his son to the church made the people of Umuaro think Ezulu was responsible for the entrance and continued presence of white men. In fact Ezulu sent his son to the Church to secure the position of his religion and protect it against the unknown power. One of the duties of the missionary was to create a sense of guilt among the native for their beliefs and way of life and in this way accelerate the process of changes. They also mixed biblical stories with historical events to generate the belief among natives that the only way to salvation was through the Bible. Initially when Ezulu wanted Oduche to go to the church he refused but after a while he became so interested in that he wanted to gain excellent command of English language and culture. The Bible had shed a light on the lives of the native converts. They could interpret every event of their lives through the Bible. To broaden the scope of ideological influence of the church, the missionaries portrayed the values and the rituals of the natives as degenerate and evil and tried to inject their own values instead.

The hegemonies of Western people are clearly shown how they taught immorality in the name of morality. Achebe writes "Mr. Good countries told the converts of Umuaro the early Christians of the Niger Delta who fought for the bad customs of their people to destroy shrines and kill the sacred iguana" (48). Missionaries compelled the native convert to prove them as a true Christian. They assert "if we are a Christian we must be ready to kill the python as the people of the river killed the sacred iguana. It is nothing just a snake. It deceived our first mother" (48). Missionaries said that a real Christian was a person who would dare to kill a python. Oduche wanted to prove himself so he volunteered to carry out this act. Ezulu, afraid of his son's action, the white men were becoming more powerful so as to resist the European, the African had to learn their ways. This is why Ezulu wanted his son to be his eyes and ears in

the church and learn the ways of Whiteman. However he could not think that the instruction of church could influence his son.

Achebe portrays the richness and complexities of African societies and impact on the people by projecting the diversity of religion. Indian PRIST University scholar SazanoSibo and Dr. K. Shibilastates "The fall of Ezulu is the outcome of the clash between faith and change. It pits the chief priest of deity Ulu, against colonial administrator, Christian missionaries, and his own people" (162). In this novel Ezulu stand as a symbol of resentment and defeat in a crucial period of social and spiritual crisis in Nigeria. Ezulu fail to unification of his people in his leadership but he refuse to admit it. The conflict arises due to the need to adhere one's traditional faith and the completion to yield to change. Shibo and Shibila says "the effort of Ezulu isto assert and maintain his religious authority" (126).

The protagonist the Chief priest faces obstacles which are complex and diverse in his positions the religious authority. It provides an insight in to the traditional form of policy making and leadership issues concerning individual and communal authority. But later he realizes that he is trading in to the dangerous and unknown path yet to be trod by his people. His overbearing nature is seen when he is seen opposition to his wife. The crucial moment is take place when he is in conflict with his community. When Ezulu refuse to announce the festivals he weakens his god and makes it easy for the new religion to gain solid ground. This serves the opportunity for the missionaries to fulfill their purpose slowly the old treble is destroyed. In this novel conflict between two culture even the strongest religious society started to believe in new force denying their own God is also the strong evident that how African natives are attracted to British culture. Shibo and Shibila state in their article "there is no doubt that Ezulu is seen as an individual braving all odds

against him" (127). It also shows that weakening of the traditional society giving way to superior force.

Achebe ascribes an immensely powerful image of Ezulu's character from the very beginning with its tragic irony. "Tell the white man Ezulu will not be anyone's chief except Ulu" (498). In spite of his inflexible will Ezulu is realistic. He makes an attempt to adopt and send his son to the Christian missionaries realizing the changing trend and need to be watchful. Ezulu's fall is a proportion to the collapse of the traditional world. Arthur Ravenscroft states that the "complex misunderstanding of the relationship between his personal desire for power and his sacred priestly responsibilities brings madness to him and ultimately destroys his people's traditional faith" (The Literary Creation 47). In this respect researchers examine how the European rulers destroy indigenous form of rule and social arrangement. One of the nationalist Amilcar Carbral claimed "it is our opinion that it is necessary to totally destroy, to break, to reduce to ash all aspects of the colonial state in our country in order to make every thing possible for our people" (3).

