

## **Chapter I: Introduction**

### **Exploring Igbo as an Indigenous Culture in *Purple Hibiscus***

*Purple Hibiscus* (2003), Nigerian based stunning debut novel of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (1977), is analyzed in the light of feminism. As the novel demonstrates the love for Igbo culture, it protests against colonialism. Adichie shows cultural differences, rituals and beliefs, luxury and poverty alike in the period of political turmoil of late 1990s of Nigeria. *Purple Hibiscus* mainly focuses on a Nigerian family torn between the orderly western world, Catholicism and the native Igbo culture. In addition, the resistance to the evil colonization, resentment of the cultural world and seeking women liberation are largely demonstrated. The study highlights the native Igbo protesting against colonialism and affection towards Igbo culture through feminism.

Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* describes the politics, climate, social customs and religion, food etc. of postcolonial Nigeria. There are mainly available two types of culture: Igbo and Christian which put them in a state of cultural tension. Igbo culture is an indigenous culture of Nigeria. The term indigenous culture is defined as a culture that is traditionally adopted by natives of a particular place. Igbo culture is the customs, practices and tradition of the Igbo people of Nigeria. *Wikipedia* says, "Igbo are people living in Nigeria, where they constitute an estimated 15 percent of the population". Their language is called Igbo. Igbo culture comprises archaic practices as well as new concepts added into Igbo either by evolution or by outside influence.

These customs and traditions include Igbo people's visual art, music, dance, attire, cuisine and language dialects.

Many Scholars have written about the indigenous Igbo culture. O. U. J. Umeora and V. E. Egwuatu note that “Igbo society of southeast Nigeria is rich in culture, myths and superstitions” (109). J. N. Oriji says that “the Ngwa is the largest clan in Igbo land, which possesses complex traditions which are invaluable for reconstructing their oral history” (65). Dmitri van den Bersselaar remarks:

Many urban Africans describe themselves as coming from village where authentic traditional African culture can be found. The effectiveness of neo-traditionalism, labour migration, the abolition of slavery, the spread of Christianity and Islam and the integration of villages in new administrative structures affected these villages. (51)

C. N. Ubah finds that the twenty three communities of Igbo were independent before came of the British. Mary Steimel Duru says that the Igbo of Nigeria is "one society which is making extensive cultural and social adjustments demanded by its progressive linkage to the western world" (1). Amobi Linus Ilika says that “the women in Igbo society generally condone, and are complacent with the violence perpetrated by intimate partners and they also express fear for the uncertainty in re-marrying, means of livelihood after re-marriage, social stigmatization and concern for their children” (77).

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie was born in the town of Enugu, Enugu state of Nigeria. She grew up in the University town of Nsukka in Southeastern Nigeria where the University of Nigeria is situated. While she was growing up her father was a professor of Statistics at the University and her mother worked there as the University registrar. Adichie's family is of Igbo descent. At the age of 19, she left Nigeria and

enrolled in Drexel University in Philadelphia of United States and later she transferred to Eastern Connecticut University to live closer to her sister, who had a job as a medical practitioner there. She continued studying Communications and Political Science where she graduated *Summa cum laude* at John Hopkins University in Baltimore in 2003. She also received a Master of Arts in African Studies from Yale University in 2008.

Adichie continued to write several literary works during her study period. She was extremely influenced by the great Nigerian author Chinua Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and perhaps paid to homage to Achebe in the beginning line at her first novel *Purple Hibiscus*, "Thing started to fall apart at home when my brother Jaja did not go to communion and Papa flung his heavy missal across the room and broke the figurines on the etagere" (1). Since the early stages of her career, she has displayed a keen awareness of the importance of ethnicity in Nigeria. She depicts the issues of postcolonial condition of Nigeria in her writings especially on the corruption in government and public offices, political oppression and subjugation, poverty and extreme economic disparity, national brain drain, love and celibacy, religious fanaticism and religious tolerance and family relationship.

Adichie started her writing career with a collection of poetry, *Decisions* (1997). She had to publish a play *For Love of Biafra* in 1998 which recounts the painful experience of a young Igbo woman, Adaobi and her family at the time of the Nigerian civil war of the late 1960s. There are many short stories of Adichie like *You in America* (2001) revised and published in 2004 as *The Thing around Your Neck*, *My Mother*, *the Crazy African* (n.d.), *New Husband* (2004) where she has examined issues faced by first generation immigrants in the west, ranging from abuse and financial difficulties to problems relating to language and identity.

Adichie's first novel, *Purple Hibiscus*, focuses on the strained relationship between first person narrator, Kambili and her devoutly Catholic father, Eugene, and set in Nigeria against the background of the late 1990s political turmoil. The narrator, Kambili explores the adolescent's and her brother Jaja responds to their father's authoritarian attitude. Liberal and freedom are provided to them from their aunt Ifeoma and love towards their Igbo traditionalist grandfather, whom Eugene dismisses as a heathen. Family, religion, politics and tolerance are the central themes which make the novel outstanding. Adichie was short-listed for the Orange Prize for fiction and the Booker Prize for the novel, and she won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best First Book in 2005. Adichie's second novel, *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006) earned the Orange Broadband Prize for fiction in 2007 and other several prestigious literary awards. This novel is set before and during the Biafran war, is told from the perspective from Ugwu, a teenage boy, Olanna, a rich and educated woman and Richard, a white English man. This novel raises political questions as well as many challenging issues relating to gender, race and class.

Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* depicts the Christian Orthodoxy which has suffered the postcolonial Nigeria. Father, Eugene severely controls his son, daughter and wife in the use of religion in spite of fulfilling his family's basic needs. They become the victims of his repression, physical violence and exploitation on the name of religion. He is submissive to the *Bible* thereby turning himself as a religious tyrant in domestic level and functions as an agent of neo-colonial.

Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* shows disintegration of family unit under the pressure of two cultural poles: traditional Igbo culture and western Christian culture in the period of postcolonial Nigeria. Heather Hewitt takes it as a coming of age

novel. She justifies the complex issue of upbringing political threatening within a country. She says:

Kambili's father foists upon his children a dogmatic understanding of what is right (Catholicism) and wrong (traditional beliefs); what is civilized (speaking English) and uncivilized (speaking Igbo). He shuns his own father, Papa-Nnukwu, because of his heathen beliefs and refuses to let his children spend time with their grandfather.

When an unnamed dictator stages a coup and the country begins its descent into chaos. Eugene continues his domestic tyranny even as he publicly fights the political assault on democratic freedoms in his newspaper. (11)

Her perspective gives a horrible picture of binary oppositional sets of English and Igbo culture in the post-independent Nigeria. Father Eugene says in his words, "We had to sound civilized in public ... we had to speak English" (13). How a person like Eugene compelled his family to live in a strict condition. Fifteen years old girl Kambili, central character and her brother Jaja live in a life circumscribed by school, Catholic church and their father, Eugene. He is a successful businessman whose factories and newspaper have earned him the title of *Omelora*, "the one who does for the community" (56). Eugene is a strict Catholic who lives within the Manichean dictates of an unforgiving faith. His imposition of regulation and scheduled life haunts the children including his wife, Beatrice. Kambili explains it as "Papa like order" (23); but the simplicity of her explanation belies his frenzied obsession with regulating his children's lives.

*Purple Hibiscus*, the way of tyranny insists that everyone dreams the national nightmare, and it works by playing off the innocence of childhood against the brutal inanities of strong men in a state gone rotten. Joanne Wilkinson says:

Kambili, who is almost rendered mute in the presence of her boisterous cousins, slowly starts to open up. This impressive first novel is redolent in its depiction of the Nigerian countryside and generates a palpable narrative tension over what's to become of Kambili and Jaja's newfound sense of freedom. (208)

That rare purple hibiscus in a sea of tamer blossoms, a teenaged Nigerian girl named Kambili must deal with escalating family tensions even as her country heads for political turmoil.

Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* explores two cultural poles of traditional Igbo culture represented by Papa Nnukwu and western Christian culture by his son, Eugene in the postcolonial period of late 1990s. Papa Nnukwu follows his own tradition, Igbo culture whereas Eugene blindly follows Christian Catholic religion. The other characters like Kambili, Jaja, Ifeoma, Beatrice and others respect their own tradition of Igbo culture and practice full of freedom by using Igbo culture. Lilly G.N Mabura studies the influence of the colonial language, English that has affected extremely in the local tribal culture and their heritage. In this regard, she says:

... From this we see that while the actual colonists seemingly left the post independence scene, the language(s) of colonization have not. These languages have, instead, attained vehicular status as bureaucratic languages of the state and robbed many indigenous

languages like Igbo, their culture, religions, commercial and educational functions. (211-12)

Mabura interprets the colonial language as legitimized bureaucratic language of the state which tries to demolish all the local values and indigenous Igbo languages and cultures of Nigeria. Kambili remembers Aunty Ifeoma's saying "Papa was too much of a colonial product" (13). Kambili's mother Beatrice poisons Papa Eugene. Beatrice says, "She killed Papa, that she put the poison in his tea" (296) due to his tortured to the family. Kambili memorizes the Aunty Ifeoma's letter to her saying:

There are people ... who think that we can not rule ourselves because the few times we tired, we failed, as if the others who rule themselves today got it right the first time. It is like telling a crawling baby who tries to walk, and then falls back on his buttocks, to stay there. As if the adults walking past him did not all crawl once. (301)

Michele Roberts reviews the book emphasizing the post-traumatic stress disorder. He sees the traumatic experiences amidst political coup and domestic violence. He says:

It puts shape on trauma and makes it bearable, mends what has been broken, works with the bits and pieces of shattered lives to see what might be made with them. Remembering thus involves remembering, and is a political act, particularly if the official historians of a culture ignore the experience of certain sections of the people ... his ardent espousal of capitalism and catholicism is shown to be at the root of his domestic cruelty. (54-55)

Roberts analyzes the text *Purple Hibiscus* based on memory of trauma. The major character Eugene Achike's fusion of Catholicism and Capitalism are the roots behind such trauma. Kambili and her brother Jaja speak English language in the presence of their father. Kambili calls their language *asusu anya*, "a language of the eyes" (305). She describes father's house as "spacious" and "suffocated" (7). These secrets weigh most heavily on Kambili whose frequent inability to speak suggests how continuously fear traumatizes her. When her classmates and teachers at the Daughter of the Immaculate Heart ask her questions, but her throat tightens and she can not speak in a clearly articulated voice then her words come in a fragmented stutters and whispers. Kambili is trapped in a cycle of self-negation by her adoration and adulation of godlike father and her acute need for his affirmation.

In this way, Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* is analyzed from various perspectives by different critics on several issues like indigenous culture, age problem, and physical violence, influence of colonial language and culture, post-war trauma and so on. This study tries to explore the issues of postcolonial female along with Christian and traditional Igbo culture. Adichie depicts the different level of cultural synergy in the post-independence scene of Nigeria.

The researcher uses the feminism: a conscious movement as a theoretical tool to analyze the text. The study supports the several writers and critics from the domain concerned. This thesis is divided into four chapters. The first chapter presents a short general introduction of novel and its writer Adichie as well as indigenous Igbo culture, and short critical responses and reviews. The second chapter presents a methodology where feminism: a conscious movement is used as a theoretical tool. The third chapter is a textual analysis which mainly focuses on love



for Igbo culture in *Purple Hibiscus*. The fourth chapter is a concluding part of this study including with Nigerians protect and protest.

## **Chapter II: Theoretical Tool**

### **Feminism: A Conscious Movement**

The term "feminism" is originated from the French word "feminisme" which was first used to denote the support for women's equal legal and political rights with men. While we talk the history of women we come to know that they had been excluded to marginality from the existing social structure. Feminism is a part of women's movement which is an aggressive consciousness feeling of women who begin to reject their own identity. The main aim of feminist movement is to develop women's personalities and to make them aware about the precarious women's existence in a patriarchal society. Arvonne S. Fraser defines feminist as "The object of feminism was to elevate the equal rights and human rights status of women of race, language or religion, in order to achieve equality with men in all fields of human enterprise and to eliminate all discrimination against women" (44) . It, therefore, studies women as people who are either oppressed or suppressed or rejected from the freedom of personal expressions and interests. All women writers who struggle against patriarchy to contain their womanhood are generally considered feminists.

The words "feminists" and "feminism" are political terms. These two terms indicate to support the women's movement which emerged in the late 1960s. Defining feminist criticism, Toril Moi writes, "It is a specific kind of political discourse: a critical and theoretical practice committed to the struggle against patriarchy and sexism, not simply concern for gender in literature" (204). Feminism is concerned both with the representation of women in literature and with the changing women's position in society by freeing them from oppressive restraints. The goal of the feminist movement is to win the equal rights and freedom.

Postcolonial feminism emerged from the gender history of colonialism; colonial powers often imposed western norms on colonial regions. It, often referred to as third world feminism, is a form of feminist philosophy which centers around the idea that racism, colonialism, and the long lasting effects on economic, political, and cultural of colonialism in the postcolonial setting, are inextricably bound up with the unique gender realities of non-white, non-western women. Wikipedia says that the central idea of postcolonial feminism is that by using the term "woman" as a universal group, they are then only defined by their gender and not by social classes and ethnic identities. It is believed by postcolonial feminists criticizes western feminists ignored the voices of non-white, non-western women for many years, thus creating resentment from feminists in developing nations. Postcolonial feminists see the parallel between recently decolonized nations and the state of women within patriarchy both take the perspective of a socially marginalized subgroup in their relationship to the dominant culture. Postcolonial feminists have had strong ties with black feminists because colonialism usually contains themes of racism. Postcolonial feminism is critical of western forms of feminism notably radical feminism and liberal feminism and their universalization of women's experiences. Postcolonial

feminists argue that cultures impacted by colonialism are often vastly different and should be treated as such. Postcolonial feminists today struggle to fight against gender oppression within their own cultural models of society rather than through those imposed by the western colonizers.

Many Black women viewed feminism as a movement that was exclusively for women and dedicated to attacking or eliminating men. Alice Walker coins a new word 'womanism' to this new movement. Womanism appears to provide an avenue for the growth of stronger relationship between Black women and Black men. In Walker's *In Search of Mother's Garden* defines a womanist as a Black feminist or feminist of color, an outrageous and audacious woman who loves other women both sexually and non-sexually, a woman who appreciates and prefers women's culture, strength and emotional flexibility. Bell Hooks analyses of feminism as:

To me feminism is not simply a struggle to end male chauvinism or a movement to ensure that women will have equal rights with men; it is a commitment to eradicating the ideology of domination that permeates Western culture on various levels-sex, race, and class, to name a few-and a commitment to reorganizing U.S. society so that the self-development of people can take precedence over imperialism, economic expansion, and material desires. (194)

As a result of this struggle, African American women's ideas and experiences have achieved a visibility unthinkable in the past. So the major breakthrough in the women's liberation movement is the humanist vision reflected in the works of contemporary African-American women intellectual. Alice Walker believes that the act of writing itself is a powerful tool for bringing about change in the lives of women. She describes: "In my own I write not only what I want to read

understanding fully and indelibly that if I don't do it no one is so vitally interested or enable of doing it to my satisfaction. I write all the things I should have been able to read" (13).

