

**Hybridization and Cultural Transformation in *No Longer at Ease* and *Arrow of God***

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**ABSTRACT:**

In postcolonial studies, “Hybridization” refers towards the blending of different cultures and beliefs in a single society. Chinua Achebe’s novels *No Longer at Ease* and *Arrow of God* have been analysed here in which the native colonized people entangle in hybridity after the intervention of colonial forces along with their culture and religion. The present article pores over the fact that the colonized people face ultimate loss at personal and social levels by being entangled in two opposite cultural and religious beliefs. They adopt the indigenous and the foreign culture and beliefs according to their personal interests and benefits. The study is based on Homi K. Bhabha’s theory of hybridity in *The Location of Culture*. The textual analysis illustrates that the colonial administration is not only responsible for the effects of hybridization; rather the approaches of the natives also play a significant role in downfall of indigenous culture and religion. The hypothesis is accomplished by discussing the instances of hybridization in the novels and it is demonstrated that this hybrid approach of the local people affects their individual and collective lives.

Keywords: *Hybridity, Culture, Postcolonialism.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

With a botanical origin “Hybridity” or “Hybridization” signifies the drafting of two species. Along with this when it is related to the human beings, it implies the mingling of a variety of features and characteristics in the people of one particular society or culture. Hybridization is a significant notion in postcolonial field of study, referring to the amalgamation or mingling of cultural values and practices from the colonizer and the colonized cultures. According to Helen Tiffin, Bill Ashcroft and Gareth Griffiths in their collective work *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* Hybridity takes place in some societies as a consequence of mindful instants of cultural repression, when the imperial powers overrun to strengthen political and economic command, and then invaders deprive native folks and compel them to ‘assimilate’ to innovative social models (Tiffin et al., 2006, p.183).

They make clear that the foreign government takes command of the non-European areas and colonizes them both mentally and physically. The colonial domination spreads its customs among the locals which causes the amalgam of two conflicting lifestyles. The local public feels appeal towards the alien culture and beliefs due to the way the settlers adopt to carry out their aims.

Edward Said differentiates the colonial and colonized cultures in his two revolutionary works *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism* and shows them to be interconnected to each other and existing side by side. In *Orientalism* he elaborates two categories of culture and people based on the Western perceptions; one is “Orient” and the other is “Occident”. Orient means eastern and Occident means western. He discusses the scheme of hybridity in the shape of cultural confrontation in another work *Culture and Imperialism*. In the preface of the book he illustrates that the citizens of colonized culture revisit old customs and values that results in multiculturalism and hybridity (Said, 1993, p.xii). They get fascinated towards the new lifestyle introduced by the intruders firstly. And later on in some matters, they resist the new order and get dissatisfied with it. Their return to the traditional approach is termed as hybridity by Said.

It is mostly considered that the colonial forces are responsible for the decline of the colonized nations, but this is also a fact that the indigenous factors are equally vital in bringing the troubles for the colonized people. Their approach towards handling different sort of circumstances results

in their tragic ends. The present research is based on the analysis of the mingling of foreign and native cultures and religions in the Igbo society of Nigeria presented in two famous works of Chinua Achebe *Arrow of God* and *No Longer at Ease*. Both the novels are the parts of a trilogy in which the first one is *Things Fall Apart*, a landmark in the entire world of African and postcolonial literature. There seems a perfect portrayal of the colonized African society in Achebe's novels which interpret how the ascendancy of colonizers influence the social and cultural lives of the Igbo people who get mingled in two different lifestyles and fail to deal with the circumstances. Achebe seems to make the people understand how the colonial forces wipe out the social life and traditions of the native people by attracting them towards new religion and culture.

*No Longer at Ease* is the extension of the story of Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart*. The characters in the novel are the part of a hybrid society. The protagonist Obi Okonkwo is the son of Isaac Okonkwo (Nwoye) who is the son of Okonkwo the protagonist of *Things Fall Apart*. The hybridization observed in *No Longer at Ease* is the effect of the colonial domination established in that society. Isaac became a victim of cultural and religious hybridization when he was attracted by Christian missionaries in the first novel of the trilogy *Things Fall Apart*. But in *No Longer at Ease* he shows a twist in his approach towards these things in the matter of his son Obi's marriage with an outcast that is prohibited in Igbo culture. His son Obi also shows a hybrid approach in the cultural and religious matters. Firstly he does not show any interest in Christianity and feels good for traditional norms and values. But when he comes across the opposition to his marriage to an outcast, he argues by referring to the Christian teachings that allows marriage to any caste and class without discrimination. These hybrid approaches of the major character lead them towards insult and social demise.

