

**Jafar Baba**

jafar.bbaba.1993@gmail.com

University of Szeged, Department of Comparative Literature

<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-6321-5450>

**DIALOGUE, IDENTITY, AND ANTI-COLONIALISM IN CHINUA  
ACHEBE'S *THINGS FALL APART* AND *ARROW OF GOD***

**Abstract:** Chinua Achebe's novels, *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Arrow of God* (1964), are masterful portrayals of the complexities of Igbo society in Nigeria on the cusp of colonialism. Achebe strategically uses dialogue to assert an African identity independent of the distortions and misrepresentations imposed by colonial narratives. In *Things Fall Apart*, Okonkwo's rigid adherence to hyper-masculine ideals leads to inflexible dialogue. His inability to express vulnerability contributes to his tragic downfall. *Arrow of God* further explores how dialogue intersects with power, where Ezeulu, the Chief Priest, shares similar tendencies of rigidity and dialogic inflexibility with Okonkwo. In contrast, characters like Obierika and Moses Unachukwu demonstrate how dialogue can promote self-reflection and understanding within traditional society. The novels show how the breakdown of dialogue, both internally within communities and externally with encroaching colonial powers, has devastating consequences. Achebe's meticulous use of dialogue in both novels serves a tripartite purpose: not only does it unveil the layers of societal dynamics, but it also acts as a potent tool to resist colonial misrepresentations of Africa and offers Achebe's own vision of a reformed Igbo identity.

**Keywords:** dialogue, postcolonialism, identity, resistance, Achebe

**Introduction**

Colonial powers and writers employed colonial discourse as a means to create a worldview that set and maintained the hierarchies between 'us' and 'them', between the colonizer and the colonized. As W.E.B. Du Bois argues, colonial discourse created what is known as "double-consciousness this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness" (Du Bois, 2007: xiii). What Du Bois highlights here is how the colonial subject is not only defined but forced to accept this definition and representation, obliged to look at

himself through the eyes, tendencies, and prejudices of others. It is through such colonial representations that the role of ideology and power becomes manifested in the form of colonial discourse. In terms of ideology, colonial discourse managed to create the forced reality of 'othering', that is, representing the colonized other as inferior, backward, uncivilized, and barbaric, while the colonial European is represented as the civilized, educated, and grand rescuer who will lift the colonized out of their miserable lives. As for the role of power, colonial discourse was mainly established as a product of power, the one and only source of information to be disseminated, authorized, and accepted as true knowledge by colonial powers.

Interaction and conflicts between the colonizers and colonized societies gave rise to a vast array of literary works that came to be known as postcolonial discourse, one that represented, or gave voice to, the oppressed, stereotyped African Other. In their works, African writers have played a crucial role in restoring and reclaiming agency over the misrepresented African culture and history, while simultaneously challenging the dominant colonial discourse and projecting a true image of African communities, unveiling stories, cultures, and social traditions that were hidden or deliberately excluded in the dominant colonial discourse on Africa.

Within the broader scope of postcolonialism, the role of postcolonial authors, particularly those of African descent, can be seen as that of reformers who invest their literary efforts to regenerate, reconstruct, and redefine the identities propagated through Western discourse. Highlighting this issue, Helen Tiffin argues that postcolonial writers are motivated by an incentive

to establish or rehabilitate self against either European appropriation or rejection...such establishing or rehabilitation of an independent identity involves the radical interrogation and fracturing of these imposed European perspectives, and their "systematic"... replacement by an alternative vision, or the attack on or erosion of the very notion of system and hegemonic control itself. (Tiffin, 1988: 1)

One of the pivotal figures in this literary movement was Chinua Achebe, who, emerging from colonized Nigeria, recognized the power of storytelling to challenge the one-sided narratives imposed by colonial powers. His novels, particularly *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Arrow of God* (1964), became groundbreaking works of postcolonial literature that not only challenged dominant discourses but also served as a powerful tool for reclaiming agency and re-presenting African experiences. In these works, Achebe's use of dialogue transcends mere plot development and becomes a literary-crafted tool for dismantling colonial stereotypes and asserting the richness of traditional Igbo culture. It is through the dialogue exchanged between different characters in the novels that Achebe creates a sense of cultural identity and belonging for the characters while simultaneously grounding the reader in the Igbo worldview.