Freedom of expression is one of the liberties that women at least nominally enjoyed for a considerable period of time. For a long period women's publications had been among the materials removed from the public and school libraries. As a result, they could not write. Virginia Woolf is quite unsatisfied of this situation she raises question about this precarious situation. She says:

The most superficial enquiry into women's writing raises a host of questions. Why, we ask at once, was there no continuous writing done by women before the eighteenth century? Why did they then write almost as habitually as men, and in the course of that writing produce, one after another, some the classics of English fiction? And why did their art then, and why to some extent does their art still, take the form of fiction? (33)

Feminist content was the basis for the censorship of publications. Women's needs and interests were ignored and neglected. In a patriarchal society, the law, constitution and the executive body were bias against women. These institutions were male-oriented and from these institutions females were oppressed and suppressed. Male defined woman as other because of male-structured society woman had no from voting of right, to the right of expression.

Modern feminist writers in U.S. took their impetus from the civil rights, peace and other protest movements. Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* (1977) signifies a significant stage in political feminist writing in literature. The feminist analysis of politics therefore rose from the fact women have been excluded from the exercise of

political power. Feminist criticism is always aware of the suppression of women in society and literature as well. But several books about women experienced by women writers are marginalized. Millet argues that the books of female writers are marginalized because of man-shaped literary values and conventions.

Conscious denotes awareness. The locus of consciousness is the psyche. Consciousness raising should re-educate and re-structure the psyche towards a growing awareness. Transformation connotes change in all spheres of life like cultural, social, economic, educational, political, etc. Literature is a major instrument of consciousness. The colonial experiences engendered literary works e.g. Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God* that raised the consciousness of different African people towards the struggle for political independence. Grace E. Okereke says that gender consciousness in Nigeria has engendered a literary sub-culture that highlights and renders visible the female perspective hitherto subsumed under the male perspective. This has in turn "opened women's eyes as well as raised society's structures (28). Consciousness rising is the central theme in feminist aesthetics. The dispersal of feminism is the seed of female consciousness across the world including Africa from which women have achieved a new and constructive awareness. Okereke contends that "Nigerian women writers and critics are currently engaged in a corrective aesthetic that places gender under the literary microscope to examine and analyze all the hidden microorganisms and their functioning systems in power discourse and to better educate the Nigerian woman on her role in transformation" (28).

In 1970s, there were significant works on women's collective action and protested against regarding colonialism in Africa. Allision Drew found the reasons that the women were firstly inspired by recognition that they remained politically and

economically disadvantaged vis-a-vis men; secondly, by the participation of African women in their armed liberation struggles of the 1970s; and finally, by the impact of the women's movement in the west on scholarship by and about women.

The few rural women of Nepal took part in active support for the decade long Maoist insurrection and captured the attention of academics, military strategists, and the development industry. In this regard, Lauren Leve proposes two theories as:

The 'failed development' hypothesis suggests that popular discontent with the government is the result of uneven, incomplete, or poorly executed development efforts ... In contrast, the 'conscientization' model proposes that, at least in some cases, women's politicization may be the unexpected result of successful development programs that aimed to 'empower' women by raising their consciousness of gender and class-based oppression. (127)

Theorists of subaltern political consciousness and the relation between development and violence must engage with the gendered moral economies of the people, they aim to empower to promote sustainable peace.

Elaine Showalter, a prominent American feminist has identified three phases of modern women's literary development. The first phase dated from 1840 to 1880 called feminine phase during which women writers imitated the dominant male tradition. The second phase dated from 1880 to 1920 called feminist phase when women advocated for their rights. Likewise since 1920 onwards, it has called a third phase or female phase when dependency upon opposition is being replaced by the rediscovery of women's texts and women. Within the present or female phase, there are four current models: biological, linguistic, psychological and cultural. Biological model is the most problematic as women writers who relate the intimacies of female

experience of female body. Linguistic model asserts that women are speaking men's language as a foreign tongue. Psychoanalytic model identifies gender difference in the psyche as well as in the artistic process. Cultural model depicts feminist concerns in social contexts, acknowledging class, racial, national and historical differences and determinants among women (qtd. in Guerin 224-26).

In *The New Feminist Criticism* (1985), Showalter has divided feminist criticism in two distinct modes. The first mode is ideological which she terms "feminist critique" (245), is concerned with the feminist as reader and it offers feminist reading of text which considers the images and stereotypes of women in literature. The second mode of feminist criticism is the study of women as writers. She calls it "gynocritics" (248) and provides the subjects, the history, style, themes, genres, and structure of writing by women. Several dimensions have been shown ranging from liberal attitude and the demand for equal rights for sexes to the radical one voicing out the extreme ideology that tends to theoretically turn the patriarchy upside down. Other feminists have developed many feminist theories like political feminism, Marxist/Socialist feminism, post-modernist/post-structuralist feminism, etc.

Western feminism which had assumed that gender overrode cultural difference to create a universal category of the womanly or the feminine, was operating from hidden universalist assumption with a middle-class, Euro-centric bias. Feminism was therefore charged with failing to account for or deal adequately with the experiences of third world women. In this respect, Chandra Talpade Mohanty criticizes:

... An elision takes place between 'women' as a discursively constructed group and 'women' as material subjects of their own

history. Thus, the discursively consensual homogeneity of women as a group is mistaken for the historically specific material reality of groups of women. (262)

This result is an assumption of women as an always already constituted group, one which has been labeled, economic, legal and sociological discourses. Mohanty explains, "Women of Africa are dependent and oppressed" (262). Mohanty says, "Bema women are constituted rather unilaterally victims of the effects of western colonization" (26).

In the article "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses", Mohanty says that third world feminism projects the internal critique of hegemonic 'western' feminisms and the formulation of autonomous feminist concerns and strategies. She says, "Third world feminisms run the risk of marginalization or ghettoization from both mainstream and western feminist discourses" (1). The definition of the third world woman as:

... A monolith might well tie into the larger economic and ideological praxis of "disinterested" scientific inquiry and pluralism that are the surface manifestations of a latent economic and cultural colonization of the "non-western" world. (42)

The third world feminism is delineating the way in which they resist and work against western feminist discourse. Mohanty feels assumption of women as a coherent group with identical interests and desires, regardless of class, ethnic, or race. In the context of western feminists work on women in the third world, Mohanty assumes ethnocentric theory. The first world women (subjects) attempt to explain third world women (objects) is viewed as a way creating power hierarchies and



cultural domination which the author calls this process of discursive colonialism (19-21).

Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin say feminism is of crucial interest to post-colonial discourse for two major reasons. Firstly, both patriarchy and imperialism can be seen to exert analogous forms of domination over those they render subordinate. Hence, the experience of women in patriarchy and those of colonized subjects can be paralleled in a number of respects, and both feminist and post-colonial politics oppose such dominance. Secondly there have been vigorous debates in a number of colonized societies over whether gender or colonial oppression is the more important political factor in women's lives. This has sometimes led to division between western feminists and political activists from impoverished and oppressed countries (*Key Concepts* 101-2).

Feminism, like postcolonialism, has often been concerned with the ways and extent to which representation and language are crucial to identity formation and to the construction of subjectivity. For both groups, language has been a vehicle for subverting patriarchal and imperial power, and both discourses invoked essentialist arguments in positing more authentic forms of language against those imposed on them.

The term "postcolonial" designates to the experience of the world both during and after European colonization. Postcolonial studies refer to the vast field of literary, social, cultural, historical, political inquiry and investigation developed in the late 1970s and the 80s. In *The Post-colonial Studies Reader*, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin have analyzed the text with many different postcolonial cultural experiences. They say:

Post-colonial literatures are a result of this interaction between imperial culture and the complex of indigenous cultural practices. As a consequence, 'post-colonial theory' has existed for a long time before that particular name was used to describe it. Once colonized peoples had cause to reflect on and express the tension which ensued from this problematic and contested, but eventually vibrant and powerful mixture of imperial language and local experience, post-colonial 'theory' came into being. (1)

They analyze that post-colonialism implicates and addresses all aspects of the colonial process from the beginning of colonial contact. Post-colonial is to represent the continuing process of imperial suppressions and exchanges throughout the diverse range of societies, in their institutions and their discursive practices.