The other novel *Arrow of God* also presents hybridization as a result of colonial intervention. It is the story of a fight over the dispute of land between two villages Umuaro and Okperi which is intervened by the colonial forces in the leadership of Captain T.K. Winterbottom, the British colonial overseer. The matter is settled by him in the favour of Okperi. He breaks their weapons by force and implements his administrative rule over them. The chief priest of god Ulu, Ezeulu who lives in Umuaro also backs Okperi that angers his villagers. The priest Ezeulu shows hybridity when he refuses the offer of colonizers to become a part of colonial administration. His

son Oduche goes to get Christian education but refuses to kill the python due to the respect of traditional Igbo values. The natives of Umuaro also demonstrate hybridity in cultural, political and religious matters. They are in double-minded situation. On the one hand they have respect for Igbo religious values but in financial and farming matters they acknowledge the verdict of Christian missionaries for harvesting the new yams. There are also found the serious effects of hybridity on the lives of the natives in the form of cultural and religious downfall and abuse.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Cultural study is significant in the postcolonial literature and theory. As the culture of the colonized land is affected by the foreign invasions, the writers and researchers make it the theme of their works. Chinua Achebe's writings have been the focal point of a majority of the researchers in the area of postcolonial studies. Being a part of the colonized African society he has always raised voice against the colonial domination in his continent. He emphasizes the significance of the African culture that has been colonized by the European forces; his novels provide a broad spectrum of research for the intellectuals interested in the study of the culture of the colonized territories. The novels under discussion in the current research *No Longer at Ease* and *Arrow of God* are also among the key works as far as the cultural research is concerned. This chapter comprises of the discussion on the research done regarding the hybridization in other works and the texts under research. Firstly I have probed into the research works done on the novels of other writers comprising of the concept of hybridity. Then the articles written on the Achebe's novels *No Longer at Ease* and *Arrow of God* have been perused with reference to the cultural transformation. The review of literature is divided into two sections: researches on Hybridity and researches on the selected texts for the present study.

Shirin Zubair (2012) discusses the conflict of cultures in the novel *An American Brat* by Bapsi Sidhwa in "Crossing Borders, Reinventing Identity (ies): Hybridity in Pakistani English Fiction". In her view-point, Feroza a Pakistani girl becomes the victim of hybridization during her time in America. She is fighting against the boundaries that once comforted her, trying to find her true self. According to Shirin, Sidhwa uses the metaphor of a dark stairwell for America where Feroza is seemingly trapped (Zubair, 2012). The feeling of being trapped and inability to break free of the boundaries restricts her from finding who she is and where she fits in. Ms Zubair illustrates that by raising such dichotomies and critical questions, the writer tends to emphasize

the complication of searching for a constant and unified distinctiveness in a multicultural, postcolonial globe (Zubair, 2012). This article gives awareness about the effects of hybrid environment on the lives of people.

In the article “Choice and Hybridity in Colonial India: The Pursuit for empowerment in Social Relationships” Jessica Massucco (2015) discusses the hybrid tendency and identity crisis in the novel *Untouchable* by Mulk Raj Anand. He uses the views of Homi K. Bhabha and Edward Said regarding hybridity in this article. He explores how the natives intentionally employ the elements of foreign identity with the aim to authorize or lift up themselves in their own society. He states Bhabha’s remarks from *The Location of Culture* by saying that marginal activities of cultural distinction may be conflicting and they may amaze our description of tradition and modernity; realign the regular limitations amid the personal and the communal, high and low; and defy prospects of improvement and evolution (Massucco, 2015, p.11).

### **2.1. Researches on the selected novels of Achebe**

Different researches have been conducted on the novels of Chinua Achebe and especially the novels selected for the present study. Here some articles are being discussed which focus on the issue of cultural transformation in *No Longer at Ease* and *Arrow of God*.

