



African Culture in the Picture View of Buchi Emecheta's

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ABSTRACT

This essay looks at how African culture is expressed via prose writing in two different works: Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe and The Joys of Motherhood by Buchi Emecheta. The history of African culture in Nigeria was examined by the researcher. Some of the facts that depict African culture were examined in a number of critical articles. It became apparent that African culture exists within Africans, contrary to what Europeans depict to the outside world. According to the conclusion, these pieces Things fall apart and The Joys of Motherhood continue to serve as evidence of the existence of African culture. This is the primary perspective of the novels in this study

INTRODUCTION

Situations, exchanges, and oppositions are depicted in literature. It implies a broad spectrum of views and ideals. One may need to consult a people's oral and written storytelling, as well as their prose, theater, and poetry, in order to comprehend them and their culture. Literature serves as a mirror reflecting the image and era of a civilization. Any excellent work of literature, whether it be poetry, drama, or prose, can be thought of as a true mirror image. Value judgments are not imparted through literature. Instead, The audience or readers are left to judge it for themselves. The complete mindset, perspective, and distinctive characteristics of civilization are what give a people their identity and position in the world. Since socialization and education are integral components of culture, culture permeates both of these processes. It is a people's whole way of life and a society's social legacy. The particular cultural characteristics that are being discussed include well-spoken speech, institutions, a code of ethics, manners, ideologies, stereotypes, intellectual outputs, artifacts, and technologies.

In the same vein, Cave and Chester (1981: 1) see culture as a uniquely human aspect of social interaction. culture can be seen as a social heritage. That is, what we inherit from a particular generation such as knowledge, beliefs, customs, language and skills. According to Idowu (2002:12) literature invariably reflects that typical features of a country and the dynamics of change which shape the history, politics and the economy of that nation, and that the place of literature and writers inevitably become pivotal in any discourse of the political culture and democratic insurgence of any nation. Literature is one of the subjects that help students to gain knowledge of the culture of a society.

Olaoye (2002:25), states that literature and culture are educative and humanistic resources for achieving national development, says that no nation can do without its past. Literature is akin to history in the sense that it x-rays the histories of people. It is a device for social and cultural empowerment. Through historical literature, our knowledge is broadened. The deliberate actions of men in society give rise to literature. The act of writing itself suggests a social interaction, but literature is also the result of men's creative and intellectual endeavors, capturing in words and pictures the tensions, conflicts, and contradictions that lay at the core of a community's identity and development.

According to Ngugi (1981:55), The aesthetic and creative aspects of a community's struggle to provide the necessities of existence, decent clothes, and shelter – while also creating and re-creating itself throughout history – are reflected in literature.

Achebe in his own view feels that literature is important from a social and political standpoint. He claims that it is much more than just a creative adornment; it teaches us about the significance of our acts, gives us a critical perspective on ordinary experiences, and gives us more power over our social and private lives. He asserts that literature functions by:

Through self-discovery, it imports a veritable weapon for coping with these threats, whether they are found in our problematic and incoherent selves or in the world around us. This allows us to encounter in the safe, manageable

dimensions of make-believe the very threats to integrity that may assail the psyche in real life.

The modern African's life has been altered by exposure to Western education, religion, cultures, ideologies, and a variety of other things as our world slowly becomes a global village. As he gives up his most significant traditional African cultural ways of life in favor of European (western) ways of living, he is totally disconnected from his roots. The researcher wants to investigate the issue of how literature can be used to depict African cultures and customs.

LITERATURE RIVIEW

Prose:

The three (3) fundamental forms of literature are theater, poetry, and The pleasures of motherhoodprose. Since the majority of our examples will be drawn from prose texts, we will focus on prose for the purposes of this study. So what is prose? One of the literary genres (branches) is prose. A collection of written works that are connected by language, subject matter, location of origin, or prevailing cultural norms is known as literature. Onyeashie (2008), p. 30. Prose means "acquaintance with letters" when translated literally (from Latin littera: 12). The most fundamental literary forms in Western civilization include prose and poetry, as well as non-fiction and fiction. Prose is a free-flowing, lengthy narrative that can be either non-fiction or fiction and is frequently seen in novels, essays, short tales, and biographies. Fictional prose are creative works that are not factual but have the potential to be such and are thus portrayed as true or real-life occurrences. Conversely, non-fictional works are the actual history or documentation of events that occurred to a person (Ethis, 2000: 3).

"Prose" refers to the written or literary form of everyday speech language. Though they might be written in poetic prose, fictional works are often classified as prose. Today, a work that presents a fabricated tale or story, such as a play or poem, is referred to as fiction (Nwachukwu Agbada et al 2005: 50).

According to Theodora (2008), prose is the opposite of poetry; it can generally be referred to as "non-poetic writing". It can be spoken conversationally, because the ordinary way we speak is prose. Prose is the commonest and most popular out of the three genres of literature. Prose is language of broadcasting, government and instruction. A planned transfer of prose into writing is called a novel.

The most common written language is prose, which uses regular grammar and speech patterns instead of rhythmic ones (as in traditional poetry). Poetry and prose are mutual. Although there are disagreements about how prose should be constructed, most spoken dialogue, factual discourse, and topical and fictional writing use it because of its ease of use and vague structure. Literature, newspapers, journals, encyclopedias, television, movies, history, philosophy, law, and many other kinds of communication all frequently employ it. Prose includes things like novels, essays, short stories, and critical works. Comedies, sagas, science fiction, stories, themes, and tragedies are some more examples. The more formal metrical framework of verse, which is nearly always present in

traditional poetry, is absent from prose. Poems frequently use rhyme and meter. Prose, on the other hand, is made up of whole, grammatically correct phrases that form paragraphs and ignore aesthetics. Prose-poetry is a deliberate blending of the two literary forms, and some prose works do include signs of versification's metrical structure (from encyclopedia America scholastic library publication, Inc: U.S.A. vol. 17). In a similar vein, free verse refers to any poetry that has less restrictions and guidelines. Verse is thought to be more methodical or formulaic. Prose, on the other hand, best captures everyday (often conversational) speech.

More authoritatively, the A novel "is a coherent, unified, fictitious prose narrative with a beginning, middle, and end," according to Eustace Palmer. A longer structure, a wider range of characters, a more intricate storyline, or a more thorough character development and motivation analysis set the book apart from other fiction or prose tales like the short story and novelette. Works such as *Things Fall Apart* (1958) by Chinua Achebe, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) by Ayi Kwei Armah, Achebe's *A Man of the People* (1966), and *The Joys of Motherhood* (1979) by Buchi Emecheta are all excellent examples. Today, a short book, or middle-length prose fiction, is referred to as a novella. The characters and events are usually imagery just like the novel. Examples of novels include Joseph

The Short-Story

This tale is short and written in prose. The short story shares many traits with novels, such as plot, characters, and setting. These distinctive devices, however, are typically not as complex or fully developed as those developed for a full-length novel due to length restrictions. "American writers since Poe, who first theorized on the structure and purpose of the short story, have paid considerable attention to the form," according to Karl Beskson and Arthur Ganiz's book *Literary Terms* (p. 257). The short story could be read in a single sitting, according to the written "protocol" regarding standards. Ernest Hemingway, Shenwood Anderson, and Edgar Allan Poe are just a few of the well-known writers of short stories.