Leela Gandhi's *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* points both postcolonialism and feminism have followed a similar "theoretical trajectory" (83). This theory began to arrange prevailing hierarchies of gender, race, culture, etc and they have welcomed the poststructuralist to refuse the binary oppositions upon which patriarchal and colonial authority. The most significant collision and collusion of postcolonial and feminist theory occurs around the contentious figure of the third world woman. Some feminist postcolonial theorists have argued that a blinkered focus on racial politics inevitably elides the double colonization of women under imperial conditions. Such theory focuses the world woman as victim *par excellence*-the forgotten casualty of both imperial ideology, and native and foreign patriarchies. While it is now impossible to ignore the feminist challenge to the gender blindness of anti-colonial nationalism, Gandhi quotes Sara Suleri, "coalition between postcolonial and feminist theories, in which each term serves to reify the potential

pietism of the other" (83). So it is almost too good to be true. It is needed to be read as a refusal to surrender the third world woman to the sentimental and fond with marginality. Gandhi quotes Spivak, "If there is a buzz world in cultural critique now, it is marginality" (84). Regarding this, she further says:

The consistent invocation of the marginal/subjugated has helped reform the aggressive canonicity of high western culture. And yet, even as the margins thicken with political significance, there are two problems which must give pause. First, as Spivak insists, the prescription of non-western alterity as a tonic for the ill health of western culture heralds the preparation of a 'new orientalism'. Second, the metropolitan demand for marginality is also troublingly a command which consolidates and names the non-west as interminably marginal. (qtd. in Gandhi 84)

The third world becomes a stable metaphor for the minor zone of non-culture and underdevelopment. Its value inheres only in its capacity to politicize or – predictably – subvert major that is to, more developed, cultural formation.

The rise of the third world woman reaches to ideological tourism of western of liberal feminism. The native woman is required to exhibit her ineluctable difference from the primary referent of western feminism. Gandhi quotes Trinh, "It is as if everywhere we go, we become someone's private zoo" (85). The conscious of difference sets up an implicitly culturalist hierarchy where in almost inevitably the native woman suffers in contrast with her western sibling.

Cultural hybridity is an important term in postcolonial studies. The term "hybridity" has its biological etymology which refers to the offspring of two plants or animals of different species or varieties. The first application of the term in

horticulture refers to the cross-breeding of two species by grafting or cross-pollination to form third 'hybrid' species. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin say that “hybridity commonly refers to the creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization” (118). The term “transculturation”, coined by Mary Louise Pratt, refers to the reciprocal influences of modes of representation and cultural practices of various kinds in colonies and metropolises, and is thus “a phenomenon of the contact zone” (qtd. in Ashcroft et al., *Key Concepts* 233). Pratt intends that contact zones are social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relationships of dominance and subordination like colonialism, slavery or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today.

Hybridization takes many forms: linguistic, cultural, political, racial, etc. It is simply understood as a process through which colonized people mimic the colonizers language, culture, politics, etc. Hybridization is an available cultural choice in the postcolonial society. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin say in *The Post-colonial Studies Reader* as:

Most post-colonial writing has concerned itself with the hybridized nature of post-colonial culture as strength rather than a weakness. Such writing focuses on the fact that the transaction of the post-colonial world is not a one way process in which oppression obliterates the oppressed or the stresses the mutuality of the process ... Finally, it emphasizes how hybridity and the power it releases may well be seen to be the characteristic feature and contribution of the post-colonial, allowing a means of evading the replication of the

binary categories of the past and developing new anti-monolithic models of cultural exchange and growth. (183)

They analyze that postcolonial writing is not as one-way process but as reversed counter-defence which is also a part of postcolonial studies. They see that hybridity and power as the characteristic feature of the postcolonial discipline.

Hybridity gives good response to the neo-colonial strategy. In regard to this, Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin say:

Hybridity occurs in post-colonial societies both as a result of conscious moments of cultural suppression, as when the colonial power invades to consolidate political and economic control, or when settler-invaders dispossess indigenous peoples and force them to 'assimilate' to new social patterns. It may also occur in later periods when patterns of immigration from the metropolitan societies and from other imperial areas of influence continue to produce complex cultural palimpsests with the post-colonised world. (*The Post-colonial* 183)

Immigration causes hybridity. Hybridity in which dislocation and displacement has become the social milieu in which indigenous cultures are compelled to follow and assimilate to new social patterns.

The resistance in postcolonial studies stands the act of resisting the colonial mission in physical, psychological, etc. The researcher sees the pertinent view of resistance in the novel. In the post-independence era, as the colonizing mission is subtle and unidentified, the colonized behave to these strategies in a very strategic way. In this regard, Bhabha says:

The negating activity, is indeed, the intervention of the "beyond" that establishes a boundary: a bridge, where 'presencing' begins because it captures something of the estranging sense of the relocation of the home and the world – the unhomeliness – that is the condition of extra-territorial, and cross cultural imitations. To be unhomed is not to be homeless, nor can the 'unhomely' be easily accommodated in that familiar division of social life into private and public spheres.

*(The Location of Culture 13)*

The analysis of home and unhomeliness and its relocation as well are identified in the post colonial cultural hybridity. It leads to diasporic consciousness that guides towards relocation of home.

Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* is the prime example of postcolonial studies which depicts the cultural tension between western colonial culture (Catholic) and native culture (Igbo) and creates cultural hybridity in the novel in the context of Nigeria in the 1990s. In the novel, by the raising of consciousness especially in female characters want to feel independence and freedom from strict colonial culture adopted family and political turmoil. Female characters are struggle against double marginalization of colonial culture and patriarchy. The Feminism: A Conscious Movement is an applicable theoretical tool to portray how emerging revolutionary forces like feminism and post-colonialism entangle to protest against colonial culture and love for native culture.

### **Chapter III: Love for Igbo Culture in *Purple Hibiscus***

#### **Affirmation of Traditional Nigerian Culture**

Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* is an example that seeks the flourishing of Nigerian communities with the liberation and freedom from colonial culture and political turmoil. This study discerns the two extreme cultures of traditional Igbo culture and of western Christian culture in the post-colonial period of late 1990s. Papa-Nnukwu celebrates his own traditional Igbo culture but his son Eugene strictly follows western catholic Christian culture. On the other hand, other characters like Kambili, Beatrice, Jaja, Aunty Ifeoma, Father Amadi, Amaka, Obiora, Chima, etc. respect traditional Igbo culture though they adopt western Christian culture. Around these extreme spheres, this study tries to analyze Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* on love for Igbo culture: protest against colonialism.

*Purple Hibiscus* is introduced right at the start of the novel. Kambili points out: "Things started to fall apart at home when my brother, Jaja did not go to

communion and Papa flung his heavy missal across the room and broke the figurines on the étagère” (3). This shows about the disintegration of the family of Eugene Achike. Eugene Achike was denied the colonial missionary education by his father, Papa-Nnukwu who is a traditionalist. He decided and worked very hard for the colonial missionaries to fund his education. Helped by the missionaries, year after, Eugene has become much very wealthy. Eugene is ever grateful to the colonial missionaries and has grown to be hateful of the traditional religion practiced by his father. He pressurizes his father to be converted to Christianity by denying him the care that an aged father deserves. Eugene also denounces all that is traditional to Africa regarding them as inferior to the Western culture and uncivilized. He becomes an extreme, fanatic Catholic. Eugene further imposes his persuasion on every member of his household. He sets a goal of perfection in the Catholic way before them. He deals out inhuman punishment to those of the family that stray from the biblical injunctions. He himself follows so hard after perfection that his daughter, Kambili, comments that “she never thought that her father had ever sinned” (196). However, the condition changes with the children, Jaja and Kambili, when they go and spend a school vacation in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, with the family of their paternal aunt, Aunty Ifeoma, a woman whose Catholic faith is rather liberal, embracing both Catholicism and the Igbo traditional religion alike. Inspired by the real practical faith on catholic Priest of St. Peter’s Catholic Chaplaincy, Father Amadi, Jaja and Kambili fall out of love with their father’s version of Catholicism. The children react and revolt to the oppressive control of their lives by the unfeeling fanatical father, Eugene Achike. Eugene could not bear the entire emotional burden and he loses control of his temper and almost kills Beatrice, his wife and mother of his children, on some disagreement, and Kambili on disobedience. When Eugene’s psychological



deterioration becomes unbearable Beatrice poisons him. He falls sick and soon dies in his office. Autopsy reveals the cause of Eugene Achike's dark death. Jaja covers his mother and accepts the responsibility for the poisoning. After enduring imprisonment for thirty-one months, Jaja is listed for release and the rest of the Eugene Achike family will start a new, promising, life together.