Moanungsang talks about the downfall of native culture in *No Longer at Ease* with the symbol of death. In the article “Death of Native Culture in Chinua Achebe’s *No Longer at Ease*” he says that with the arrival of the colonial forces in Umuofia the old order has died and it has made the way easy for the spread of a new culture and religion with a mediator society. He is of the view that through the struggle of the protagonist Obi, Achebe has drawn the idea of the death of the native culture by presenting him as the product of modern era that is an amalgam of different cultures (Moanungsang, 2011, p.214). This mixture brings about the death of the native culture. Moanungsang illustrates the reason for Achebe’s use of the symbol of death for the demise of the native culture (Moanungsang, 2011, p.218).

He affirms the native society at intermediary stage due to the colonial domination in the area. With the establishment of the foreign rule in that land the alien culture and religion have been inculcated in the society because of which the native norms and values have died. He further comments about Achebe’s novels that they can be termed as the justified representation of the involvement of the foreign culture and the death of the indigenous Igbo culture (Moanungsang,

2011, p.219). In the conclusion of the article Moanungsang declares the novel *No Longer at Ease* as the study of personal dilemma of the colonized society that is the result of Westernization and it brings about the death of the native culture (Moanungsang, 2011, p.220).

Another researcher Adina Campu analyses the conflict between the traditional and modern ways of life in the article “Tradition Versus Modernity in Chinua Achebe’s *No Longer at Ease*”. She talks about the dilemma of the characters in the novel regarding the traditional and modern lifestyles after the establishment of foreign rule in their land. According to her in this novel there is a conflict between British-imposed modernity and African tradition (Campu, 2013, p.5). Here the writer presents a comparison and contrast between *No Longer at Ease* and Achebe’s first novel *Things Fall Apart* regarding the native people’s approach towards their own and foreign cultures. She says that in *Things Fall Apart* the native converted Christians and the missionaries join with the British administrators to destroy the native Igbo customs and religious values. But here in *No Longer at Ease* they adopt different approaches. Sometimes they suppress and sometimes sustain the indigenous traditions (Campu, 2013, p.5).

Campu finds the choice between the wish to hold on to tradition and to adopt modernity as one of the major themes of the novel. She concludes that the people in the novel *No Longer at Ease* have affection for their native traditional values but along with this they feel it necessary to assimilate with the modern values for survival (Campu, 2013, p.6). This article is a guide to find the conflicting aspects of both the colonial and colonized cultures.

## 2.2. Research Gap / Niche

Previous research has illustrated the collision between the indigenous and alien cultures due to colonial incursion. Some reflect the ambivalence of the native people towards the foreign traditions. Since the variance between the older and latest order in Achebe’s novels has been investigated by many researchers, the present article explores the impacts of hybridity on the family and social lives of the colonized people. Last but not the least, the present study investigates whether it is the invaders who are liable for the effects on the colonized society’s culture and beliefs or the locals also act in such a manner that proves to be sticky for them and their folks and societies.

## 2.3. Theoretical Framework for the Present Research:

The present research has been done in the light of the theory of hybridity proposed by Homi K. Bhabha. Bhabha categorizes the process of hybridity in two steps; the acceptance of the foreign culture and religion and then their rejection or disavowal by the natives. He says that Hybridity is the symbol of the efficiency of colonial power, its changing forces and fixities. And it is also the name for the planned turnaround of the procedure of supremacy in the course of rejection. (Bhabha, 1994, p.112)

Bhabha highlights two approaches of the colonized people; one when they accept the foreign culture and second when they incline towards their native culture and traditions. It makes them hybrid and the people with double identity because they are associated with two different cultures and also the religions at the same time. In some matters they prefer the foreign culture whereas whenever they feel it against their native traditions and religious values they get back to the indigenous norms. New cultural forms and identities are created and accepted by the native people who are dominated by the colonizers, but there comes reversal or retrieval towards the past through disavowal or refusal of the colonial authority and its culture. This whole process makes the people hybrid because they do not behave in a consistent manner in the favour of or against any particular culture. They accept the foreign culture on certain conditions and if they find any of its characteristic wrong according to their native customs, they rebuff it.