## **Beyond the Spoken Word: Unveiling Igbo Identity through the Symphony of Language in *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God***

Prior to the arrival of the colonizers, Achebe depicts a vibrant picture of the pre-colonial life and social structures of the Igbo society in the fictional villages of Umuofia and Umuaro. He clearly portrays a strong and complex cultural identity governed and shaped by intricate indigenous social structures, including political systems, judicial powers, oral traditions, rituals, and religious ceremonies. Achebe describes how the village of Umuofia is governed by a council of elders, or *ndichie*, who hold hereditary titles in the village, especially pertaining to taking public decisions and enforcing laws, thus representing the judicial power in the village. This idea is evident in *Things Fall Apart*, where, following a woman's murder, which incites tension between Umuofia and Mbiano, the elders dispatch Okonkwo, a respected warrior, to negotiate. Okonkwo secures a young boy, Ikemefuna, and a virgin girl as restitution, demonstrating the Igbo emphasis on appeasement and social order. In this regard, C. L. Innes argues, "The Igbo community presented to us in *Things Fall Apart* is one that has established a balance, though sometimes an uneasy one, between the values clustered around individual achievement and those associated with community" (Innes, 1990: 25).

Similarly, Achebe draws a vivid picture of pre-colonial life in *Arrow of God*, where he continues to explore the complex structure of the Igbo community of Umuaro. Like Umuofia, Umuaro is also governed by a group of *ndichie*, who also hold pivotal roles in the decision-making process and are represented as the guardians of Igbo customs and traditions. For example, the elders and men of title, also representing judicial power in the village, gather to decide whether the village should go into war against Okperi regarding a land dispute.

Achebe also sheds light on the rich cultural heritage of the Igbo community in both novels by stressing the importance of proverbs, folktales, and songs in preserving and transmitting indigenous Igbo knowledge, culture, and history across generations. Achebe clearly brings this issue to the readers' attention in *Things Fall Apart* when the narrator describes the importance of oral traditions and dialogue in the Igbo culture, stating that "Among the Ibo the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten" (Achebe, 1994b: 7). Through the dialogue exchanged between characters, Achebe infuses the novel with a set of Igbo proverbs that explicitly reflect their culture. One proverb states, "As the Ibo say: "When the moon is shining the cripple becomes hungry for a walk"" (Achebe, 1994b: 7). Another proverb advises, "As our people say, a man who pays respect to the great paves the way for his own greatness" (Achebe, 1994b: 19). We then see the concept of destiny reflected in the proverb, "the Ibo people have a proverb that when a man says yes his *chi*<sup>1</sup> says yes also" (Achebe, 1994b: 27).

Likewise, Achebe continues to stress the importance of orality, including exchanged dialogues of proverbs and storytelling, as mediums of cultural exhibition and

---

<sup>1</sup> *Chi* is the personal god in Igbo culture.

preservation in *Arrow of God*. Achebe represents proverbs and oral traditions as the essence of maintaining an indigenous pre-colonial Igbo identity and as a medium for transmitting knowledge and history across generations. For example, one proverb states, “the people of Umuaro had a saying that the noise even of the loudest events must begin to die down by the second market week” (Achebe, 1969: 92). Another proverb warns, “it looks like the saying of our ancestors that when brothers fight to death a stranger inherits their father’s estate” (Achebe, 1969: 220). It is through such dialogues and interactions between characters that Achebe becomes able to represent the authentic voices of his Igbo community in a way that simultaneously represents their cultural identity. Reflecting upon this issue, C. L. Innes argues that by bringing to focus the issue of proverbs and orality, Achebe

speaks *for* his society, not as an individual apart from it - he is the chorus rather than the hero. As such he embodies not only the values and assumptions of his community, but also its traditions, its history, its past; and the present (Innes, 1990: 32).