Eugene Achike is an extremely wealthy industrialist and an extremist devout catholic. He is also a great humanitarian philanthropist. He is a very important chief, in his hometown, Abba, titled Omelora, which means "The One Who Does for the Community" (56). Papa-Nnukwu refuses to sponsor his colonial education; it is run by the catholic missionaries that the traditionalist father never believed in. Eugene had to work as a houseboy and gardener at different times with the catholic priests. He has to trek long distances to get to school. The missionary priests help him with his studies so much that he remains ever grateful to them. Eugene continues to resent Papa-Nnukwu because he has refused to convert to the catholic faith that actually made his colonial education a really hard experience. Besides, being a perfectionist, Eugene will never tolerate a heathen or the pagan worship. He is hot-tempered – a fat man- especially where it comes to sin and could not bear with corruption, injustice and wickedness.

The most prominent themes in the work, *Purple Hibiscus*, are religion, family governance, colonialism, and corruption and injustice. *Purple Hibiscus* examines the Catholic Christian religion and the African, Igbo traditional religion. "The Catholic religion is a colonial tool" (13). It is used to colonize Eugene Achike's mind. The Catholic faith could do better and accommodate, or assimilate, African cultural virtues. Expressions in the church meetings could as well be done in the Igbo language. The Igbo Catholic could dance in their ways to worship God. Certain

traditional dance performances could be allowed without any hurt to the Christian profession such as Kambili suggests that “Our yard was wide enough to hold a hundred people dancing atilogu, spacious enough for each dancer’s shoulders” (9). Moreover, confirmation names should not necessarily be English as demonstrated by Amaka. The names could as well be the very meaningful Igbo ones like “Chiamaka”, “Chima” and “Chiebuka” (272).

*Purple Hibiscus*’s most compelling features lie in its nuanced treatment of the notions of freedom and tyranny, the entanglement of the two concepts is epitomized by the young narrator’s father, Eugene: a wealthy Igbo businessman, he fights the yoke of military dictatorship in Nigeria by publishing a pro-democracy newspaper, but he brutally imposes his fanatical religious views on his wife Beatrice and his children, Kambili and her brother Jaja, all of whom he regularly beats.

Eugene is ruled by a sense of fear; that is fear of contamination from what he perceives as pagan values. Accordingly, his perspective is dominated by closure as exemplified in the closed doors, the high walls that barricade the family house both at Enugu and in the village. It is manifest in the big gates to his compounds and the schedules that rule the children's lives. So Eugene gives the severe punishment to his wife and his children. Kambili’s mother, Beatrice says Kambili, “You know that small table where we keep the family Bible, nne? Your father broke it on my belly ... My blood finished on that floor even before he took me to St. Agnes. My doctor said there was nothing he could do to save it” (248). Kambili concurrently overlooks her father’s commands by concealing her cousin Amaka’s painting of Papa-Nnukwu, although she is fully aware that Eugene will disapprove of her doing so because old man is not a Catholic. This act of resistance is probably her most overt challenge to her father in the entire novel. When he pours boiling water on Kambili’s feet for

staying in the same house as her 'heathen' grandfather, Papa-Nnukwu. In this regard, Kambili states:

He lowered the kettle into the tub, tilted it toward my feet. He poured the hot water on my feet, slowly, as if he were conducting an experiment and wanted to see what would happen. He was crying now, tears streaming down his face. I saw the moist steam before I saw the water. I watched the water leave the kettle, flowing almost in slow motion in arc to my feet. The pain of contact was so pure, so scalding, I felt nothing for a second. And then I screamed. (194)

Eugene destroys the painting as if it is Papa-Nnukwu himself. Kambili could not hold back anymore. She is not ready to watch her father tear something she holds sacred from her just like that. She is not willing to observe her father truncate the stable transition of her development. Eugene's voice is quavered and says, "Kambili, you are precious", "You should strive for perfection. You should not see sin and walk right into it" (194). He said that what she did to herself when she walked into sin. She had to burn her feet. She thought that he was right. The burning on her feet was climbing up, in swift courses of excruciating pain, to her head and lips and eyes. Moreover, Eugene refuses adamantly to the funeral of his father, Papa-Nnukwu. He says, "I can not participate in pagan funeral but we can discuss with the parish Priest and arrange a catholic funeral" (189). But his proposal is despised by Ifeoma saying, "I ask you Eugene, was he a catholic? put my dead husband's grave up for sale, Eugene, before I give our father a catholic funeral. Do you hear me? I said I will sell Ifediora's grave first! Was our father a Catholic? I ask Eugene, was he a Catholic?" (189). He despises the painting of his father. When Kambili and Jaja bring the painting of their grandfather, he questions bitterly, "What is that? Have you converted

to heathen ways? What are you doing with painting? Where did you get it?" (209).

Then Eugene snatches the painting and made it in several pieces. Kambili feels and acts as:

Papa snatched the painting from Jaja. His hands moved swiftly, working together. The painting was gone. It already represented something lost, something I had never had, would never have. Now even that reminder was gone, and at Papa's feet lay pieces of paper streaked with earth-tone colors. The pieces were very small, very precise. I suddenly and maniacally imagined Papa-Nnukwu's body being cut in pieces that small and stored in a fridge. "No!" I shrieked. I dashed to the pieces on the floor as if to save them, as if saving them would mean saving Papa-Nnukwu. I sank to the floor, lay on the pieces of paper. (210)

Eugene's strong uphold and dogmatic practices lead him to do such misbehavior act to his family. Kambili's feeling of cannibalistic act of her father is serious result of extreme complicity.

Kambili's description of her commodious apartment is which she thought that her house is felt suffocation too. She tells:

The silence was broken only by the whirl of the ceiling fan as it sliced through the still air. Although our spacious dining room gave way to an even wider living room, I felt suffocated. The off-white walls with the framed photos of Grandfather were narrowing, bearing down on me. Even the glass dining table was moving toward me. (7)

Eugene's implication in these traumatic events suggests that his abuse not only maims on his family members' bodies but it also serves to control their tongues.

Beatrice's swollen eye or face (10, 190,193), her blood on the floor (33), on her ritual of polishing the figurines on the étagère (10, 192). Similarly, the punishment that has left Kambili's brother with a deformed little finger is recounted by means of a narrative ellipsis. "Papa took him upstairs and locked the door. Jaja, in tears, came out supporting his left hand with his right, and Papa drove him to St. Agnes hospital"(145). "Papa slapped my left and right cheeks at the same time" (51) and that "Papa yanked my ear in the car" (94). Eugene's life is as dictatorial and abusive as the leaders whom he attacks. He constantly batters his wife and uses other violent means to correct his family. This weird behaviour has therefore caused Kambili, her brother Jaja, and their mother, Beatrice both physical and psychological destructions.

The enraged Eugene raises a belt, Kambili's mind jumps to a scene she has witnessed many times:

Sometimes I watched the Fulani nomads, white jellabas flapping against their legs in the wind, making clucking sounds as they herded their cows across the roads in Enugu with a switch, each smack of the switch swift and precise. Papa was like a Fulani nomad – although he did not have their spare, tall body- as he swung his belt at Mama, Jaja, and me, muttering that the devil would not win. We did not move more than two steps away from the leather belt that swished through the air.