This is what Bhabha presents while putting the theory of ‘hybridity’ in his book *The Location of Culture*. In this book he differentiates between the colonial and the colonized cultures and the approaches of the colonized people towards both the cultures which identify them half foreign and half local. Bhabha clarifies about the tactics of the colonizers how they prepare their culture acceptable for the colonized people and how the native populace adopt it. Before elaborating the concept of hybridity Bhabha talks about the borderlines on which we are living as the people of a land that has remained under colonial supremacy. He says, “We are living on the borderlines of the present and the past with the prefix ‘post’: *postmodernism, postcolonialism, etc.*” (Bhabha, 1994, p.1). According to him these borderlines construct our identity as per the cultural difference between the past and the present and lead us towards the situation in which we are stuck in two different cultures and identities. He further means that we come across the occasion of passage when space and time crash to construct intricate objects of dissimilarity and identity, past and present, indoor and outdoor, addition and ruling out. (Bhabha, 1994, p.1)

It points out that a great change occurs in the culture and identity of a nation due to the influence of some foreign culture and religion. Due to this change different cultures mingle and bring about the situation in which people find themselves the part of both the cultures; the native and the foreign. This is what Bhabha terms hybridization or the integration of different cultures in a single society.

Pramod K. Nayar describes Bhabha's notion of hybridity in his work *Postcolonial Literature: An Introduction* that it is the establishment of new cultural varieties and identity as a product of the colonial stumble. In such societies hybridity may be in the shape of reclamation of pre-colonial history - such as ethnic traditional forms and principles - or to acclimatize existing inventive and social constructions to present-day circumstances of multiculturalism. (Nayar, 2008, p.200)

This sort of hybridity is observed in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God* and *No Longer at Ease* that is explored in the current research that how the colonized people become the victim of hybridization and bring about their downfall by their own approaches.

### 3. RESEARCH METHOD

A qualitative research method has been adopted to have a deep insight of the texts of both the novels for accomplishment of research objectives. The key concepts of Bhabha's theory have been comprehended firstly and then linked to the novels to unravel the main issue. Jonathan Grix, in *The Foundations of Research*, describes the methods of qualitative research that it can be a study based on a 'realist research paradigm'. According to him qualitative researchers usually look for building up information through their perusal on a specific occurrence, resolution, organization, area, matter or law with an observation of discriminating outlines, tendency and relation between vital variables (Grix, 2010, p.121).

So this research contains a thorough perusal of the texts in relation to the particular events, geographical locations, etc. in both masterpieces *Arrow of God* and *No Longer at Ease*. Through this perusal the relevant data was collected from both the texts. Such instances were pointed out that showed the hybridity and its effects on the lives of the major characters and the whole society. From these instances and effects the investigation about the responsibility of these effects was made.

### 4. ANALYSIS / DISCUSSION



The analysis is based on hybridization affecting the lives of the colonized people and to know whether only the colonizers are responsible for the effects of hybridity or the natives themselves are also responsible for the disorder in their society. The study comprises the components of effects of Hybridization and the responsibility of these effects

### ***No Longer at Ease: Hybridization and its Effects***

The first novel *No Longer at Ease* exposes the hybrid tendencies of an Igbo family in the colonized society. The protagonist Isaac Okonkwo, his wife Hannah and son Obi all embody hybridization in their temperaments. Although the father and mother are devout Christians, yet the matter of their son's marriage with an outcast exposes their hybrid tendency. In spite of their inclination towards Christianity they oppose their son to marry an outcast girl Clara. Obi is against Christianity but when he starts loving Clara he criticises the old Igbo traditions and appreciates the notion of Christianity to accept the outcasts. This hybridization makes the people careless towards each other and creates a disorder in the family and social life. The process hybridity is found through two steps as formulated by Bhabha; the acceptance of the foreign lifestyle and the retrieval to the indigenous norms. It takes place side by side in story so it is described here through the sequence of events in the novels.

I discern the effects of hybridization on the life of the protagonist Obi Okonkwo in the very beginning of the novel. He is facing a trial in court due to the blames of bribery and corruption as a civil servant. He has also borne his mother Hannah Okonkwo's death and the separation from his fiancée Clara. Everyone is surprised over the corruption charges and not ready to believe it with reference to Obi. Even the judge himself comments that he is unable to comprehend how an educated young man involved in an evil (Achebe, *Ease* 4). Obi is also criticised by the Umuofian Progressive Union with whose help he went to England for higher education. A member of the union declares it useless to spend money on a boy who insults the society because of a girl (Achebe, *Ease* 7). In the view of the President of the union it was shameful for a man in the superior service to go to prison for twenty pounds. In the impending discussion I am going to analyze how he faces these tragedies. The discussion will make it clear in what ways he faces this type of situation due to hybridization and his failure to tackle the situation.