The Nature and Concept of African Literature

According to Vincent (1986), "African literature is a composite and descriptive term which includes three (3) different but complementary manifestation of African literary expressions that is traditional literature, vernacular literature and modern African literature. African literature comprises of African oral tradition and written tradition. African literature is that body of work written by writers throughout the world about the milieu, essence, thematic and psychic particularly of the Traditional, vernacular, and contemporary African literature are examples of African literary expressions. African written and oral traditions make up African literature. The corpus of writing by authors worldwide regarding the environment, spirit, themes, and psychology of the African continent is known as African literature. The political and social developments that shape the history and customs of the pre-colonial era provide the backdrop for African literature. As is the case with all literature, this event and pre-existing forms have influenced and inspired African writing. Slavery, colonization, independence, and neo-colonialism are all included in the socio-

political component of African literature. Negritude's strongest voice in literature can be found in Leopold Sedar Senghor, and the art form mostly borrowed its ideas from poetry. Senghor, David Diop, and Birago Dilop are a few of the well-known negritude poets in "Viaticum." The francophones employed this negritude as a The nature and concept of a cultural response to cultural imperialism. Other experiences and manifestations of the colonial encounter may be found in African literature. It spawned a political statement literature in which African authors rejected their presumptions about European rulers and attempted to express or resent the African will. Examples of this are *Death and the King's Horseman* by Wole Soyinka, *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, and *One Man One Matchet* by T.M. Aluko.

In South Africa, our sister African nation, colonialism remained more prevalent. Apartheid, a policy that requires white people to love differently from black people, was brought about by white occupation in this area. Black men are treated inhumanely under this system because they are viewed as less than human. The idea that white people are superior to other races is the foundation of apartheid. Therefore, in light of South African whites, black blood shouldn't taint the white race. African states have emerged since colonization, and their citizens believed that independence would bring about a better quality of life. Therefore, a number of organizations battled for independence from colonial rule in every colonized country. In some countries, like Ghana and Nigeria, the fight was difficult but not violent. Independence was achieved by the use of firearms in a few other countries, including Kenya, Namibia, Angola, Algeria, and Zimbabwe. The hopes of Africa were not fulfilled in many African countries due to corrupt leadership or control. As a result, writing that explicitly glorifies independence is hard to come across. What one discovers are pieces that show the latter's disappointment or expectation. These typically belong to Africa's fourth epoch of history. The neo-colonialist stage is this one.

Much of African literature is a hybrid between oral and modern written European literature. Our traditional African literature was preserved and later translated into European languages such as English, French and written down. Written. Early African writers largely drew from the rich stock of our culture to produce written African literature. Stories of wars, conquests of empires, Kings of Dynasties were passed on from generation to generation through oral method. Today, most of these novels have been committed to writing.

Classics like *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, *Weep Not Child* by Ngugi Wa Thiongo, and *Death and the King's Horseman* by Wole Soyinka have helped modern African literature become well-known around the world. This acknowledgment was strengthened when Soyinka was awarded the 1986 Nobel Prize in Literature. Both native African languages and European languages spoken in Africa are utilized to write contemporary African literature. Compared to the long-standing and thriving oral heritage of African literature, written literature is relatively recent. Literary works in indigenous African languages, such as Yoruba, Hausa, Zulu, and Sotho, are seldom known outside of their own linguistic borders. Before translating their works into English, authors like Mazisi, Kunene, Ngugi Wa Thiong'O, and the late Okot P. Bitek

authored parts of their works in African. However, the majority of African authors write in Portuguese, French, and English. The inclination to view contemporary African writing in these European languages as a continuation of European literature is Eurocentric. However, language is no longer sufficient to identify a people's literature in the wake of modern imperialism.

Defining African literature, Abiola Irele writes:

The word "Africa" seems to refer to a geographical concept, but in reality, it encompasses the areas of collective consciousness that have been defined by ethnic, historical, and sociological factors. These factors all influence and manifest themselves in our literature, which marks off a wide range of references. The problem of defining, then, involves taking into account aesthetic modes in their close relationship to the cultural and social structures that define and determine the expressive schemes of African people and societies, as well as certain aspects that are inherent to the literature.

African Culture

Humans are distinct from all other animals in the animal world due to our capacity to establish and maintain civilization. Every human community has a unique culture, which causes its members to behave differently from those of other societies in "some significant respect." As a result, we can see that Nigerians and even Nigerians in general wear different clothes. An Ogoni guy and an Igbo man dress differently. Cultural variability provides an explanation for these behavioral differences. This is only one example of a cultural pattern. However, culture is more than just a collection of discrete behavioral elements. It is the culmination of all the taught behavioral characteristics that people in society exhibit and observe.

But culture isn't only a group of distinct behavioral components. It is the result of all the taught behavioral traits that members of society display and see. Moreover, Punishment of those members of a society who do not adhere to the culturally defined pattern of conduct ensures its continuation. It should be noted in this context that social life in general and cultural processes in particular are not the same thing. Ants and many other animals in the animal kingdom have complex social structures and lead social lives. However, it is still true that an ant society's intricate social structure is based on instinct rather than culture. For starters, conduct is not transmitted by any kind of learning.

No two societies are exactly same. There is differentiation according to age, sex, and socioeconomic background. Both males and females, as well as children and adults, exhibit different behavioral tendencies. Some have biological roots, while others do not. There is a global social distinction between married and unmarried people, and religious experts are found in every society. There are regional variations in society as well. As an example, individuals in metropolitan parts of society display distinct behavioral patterns than those found in rural areas. This implies that every civilization has internal subgroups. Since each of these groups consists of unique individuals, they will all have shared values and customs. Consequently, these groups' unique behavioral tendencies will form subcultures..

African writers such as Chinua Achebe and Buchi Emecheta have made tremendous efforts in portraying the rich African culture. African culture which these authors have show-cased in the selected texts under study (*Things fall apart* and *The joys of motherhood*) will be looked into. These novels are deeply rooted in the literary tradition of realism mainly because the writers painted a realistic tradition of the two African villages that is, Umuofia and Iboya. Also, their accounts of the contact and conflict with westerners are not in any way sentimental. Through such realism, the writer's purpose still remains. According to Achebe:

Europeans were the ones who initially introduced Africans to civilization. Their communities were not mindless; they had poetry, profound philosophical ideas, beauty, and worth, and most importantly, dignity. (p. 5).

There was indeed, the need to reject the image of the African as injuriously painted by Joyce Cary in *Mister Johnson* (p. 6) published just before the World War II, Tarzan, and even John Buchan in *Prester John* depicting the black man as a rootless fellow, existing outside the surrounding of civilization and development, while living a miserable life and inflicting violence upon himself and his environment. Achebe's *Okonkwo* seems to be enough reaction to Cary's *Mister Johnson*. The two novels under study presents a better way of – of seeing Africa especially through the eyes of Africans – a fierce attack against the archetypal western notion of black man's vision and culture.

The research project looks into certain areas of culture in the novels; *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe and *The Joys of Motherhood* by Buchi Emecheta are studied. Various facets of culture are analyzed from the viewpoints of religion, ritual, mythology, and society.

This study highlights how Chinua Achebe's and Buchi Emecheta appropriately highlight the rich African cultural heritage in the advent of European cultural interference.

Literature: An Expression of African Culture

Culture is regarded as the context of literature in conventional literary studies. As a result, a writer's writing always reflects their background, regardless of their origins. This is further demonstrated by the fact that the historical concerns surrounding the word have an impact on the work of artists regardless of their place of origin. African men have always adhered rigorously to the customs and traditions of their civilization, and this is evident in their writings. Even in this postmodern day, contemporary African authors have drawn on traditional ideas and culture to help identify their works as African. As a result, their writing is influenced by culture and conventional standards. This distinguishes the writings of African authors from those of authors from other regions of the world.