### **Colonial Intrusion: The Breakdown of Dialogue and the Fragmentation of Igbo Identity**

In both novels, the arrival of Christian missionaries and their construction of churches and colonial courts undermine both the Igbo legal system, controlled by the elders, and the religious authority practiced by oracles and priests in both villages. In *Things Fall Apart*, while Okonkwo is spending his seven-year exile, colonial missionaries arrive at Umuofia, where they start to preach people as representatives of God and tell the villagers that “they worshipped false gods, gods of wood and stone,” as well as advise them to “leave [their] wicked ways and false gods” (Achebe, 1994b: 145). Likewise, *Arrow of God* depicts the arrival of Mr. John Goodcountry, a native convert to Christianity, who starts preaching to the people of Umuaro about dismissing their religion and traditions. Moreover, he incites the villagers to kill their sacred symbols, including the sacred python, arguing that “You address the python as Father. It is nothing but a snake” (Achebe, 1969: 47).

One illustrative example of the transformation of Igbo identity dynamics and the breakdown of internal dialogue in *Things Fall Apart* is Achebe’s depiction of a clear distinction between the pre-colonial role of the Oracle Agbala and her diminished influence after the arrival of colonialism. Right from the outset, the narrative establishes that Umuofia “never went to war unless its case was clear and just and was accepted as such by its Oracle-the Oracle of the Hills and the Caves” (Achebe, 1994b: 12). Achebe also depicts how people sought guidance from the Oracle through consultations; for example, Okonkwo’s father used to “consult the Oracle of the Hills and the Caves to find out why he always had a miserable harvest.” (Achebe, 1994b: 16). However, after the arrival of colonialism, MacKenzie argues, “the notion of the traditional “Oracle,” so strong hitherto, disappears without a trace from the novel. It is never again mentioned or even intimated” (MacKenzie, 1996: 131).

However, unlike *Things Fall Apart* and Okonkwo's encounter with a sudden social crisis, Achebe's *Arrow of God* highlights an internal tension that simmered inside the village of Umuaro even before the arrival of colonialism. This tension mostly revolves around the issue of power and authority between the Chief Priest, Ezeulu, and a character named Nwaka, one of the wealthiest men in the village, who is depicted as Ezeulu's nemesis. Social cohesion is further put to the test when the British District Officer, T. K. Winterbottom, calls Ezeulu to visit him in Okperi to discuss with him the possibility of joining the colonial administration and being their representative in the village. Upon learning the news, Nwaka intensifies his efforts to undermine Ezeulu's position, implicitly branding him a traitor to the community. Nwaka declares, "The white man is Ezeulu's friend and has sent for him. What is so strange about that? He did not send for me. He did not send for Udeozo;...He has asked Ezeulu. Why? Because they are friends" (Achebe, 1969: 144).

However, upon Ezeulu's release from prison, he rejects calling the New Yam feast, where farmers can harvest their crops, arguing that this is the will of god Ulu, not his. Despite the elders' intervention, Ezeulu maintains his refusal, and the yams in the village begin to rot, precipitating a severe famine that threatens the entire village. Achebe depicts how Ezeulu's refusal marks one of the climax moments in the novel. It is this very moment that Mr. Goodcountry seizes to strike the hardest blow against the Igbo identity, for he

saw in the present crisis over the New Yam Feast an opportunity for fruitful intervention," and thus he decides that the villagers must "be told that if they made their thank-offering to God they could harvest their crops without fear of Ulu (Achebe, 1969: 215).

Through such a call, Achebe highlights how Mr. Goodcountry challenges the core of the Igbo belief system and thus imposes Christian beliefs, leading to a severe loss of both the cultural and religious identities of Igbo people. Finally, when Ezeulu's son, Obika, dies during a ritual, the elders of the village infer that "their god had taken sides with them against his headstrong and ambitious priest." (Achebe, 1969: 230). In such a description, Achebe highlights a significant change in religious practice, possibly leading to a complete erosion of traditional Igbo belief, identity, and cultural systems.