An important kind of hybridization is seen in the approach of the Umuofian Progressive Union that sends Obi to England for university education. Here I notice cultural hybridity when they

give advice to Obi in opposition to the old customs and in the favour of the new one on the occasion of a feast his father Isaac gives on his departure to England. As Mr. Ikedi says to Obi that previously Umuofia would wish people to fight in wars and fetch human heads. But such were dark days. Now they send young one for knowledge. (Achebe, *Ease* 10)

Obi's cultural hybridity can be observed through the following extract from the text about him, "It was in England that Nigeria first became more than just name to him." (*Ease* 12). I see him totally involved in the English lifestyle and he does not think much about his native land and people. But later on Obi is seen keen and restless towards his native culture and land. This tendency can be observed Achebe elaborates that Obi became wishful during four years of his stay in England to return to Umuofia. This sentiment was so sturdy that he found himself ashamed to study English for attaining a degree. (*Ease* 38-39)

He is an Igbo and his area is under colonial rule. He is sent to England for higher education due to the acceptance of English knowledge and way of life. This approach makes him a mixture of two tendencies; absorption in foreign lifestyle and keenness for the native place and culture. So there is assimilation and retrieval in the character of Obi. Earlier he went to get the foreign education willingly and now he is dissatisfied with it.

Religious hybridity is noticeable in the character of Isaac Okonkwo while showing his devotion to the Christian principles during that party and refusing to break the kola nut. He stresses that kola nut is eaten in that house but not sacrificed to idols (Achebe, *Ease* 40). From this tendency Isaac Okonkwo appears as a devout Christian and a disbeliever of the old Igbo customs and traditions. Being an African and Igbo by origin, he is a part of society that is the victim of Christian missionaries' efforts of spreading their religion among the native Igbo men. But as the story progresses, I notice how he shows the other approach of his respect for the religious values of old Igbo society in the matter of his son's wish of marriage to an outcast.

An instance of cultural hybridity is found in a conversation between the native people regarding marriage of the black men to the white women in the same party. An Igbo man Matthew Ogbonna asks the people to be thankful to God that Obi had not married a white woman. He is of the view that many black men go to the country of white men and marry their women that is not an appropriate action because both partners cannot live together in different cultures (Achebe,

*Ease* 41). Although they have accepted the colonial domination over their land and its religion too, yet they are not ready to form any deep relation with them. The Igbo men agree and they are happy on their children's foreign education but they do not like them to marry there and adopt that life. This is what I observe as the condition of hybridization as per Bhabha's theory which makes the people double-minded about different matters of life. On the one hand they love the foreign lifestyle and education, but besides this they do not want to become a part of that foreign society. They dislike marrying the white women and making their generations a component of the white community.

Obi's relationship with Clara is the most significant matter in the novel which exposes the hybrid behaviour of the majority of the characters and it leads the central characters towards turmoil. It also proves that only the colonizers are not responsible for the disorder in the colonized society, the natives themselves are also responsible for their individual and collective debacles. It shows the retrieval of the natives. Clara and Obi are interested in each other but Clara is afraid of marrying him. This is because she is an *osu* which is considered an outcast in Igbo religion. As per their traditions the people of *osu* cast are dedicated to a specific god. Clara tells him about the impossibility of their marriage which makes Obi shocked. On Obi's insistence she tells him about the real matter that she is an *osu* (Achebe, *Ease* 54). Religious hybridity at Obi's part is noticeable when he shows dissatisfaction with the logic of not getting married to an outcast in Igbo religion. Before this Obi has been showing reverence to the Igbo traditions and religious values. But now at this moment he refuses to accept an old custom when it becomes a hurdle in his marriage with Clara, an outcast. In spite of knowing that his society will not allow him to accomplish this plan, he buys an engagement ring for Clara.

A painful effect of hybridity is when Obi faces the restriction to meet Clara. After paying the doctor's fee Obi cannot meet Clara again. She is hospitalized due to the infection after abortion and nobody is allowed to meet her in the intensive care unit. Obi tries a lot to see her but all goes in vain. At last after continuous effort he succeeds to reach in the ward where she is laying on the bed but as soon as she sees him she turns her face towards the wall (Achebe, *Ease* 117). Obi gets so much embarrassed in front of the other patients that he leaves the ward at once. The sorrow of Obi increases when Clara is given seventy days' leave from her job after being discharged from the hospital for having some relax time due to which she leaves Lagos. The aching phase for Obi

is that he is advised not to try to meet Clara in her present condition of heart and mind (Achebe, *Ease* 120). This is a great affect of hybridization on the lives of Obi and Clara. They had a strong love towards each other but cultural restrictions became walls between them. Obi fell in love with her in the first sight and developed intense feelings for her. He was strictly committed to marry her in spite of knowing about the class distinctions, but on facing strong opposition from his family and society against his marriage to an *osu* that is declared an outcast in the Igbo culture, he surrenders and gives up his commitment. He loses his love and also becomes financially weak. It makes me declare him responsible for the effects of hybridization on his life and also on Clara's life. He could have tackled the situation sensibly but he just did what he thought right from only his point of view.