One of Africa's most well-known modern authors is Chinua Achebe. His first book, *Things All Apart*, explores the catastrophic changes in life and ideals brought about by the beginning of British colonization in Nigeria at the end of the nineteenth century, as well as the collision of cultures. The novel, which was published in 1958, shortly before Nigeria attained independence, tells the story

of Okonkwo, the village chief, and the impact of white missionaries on traditional Igbo society in the late 1800s.

In order to document and preserve African oral traditions and to subvert colonialist language and culture, *Things Fall Apart* interposes Igbo words and phrases, proverbs, tables, tales, and other components of African oral and communal story telling traditions with western linguistic forms and literary traditions. Students will identify the text's literary and linguistic devices and examine how oral features relate to the novel's meanings and messages after placing the book in its historical and literary context.

Once more, Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood* is a thorough, intellectually stimulating, and culturally appropriate work. She demonstrates an instinctive sense of the characters' motives and influences in her book. The presentation of Igbo culture and customs is extensive. In fact, *The Joys of Motherhood* is particularly put up in a very clear fashion, not only with the title but also with the naming of the chapters. Her thoughts about Igbo cultural standards are evident in the way she handles her works. For example, the book contains a chapter titled "A man is never ugly." A woman's significance and relevance in society are shown only via her maternity and the resulting conformity, which is instructive in terms of the attitude shown toward women. Although there are some overtly sexual portions in *The Joys of Motherhood* that might not be appropriate for use in a high school classroom, the book is incredibly insightful and cleverly written, making it well worth popu time.

According to Elechi Amadi in the book *Critical theory and African literature* (1987:2) this reaction came when Africans tried to reverse this trend by using a too -prolonged attack. He writes:

One prong was to write strictly in terms of their culture, to establish that they have always had a way of life as rich, and a world view as coherent as anybody's.... novels in this group include those of Onuora Nzekwu's *Wond of Noble Wood*, Achebe's *Things fall apart*, Munonye's *The only son*, Nwapa's *Efuru* and Amadi's *The concubine* and so on. So effective was this move that it produced a back lash from critics who began to complain of too much pre-occupation with cultural matters. What the critics forget was that if we had no other culture to write about except our own, and their charge would have been absurd. The other prongs of attack was a dreid assault on the imported culture through criticism, satire etc. the latter strategy proves less effective since there is little or no logic to culture and it is futile to other people's culture.

Chinua Achebe in *Arrow of God* and *Things fall aprt*, Elechi Amadi in *The concubine* and Buchi Emecheta' in *The joys of Motherthood* highlight the rich Igbo cultural heritage by bringing out the concept and the importance of personal gods known as "chi", religious rites like the rites of purification and the search for the new moon; the manifestation of the supernatural like deities and oracles; the belief in shrines, native doctors and chief priests who are mediators between men and the spirit world, the belief in laboos and superstitions and the over importance of the male child. Looking further at Wole Soyinka's works like *Death and the kings horseman*, *The strong breed* and Ola Rotimi's *The Gods are not to blame*, which highlight the rich Yoruba cultural heritage. We notice that there are

similarities in both cultures (that is Igbo and Yoruba). For instance, there are rites in the latest books as well as the former. These books emphasize the mystery and ritual of African (village life), the world of the living, the dead and the unborn, it must never be less emphasized that this literary expression of African culture is not restricted to Nigerian writers alone. Achebe makes use of folktales in portraying the rich African cultural heritage (especially the Igbo culture) in his work. Folktales like the proverbs are almost performing the same function for the artist in the novel. Only a passing reference must be made of the main folktales contained in the novel. We have for instance, folktales about sky and earth, Tortoise and the birds, Mosquito. Ear and snake, lizard and moths; we must observe at this stage that Achebe is a committed writer who believes he has a duty to serve his people. In Nigerian Magazine, June 1964 he says:

The African peoples did not hear about culture for the first time from Europeans; that their cultures were not senseless but frequently had a philosophy of tremendous depth and worth and beauty that they had poetry and, above all, they had dignity (p. 5).

This is as good as saying that the African people were seen by the white man as blockheads and were no mere "tabula rasas" as our white detractors thought. The novel, *Things fall apart* must of course be included as one of those "Negritude African literature" designed to present the African ancestry impartially as it had been. The folktales, like the proverbs, at once portray that the Africans had a powerful imagination, that he had scientific mind to know the 'why' of things and forces around him; that he had mirth and humour, as well as philosophy and solid knowledge.

The folklore about Tortoise and the birds deserves some special mention. In Igbo folklore, the tortoise is the usual trickster motif sometimes rivaled by the cat. In the folktale under present notice, the tortoise acts truly in character, and is usually known for his cunning attitude and sometimes when he gets into trouble as here, the tale becomes entertaining indeed. The folktale about Mosquito as suitor to marry ear must provoke everlasting fun for everybody. And with the tale about the snake-lizard and moths, we are reminded indirectly of the motif of the novel. The folktale about sky and earth contrasts with that about snake-lizard and moths. Sky melts with sympathy for earth when the emissary culture visits him to plead with his song.

And so fundamentally, two of the folktales the snake-lizard and moths and sky and earth, have very much to do with the main topic and the main character of the novel. While the former recalls and rehearses the spirit of Okonkwo; the protagonist, the latter contrasts with it, to show what Okonkwo should have done to be safe and live. The remaining two folktales provide entertainment of other kinds.

Finally, like the proverbs, the folktales indicate that the African is capable of constructive imagination and organized thought. All nations in their elementary stages of development have such folktales and those in *Things fall apart* are by no means any worse than their counterparts available to all nations. Efuwa Sutherland a Ghanaian writer also reflects the Ghanaian culture in her

popular play, the marriage of Anansewa. Here, she adopts the act of storytelling style, which is typical of the Akan speaking people of Ghana.

The Value of Literature

We take literature for granted because it permeates every aspect of our lives. The average person rarely takes the time to learn about the importance of literature or how it affects his daily life. For example, it becomes relevant to consider what would happen to our society and traditions if literature disappeared.

These Women Do Not Come Empty-Handed

For example, Nwoye's mother would bring a basket of cocoyams, a cake of salt, and smoked fish to Ojiugo, Obierika's wife. As part of her personal contribution to the ritual, Okonkwo's third wife would also offer a basket filled with plantains and cocoyams as well as a tiny pot of palm oil.

Other women responded in like manner and their children "carried pots of water". In Obierika's compound these women had to set temporary cooking tripods in all parts of the compound and "foo-foo was pounded in a hundred wooden mortars".

"While some of the ladies prepared vegetable soup, others cooked the cassava and yams. Young men banded the foo-foo and divided firewood. The kids visited the brook several times." (Things fall apart p. 102).

Goats with which "the soup was made" the fattest goat which is described as being as big as a small cow" was to be given to Obierika's in-laws and its relations that were present had to approve it earlier. This is about the sum of what should be happening in the host's compound at this stage. Achebe paints the scene beautifully. He tells us that Obierika's compound" was as busy as an ant-hill" on the other hand, Obierika's in-law must be fully prepared with sufficient palm-wine to satisfy hundreds of people that must be present. And in the description they did come with fifty pots of palm-wine. The bride, Akueke must be thoroughly prepared so as to be very attractive. Her fellow girls took time to decorate her with cam wood and "uli" and plaited her hair in a particular design to match the occasion. And for the ceremony itself, both Obierika's relations and the in-laws sat in a half-moon, facing each other. This full circle is completed with an open center when the in-law guest arrives; the next issue was welcoming them.