(102)

The striking, almost romantic comparison is between Eugene and a Fulani nomad, whipping cattle with a rod. The juxtaposition of peaceful, rural nomads with Eugene's violent rage startles, but the image more. By slowing down the moment, it increases the tension, enabling us to see through the eyes of a young narrator who possesses acute powers of observation.

## **Female Consciousness for Freedom from Domination**

Purple hibiscus is a large bright colored flower which is significant because it has got multifarious colors in contrast to red hibiscus in terms use in novel. In contrast to red color, the purple color represents of mix two different colors of red and blue. These two symbolic colors represent two extremities in Nigerian context during postcolonial period. Red color represents the extremity and violent move, and most of the time revolutionary. Likewise, blue color represents freedom and peace. In the Adichie's novel *Purple Hibiscus*, the flower of the title is a hybrid, which represents the changes where Kambili survives in her abusive family and corrupted society. Kambili describes about purple hibiscus in contrast to red hibiscus as:

Closer to the house, vibrant bushes of hibiscus reached out and touched one another as if they were exchanging their petals. The purple plants had started to push out sleepy buds, but most of the flowers were still on the red ones. They seemed to bloom so fast, those red hibiscuses, considering how often Mama cut them to decorate the church altar and how often visitors plucked them as they walked past to their parked cars. (9)

This shows the ambivalent feelings in symbolic level. It is represented that Kambili sees the vibrant bushes of hibiscus reaching out and touching one another as if they were exchanging hope, aspirations of freedom but this is no avail because in the succeeding description we see the restriction when visitors pluck them. Nonetheless, the visitors are western invaders who are just walking past Nigeria feigning the parking station. The whole mission is the colonial mission of the invaders and that is the most vicious cycle. Kambili's mother is also a part of such crowd who is name of religion cuts it to decorate the church altar.

Jaja brings seeds of purple hibiscus while Kambili brings the uncompleted painting of their grandfather. Both items represent freedom from the rigid life style of their father's world. With these items, they are to sustain a steady link with their aunt's airy world enroute liberation. With these items they hope never to plunge into the border of frustration, disillusionment, alienation, and the existential solitude of the world they know to well. The items will help cram the vacuum created in their lives. Kambili tastes a freedom that had never before been hers. It resembles the purple hibiscus in her aunt's garden, which is:

Aunty Ifeoma's experimental purple hibiscus: rare, fragrant with the undertones of freedom, a different kind of freedom from the one the crowds waving green leaves chanted at Government Square after the coup. A freedom to be, to do. (16)

Kambili and her brother Jaja dare not say some things aloud, but their "asusu anya," or "language of the eyes" (305), allows them to speak about subjects of which their father might disapprove. The narrator attempts to comfort her mother. The girl reports: "I meant to say I am sorry Papa broke your figurines, but the words that came out were, I am sorry your figurines broke, Mama" (10). When a pregnant Mama is beaten so heavily by her husband that she suffers a miscarriage, on return from hospital she reports to her children. "There was an accident, the baby is gone" (34). The baby is gone follows the same pattern as the figurines broke.

When Kambili comes second in her class rather than encourage the girl to put more effort into her academic business, he petulantly asks a mechanical question. "How many heads has Chinwe Jideze (46)?" The girl beats her to the second position. He didn't stop there, he brings out a mirror and gives it to Kambili, in order to

ascertain the number of heads she has. For fear of being tortured, Kambili devices a new method of studying:

I carried a bigger load-the worry of making sure I came first this term. It was like balancing a sack of gravel on my head every day at school and not being allowed to steady it with my hand. I still saw the print in my textbooks as a red blur, still saw my baby brother's spirit strung together by narrow lines of blood. I memorized what the teachers said because I knew my textbooks would not make sense if I tried to study later. After every test, a tough lump like poorly made fufu formed in my throat and stayed there until our exercise books came back. (52)

Eugene's educational standards are not only placidly faulty, it is banal and unproductive. Hence Kambili turns the entire academic enterprise to cramming and calculation. Eugene's educational standards stress the training of the intellect without any complementary ties with the emotion and imagination.

Eugene's brutality has been on his children and his wife since a long time ago. Similarly Jaja is experienced a badly treat from Eugene as:

When he was ten, he had missed two questions on his catechism test and was not named the best in his First Holy Communion class. Papa took him upstairs and locked the door. Jaja in tears, came out supporting his left hand with his right, and Papa drove him to St. Agnes hospital. Papa was crying, too, as he carried Jaja in his arms like a baby all the way to the car. (145)

Father Amadi takes takes advantage of her dogmatic naivety as she falls for the bait and runs for it:



“Do you love Jesus?” Father Amadi asked, standing up, I was startled. “Yes, Yes, I love Jesus.” “Then show me. Try and catch me, show me you love Jesus.” He hardly finished speaking before he dashed off and I saw the blue flash of his tank top. I did not stop to think; I stood up and ran after him. (176)

As Father Amadi continues to cosset her, she beams her first smile, though icy, it is a process towards voicing. As a result Adichie shows how a male exploited the female in the name of religion.

The helplessness of the traditional African woman is only articulated very vibrantly when Kambili’s mother in complete actuality remarks that:

“Where would I go if I leave Eugene’s house? Tell me where would I go?” She did not wait for Aunty Ifeoma to respond. “Do you know how many mothers pushed their daughters at him? Do you know how many asked him to impregnate them, even, and not to bother paying a bride price?” (250)

Her conviction of the above assertion makes her silence in the home even more galloping.

In *Purple Hibiscus*, Papa-Nnukwu is an agent to save his own traditional Igbo religion whereas Eugene tempted him to give up his own traditional religion.

Regarding this, Kambili narrates:

Papa-Nnukwu had told the umunna how Papa had offered to build him a house, buy him a car, and hire him a driver, as long as he converted and threw away the chi in the thatch shrine in his yard. Papa-Nnukwu laughed and said he simply wanted to see his grand-children when he

could. He would not throw away his chi; he had already told Papa this many times. (61)

Papa-Nnukwu had been offered all things what he needed. But it is the condition to convert in Christian. So he refused to take the facilities which were offered him. Instead that he saved his own traditional Igbo god, chi.

Eugene describes Igbo god which is lower status than in other colonial religion. In this regard, Kambili says: “The shrine was a low, open shed, its mud roof and walls covered with dried palm fronds. It looked like the grotto behind St. Agnes, the one is dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes” (66-67). The comparison of Igbo god, *mmuo* stated by Eugene:

The stories of *mmuo* that they were spirits who had climbed out of ant holes, that they could make chairs run and baskets hold water, were all devilish folklore. *Devilish Folklore*. It sounded dangerous the way Papa said it. “Look at this,” Papa-Nnukwu said. “This is a woman spirit, and the women *mmuo* are harmless ... The *mmuo* he pointed to was small; its carved wooden face had angular, pretty features and rouged lips. It stopped often to dance, wiggling this way and that, so that the string of beads around its waist swayed and rippled. The crowds nearby cheered, and some people threw money toward it. (85-86)

Eugene says that the Igbo god, *mmuo* is a devil and dangerous as well but Papa-Nnukwu says that it is woman spirit which is harmless and pretty, and people respect it. There is a lovely custom in Igbo culture which is offer to everybody to eat “Come and eat” (64). Kambili respects to Papa-Nnukwu as “Papa-Nnukwu does not look as healthy as last year” (68), Aunty Ifeoma said, “Your Papa-Nnukwu is not a pagan ...

he is a traditionalist” (81). They are happy when Eugene gave the money to the Aunty Ifeoma for Papa-Nnukwu’s funeral procession. Kambili narrates: “I sent Ifeoma money for the funeral. I gave her all she needed,” Papa said. After a pause, he added, “For *nna anyi*’s funeral.” Thanks be to God,” Mama said, and Jaja and I repeated her” (198).