### ***Arrow of God: Hybridization and its Effects***

*Arrow of God* is also a part of the trilogy in which the first two novels are *Things Fall Apart* and *No Longer at Ease*. As it has been discussed previously in the introduction it is the story of two rustic areas under colonial government. One is Okperi which is the capital of colonial rule and the other is Umuaro which consists of six villages. As the novel is set during the British colonization in the African Igbo society of Nigeria, the cultures and religions of the colonizers and the colonized mix up and make the people behave in different ways as per the circumstances. Ezeulu, the main character of the novel, is the chief priest of a deity Ulu who is cherished and worshipped amid the six villages of Umuaro. The clash between Umuaro and Okperi escorts the colonizers to interfere the area and interrupt in the natives' matters to establish their rule there.

The assimilation and retrieval is observed on a lot of occasions in this novel and the protagonist Ezeulu is the vital character in this sense. Ezeulu is the most important character in the novel whose hybrid inclination is very much apparent through several instances. Being the chief priest of God Ulu he is observed as a follower of Igbo customs and traditions but side by side he has soft corner for the colonizers' way of life also. In the beginning of the novel he appears too conscious about seeing the new moon. According to the customs of the Igbo religion the chief priest announces the new moon every month, especially before the start of new crops. His announcement is considered sacred and crucial that's why he takes a lot of care about this and starts searching the sign of the new moon three days earlier than the expected date.

Although Ezeulu sends his son to the Christian church due to his friendship with Wintabota, whose real name is Captain T. K. Winterbottom, the deputy commissioner in the area under colonial administration, yet he does not like it to remain too much busy in the affairs of the church. He asks him to go back to the missionaries and refuse them to go to Okperi due to some family commitments and giving time to their native customs also. This is the religious hybridization observed in Ezeulu's character that he does not show consistency regarding his attitude towards the native and foreign religious values. He sends his son happily to learn the new religion under Christian missionaries but when his son is performing his duties according to their religious teachings, he stops him and asks to remain on the back foot.

In connection with the last instance of religious hybridity I observe another hybrid approach in the reference of bell ringing of the C.M.S. Church when Ezeulu's son Nwafo hears it and asks his father about its meaning. At that very moment Ezeulu is thinking about the new festival but his mind suddenly turns towards the church bell and he terms the new religion as leper (Achebe, *Arrow* 18). Although he had good feelings for the colonizers' religion, yet he sometimes becomes afraid of the spreading of Christianity in his land. This is what I think the religious kind of hybridization. In spite of being a priest and the representative of a god in a tribe he sometimes shows inclination towards foreign religion, and along with this sometimes he feels resentment towards it and more respect for his native religious values. Along with this I examine the other kinds of hybridity in the character of Ezeulu that is political hybridity when he advises his son to go and join the foreigners by saying, "The world is changing." (Achebe, *Arrow* 19). He means that the white man has brought a new culture and new knowledge in which the native people should also get mastery. But besides this he asks Oduche that he would be his eyes and ears among the white man and he should keep on telling him whatever he would observe there. Now this is the significant instance of the political hybridity of Ezeulu that on the one hand he has a motive to make his son learn new lifestyle and on the other hand he wants to use him as a spy.

Oduche's religious hybridity is evidently found in the matter of killing the sacred python. Actually he does so according to the instruction of Mr. John Jana Goodcountry a Christian catechist. Like all other converts he is brainstormed by the Christian missionaries specially Mr. Goodcountry. They are prepared to stand against the old traditions of Igbo society declaring them primitive and uncivilized. Mr. Goodcountry motivates the converts to kill the python by

declaring it a hateful and deceptive creature. He says to them, “You address the python as Father. It is nothing but a snake, the snake that deceived our first mother, Eve” (Achebe, *Arrow* 20).