Half a dozen girls including the bride's mother and Akueke, emerged to welcome them with a shake of hands. Then followed the traditional presentation of the kolanut, its breaking and its ritual. Obierika's eldest brother did the breaking and its ritual.

He says:

'We are giving you our daughter today

She will be a good wife to you

She will bear you nine sons like the mother of our clan"

All present shouted their assent, E-e-e-e and from the in-laws camp, the oldest man replied:

It will be good for you and it will be good for us. This is not the first time my people have come to marry your daughter.....

At the end of the sentence, the crowd roared the same agreement: "E-e-e-e."

Another aspect of the African culture as portrayed by Achebe in *Things Fall Apart* is the burial ceremony, the important things to note here is that a man is buried according to his status. A heroic character and titled men would not be favoured with details and intensity of ceremony like that of Ezeudu. Interesting enough, it must be noted with Ezeudu's burial that our ancestors strongly believed in immortality, in re-incarnation with change of destiny. And finally they believed that the situation between the living and the dead was insignificant. All peoples of the world at different stages of their development were primitive in nature. Africans precisely Nigerian Igbo's, were no exception in the novel, no one can be happy today with the treatment given to Ikemefuna and the function of the oracle that pronounced his death. Twins murder then even held the young Nwoye with a cold shock when he heard a baby crying in the forest.

"Ogbanje" and its belief have not been completely wiped out in our modern society with modern scientific medicine and education, we come to realize that twins in a woman's womb are no abomination but a natural and normal trick of nature. That lack of adequate pre-natal and post-natal care, malnutrition, poor sanitation and environment contributes a great deal to infant mortality and not a design by the poor children to even an endless cycle and break their mother's hearts. In the same way we have every reason today to frown at the old practice of throwing dead men and women into the evil forest unburied, because they died of a swelling belly like Unoka. Belief in charms and medicine, in the past is acceptably primitive. Fighting tribal wars had very much to do with charms and a thriving market is connected with "medicine". "Isa-ifi" or confession before marriage by the bride is certainly one of those indefensible primitive practices of our forebears. The act at once condemns itself. It is one-sided and unjust. Only the woman confesses, the man does not. Moreover, the confession is forced, made public and men involved in secret affair with the woman are called names publicly. This practice died long ago and no one is happy about it or eager to revive it.

Also, the merits of our traditional customs and values and the effects they had in society in the past as revealed in Achebe's novel would also be highlighted. Although, we cannot rightly absolve our ancestors from blemish, their merits over-ride their short-comings. First of all, wealth as we know it today had few items for its recognition in society, several wives and many children, a large barn of yams, and one or two titles of the land. Title-taking was very important for the administration of the society at that time. It meant responsibility first and foremost, before it could mean rise in social status. The higher your title in the past, the more responsible you should become.

Titled men were therefore dedicated men who were exposed to truth, honesty, justice and fair-play as well as good fellowship to all, under pain of death. They were respected in the society because they carried the stamp of authority by virtue of their vow to uphold the above genuine social principles. With justice, honesty, truth and fair-play in our traditional society, there was greater peace among them than we know it in our modern and civilized society

today. Wives in spite of their numbers, respected their husbands as the head of the family and bread-winner, and the husbands reciprocated. The children followed the example laid down by their mothers to obey and respect their parents. Although, we can regard their worship of the Earth-goddess today as rubbish, we must not forget that it led them to such healthy institutions as the "Week of peace" during which no one would say a harsh word to his neighbor. And after this sacred week, they tried to live in harmony and peace among themselves. The family was and still the highest human social institution. That is the reason why in the novel, the "Egwugwu" representing the nine villages of the clan and the highest social authority in the long past, had to give the final verdict to the quarrel between Uzowulu and Mgbafor. But the most interesting aspect of the settlement is the way our ancestors handled delicate matters like the family. It was not a hurried affair even though the supposedly ancestral spirits from the underworld, who could have known all the truth beforehand. Yet the accuser and the accused were given chances to talk and witnesses were called to substantiate the evidences. With these, the final judgment was passed with mature balanced advice, short and to the point.

In the novel, in defiance of tradition, Okonkwo beat up his third wife, Ojiugo, during the "Week of Peace." The Earth-goddess' priest came to Okonkwo that evening to punish him for his actions and to offer an atonement sacrifice. Notice that Okonkwo's taboo in society begins with the rejecting of the kolanut he presented to Ezeani. At this customary welcome gift, the latter angrily said, "Take away your kolanut." I refuse to dine at the home of a man who does not honor our ancestors and gods.

Okonkwo attempts to defend or explain his behavior, but Ezeani rejects this and reminds him of the seriousness of his transgression: The evil you have committed has the potential to destroy the entire tribe. We will all die if the earth goddess, whom you have offended, declines to give us her growth.

The village society observed this "Week of Peace" because of this fear. Okonkwo was given the following instructions in order to make up for his wrongdoing and please the goddess of the earth: Tomorrow, you are to bring one she-goat, one hen, a length of fabric, and one hundred cowries to the temple of Ani (Things break apart, p. 28).

Achebe's Literary Techniques and Style

Prior to the 1958 release of *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, white authors like Doris Lessing, Alan Paton, and Nadine Gordimer were the main sources of public knowledge in West Africa. Thus, despite being an Igbo Nigerian, Achebe's debut English-language work was a noteworthy achievement. More noteworthy was the fact that it was an excellent book that has likely become the most read and discussed African book throughout time, surpassing the work of other West African authors as well as those from East and South Africa. It had a stellar reputation at first and has continued to do so, encouraging critical thinking in several books, dissertations, and hundreds of articles. As might be expected from its Yeatsian title, its story follows the life of a traditional Igbo rural village and the ascent of one of its talented leaders, Okonkwo, prior to colonization. It then confronts the beginnings of the novels,

which are more or less related but not sequential; despite their respect, No longer at ease (1950), Arrow of God (1964), and Man of the People (1966) have not been as successful as it has been. Even when published in English, poetry had likely gained popularity since Senghor in the 1940s, but Achebe's novels solidified the existence of African prose writing. His debut book has been He is "as big a factor in the formation of a young West African's picture of his past, and of his relation to it, as any of the still rather distorted teachings of the pulpit and the primary school." Naturally, he has had an equally significant impact on his fellow writers' selection of their own subjects and voices.

Critics have interpreted Chinua Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart* as an attempt to create a "English... coloured to reflect the African verbal style with stresses and emphasis that would be eccentric and unexpected in British or American speech" because of its straightforward narrative and equally straightforward prose style. He adapts English to his readers' needs and piques their curiosity about the book. You can tell that there is something intriguing about the way *Things Fall Apart* is written without any effort.

Despite writing in English, Achebe manages to convey the Igbo people's rhythm, which is especially evident in the conversation of the book. Achebe maintains simplicity, directness, and a focus on nature throughout the narration. His intention is to portray the Igbo people's worldview through language. Additionally, there are numerous Igo words and phrases that appear throughout the book.

While some of the ladies prepared vegetable soup, others cooked the cassava and yams. The split firewood or foo-foo was hammered by young guys. The kids visited the creek incessantly.