Ezulu, central character of the novel, rejects the offer to be a warrant chief of white people saying that he will not be the servant of anyone except his deity Ulu. But on the other hand he takes revenge upon his clan by denying performing ritual ceremonies and letting his people die for starvation. Ameh K. Abussamen and Shadi S. Neimneh describes that "the text exhibit between taking revenge on missionaries and natives and gratitude for them" (1). Taking this researcher examines the Achebe's position as ambivalence. Achebe depicts the revenge position on both missionary and native. The ambivalence of Achebe appears in attacking his people and colonialism simultaneously. One side he attacks his own people without giving any justification and on the other hand he attacks the West who were the colonizer. This research

attempts to justify the ambivalence implied in the revenge on missionaries and native and gratitude for both of them. Some of the reasons are cultural renewal and call for change. Another reason could be cultural contact and hybridization.

Some critics believe Achebe not totally opposing Western imperial knowledge rather he admires their wisdom. Bruce Gilley states "the late Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe was a key figure in the rise and the pretence of anti colonial ideology in Africa"(2). In this regard the protagonist of the novel also a key figure who accept and resets colonial power. Accept in a sense that he send his son to learn Whitman wisdom and rejection in a sense that he reject the offer to be the Whiteman' chief. Bruce Gilly asserts:

A man best known for his anticolonial view claim in his final work that colonialism in lower Nigeria left legacy both beneficial and relevant, alongside its harmful ones. The challenge of modernity put to Africa by colonialism was healthy one. The way that colonialism disempowered African societies he believes that empowered require embracing not spurning. (3)

In the eminences of Westerner mission they simply do not want to develop Nigerian country rather want under their control. Achebe also harshly criticize the colonialism he says, "the most extreme of totalitarianism. This theme of colonialism is disrupting the habits and tradition of self rule. We were considerably damaged by the colonial rule"(4). Achebe also project the consequences of when two culture meet some of the worst elements of the old are retained and beneficial of new culture are added. In this regard Achebe show's both advantage and disadvantage of mix of two culture and same time harshly criticize the Western term of modernity. When Ezulu was in Okperi kept in prison by White man he cannot perform rituals and did not have any religious responsibility Achebe writes "it gave him a feeling of loss which was

both painful and pleasant. He had temporarily lost his status, as a chief priest which was painful but after eighteen years it was relief to be without it for a while" (161). It means slowly and gradually old tradition giving way to new one.

Chinua Achebe had a strict upbringing in Christian religion because he was born in Nigeria and grew up and got education in Europe. But most of the people around him lived a traditional life. They performed all of their traditions and ethnic rituals, such as offering their food to God. They spoke the Igbo language and sang the hymn in the prayer. Hence Achebe has always been trying to create a new Africa which is closer to reality. As a writer he believes in certain rules "in society solidarity and community is more important than individuality"(49). Importance of community can be seen through the Ezulu's character. When Ezulu was obsessed by personal authority he ultimately separated from society and finally no one trusted him and followed his decision.

Although all these critics have examined this novel from multiple perspectives, many critics claim Achebe's position as ambivalent, he somehow seen as ambivalence but no one studied his major focus is to preservation of Nigerian tradition and history and advocating for change. In such a context this study explores how Nigeria is undergoing a crisis. It is examined how and why that colonial power still practiced in Nigeria and why the African culture is undergoing crisis even after political decolonization. The seed of ambivalence is shown here it doesn't mean Achebe fully admires the Western culture and underestimates native values rather he was advocating for the traditional values. Achebe is one who projects real Africa in this novel.