### **Achebe's Vision of a Reformed Igbo Identity**

Although many readers and critics might perceive Achebe's works as an attempt to praise his Igbo people, depicting them as a utopian community before the arrival of colonialism, he explicitly confirms his critical stance in an interview, stating, "I don't praise my people. I am their greatest critic" (Achebe, 1994a: 31). While Achebe celebrates Igbo traditions, customs, and social structures in his novels, his vision of a reformed Igbo identity suggests a level of balance. Achebe's portrayal of the Igbo community lays bare both its advantages and disadvantages, its strengths and limitations. He clearly delivers this message through the actions, beliefs, and

personal philosophy of his characters in both novels, showcasing the failure of rigid adherence and inflexibility.

Achebe's vision of a reformed Igbo identity can be better understood using Homi Bhabha's notion of "cultural hybridity," where there is neither assimilation nor imposition between cultures but rather a "third space" that creates hybrid forms of identities (Bhabha, 1990: 211). In *Things Fall Apart*, this idea can be seen in the character of Obierika, Okonkwo's best friend and one of the best and most reasonable men in Umuofia. While Achebe depicts Obierika as a character who holds a deep respect for Igbo traditions and values, he also reveals that Obierika was "a man who thought about things" (Achebe, 1994b: 125), for he questions the rationality of several Igbo traditions and customs.

It is through Obierika that Achebe criticizes some of the ancient superstitions and violence in his Igbo society, especially when Obierika remembers his twins and says that he had to throw them away, for twins are considered a bad omen in Igbo beliefs, arguing, "what crime had they committed?" (Achebe, 1994b: 125). Moreover, Obierika challenges the Oracle's decision, refusing to participate in the killing of Ikemefuna, and chastises Okonkwo for his complicity, telling him, "If I were you I would have stayed at home. What you have done will not please the Earth. It is the kind of action for which the goddess wipes out whole families" (Achebe, 1994b: 67). In this regard, Clayton MacKenzie asserts Obierika's exceptionalism, arguing that Obierika is the only one who seems to be questioning the traditional authority of the Oracle in the Igbo culture. He adds, "Achebe's narrative characterizes Obierika's inaction as being not only at variance with Okonkwo's view of things but with the received canon of traditional deific lore" (MacKenzie, 1996: 129). Thus, through the character of Obierika, Achebe suggests a possibility for a reformed Igbo identity, one that is rooted in Igbo culture and traditions but never succumbs to the level of uncritical conformity.

In *Arrow of God*, Achebe introduces the character of Moses Unachukwu, "the first and the most famous convert in Umuaro" (Achebe, 1969: 47), to highlight the tension between converting to Christianity and the effort to maintain and preserve Igbo traditions and culture. Achebe uses Moses as a foil to Mr. Goodcountry, highlighting the contrasting approaches to conversion in the novel. Although Moses converts to Christianity, he maintains a deep respect for Igbo traditions and religion, attempting to integrate his new religion with his Igbo cultural heritage. On the other hand, Mr. Goodcountry represents the opposite extreme, for he prioritizes religion over Igbo traditions, culture, and customs and calls for demolishing Igbo religious heritage.

Moses challenges Goodcountry's dictations for killing the sacred python, arguing that the Bible never dictates such actions, and then he openly warns Goodcountry, "If you are wise you will face the work they sent you to do here and take your hand off the python." (Achebe, 1969: 49). Through this dichotomy between Moses and Mr. Goodcountry, Achebe represents his vision for an Igbo community and Igbo identity open to change and adaptation. Through the character of Moses, Achebe seems to advocate an identity that accepts coexistence of beliefs and respectful conversion, while, on the other hand, he tends to criticize Goodcountry as a

representative of an identity that is driven by a desire for cultural annihilation and demolition of cultural foundations. Achebe's representation of Moses shares similar traits with those of Obierika from *Things Fall Apart*, and it is through such characters that Achebe delivers his message of an exemplary Igbo identity that adheres to hybridity and recognizes the interplay and dialogue between cultures that promotes understanding and coexistence while resisting dominance and subjugation.