Some serious effects of hybridity can be observed on the lives of both the father and the son. Their reputation at home and also in society is affected through the matter of holy python. All the family members feel resentment towards Oduche and curse him on the abomination done by him. They also oppose his going to the church in future and think Ezeulu responsible for whole situation. Edogo, the son of Ezeulu, shows his anger the most among the house members and criticises his father for creating these circumstances by sending Oduche to learn the Christian ways of life and knowledge (Achebe, *Arrow* 22). Ezeulu faces the criticism also from the other people of his society especially his opponent priest Ezidemili and his follower Nwaka. He is called the friend of the white man by his opponents and declared that he intentionally sent his son to learn the new religion against the Igbo norms and traditions.

I observe the instance of political hybridity in the attitude of the protagonist Ezeulu and the whole community of his territory Umuaro through the matter of “Indirect Rule”. There is the policy of the colonial administration to appoint the chiefs in the rural areas and rule through them. The name given to this system is “Indirect Rule”. In the case of Umuaro the officers of the colonial administration in the area, Captain Winterbottom and his deputy Tony Clarke are in confusion. Ultimately they decide over the name of Ezeulu who has already good influence in Umuaro. He is in good books of the district commissioner and is considered to be his best friend in the area. Due to this the colonial administration sends two messengers to Ezeulu with the order of coming to the office that is called the Government Hill located in Okperi and meet Captain Winterbottom. On this occasion Ezeulu proves to be a hybrid character when he does not give them positive response in spite of his good terms with the colonizers. He just refuses to go with the messengers and asks them to go back and tell the white man that he does not leave his hut as per the tradition of his Igbo society. Further he gives the message if he wants to meet urgent and necessarily, he should do it in Ezeulu’s house (Achebe, *Arrow* 59). In spite of his soft corner for the colonizers he is not ready to leave his hut that is the part of the traditional norms of his society.

Finally he decides to go to the office of the white man after consultation with the elders of his clan. But there he is detained and offered to become the warrant chief. He refuses to be a white man’s chief in his area. He just clarifies that he has been appointed chief by Ulu and he will not

accept such offer by anyone else (Achebe, *Arrow* 72). Here he shows dissatisfaction with the system of the colonial administration that is called “Indirect Rule”. He has been familiar with the system under which the chiefs are just the puppets of the colonial government. Though he is in favour of the colonizers’ presence in the area and their religion also, but he does not want to become their representative. He has sent his son to learn the religion and way of life of the white man, but he does not like to be the part of that system himself. His politically hybrid tendency is obvious when we observe that on the one hand he has friendship with the white man while besides this he does not want to have any designation under the white man’s rule.

It is found through the above analysis that the major characters of the novel mishandle the mixture of different cultures and religions that creates problem for them. So I do not consider the colonizers totally responsible for the disorder in the colonized land, rather the natives also play a vital role in their downfall. Although the colonizers spread their culture and religion among the Igbos, yet it was the responsibility of the natives to keep a balance between the indigenous and the alien cultures and religions. So that they might avoid any chaos in their individual and collective lives. Therefore the native people can also be blamed for the social demise of the colonized land.

## **CONCLUSION**

Through the analysis of both the novels it is clarified that there is a proper social, cultural and religious system in Africa. With the arrival of the foreign forces it is merged into their culture and religion. It is identified that the native people face the conflict of priorities between the indigenous and the foreign cultures and religions. On this base they make different decisions as per the situation regarding religious, political, economic and cultural matters which makes them hybrid. Those who are attracted towards the lifestyle and religion of the colonizers they become double-minded regarding their approach in cultural and religious affairs because they cannot get cut off from their old religious and cultural values. This religious and cultural hybridization affects the whole social order and eventually traditional norms and values of a native society are disturbed.

We notice in both the novels *No Longer at Ease* and *Arrow of God* that the native people fall a prey to the influence of the foreign administration because of their own weaknesses. Although the colonizers have the motives of spreading the Christian teachings and the British lifestyle, yet it is

the duty of the natives to avoid the cultural, political, economic and religious clashes. They should not have adopted the new order to the extent that it could harm them personally and socially. Most of the effects of hybridity in the novels are the outcomes of the mishandling the situation by the locals. They did not behave in a consistent manner regarding all the matters at the individual and collective levels. As a result their lives are blighted with insult and sorrowful incidents.



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