After the intervention of colonial power people are confused regarding which values are superior and better. The dichotomy is presented everywhere throughout the text highlighting the dilemma of the people. *The Arrow of God* is about the overall social system of Nigeria and it describes about the cultural, social and religious

transformation of Nigerian people. While Ezulu was kept in prison he saw a White Man writing with his left hand "The first thought that came to Ezulu on seeing him was to wonder whether any black man could ever achieve the same mastery over book as to write it with the left hand"(174). Even the wise religious leader confused regarding western power and the power he has. The transformation is product of culture from Eastern to Western values. The traditional people in Nigeria are doing their best save their indigenous culture from being polluted value of Christianity. Being influenced from Western system the people especially those who converted into Christianity became rebellious of their own culture. It creates states of having simultaneous conflicting reactions, beliefs or feelings towards the own culture.

Ambivalence is the situation of person, group or community in which they are caught in dilemma or dual nature one encounter confusion, dilemma from which one remain in trap where to head, what to decide, what to do and what not to do. Homi K Bhaba writes "ambivalence describes a complex mix of attraction of repulsion, which characterize the relation between colonizers and colonized. The relation is ambivalent because the colonized subject never simply and completely opposed to the colonizer"(The Location of Culture). Attraction and repulsion of Nigerian people towards Western culture create ambivalence situation.

Despite the political freedom from the colonial rulers, the former colonies remain under the cultural influences of their colonizers. People in the country have adopted the Western system in their government body, educational institutions and economic system. The direct and indirect influences of their colonial power can also be seen in people's language and dress. During the postcolonial era people around the world seem to have mimicked the West, resulting in the assimilation of indigenous culture into the culture of imperial power.

After the decolonization of 1960, people in the former colonies like Nigeria demonstrate ambivalence between accepting and rejecting the west as power. Their location between the two culture the colonizer's modernity and indigenous tradition reconstitute the cultural hybridity in Homi K bhaba's term. He writes ";Bhaba reduce his whole idea concerning the colonized and colonizers relation. Bhaba discuss the concept of the colonial other in terms of cultural hybridity that characterize the ambivalent relation between the ruler and the ruled, knower and the known, because the colonized people do not totally oppose the colonial rulers. Westerners think non westerner indigenous people are passive, idle and backward on the one hand and innocent, exotic and diligent on the other.

Ambivalent situation can be clearly seen through the protagonist Ezulu. It is true that Ezulu resists against the Western imperial power but at the same time he admires the Western power. As Nandy insist " Colonialism is an indigenous process released by external forces. Its sources lies deep in the mind of the rulers and the ruled (3). Indigenous people somehow welcome the westerners in their native land not because they deny their religion but their brain washed by European rule. Gandhi insists "The English hadn't taken our land. But we have given them. They are not in our land because of their strength, but we have given it to them "(36). Native people are unaware that they are inviting their own destruction even they assume Whiteman as their friend. Ezulu says " It was I who sent you to join this people because of my friendship with white man Winterbotta"(13) Ezulu asserts with a confidence that he is friend of Whiteman. The people of Nigeria somehow welcome the Westerners and generate the path for them. During the clans ritual ceremonies one of the clan says "how the white man found the way? We showed them and are still showing them (133). It means they accept Westerns in their land. But native people

were unaware of the fact that they are inviting own destruction considering white as their friend. To analyzing the text by focusing on the cultural issues through the character, religion, ceremonies and rituals, the influences of Western culture and the great suffering of protagonist of the novel, this projection has made a deliberate choice to view the text through the viewpoint of postcolonial. Which include identity, cultural and religious crisis.