In *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe warns against blind adherence to tradition, and he clearly represents his concerns through the character of Okonkwo, who embodies the blind and rigid adherence to tradition, hypermasculinity, and fear of social shame that ultimately make him a character driven by violence and an inability to accept change. As Nnoromele argues, in Okonkwo's culture, "a man who was unable to rule his own family was not considered a real man" (Nnoromele, 2010: 45). Thus, the narrator states that Okonkwo "ruled his household with a heavy hand. His wives, especially the youngest, lived in perpetual fear of his fiery temper, and so did his little children" (Achebe, 1994b: 13). Okonkwo's fear of being perceived as compassionate drives him to hide all types of affection, even with his own family, for he "never showed any emotion openly, unless it be the emotion of anger" (Achebe, 1994b: 28).

Okonkwo's hypermasculinity leads him to participate in the killing of his adopted son, Ikemefuna, driven by his fear of "being thought weak" (Achebe, 1994b: 61). It is through such examples that Achebe depicts the psychological trauma of Okonkwo, embodied in the fear of resembling his father. Okonkwo's father complex leads him to act cruelly, for the narrator clearly suggests that "Perhaps down in his heart Okonkwo was not a cruel man" (Achebe, 1994b: 13). However, the driving force behind his behavior is that "his whole life was dominated by fear, the fear of failure and of weakness...It was not external but lay deep within himself. It was the fear of himself, lest he should be found to resemble his father." (Achebe, 1994b: 13).

What Achebe wants to assert is that Okonkwo's tragic downfall hinges on his absolute rejection of dialogue. Indeed, Okonkwo's ideals lead him to equate open communication and the ability to exchange opinions with weaknesses, thus creating an aversion to conversation that isolates him and fuels his irrational actions. Even with his closest and most trustworthy friend, Obierika, Okonkwo rejects all attempts at reasoned discussion and ignores Obierika's advice about not taking part in the killing of Ikemefuna. Okonkwo's inability and rejection to engage in a reasonable dialogue—a dialogue that might have allowed him to express his internal conflicts—leads him to commit another action in an attempt to prove his unwavering strength. This act happens when a colonial messenger attempts to disrupt the meeting of Okonkwo and the elders, where Okonkwo, rather than trying to seek understanding through dialogue, decides to silence the messenger completely by killing him.

Achebe tends to further highlight his message of mutual understanding through the character of Akunna, a minor character in the novel who indulges in dialogues and conversations with the colonial missionary Mr. Brown. In stark contrast to Okonkwo, Akunna stands as the wise elder who deeply recognizes and understands the importance of dialogue in such a critical time when the village is on the cusp of

change. The narrator states that “Whenever Mr. Brown went to that village he spent long hours with Akunna in his obi talking through an interpreter about religion” (Achebe, 1994b: 179). In this respect, Russian theorist Mikhail Bakhtin suggests that a mutual dialogue creates a space for meaningful exchange and mutual understanding between cultures. Although Bakhtin might not be considering the hierarchical relationship between the colonizer and the colonized in his views, nevertheless, as Kiyotaka Miyazaki argues, Bakhtin finds that “such a dialogic encounter of two cultures does not result in merging or mixing. Each retains its own unity and open totality, but they are mutually enriched.” (Miyazaki, 2016: 1). Indeed, the narrator states that in such a dialogue between the colonizer and the colonized, “neither of them succeeded in converting the other but they learned more about their different beliefs” (Achebe, 1994b: 179).

Achebe’s *Arrow of God* further builds upon his critique of both uncritical adherence to tradition and complete assimilation into the colonial system. Achebe depicts Ezeulu as a character deeply committed to preserving the Igbo customs and rituals that serve as the cornerstone of his community’s religious beliefs and social order. For Achebe, Ezeulu’s rigid adherence and commitment can be seen as tragic inflexibility, especially when faced with a threatening change.