The young guy who had been dispatched by Obierika to purchase the enormous goat declared, "The market in Umuike is a wonderful place." "If you throw up a grain of sand, it wouldn't find a way to fall to earth again because there are so many people in it." "It is the outcome of excellent medicine," Obierika stated. The residents of Umuike desired an expansion of their market. Thus, they created a potent medication. Another man remarked, "And so everybody comes." Men of integrity and thieves. In the marketplace, they have the ability to take your clothing off your waist. Men finishing each other's thoughts and explanations, a brief description, an Igbo word (foo-foo), some cadenced dialogue, and a brief medical story to explain why the Umuike market is so packed are all included.

Chinua Achebe depicts the rich African cultural heritage of the Igbo people using as many proverbs and allegories as she can. The novel contains numerous proverbs and allegories, such as "A toad does not jump in the daytime for nothing," "A child's fingers are not scalded by a piece of hot yam which its mother puts into its palm," and "Eneke, the bird, said that since men have learned to shoot without missing, he has learned to fly without perching," among others.

In *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe also employs Igbo proverbs to achieve strong impacts throughout the narrative. Early on in *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe tells us that the Igbo place a great emphasis on conversational skills and that proverbs are the palm oil that words are chewed with (TFA, p. 5).

"The palm-oil with which words are eaten" is, of course, the essence of the aforementioned quote. Because palm oil lubricates, softens, and enhances the appearance of food, the statement has intriguing metaphorical meaning. Additionally, it creates a powerful closing statement for his last address to Okoye, who has returned to retrieve the "two hundred cowries" that Unoka taught him two years ago: "I'll settle my major debts first." In order to demonstrate how the Igbo enjoy their sports, particularly during the dry season, Achebe notes:

The cripple bedtimes are hungry for a stroll when the moon is bright (Things Fall Apart, p. 10).

We are given an excellent example of Igbo good neighborliness and camaraderie, as well as their strong sense of justice, through the tradition of cracking kola nuts all at once. In breaking the traditional kola to greet Okonkwo at his home, the wealthy Nwakibe says, among other things: Let the kite perch and let the egret perch as well. Things come apart if one person refuses the other and lets his wing crack (pp. 17-18). And Okonkwo says this after asking Nwakibe for help with some seed yams for share-cropping while displaying a pot of palm wine and a cock:

A man who honors the great opens the door for his own greatness, as our people say (Things fall apart, p. 18).

Considering the societal setting, Nwakibe is a fantastic individual. Additionally, Okonkwo feels that by offering him a cock and palm wine as a favor, he is paying the great man the respect he deserves and laying the groundwork for its own future grandeur. Thus, Achebe is able to provide his work with an appropriate context through the many proverbs that are used throughout the book. The English-language novel is a masterpiece of African literature. When immersed in the rich cultural content of the novels, English—the vehicle of expression—becomes nearly forgotten. The sayings are African, or more specifically, Igbo and Nigerian by nature.

Early on, Okonkwo began to worry about his oldest son, Nwoye, since he saw in the small boy a similarity to his grandpa Unoka, who was known to be weak and a failure in life. Ezinma should have been a guy, according to Okonkwo, since "she has the right spirit" and looks like her father. Okonkwo's concerns are curtly dismissed by the realistic and mature Obierika, who says, "You worry yourself for nothing." The kids are still quite young.

However, Okonkwo is not persuaded and instead offers the following adage to counter Obierika's astute advice: "A chick that will develop into a cock can be spotted the very day it hatches," (Things fall apart, p. 60).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Other examples of Igbo proverbs are still very much available in this text. And none of them including the ones used for this discussion is new. No one knows who used them first and no one questions their validity. No one tries to modify them or improve on them. They are as old as the hills and bear the stamp of our traditional ancestry. And to be able to use them spontaneously and appropriately in situational discussions either of mirth or seriousness is a mark

of maturity and wisdom. They bear the stamp of authority and the great wisdom of the past. Achebe uses them spontaneously and appropriately and thus succeeds tremendously in giving his novel that stamp of authority, of wisdom of the past which modern civilization through the while man has greatly shaken and in many cases tried to obliterate. For instance, few modern educated men in the Igbo society know them and fewer still care to use them even if badly. Achebe's lavish usage of the Igbo proverbs in *Things fall apart* is therefore very effective in trying to recapture a past civilization and culture already becoming decadent in the face of modern civilization. And this is one of the ways he chooses to strengthen his yeatsian title. *Things fall apart* since the traditional center can no longer hold.

The New Yam festival is again another very important time for mirth, lavish feasting and merry-making. Achebe tells us that:

It was an occasion for giving thanks to "Äni" the Earth-goddess and the source of all fertility (*things fall apart* p. 33). At the same time, it was an occasion of honouring the ancestral spirits who were buried in the earth "in close communion with the departed fathers". Achebe comments thus:

In Umuofia, the New Yam festival was a time for celebration. Additionally, according to the Igbo people, any guy with a powerful arm was supposed to invite lots of people from all over the world. (*Things fall apart*. P. 34).

To prepare for this great feast, women scrubbed their floors and walls with "red earth until they reflected light". Furthermore they feel to decorating themselves with cam wood and "ülü" or indigo. A marriage festival was again another occasion for great mirth. The traditional weeding that took place in Obierika's compound which we have seen in the novel is a good case in point.

Humour as have been observed earlier is not absent in the novel and like the mirth described above has been woven in sporadically. Few instance need to be cited to illustrate this point. Ikemefuna early in the novel treated Nwoye to great fun when he told him:

That the proper name for a corn-cob with only a few scattered grains was "ëze-agadi-nwanyi", or the teeth of an old woman. Nwoye's mind had gone immediately to Nwoyieke, who lived near the udala tree. She had about three teeth and was always smoking her pipe. (*Things fall apart*, p. 32).

In the same way we see Achebe description of a typical New Yam Festival entertainment:

The story was always told of a wealthy man who set before his guests a mound of foo-foo so high that those who sat on one side could not see what was happening on the other side, and it was not until late in the evening that one of them saw for the first time his in-law who had arrived during the course of the meal and had fallen on to the opposite side. It was only then that they exchanged greetings and shook hands over what was left of the food. (*Things fall apart*, p. 34).

Two more examples include the folktale about Mosquito asking to marry him and the consequent refusal and regular action of ear must provoke perpetual fun for anybody. So also is Okonkwo's comment about Nwoye as

weak, quite unlike Obierika's gallant son, Maduka. Okonkwo pokes real fun when he comments that a bowl of pounded yams' could throw Nwoye in a wrestling contest.

The Narrative Style of Achebe in *Things Fall Apart*

The main character of the book, Okonkwo, is a well-to-do and well-respected warrior from the Umuofia clan, a group of nine interconnected villages in lower Nigeria. His cowardly and frugal father, Unoka, died in misery and disgrace, leaving numerous village debts unpaid, and his actions haunt him. Okonkwo responded by becoming an extraordinary clansman, warrior, farmer, and family provider. Okonkwo fears that his twelve-year-old son, Nwoye, would become a failure like Unoka since he considers him to be lethargic. In a settlement with the nearby village of Mbaino, Umuofia wins a fifteen-year-old boy and a virgin. After taking control of Ikemefuna, Okonkwo discovers that he is the perfect son. Nwoye also develops a close bond with the newcomer. Ogbuefi Udo's deceased wife is immediately replaced by the virgin, and we don't hear from her again. "one she-goat, one hen, a length of cloth and a hundred cowries" which must be brought to the shrine of Ani early the next morning as stated by Ezeani – the chief priest of Ani. He makes these sacrifices to allow his repentance because he has shocked his community irreparably. According to Ezeani, Ani's chief priest, "one she-goat, one hen, a length of cloth, and a hundred cowries" must be brought to the shrine early the following morning. Because he has irrevocably shaken his community, he undertakes these sacrifices to enable his repentance.