Achebe points out here the introduction of Christianity into African society. Though Achebe may not be opposed to the 'import' religion which has taken root in Africa he realize that one of the effect of Christianity is to drive African away from their past , their religion and rituals by representing the native's past and rituals as 'heathen'. Ziauddin Sardar asserts "both colonialism and Christianity were seen as the instrument of the caviling mission"(31). The imperial power used different materials or instruments to control the native people. In the name of providing education to non western people they are imposing their value and culture. The Westerns education, civilization, and modernity these terms are heavily loaded by Western hegemony. According to Gandhi "it is civilization only in name, under it the nation of Europe are becoming degraded and ruined day by day"(32). He believes European people are demoralized day by day. People who are educated enough use their rationality to dominate uneducated people. That is the instrumental use of reason use as the dominant to uneducated people. They just want to spread their religion. Missionaries spreading colonialism has an important role to play the point is that this education is an effective element in the spread of colonialism. Colonizer proves that their religious beliefs were rich and ancient. And non westerner's tradition and costumes are evil. In *Arrow of God* Mr. Goodcountry told the converter of Umuaro:

Every Christian of the Niger Delta who fought the 'bad costumes' of their people destroyed shrines and killed the sacred iguana. If we are Christian we must be ready to die for faith. So you must be ready to kill python as the people of the river killed iguana. It is nothing just a snake. It deceived our first mother Eve(48).

Actually their purpose was to propagate their own religion. Mahatma Gandhi was an Indian activist who was the leader of the Indian independence movement against British colonial rule. He was the real eye witness of Indian suffering and struggle under the colonial rule. In this respect his ideas are applicable to expand this research. Gandhi asserts "I don't hesitate to say that they (European) have neither real honesty nor living conscience. Immorality is taught in the name of morality" (35). By doing this, they succeeded in the process of change. The Bible had shed a new light on the life of native people. They interpreted their life events according to biblical story. In this way, missionaries portrayed the religion and their beliefs, values and rituals of natives as degenerated and evil. And tried to impose their own values.

But for the Nigerian people tradition means the way of life. Each and every thing is sacred for them. Westerners are self-centered and only self-interested; they did not appreciate the natives' life style and their values. Nandy claims "In the eye of the European civilization the colonizers were not a group of self-seeking rapacious, ethnocentric vandals and self-chosen carriers of a cultural pathology, but ill-indented, flawed instruments of history, who unconsciously worked for the upliftment of the underprivileged of the world"(14). The author has given extensive details of some of the major festivals and ceremonies of the people of Umuaro. Umuaro people are lovers of ceremonies. They celebrate every aspect of life. Sardar asserts "indeed full development and realization of their humanity requires building mutual capability

with the community"(226).Humanitarian value can be seen through community. The life style and the tradition make them cooperative and mutual. Out of the numerous festival of Igbo's people the author has tried to focus on only some in this novel such as , The festival of new Pumpkin Leaves and New Yam Feast, During the festival peoples gather together , they exchange happiness and sorrow together. partly non westerners also responsible for the damage done by the Whiteman in Nigeria Achebe write "When two brother fights, a stranger reaps the harvest" It means the unity among people required in order to challenge outsider.

Missionaries use the Bible as an instrument only to impose their religion upon native's people. In Nigeria "who killed the Python would be regarded as having killed his kinsman"(50). It is clear that how important religion for native people. The impact of the missionaries on the life of the Igbo people is shown in this novel. Interestingly, Zulu sent one of his sons Oduche to learn the way of Christian and keep an eye over them. Unfortunately Oduche is brainwashed and trapped in to the Christian religious way. "Oduche captured the Python inside the box"(45) just because the influences of Christian religion. They convince the natives that their religions and heritage are degraded and evils. Achebe writes "They wish to convert the whole world in to the vast market for their goods. They will leave no stone unturned to reach the goal" (39). By this White people are propagating their own culture and underestimating natives. Ezulu's decision leads him towards his own down fall from his own community. He sent his son to missionary's school to make his leadership powerful and strong but unfortunately his own son stand against native culture. Achebe writes, "his box was not actually moving, but it seems have something inside it struggling to be free"(45). The python struggles for survival, so the old God struggle against the new religion. Oduche suffocating the snake inside the box made by missionary is symbolic of the

effort of the Christian force to subjugate the traditional religion. In this regard Sardar asserts " Postmodernism is the ultimate justification, the master alibi for the continued exploitation and oppression of non western culture"(28).