Eugene negligence is on his traditional religion. Eugene asked his family every night at dinner “Do you think Godless men have any sense?”(201). In *Purple Hibiscus*, many characters protest against colonial culture. When Kambili ate Eugene’s new product then she feels:

I developed a cough, and my cheeks burned the back of my hand.  
Inside my head, thousands of monsters played a painful game of catch,  
but instead of a ball, it was a brown leatherbound missal that they  
threw to each other. (14)

It is symbolic that the new product is colonial culture which is a symbol of Christian people religion. In her thinking that the colonizers are the monsters who had badly tortured the Nigerians.

Papa-Nnukwu teaches Father Amadi not to hate to the own father or senior persons as Eugene. Kambili states:

Father Amadi said, “We go to the white man’s land and the black man’s land, sir. Any place that needs a priest” ... Then Papa-Nnukwu said to him, “It is good, my son. But you must never lie to them. Never teach them to disregard their fathers”. (172)

Father Amadi is a church priest whose job is to work on the white man’s land and the black man’s land. Papa-Nnukwu says to him not to disregard their father.

There was a political turmoil where British colonized the Nigeria. Kambili says, “Nigeria had been suspended from the Commonwealth because of the murder, that Canada and Holland were recalling their ambassadors in protest”(201), and Soldiers are appointed lecturers and students; lecturers with guns to their heads (223). As a result, Students are rioting. There had to be a least five hundred people singing as:

“Sole administrator must go. He doesn’t wear pant oh! Head of State must go. He doesn’t wear pant oh! Where is running water? Where is light? Where is petrol?” “The singing is so loud I thought they were right outside,” Aunty Ifeoma said. (228)

There were a lot of problems in Nigeria like light, petrol, food etc. Colonial Administration is only confined his own facilities not to care the public. So people do not like the colonial ruled in University. Last time, the students burned a senior professor’s car. Moreover, “All we are saying, sole administrator must go! All we are saying, he must go! No be so? Na so!”(228). The students had set the sole administrator’s house on fire; even the guest house behind it had burned to the ground. Six university cars had been burned down, as well. “They say the sole administrator and his wife were smuggled out in the boot of an old Peugeot 404, o di egwu,” (229) Aunty Ifeoma said, waving around a circular. The university was closed down until further notice as a result of the damage to university property and the atmosphere of unrest. Kambili wonders what it meant, if it meant Aunty Ifeoma would leave soon, if it meant she and her brother Jaja would no longer come to Nsukka.

These all are caused of colonial culture which is strongly carried by Eugene. In Purple Hibiscus, there are many objections to the Eugene by Kambili, Beatrice,

Aunty Ifeoma, Jaja etc. Beatrice got objection for the Eugene's facilities as Mama said, "I got back from the hospital today. The doctor told me to rest, but I took Eugene's money and asked Kevin to take me to the park. I hired a taxi and came here" (248). Likewise, Jaja's strength to say, "We are going to Nsukka today, not tomorrow. If Kevin will not take us, we will still go. We will walk if we have to" (261). Beatrice said, "I started putting the poison in his tea before I came to Nsukka" (290). "She went about telling people that she killed Papa, that she put the poison in his tea" (296). As a result that Eugene is being alone in the family as well as colonial rule is symbolically alienated from the Nigerian society due to his severe act. Adichie remarks that in Amaka words: "Haven't you heard how those American embassy people treat Nigerians? They insult you and call you a liar and on top of it, eh, refuse to give you a visa" (263). As a behavior of American towards Nigerians cause to demolish their popularity in Nigeria as well as African countries.

Adichie divides her novel *Purple Hibiscus* into following four sections:

"Breaking Gods": Palm Sunday", "Speaking with Our Spirits: Before Palm Sunday", "The Pieces of God: After Palm Sunday", and "A Different Silence: The Present".

The action moves to the past in section two which is entitled, "Speaking with Our Spirits: Before Palm Sunday." In this section we are given insight to the shadow of Eugene's authority over the family. The events in this section are foreshadowed toward the end of the last as Kambili. "Lay in bed and let her mind rake through the past through the years when Jaja and Mama and I spoke more with our spirits than with our lips." (15-16). With this in mind it is easy to see that Jaja's defiance which manifested as his refusal to go to the communion, is precipitated by the events of those years of silence of muted interaction as they spoke with our spirits. The second manifestation of this defiance is subtly reported by Mama in response to Kambili's

question as to Jaja's whereabouts; to this Mama responds: "In his room he did not come down for dinner" (15). The sub-title of this section of the novel, "Breaking Gods," refers to the shattering of these figurines. But beyond the surface we witness a pattern. This is because Jaja's defiance serves to put his father's dominance in brackets. The young man's action establishes a shattering of the oppressive cloud cast over the entire domestic space as a result of their father's presence and dominance. In this regard their father is the god in question. Although he breaks his wife's figurines, "the figurine pieces on the floor" (7) ironically point to the demystification of his authority. This is because as we will see, this incident provides the opportunity for the story to be told and also for Kambili to gain the capacity for self-expression. In the third section the rigid complicit cultural values crumble down and the very breaking of God appears into several pieces. The last section is about to present the different than past but it is ultimately result of past. The importance of past and present is equally important shown in the novel through cultural aspect.

*Purple Hibiscus* treats the African, Igbo traditional religion as innocent, sincere, pure and living. The scenes that are most depictive of this are the traditional shrine of Papa-Nnukwu and the old man himself, and the Aro festival at Ezi-Icheke. Kambili comments about Papa-Nnukwu, "I had examined him that day, too, looking away when his eyes met mine, for signs of difference, of Godlessness. I didn't see any..." (63). Kambili also sees the Aro festival as being "like a vibrant painting that had come alive" (85). Where Papa-Nnukwu prays, doing his *itu-nzu*, his declaration of innocence (166), Kambili observes rather with disbelief on the purity of the traditional devotion.

### **Female Consciousness on Igbo Language and Songs**

Adichie also peppers the dialogue with a number of Igbo words; language itself is viewed as a reflection of status, as Kambili's father, Eugene discourages its use in favor of English. He represents the mimicry of British colonialism through language and religion. He hates his own Igbo language and praises the colonial language. Kambili says:

He hardly spoke Igbo, and although Jaja and I spoke it with Mama at home, he did not like us to speak it in public. We had to sound civilized in public, he told us; we had to speak English. Papa's sister, Auntie Ifeoma, said once that Papa was too much of a colonial product. She had said this about Papa in a mild, forgiving way, as if it were not Papa's fault, as one would talk about a person who was shouting gibberish from a severe case of malaria. (13)

Eugene's less preference of his own traditional Igbo language is very much supportive to colonizer. He forbids his family to speak Igbo language in public as he proclaims English is the language of civilized people. So, Eugene is as a colonial product.

Eugene Achike is a strict Catholic who lives within the Manichean dictates of an unforgiving faith. "Papa liked order," (23) Kambili explains; but the simplicity of her explanation belies his frenzied obsession with regulating his children's lives. His rigid adherence to order manifests itself in the daily schedules he creates for them, schedules with:

... meticulously drawn lines, in black ink, cut across each day, separating study from siesta, siesta from family time, family time from eating, eating from prayer, prayer from sleep. He revised them often. When we were in school, we had less siesta time and more study time, even on weekends. When we were on vacation, we had a little more

family time, a little more time to read newspapers, play chess or monopoly, and listen to the radio. (23-24)

The manifestoes replicate Kambili and Jaja's schedules. Eugene allows his children a little air of freedom but tries to regulate their life styles in his absence with his doctrines instilled in their hearts via his schedule.

Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* has constituted numerous Igbo words in the use of calling name, food, plants and other symbolic words which make the novel outstanding example of Igbo people. Adichie uses the "Nne, ngwa", "nne", "O zugo" etc for Kambili and uses the name "biko", "Ke Kwaanu", "gbo" etc for Jaja. She uses "nna anya" for her father. By loving towards Igbo, she has shown many names for various food items – egusi soup, utazi curry, fufu, Onugbu soup, Cashew juice, wafers, ofe nsala, aromatic soup, moi-moi, anara, jollof rice, azi fried, crisp, ngwo-ngwo, okpa, flanky fufu, watery soup etc. There are many Igbo songs singing in *Purple Hibiscus* by different characters like "Bunie ya enu..." (28), "O me mma, Chineke, o me mma..." (39), "Ka m bunie afa gi enu..." (125), "I na-asi m esona ya! I na-asi m esona ya!" (179), "Ekena nke udo – ezigbo nwanne m nye m aka gi – The greedy of peace – my dear sister, dear brother, give me your hand" (241), "Abum onye n'uwa, onye ka m bu n'uwa" (276) etc. Some of the indigenous conscious music is the favorite of the Igbo people. She said, "I listen mostly to indigenous musicians. They're culturally conscious; they have something real to say. Fela and Osadebe and Onyeka are my favorites" (118). Kambili thinks of Amaka's culturally conscious music which is a symbol of resistance. *Purple Hibiscus* may well mirror the author's awareness of the complexities of her own relationship to postcolonial Nigeria.

The tone of innocence could appear childish and playful in most instances. The reader finds the "slap-slap sounds" of slippers (7), "the thump-thump-thump of



the pestle” (11), “the clink-clink-clink of forks and spoons” (22), and Kambili’s strongly imagistic descriptions, which utilize impressive similes as asserting her innocent narrative tone. The innocent tone veers off a new lane in the last part; it becomes not merely a tone of awareness but that of conscious plainness.

Kambili's attraction to Amadi is announced with flourish as he comes to visit at Aunty Ifeoma's residence at Nsukka. We are told: "He had a singer's voice, a voice that had the same effect on my ears that Mama working Pears baby oil into my hair had on my scalp" (135). And later, "he spoke so effortlessly as if his mouth were a musical instrument that just let sound out when touched" (138). Again she confesses, "I could not help staring at him because his voice pulled me" (148). The common core that binds all these indications of Kambili's attraction is her consciousness of the other. More importantly, this consciousness is expressed directly through her perspective. Here, we see her as a person, a young woman who is capable of expressing her feelings for a man. This is in contrast to the traditional patriarchal constructs that subtly prohibit female expression for male attraction and desire for sex.

Kambili is seen of awakening in the leadership role playing in the family. This awakening also manifests in her new consciousness of her sexuality. It is important to underscore that the awakening to her sexuality and her role in the family are in conformity of the female writer. In *Purple Hibiscus* silencing is not only a mechanism or weapon of patriarchal control but of domestic servitude. Kambili, Jaja and their mother device ways of survival within the utilitarian calculus Eugene has created for their minds. One of the domineering silence with which they observe situations and the other is a filial bonding.

When Kambili's mother suffers the last miscarriage as a result of the overbearing and barbarous instinct of Eugene, Ifeoma advises her not to return her husband. Kambili's mother rises up from her docility and poisons her husband, a countermeasure to redeeming herself and her children from the marginal border of taciturnity. These are all firm indications of Adichie's feminist intention. The female choice is feminist to the extent that it helps to express the human intelligence of the female folk. It is also essentially the demonstration of their equal fundamental human right of the freedom of expression with the male person. While in the Achike family, Beatrice and Kambili will never contest the fanatical leadership style of Eugene, Kambili comes out at the end to utilize her newly found freedom of expression. It is only Jaja that boldly speaks out against his father's wish that he (Jaja) does not like the communion bread, wafer.

The significance of *Purple Hibiscus*, which opens it up to the issues of ideology, is that it is animated by a tension between these two aspects of voice. In short, Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* is the disintegration of Achike family caused by domestic violence where Eugene wants to destroy his own traditional religion Igbo and forces to adopt his family on western catholic Christian religion but Papa-Nnukwu doesn't accept his proposal and saves his own traditional Igbo culture where many characters like Kambili, Auntie Ifeoma, Beatrice, Jaja, Father Amadi, Amaka etc respect the Igbo culture even they adopt Christian culture as well as they resist Eugene's stance through the quest of cultural hybridity during the postcolonial period of Nigeria. Around these extremities, the researcher tries to explore the love for Igbo culture: protest against colonialism.

## **Chapter IV: Conclusion**

### **Nigerians Protect and Protest**

Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* is an exemplary signature of postcolonial studies. It depicts the cultural tensions between modernity and tradition, and also shows new form of cultural hybridity assimilation in the form of Western Christian culture with traditional Igbo culture during the period of post-independence Nigeria in the decade of 1990s. This study explores female consciousness on religion, language, education, sexuality, freedom as well as their protest against colonial rule and patriarchy in the context of postcolonial Nigeria. This exploration depicts the Nigerian culture and female resistance to colonial rule. As a theoretical tool feminism is applicable for analysis of the text to portray how emerging revolutionary forces like feminism and post-colonialism together protest against colonial rule and show love towards their native religion.

Eugene and his father Papa-Nnukwu represent two extreme cultures. Eugene blindly follows Christian culture and he is completely colonized through Christian

religion and English language. Whereas Papa-Nnukwu celebrates his own traditional Igbo culture. He represents as an extremist resistant of western Christian culture. He is also a symbolic character of democratic ideals, which connotes freedom. But Eugene is totally influenced by colonizers. He does not allow his father into his premises because their religious beliefs are two opposite pillars which are characterized by a kind of inverse.

Eugene does not know the roots of germination of domestic violence. Likewise Papa-Nnukwu's extremist resistance leads to the violence. So, both of these work as factors that lead to disintegration of Achike family shown in *Purple Hibiscus*. Adichie shows the fact and figure in African countries like Nigeria through the plight of Achike's family. The novel negotiates the tensions between two cultures namely traditional Igbo culture and Western Christian culture, which creates third party characters like Kambili, Aunty Ifeoma, Beatrice, Jaja, Father Amadi, Amaka, Obiora, Chima etc. who respect the traditional Igbo culture while they practice Catholic Christian culture. They understand that the modern Western Christian culture and the traditional Igbo culture are inseparable to form a new formative society in Nigeria.

Adichie artistically advocates a radical feminism. Her portraiture of male domination of the lives of women and female resistance to marginalization is striking. Adichie has been able to explore artistically the socio-political tensions in her country in particular and Africa at large. Her vision as a writer emphasizes that exposure; fortitude and audaciousness are the ergonomic designs that can rupture these tensions. Adichie presents a dialectical situation between characters understood as subjects, with the eventual emergence of Kambili to self-knowledge and condition of social responsibility. It is expected of the initiate to be conscious of the initiation rite and process.

Resistance against colonial rule and cooperation among native people are the new way to defeat colonial domination. In Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, the major women characters like Kambili, Beatrice, Ifeoma show their contempt of colonial domination. Aunt Ifeoma snapped her brother Eugene, Beatrice killed her own husband Eugene, Kambili protected her grandfather Papa-Nnukwu's painting, Amaka frequently sang Igbo song etc have shown the protest against colonial rule which carries symbolic meaning to love Igbo culture.

Finally, the study also explores the growth process of female protagonist, Kambili as she struggles to make her own active function in her father's home. Kambili is involved in crisis with religious and domestic stakes at the beginning of the narrative, she seems to be a mere observer and victim, but as the novel drags towards denouement she realizes her voice and role in the home after her awakening. In the novel, silence is conceptualized in order to articulate how the dominant group employs it to regulate the existence of the subservient group attains power and agency in the subversion of the weapon of domination to negotiate their existence around the margins.

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