The literary character and richness of the text are shown through the usage of the English language. Fiction is written in prosaic language and falls under the tragic genre. T.S. Eliot's words are fore-grounded in fiction. According to him, a person's feelings can be compared to something in the outside world. In light of this, Achebe's creative inventiveness in his works is influenced by the dual powers of passion and social fact or reality. Plot, characterization, diction, style, and narrative technique serve as the benchmarks for evaluating the novels' literary components.

The text's characterization is credible. Both flat and round characters are available. While other characters stay flat, Okonkwo is a round figure who does not shift or adjust to the whims of the story. The writings' diction is straightforward, and they make economical use of words. *Things Fall Apart's* storyline is straightforward and linear; events occur one after the other in a sequential order, whereas other works have more intricate plots. After a flashback or recollection, the plot moves back to the present.

Achebe's style incorporates cushioning in *Things Fall Apart* but leaves it out of other texts. This is most likely a result of the author's explanations of some of the Igbo words and phrases in his debut book. In his previous writings, *Things Fall Apart* doesn't bother to repeat almost the same terms. This is most likely the reason why the characters' dialogue in other works is more strong and sophisticated than it is in *Things Fall Apart*. Despite this, his writing is conversational in style, including ordinary conversational elements like exclamations and ellipses. In order to portray the primarily oral culture, the

author also uses poetry and music. The omniscient or eye of God storytelling approach is used, in which the narrator sees and knows everything that occurs. This tells the tale from an observer's point of view and distance, letting the readers to evaluate or draw their own subjective judgments. The storyline is incredibly vivid and detailed. In *Things Fall Apart*, for example, one can visualize events like the wrestling match described in chapter six, the funeral and purification rituals in chapter eight, the method of judgment through the "egwugwu" trial in chapter ten, and the punishment symbolized by Okonkwo's exile in chapter thirteen. We would look at the texts' use of tropes and examples of them as a component of their literary richness. Similes, paradoxes, irony, onomatopoeia, proverbs, idioms, exaggeration, personification, and metaphor are examples of figures of speech.

Grin: His texts reflect this. For instance, on page 3 of *Things Fall Apart*, it states that "Okonkwo was as slippery as a fish in water, but Ämalinze was a wily craftsman," page 16. Page 34 states, "It was like pouring grains of cob into a bag full of holes." "It appeared as though water had been applied to a drum's tautened skin."

The paradox Ironically, Okonkwo, the main character, is shown to violate and desecrate all he holds dear. He lives and passes away in defiance of the same tradition and custom that he had previously upheld: first with the His horrible suicide, which desecrates the soil and goes against his people's values, is the second female crime he does that results in his exile.

Irony: Ironically, Okonkwo's fear of failure leads him to failure.

Onomatopoeia: These rhythmic sounds help to buttress the people's morality. They can be found in *Things fall apart* in page 7 and 62 respectively. "Gome, gome, gome becomes the follow metal" and page 84: "Go-di-di-go-di-go, Di-go-go-di-go. It was the ekwe talking to the clan".

Rhythmic movements and utterances which are a form of incantation are also in pages 72 and 73 viz: "Agbala do-o-o-o... Agbala o -o-o-o...".

Proverbs are "the palm oil with which words are eaten," according to Achebe in *Things Fall Apart* (p. 5). Thus, it is impossible to overstate the significance of proverbs to the Igbo people. The phrase "our elders say that the sun will shine on those who stand before it shines on those who kneel under them" is one of the proverbs in *Things Fall Apart* that can be found on page 6. A youngster could eat with kings if he cleaned his hands. Page 19 states, "Those palm kernels were cracked for them by a benevolent spirit should not forget to be humble," and page 14 states, "A man who pays respect to the great paves the way for his own greatness." In order to depict situations, the author uses a number of colloquial terms, exercising his creative and lyrical freedom. This makes it possible for ideas to freely circulate and for the stories to be presented informally. The text contains a number of phrasal terms, including "the clouds have gathered," "add fuel to fire," "all ears," "up in the air," "early birds," "at the crack of dawn," "dry up," and "cross fingers," among others. The phrases that make up the idioms' structures include adverbial, prepositional, main, and adjectival phrases.

Hyperbole: Hyperbole expressions are present in the texts but a typical example is found in page 16 in *Things fall apart*, thus: "that year that Okonkwo took eight hundred seed-yams from Nwakibe was the worst year in living memory. Nothing happened at the proper time...".

Personification: Personified expressions are seen in his text. Examples in *Things fall apart* include page 7. "The night was very quiet Silence returned to the world", page 17 "That year the harvest was sad....., under the load of despair", and page 87: "The crime was of two kinds male and female".

Metaphor: The book *Things Fall Apart* is full of common metaphorical terms, such as "Yam the King of Crops" on page 24, "Ndulue and Ozoemena had one mind" on page 47, and "living fire begets cold, impotent ash" on page 109. "The skin of the white man is directly compared with that of lepers" (page 52).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The realistic tradition informs the writing of *Things Fall Apart*. Because the text's creative values were conveyed through myth, folklore, and other traditional verbal art forms, African history has been given legitimacy. Cultural norms are prevalent in Africa, as seen by the cultural features that were covered. Examining these customs demonstrates how the book may be classified as authentically African.

The Joys of Motherhood is a psychologically complex, culturally relevant, and in-depth book. Emecheta's book exhibits a natural understanding of the characters' motives and traditions. Emecheta's approach of her writings reveals her beliefs on Igbo social conventions. In fact, both the title and the chapter names for *The Joys of Motherhood* in particular establish the book in a very clear way. For example, the book has a chapter called "A man is never ugly." Regarding the attitude that the book's protagonist has toward women, this is instructive. Due in part to this mindset, a woman's value and significance in society are shown only via her role as a mother and the resulting compliance. There are several blatantly sexual parts in *The Joys of Motherhood* that are really helpful and beneficial both within and outside of the classroom, making the study time worthwhile.

Emecheta illustrates how a society's customs and culture portray women as less valuable than males in the text *The Joys of Motherhood*. Our traditional Igbo culture also incorporates some of the customs that Emecheta mentions in the book. For instance, our culture still strongly favors male offspring over female ones. This is evident when a man marries a woman and she has children, believing that these children would eventually leave their father's home and marry other men. In this instance, driving such a woman away or replacing her with another woman is the penalty. The inability of Adaku, Nnaife's wife, to bear her husband male offspring serves as an example of this. "You are the mother of men, children that made him into a man," one of the titled men told Nnu Ego. Adaku's body will be taken by her people, not her husband, if she passes away today. That isn't the case with you (p. 59). Nnu Ego provides her daughters with a number of justifications for why they ought to focus on hawking rather than reading. In *Ibuza* society, women are expected to stay at home and take care of males. According to Nnu Ego, "But you are girls! They're boys. To place them

in a decent position in life and enable them to support the family, you must sell. (page 176). Nnu Ego, the daughter of Nwokocha Agbadi, is portrayed by Emecheta in the text *The Joys of Motherhood* as a mother who finds it difficult to support her sons; there is no allowance for the girls to attend school. She states:

Mama Abby told me to save five pounds two years ago, and that's all I have. What would happen to Adim and how will Oshia continue his education if I utilize that right away? Additionally, little Nnamdio is growing. Oh, this conflict, this... No one gives you any information. Page 163.