Achebe highlights Ezeulu’s inflexibility with dialogue through several scenes in the novel. For example, the narrator describes the way Ezeulu treats his children “like little boys, and if they ever said no there was a big quarrel” (Achebe, 1969: 92). Ezeulu’s obstinacy is even highlighted by his wife, who used to tell her children that “Ezeulu’s only fault was that he expected every-one—his wives, his kinsmen, his children, his friends and even his enemies—to think and act like himself” (Achebe, 1969: 93). However, Ezeulu’s rigid adherence to tradition is best seen in the final parts of the novel when he declines to call the New Yam feast, saying that it is the will of god, thus leaving his village to face the threat of an unprecedented famine. Despite the elders’ intervention to make him eat the last remaining yams and call the New Yam feast, Ezeulu remains resolute in his opinion and rejects any form of intervention, even when the elders sacrifice to take the responsibility of such an ‘abomination’ and tell him, “if Ulu says we have committed an abomination let it be on the heads of the ten of us here.” (Achebe, 1969: 208). In this respect, Sola Soile skillfully describes Ezeulu’s acts as a “tragic paradox,” for although he is “the political and spiritual leader of the community and its most able protector against contamination from internal and external sources...yet he becomes the unwitting cause of some of the society's woes” (Soile, 1960: 283).

Achebe shows how Ezeulu’s rigidity leads to an internal breakdown of dialogue; following his decision to reject calling the New Yam feast, the narrator describes how “Almost overnight Ezeulu had become something of a public enemy in the eyes of all” (Achebe, 1969: 211). Indeed, Achebe foreshadows this issue earlier in the novel, when the narrator describes Ezeulu’s inflexibility, suggesting that “he forgot the saying of the elders that if a man sought for a companion who acted entirely like himself he would live in solitude” (Achebe, 1969: 93). Rather than actually serving his role as the political and spiritual leader and saving his village, which is on the



brink of falling into a severe famine, Ezeulu prioritizes his strict adherence to tradition and appeasing the gods, pushing the village closer to a disaster. In this regard, Gareth Griffiths asserts, “Ezeulu has fallen because he has failed to act within the bounds of the ‘reasonable’ and the ‘sensible’ in responding to the threat of the white man” (Griffiths, 1978: 75). It is through the novel’s denouement that Achebe delivers his opinion of Ezeulu’s rigid adherence and inflexibility, especially when related to the well-being of the community. Achebe’s critical message is clearly underscored by the narrator’s statement: “No man however great was greater than his people; that no one ever won judgment against his clan.” (Achebe, 1969: 230).

## **Conclusion**

The revolutionary aspect of Achebe’s writings lies in their profound challenge to Western colonial narratives that feature representations of Africa and Africans. Through these novels, Achebe provides a nuanced depiction of the traditional life of Igbo society before the arrival of colonialism, highlighting the complex structure of Igbo cultural traditions, customs, and social norms. Achebe challenges colonial narratives and stereotypes prevalent in Western literature, with the main aim of showing that Africans “did not hear of culture for the first time from Europeans; ...[they] had a philosophy of great depth and value and beauty, that they had poetry and, above all, they had dignity” (Achebe, 1973: 8). By placing African culture at the forefront and revealing minute details of such a culture through the dialogue exchanged between characters, Achebe challenges the one-dimensional Eurocentric narratives that accept neither interrogation nor falsification and reclaims the narrative authority that had always been denied to Africans for expressing a true and realistic version of their cultures and societies. In other words, Jay Lynn argues, “Achebe interrupts the encoding of power that supported colonialism and other forms of Western cultural domination in Africa” (Lynn, 2017: 2).