Non western people should be able to prevent themselves from the charm of the Postmodernism. The Western modernity is like a 'virus of Aids' which harm and damage slowly lives of native people. Gandhi recites "Western civilization is such a disease, we have to very wary" (47). That the English people are somewhat more selfish they only consider their own benefits and interest. The projection of native history, heritage and past with strength is clear evidence to show that how rich they are culturally. Sardar "sees tradition as much more flexible and dynamic, still a summation of the absolute frame of reference' past values and axioms"(223). Tradition provides us our originality, it should be dynamic in the demand of cultural change it can accept the beneficial things to add. we can get our identity only through our culture, tradition and past. So, we should not follow the western Modernity and civilization. In this point Gandhi recites "Western Civilization is like a mouse gnawing while it is soothing us, when its full effect is realized we should see the religious superstition are harmless" (39). To shave from the Western term of modernity non westerner need to redefine their modernity and develop their own terms of modernity which fits in their context.

In Nigeria every Umuaro child knows that "if a man kills the Python inadvertently he must placate Idimili by arranging a funeral for the snake almost as elaborates man's funeral"(62). Killing Python in Nigerian community is like killing their clan's man. It's not just a snake as White man says to Oduch. AshisNandy is an Indian political psychologist, social theorist and critics of European colonialism argue that Colonialism has not only colonized the geographical material entity but also the

mind by compelling colonized society to modify (4). The Westerners compel the natives to fall on their feet by creating many stories which are not true in real sense. Ezulu asserts:

I want one of my son join to these people and be my there. If there is nothing in it you will come back. But if there is something there you will bring home my share. The world is like a mask dancing. If you want to see it well you do not stand in one place (47).

The mask is symbol of change. The whole world is changing and the people who do not change will not survive. The old priest desire to change but he cannot do it, he cannot force himself to leave the old ways behind and adopt the new ways, Thus he send his son to learn from the white men. Ezulu could not be aware that he is compromising his position by using Oducheto joining the white man's religion, whose practice undermines local tradition. He knew those missionaries are more powerful and their religion "is like a leaper" (43). Sardar also include that "Other culture with much needed antidote to the virulent and over changing virus of Postmodernism" (228). In Western who glorify individualism but non westerner are more communitarian, they live for other. They celebrate collectivism, communitarian, these are their common value but white man separating native people from their day to day life or common value. To challenge white man strategy Ezulu send his son white man religion. He wants to gain information through his son. Ezulu claim "A disease that has never been seen cannot be cured everyday herbs" (134). He thinks to stand against white man natives need to know the way of doing of Whiteman. That is the reason Ezulu send his son in new religion. Unfortunately his decision made him apart from his society and his son to move far away from his own tradition.

NwekeUkpak on of Nigerian natives insists that "white man is like hot soup and we must take him slowly- slowly from the edge of the bowl"(88)and that guile is need in dealing with the white colonizer who considered the villagers of Umuaro fools. The best way dealing with them to try to learn what they know, and take advantage of the new states of affairs. Their presence createsproblem in each place of Nigeria. Ezulu already knew that white man has come with anew religion which is like leprosy highly harmful and contagious.

Sardar professes "the Westernization of globe is suffocating non western culture. We are being constantly manipulated"(23).Western imperial power directly or indirectly ruling over non westerner people. Westernization of Western culture overshadowed over native culture.Christianity used direct method like sending missionaries or indirect method like reshapingthe minds of the people to maintain the practice of colonialism. It is presumed by the colonizer that all of the colonized are heathens they do not being to an established religion like Christianity and that their religion was mere superstition. As Moses Unachukwa insists:

I can tell you that there is no escape from the white man. He has come. When sufferings knock at your doorand you say there is no seat left for him, he tell you not to worry because he has brought his own stool. The white man is like that. As day light chase away darkness so will the Whitemandrive away all our customs (86).