Nnu Ego believes that her boys are the only ones capable of providing for her family. Her female offspring are encouraged to engage in hawking. She thinks a "Men require knowledge more than women do in order to exist in life. She claims that in order to benefit in later life, an Ä girl must learn a trade. Conversely, the lads were urged to devote more time to their academic studies. (page 180). There is a significant disconnect between fathers and their female offspring as a result of the high value placed on male children. Fathers induce fear in their female children. Nnu Ego believes that her boys are the only ones capable of providing for her family. Her female offspring are encouraged to engage in hawking. She thinks a "Men require knowledge more than women do in order to exist in life. She claims that in order to benefit in later life, an Ä girl must learn a trade. Conversely, the lads were urged to devote more time to their academic studies. (page 180). There is a significant disconnect between fathers and their female offspring as a result of the high value placed on male children. Fathers induce fear in their female children.

Cultural norms dictate that everyone should fear fathers. For the first time, Nnaife, Nnu Ego's husband, looked at Kehinde seriously. Nnaife spends more time with the guys than with his female children. He had never paid any attention to his ladies. Conversely, girls were expected to help manage the home and be disposed of as soon as possible, unless they were creating trouble (p. 204). Planned and restless evenings were directed toward boys.

Conversely, Adim and Oshia go without remembering their mother. When Nnu Ego laments over this, she says, "I haven't just daughters; I have a son in Emelike, a boy in grammar school, and another who is going to be a farmer," after drying her tears (p. 223). Her wealthy sons are unable to care for her, but they are welcome to attend her funeral. After everything their parents have given up to be successful and educated, the male offspring of Nnu Ego and Nnaife never return home. Adim only shows up when his mother passes away, and they forget everything else. Emecheta clarifies this:

All of her children, including Oshia, returned home after learning of her unexpected passing. They were all regretful that she passed away before they could provide a happy life for their mother. A shrine was built in her honor so that her grandchildren may turn to her in the event that they became infertile, and she was given the most lavish and expensive second funeral Ibuza had ever witnessed (p. 224).

Because it is easier to convince female children to comply than male children, the majority of the time, the care paid to male children is always squandered. Even while Nnu Ego gives her sons a lot of care and instruction,

they frequently go out and cause problems, while the ladies remain composed. Emecheta attests to this: "... because she had never experienced any issues with the girls before." Since the boys will always be part of the Owulum family, they had always been the ones who gave them headaches (p. 207). Emecheta demonstrates that female children do not receive the appropriate care and education. She presents them as people who, even in their husbands' homes, struggle to forget the family they come from. With what little they have, the females, Taiwo and Kehinde, look after their mother.

Conversely, Adim and Oshia go without remembering their mother. When Nnu Ego laments over this, she says, "I haven't just daughters; I have a son in Emelike, a boy in grammar school, and another who is going to be a farmer," after wiping away her tears (p. 223). Her wealthy sons are unable to care for her, but they are welcome to attend her funeral. After everything their parents have given up to be successful and educated, the male offspring of Nnu Ego and Nnaife never return home. They overlook all of that, and Adim only shows up when his mother passes away. Emecheta clarifies this:

All of her children, including Oshia, returned home after learning of her unexpected passing. They all regretted that she had passed away before they could provide a happy life for their mother. A shrine was built in her honor so that her grandchildren may turn to her in the event that they became infertile, and she was given the most lavish and expensive second funeral Ibuza had ever witnessed (p. 224).

Emecheta uses the figure of Nwokocha Agbadi, the father of Nnu Ego, a formidable wrestler who takes on additional wives after winning a fight, to illustrate the acquisition of concubines. He does this in an attempt to get more honor, authority, and titles. Male offspring are favored over female ones, and having male children elevates a man's status in the community, as the story makes clear. Additionally, the narrative reveals that Nnu Ego had male children during her first marriage to Amatokwu, which ended in a childless union. Due to the fact that her household has male children, in her husband's household, she was treated with dignity. This cultural prejudice does not exclude female children. In her work, Emecheta demonstrates that men receive more attention than women. While the girls are sent to hawk, cook, and earn money for the family, the boys are sent to learn.

Nnu Ego's sons, Oshia and Adim, are sent to school, while the females, Taiwo and Kehinde, are forced to hawk alongside their mother. Neither Nnu Ego nor her spouse, Nnaife, consider sending the daughters to school. The developing newborn boy, Nnamdio, will be the beneficiary of any remaining funds. The girls are expected to assist their mother in the kitchen and hawk. "The twins will have to leave and assist me in managing the house and in my trade," declares Nnu Ego. "She would sit by her stall and the twin girls would hawk the food items from street to street in search of buyers," the author adds. Adim would go to their individual sessions with Oshia (p. 174). To Agbadi, women are like goods to be bought and sold. He goes to get more when they are worn out. Agbadi even leaves his wife at home and spends time with mistresses. Emecheta portrays this: "Given the nature of men, he chose to spend his leisure time with

his concubine, Ona, who also took pleasure in making fun of him by declining to be his wife (p. 11). Agbadi walks out to visit his lover after leaving his other wives carelessly at home. For a concubine who is unwilling to commit to him, Agbadi is willing to sacrifice these other spouses. "Nwokocha Agbadi would not have objected to sending all his wives away just to live with this one woman," claims Emecheta (p. 12).

Emecheta uses the characters of Agbadi and Nnu Ego's first husband, Amatokwu, to illustrate how rude men can be to their legal wives. Knowing that his legal wives are there, Agabdi invites his mistress home to indulge her sexually. Agabdi has no regard for his wives' sentiments. His elderly wife dies as a result of this neglect.

Emecheta Confirms this:

Emecheta also highlights the disrespectful actions that had an impact on Nnu Ego's first marriage. The inability of Nnu Ego to have children in her first marriage, particularly male offspring, led her husband's family to search for a new bride who could have children, particularly male children. When the new wife shows up, Nnu Ego's first husband, Amaokwu, treats her disrespectfully. Emecheta exemplifies Ibuza culture, where a new wife takes over the role of an elderly wife.

Nnaife, the husband of Nnu Ego, upsets his family by pursuing more women. When his late brother's wife are barely able to provide for their families and send their kids to school, he consents to marry them. According to Nnu Ego:

Oh! How will you handle it, Nnaife? All these spouses, all these children. The reality struck her like a hammer, and she halted. When it finally hit her, she nearly fainted. Where would Nnaife get her money? Oh! God. Her infant was on the bed as she fled (p. 115).

A lady should be pleased when her husband brings a new wife home, according to Ibuza tradition. When Nnu Ego appears to be pleased to see a new bride, Emechata illustrates this. "She tried desperately to control her feelings; to put on a pleasant face, to be the sophisticated Ibuza wife, and to welcome another woman into her home, but she was unable to do so," according to Emecheta (p. 119). According to Emecheta, Nnaife is meant to take care of his family but continues falling sick and leaves his kids in the hands of his wife, Nnu Ego. When it comes to the new wife, Nnu Ego does not hold back when expressing her emotions. "Her disapproval was not concealed for once." He declined to let this new female and all of their kids stay in the same room. Where will we store them all? She yelled at the new girl and her husband (p.184). A household with several women is more likely to experience jealousy and marital strife. Because of the new wife's presence, Nnu Ego worries for her kids. She goes to a "Dibia" for assistance, and she receives the following advice: "The child is right, you must shield your sons from the younger wife's jealousy." I will make charms for your sons to wear if you bring me two hens and a yard of white fabric (p. 129). When men chose women, they solely consider themselves and not their families. In their society, having several wives demonstrates a man's riches, power, and ability.