It is through dialogue that Achebe presents his vision for a reformed Igbo identity as one that accepts neither rigid adherence and inflexibility nor complete assimilation into colonial culture and denial of native roots. Achebe’s exploration of identity calls for a more balanced approach – an approach that is flexible and more apt to adapt to inescapable change. Indeed, Achebe’s vision of identity stems from the Igbo proverb, “Wherever Something Stands, Something Else Will Stand Beside It” (Achebe, 2009: 6). Reflecting upon Achebe’s adoption of this proverb as a literary vision, Jay Lynn asserts,

This proverb not only bespeaks the value placed on the qualities of balance and complementarity in the Igbo philosophical vision, qualities associated with Achebe’s use of the term “duality,” but also signifies an alternative to a binary duality that divides subjects into discrete, opposing pairs (Lynn, 2017: 2).

Achebe thus calls for a hybrid identity, a middle ground that is “neither the origin of things nor the last things; it is aware of a future to head into and a past to fall back on” (Achebe, 2009: 6). Therefore, we could discern Achebe’s criticism of characters

like Okonkwo and Ezeulu for taking the position of binary dualities in their rigid adherence to tradition and inflexibility. On the other hand, he advocates characters such as Obierika and Moses Unachukwu, whose characters serve as the bridge that exemplifies the hybridity Achebe advocates and create a middle ground between past and present, tradition and modernity.

While Achebe's use of Igbo language traditions provides cultural depth and authenticity to the works, his dependence on the English language and literary traditions is a means of accessibility. In other words, Igbo and English do not stand in contrast in Achebe's works; rather, they form a linguistic fusion that allows such works to reach a wider audience in the form of what Jay Lynn describes as "a constructive dialogue between Igbo language traditions and literary English in varied ways, [Achebe's] imaginative writings attest to the possibility that legacies of violence may be shaped to the constructive ends of mutual understanding and respect" (Lynn, 2017: 3). By allowing Igbo voices to speak for themselves, Achebe disintegrates the notion of colonial narrative hierarchy and fosters a richer understanding of who these people are within this Igbo-colonial context.

## References

- Achebe, C. (1969). *Arrow of God*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Achebe, C. (1973). The Role of the Writer in a New Nation. In G. D. Killam (Ed.), *African Writers on African Writing* (pp. 7-13). London: Heinemann.
- Achebe, C. (1994a). Chinua Achebe, The Art of Fiction No.139. 15-31. (J. Brooks, Interviewer, & G. Plimpton, Editor) New York: The Paris Review Foundation.
- Achebe, C. (1994b). *Things Fall Apart*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Achebe, C. (2009). *The Education of a British-Protected Child*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Bhabha, H. K. (1990). The Third Space: Interview with Homi Bhabha. *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, 207-221. (J. Rutherford, Interviewer, & J. Rutherford, Editor) London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Du Bois, W. (2007). *The Souls of Black Folk*. (B. H. Edwards, Ed.) New York: Oxford University Press.
- Griffiths, G. (1978). Language and Action in the Novels of Chinua Achebe. In C. L. Innes, & B. Lindfors (Eds.), *Critical Perspectives on Chinua Achebe* (p. 70). Washington, D. C.: Three Continents Press.
- Innes, C. L. (1990). *Chinua Achebe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lynn, T. J. (2017). *Chinua Achebe and the Politics of Narration: Envisioning Language*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
- MacKenzie, C. G. (1996). The Metamorphosis of Piety in Chinua Achebe's "Things Fall Apart". *Research in African Literatures*, 27(2), 128-138 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3820166>.

- Miyazaki, K. (2017). Questioning as the key for dialogue to develop: Bakhtin encountering with Gadamer. *the 16th International Bakhtinian Conference* (pp. 1-11). Shanghai: Fudan University, Shanghai.
- Nnoromele, P. C. (2010). The Plight of A Hero in Achebe's Things Fall Apart. In H. Bloom (Ed.), *Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart New Edition* (p. 45). New York: Infobase Publishing.
- Soile, S. (1960). Tragic Paradox in Achebe's Arrow of God. *Phylon*, 37(3), 283-95  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/274457>.
- Tiffin, H. (1988). Post-Colonialism, Post-Modernism and the Rehabilitation of Post-Colonial History. *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*(23), 169-181.