The presence of European in Nigeria became threat for native people. As Moses assert in above line the white man succeed in their mission. They succeed in converting native people into Christianity and successes to wash the brain of native. In Gandhi's says" When tiger change his nature, English will change theirs"(28). English people are very dangerous and harmful for native people. They create division among people

and disrupt the arrangement of social unity Just because of them even the family member have no unification. Sardar believes "modernity sought nothing less than to replace the way of knowing, being and doing of non westerner's culture" (225).

Identification of native people has been seized by the Whitemen.

When Oduche join to the new religion" he always wore a loinclothoftoweling material instead of thin strip of cloth between the legs"(98).Oduche became the agent of Whiteman because he carries the costumesand culture of Whiteman. During the story telling and ritual performance" Oduchesit apart, completely absurd, learning the alphabet from his new book AzuNdu"(192). Sharing beliefs and morals contributes largely to how close the people are within a society. Igbos have many traditions from the storytelling to action performance ceremonies. While the rest of his family sit together during the story telling season' Oduche sit apart, completely absurd learning the alphabet from his book.Oduche completely separate himself from community and ritual ceremonies. Community is source of life it provides collective identity to native people. Their Community, religion, rituals, and historical heritage matters a lot to them. The Igbo community was chiefly agricultural. The Igbo had followed their own traditional religion with their own cultural belief, customs, before the impact of Christianity. The culture in of the Igbo was very much in coordination with their life in the natural settings. But invasion of colonizer shatter all natives customs.Sardar writes:

A community argue Iqbal is like a child, a child acquires a sense of its worth when it learns to remember and link tomorrow withit's yesterday, and hence creates its own history. It is the personal history of child that's open itembeing eyes. Similarly it is its memory, it's living history, its tradition that's make community. (226)

Its means to say to become a community religion, history, past, tradition are mandatory which provide pure identity. It is a people's way of living, their day to day life's activity that makes community vibrant. Achebe point out the Unity of the African people in the primitive society:

African people didn't hear a culture from the first time from Europe. That their society was not mindless but frequently had a philosophy of great depth. and value and beauty that they had poetry and above all they have dignity that make African people all, but lost in the colonial period, and it is this dignity they must regain. (157)

The identity of the people in *Arrow of God* is projected with the religion the influences of the domestic forces and their nature effect the manner. The 'Ikenga' is describes the strength of man's right arm. The Igbo clan had clan had the protective deities in the village like, Idemili, Ogwugua, Udo and other Gods of Umuaro. Individual life of native people was controlled by the spiritual forces. The relationship between man and their god make the communication with ancestors. It regulates the traditional norms among the people to get control the evils. The rituals and festivals generate the social unity at the crisis. The celebration of festival unify then in community. Achebe says " it was the only assembly in Umuaro which a man might look to his right find his neighbor and look to his left sees the God standing their"(203).

The social structure of Igbo people is based on the religion and leadership. In this regard Achebe afraid that whether they can regain their identity and unity or lost it. Sardar asserts" Post modernism intact dismember other culture by attacking their immune system; eradicating identity, erasing history and tradition, reducing everything that makes of sense of life for non westerners cultures" (228). But here

Westerners attack on their immune system; it means they attack on the surviving source of non westerner. Whiteman attack on native's history, tradition and their religion and eradicate the religious belief of the Igbo people. The rural Igbo bounded by religion and their communal beliefs destroyed after the presence of white man. The people who harvest yam in the name of their god started to harvest in the name of Christian god." The Christian harvest which took place a few days after Obikas death saw more people than even Good Country could have dreamed. In his extremity many a man sent his son with a yam or two to offer to the new religion and brings back the promised immunity" (232). In this respect those who believe in their own god started to believe in somebody else God.

Gandhi argues "modern civilization as presented in the west and more especially in Britian, was an 'evil forces' that was entirely opposed to the interest of human being thus the tendency of Western civilization is to propagate immorality" (37). The colonial administrators prepared deliberately to misunderstand the origin of the Opkeri to Umuaro rivalry. The narrator add that the new religion was like a leper (42). It is all about to pacify the Igbo clan and to rule the society.