Emecheta's Literary Technique and Style

The Joys of Motherhood delves into the innermost thoughts of Nnu Ego, a woman who struggles to uphold her traditional beliefs in a contemporary, industrialized, and westernized metropolitan environment. Even though those who are opposing Nnu Ego's claim seem to be upholding her values, it feels like she is being opposed from all sides. Additionally, we can see how her husband's manhood is undermined by western norms in an African metropolitan setting, which directly affects Nnu Ego. Emecheta has an instinctive sense of the characters' motives and influences throughout the book. The presentation of Igbo culture and customs is extensive. While the information is dense and much of the information will be new to high school and college age readers, Emecheta manages to make her material absorbing enough that if given enough over the course of a semester students should be able to make a detailed study of this book. The yardsticks for analyzing the literary elements in the novels are plot, diction, style, characterization and narrative techniques.

Because of their realistic portrayal, the characters in the text are convincing. There are flat and round characters. While other characters stay flat, Nnu Ego, the circular character around whom the tale centers, does not shift or adjust to its whims. The text's diction is straightforward and its word choice is frugal. While the storyline of other works is more complicated, the plot of The Joys of Motherhood is straightforward and linear, following one another in a sequential manner. After a flashback or recollection, the story moves back to the present. The narrative revolves around the lives of a single character, Nnu Ego. In the story that follows, we learn about her struggles, pleasures, sorrows, and thoughts. To describe how her parents conceived her, one chapter does, however, depart from her point of view.

That chapter is crucial because it gives us a close-up look into Ibuza life on a normal compound, despite the fact that it is completely disconnected from the rest of the narration. The connection between Nnu Ego and her "chi," the slave woman who was murdered at the time of Nnu Ego's conception, is also established. In the book The Joys of Motherhood, Nnu Ego, a woman who struggles to uphold her traditional beliefs in a contemporary, industrial, westernized metropolitan environment, is examined in depth. As a young lady who aspires to be a decent wife and mother, the tone of The Joys of Mother is sympathetic to Nnu Ego, the main character, is interrupted by the trends of contemporary civilization. Although she really wants the best for her kids, her selflessness eventually proves to be her downfall. When anything goes wrong, her husband Nnaife places the blame on her, and her family takes advantage of her. For two reasons, we are able to keep from feeling sorry for Nnu Ego. First of all, despite the compassionate tone, Nnu Ego herself never becomes self-pitying. Second, although though Nnu Ego acknowledges that she was a slave, she exacts her retribution after passing away. The writing style of another well-known Nigerian author, Chinua Achebe, might be compared to the delights of parenting. While Buchi Emecheta's style is simpler and allows the storyline and characters to tell the readers about cultural facts and the characters' sentiments,

Achebe's sentences are full of idioms and rich cultural elements. This is a passage from the book:

This morning, I will travel to the island. I want to know if I can obtain some cartons of cigarettes from the sailors on the black market since the ship arrived last night. Now, Nnaife was awake and gazing up at their one-room house's ceiling. This part of his wife's business was unlawful, and if she was discovered, she may face consequences. What was he to do, though? Request that she remain. (Pages 67-70, Chapter 8).

We should take note of Emecheta's directness and conciseness. We learn from the story that Lagos has a port culture and a bustling black-market, in which females participate actively. It is evident that Nnu Ego's husband, Nnaife, is concerned about her trade but is unsure of how to handle it. However, the structure of these phrases is extremely straightforward. The novel's title is ironic. Nnu Ego has a strong desire to have children, but she never gets to enjoy the "joys" of motherhood that she has been trained to anticipate. These pleasures include receiving care in her latter years, being surrounded by her grandchildren, and being respected for her roles as a mother and wife. Nnu Ego feels like a failed woman as a result of her infertility in her first marriage to Amatokuwu. It should come as no surprise that she is thrilled to become pregnant right after marriage. Her second spouse was Nnaife. Over the ensuing years, Nnu Ego is thankful for each new baby until she comes to the realization that her kids are the shackles around her neck. She spends the most of her life making ends meet and saving money for her children's education. However, despite her best efforts to provide a good upbringing, her children are unable to return the favor. Nnu Ego probably wishes she hadn't had kids.

Emecheta's satirical meaning is further shown in the conclusion of *The Joys of Motherhood*. When Nnu Ego passes away at the book's conclusion, her children organize an extravagant and costly burial for her. "Her funeral was the most expensive funeral that Ibuza had ever seen," writes Buchi Emecheta in the book. She had endured hardships throughout her life, had been on the brink of famine, and spent her last days in Ibuza by herself, destitute and alone. All she had wanted was to be respected in her community and to be a fully realized woman. However, her children did not provide her with financial support during her lifetime. Her children now honor her when she passes away. In order for her descendants to pray to her and implore her to provide them offspring, they erect a shrine. However, Nnu Ego rejects her children's requests when she passes away. She has made the decision that having children is an unappreciated endeavor, and she will not assist people who are infertile.

Famous authors like Wole Soyinka, Buchi Emecheta, Ngugi Wa Thiong, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Chinua Achebe, and many more have utilized their literary skills to highlight the majority of the problems that plague African civilization in order to find answers. The idea that African culture may be fully reflected in literature is supported by the current study. It helps us understand the character of interpersonal connections and African lifestyles. In this sense, it can be claimed that the literary works analyzed in this research accurately depict the cultural reality that is typical of African culture, particularly Igbo society.

The pleasures of motherhood and *Things Fall Apart* have been analyzed from a cultural perspective, and Emecheta has demonstrated in their books that prose literature is a powerful tool for expressing African culture and restoring the African image. Both books do not aim to be exact replicas of western novels, but they also fully support the African worldview in the same way that any western book does. Through their books, Chinua Achebe and Buchi Emecheta have also shown that literature, in the form of novels and prose, serves purposes far more important than mere amusement. Political, economic, religious, and cultural measures are taken to improve the situation when life itself turns into a hell, an obstacle to a people's advancement, when the foundations of a people's identity are questioned and their image is brutally portrayed by "outsiders who weep more than the bereaved." However, it is undeniable that only the writer possesses the unique ability to use imagination to bring order to chaos. Fiction therefore turns into a potent tool for nationalism. Thus, the author utilizes his craft to instruct, but more significantly, to rectify and reroute perceptions. This is not to argue that art is propaganda, but rather that it is a destructed way to counteract harmful messaging.

Additionally, one significant literary genre (branch) that aids African writers in disseminating and promoting their culture and customs is prose as a vehicle for depicting African culture.

Recommendations

For any further promotion of African culture and tradition, the following recommendations are to be put in practice:

- i) There should be enough exploitation of proverbs, riddles, folklores and songs to polish the prose work thereby enhancing the African culture and tradition.
- ii) Consideration of the existing beliefs, norms, values and customs of African countries while writing a prose work
- iii) Promoting the rich African cultural heritage by writing more works on it
- iv) Prose literature has been able to correct the wrong impressions which the non-Africans have about Africans
- v) Prose should be recommended if possible made compulsory for all students in schools and colleges so as to make them more familiar with their traditional practices and values.

The novels, have, complimentarily been explored in styles that are also appealing. In all, Achebe and Emecheta in their novels have been able to exhibit an enviable sense of keen observation and great insight about issues around them. They have been able to prove, contrary to western prejudices, that African literary resources are yet to be exhausted.

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