Ezulu's imprisonment in Okperi by the missionaries for thirty two days prevented him to perform the rituals of eating sacred yam as as he was not at home. It was the time to announce New Yam Feast but Ezulu could not name the day of New Yam Feast. It caused the hostility among clan. The missionaries deliberately causes the by taking Ezulu away from Umuaro to prove that the God Ulu is false God.

Sardarinsist "To maintain the meaning of value, morality and ethnic, despite apparent difference , living memories , reinterpreted history, dynamic traditions not only enable to community survive and thrive , they are prerequisites for life"(227). Proverbs and oral traditions in Achebe's novel constitute and identify the Igbo patterns

through the wisdom and beliefs. The elder of Umuaro utter the proverbs and oral tradition to articulate the manner of Igbo people. Costume and tradition of any society, tribe or clan keep them vibrant about the cultural patterns. The people follow costumes and traditions to regulate the social order. The Igbo people believe in the religious practice before the colonial administration in the early twentieth century. They had their belief in the customs and the traditional practices. The festivals of the Pumpkin leaves explored through the kind of tradition of people to thank the god. The sacred moon is evident of the goodness. The tradition and costumes make the people to show the respect towards their culture and ancestry. What Sardar called tradition is the way of knowing"(225).

Thus, Achebe try to make aware his people that the Western modernity and civilization mission are immensely harmful to native people. If they want to remain within their social unity they have to preserve their tradition and rituals. Native peoples past, history, oral tradition serve the purpose of Unity. Sardar clearly state that "non westerner society need to redefine modernity in their own terms and cultural frameworks. This requires using traditional concept on idea as an analytical tool, incorporating the knowledge of the past in to the thought, process and product of today"(231). Tradition is life giving force and the source of cultural identity. Which connect you with your own history and heritage, tradition is not outdated value it is very much dynamic. If Modernity is mandatory' redefine' on your own terms.

The way Westerners use English language and religion as a tool to hegemonize Nigeria, Achebe's pragmatic approach is open to possibility that in future postcolonial environment. English as globally important and vachel for "new voice coming out of Africa, essentially speaking of African experience"(548). Taking their language we should challenge their power. The man is not necessary be happy

because is rich or unhappy because he is poor. Often seen rich are unhappy but poor are remain happy. Our ancestors were very happy because they maintain distance from luxury and they have managed same kind of plough as existed thousands years ago. But native people saw the sword and king inferior with sword of ethnic. In the same way people have Nigeria remain happy and represent collective identity before the entrance of missionary. They have their own rules , own system of life the natives everything connecting themselves with spirituality.

Gandhi demonstrates "they writes abouttheir own research on most legendary terms and hypnotize us in to believe them. We in our ignorance than fall at their feet."(48). White people create their history according to their own interest, false story of their bravery and made native people to believe them. They hypnotize the native people. In the novel *Ezulu* very strong and wise religious leader also come in the influences of them. Though he Cleary state that why he send his son to join new religion and his rejection of white man offer proves that he was against Western modernity but somewhat he was attracted to their power. One of the native Claims "sometime I feel shame when other asks me where I camefrom. We have no share in market, we have no share in white man office, and we have no share anywhere. It's clear that how native were brainwashed by them. White people convince that they have nothing in the business world and they are toopassive. To be active or to make financial condition better join our institutions. But under this they hide grate policy to hegemonies the native.

In a 1988 interview with American journalist Bill Moyers Achebe described colonialism is the extremist form of traditionalism. This theme of colonialism as disrupting the habit and tradition of self rule and resulting in weak a constant one throughout his life, we were concededly damaged by colonial rule. As we already

discuss colonial rule means that power, initiative is taken away us, by somebody else who make our decision. If that goes long "the habit of self rule has been forgotten" (26). In this respect Achebe was critical of the illegitimacy and disempowering nature of colonial encounters. As presented in the novel the intention of the colonizer is to propagate their ideology and take control over the natives. Gandhi adds, we have civilization that you support to be reverse of civilization, we considered our civilization to be far superior to yours. We considered your schools and law courts to be useless. We want to our own ancient school court to be restored" (89). The English civilization is governed by rationality. They do every task making a connection with reason. But in non westerner are so much guided by emotion, humanitarian value which is more superior to European individualism.

Non westerners are very rich in culture those white men are weak to anticipate it. Sardar asserts "tradition requires non western culture to be true of their self but this self is not the 'I' of Western individualism. Thenon western culture must seek out an inclusive identity that is first and foremost above individual ego"(225). The Nigerian Igbo social structure is based on blood relationship. In the society family is at the center into which the compound of Igbo people are at the considered for familial relations. The people take the decision in the democratic way as there is no monarchy. There is deep faith in religious, ritual and marriage. All the people of different age, groups interact with each other during their ritual ceremonies. First of all this research brings out the negative impacts of the Western value upon the life of the people. Their hegemonies and colonial power crate alienation among people and disrupt unity of native people. In this regard this research projects the importance of the community and tradition which provide sense of belongingness and build mutual relationship

among people. In this respect tradition and religion play prominent role to unify people together and helps to maintain social order within society.

In this respect Achebe advocates for humanitarian value, and critiques the Western individualism. The very rootlessness of tradition, culture, and custom have created the alienation of the African people. Achebe through the character of Ezeulu exposes the situation that the Nigerian people have witnessed due to the imposition of colonial power. By showing the effect of alienation upon the natives the research exposes the situation that has brought disorder and social evil in African society. In this novel Christianity is used by the white people just as a tool to hegemonize Nigeria. Nigerian Igbo community have their communal value, oral tradition is the beauty of their culture. But the British administration disrupts the unification of Nigeria. In this regard researcher tries to show the glory of Nigerian myth, their tradition and rituals, their communal act in order to challenge Western individuality and their concept of superiority.

The significance of native festivals, ceremonies, rituals, costumes and their oral tradition is presented in this research. The celebration and the communitarian value makes people believe in morality, humanity. Igbo people celebrate every aspect of life. These festivals are considered special both for men and women. Women wear their finest clothes, jewellery made out of ivory on this occasion. In the festival of New Pumpkin leaves women carry some fresh leaves of pumpkin and gather at the market place and Ezeulu narrates the story of their ancestor. And another festival New Yam feast is the biggest and most important celebration of Igbo people. In this festival natives start cultivating New Yam for the New year. Yam which is considered as the king of crops in Nigeria given great value. The New Yam Feast marks the end of the old harvest season.

As illustrated in the novel, Igbo community is very rich in local folklore which has been carried on from generation to generation. Story telling is popular among them stories are told by one generation to next generation. They are guided by moral values and their festival, myth and rituals provide them message to what to do or what not to do. One of the most important and frequently found costumes of Igbo people was the breaking of kola nut. And it was considered to honor as break in this novel *Arrow of God* Ezeulu break kola nut to greet his guest at home.

Thus, this research reveals the disrupting effects of colonial power and inability of native to maintain self rule. In some cases, Achebe appears ambivalent but his major focus is to show the effect of colonial power and to glorify the Nigerian myth over Christian myth. He critiques Western hegemony which dominates the non western tradition and the people's way of life. By doing so, Achebe pictures his people's history, tradition with strength because native people dedicated their life to their history, cultural heritage, rituals, and ceremonies. Achebe appears to be somewhat aggressive toward native people due to their passive acceptance of white people as their friends since they are very perilous to native tradition. Provoking his people to follow own terms of modernity embedded with tradition, Achebe advocates for the preservation of Nigerian tradition and their own religion which unify native people together.

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