Chimichanda Nigozi Adicihe: “The Thing Around Your Neck”

Important dates: When the country was colonised ? Country Independence?

Adichie’s nonfiction includes *We Should All Be Feminists* (2014), an essay adapted from a speech she gave a TED Talk in 2012, parts of the speech were also featured in Beyoncé’s songs “*Flawless*”. *Dear Ijeawele*, or *A Feminist Manifesto in Fifteen Suggestions* was published in 2017.

South-East: Igbo (Christians). Confrontations.

South-West: Yorubas

North: Muslims

NIGERIA:

On the western coast of Africa. Hundreds of languages in the country: Yoruba, Igbo, Fula, Hausa, Edo, Ibibio, Tiv, and English. Abundant natural resources, notably large deposits of petroleum and natural gas. The national capital is Abuja. Lagos, the former capital, retains its standing as the country’s leading commercial and industrial city. Modern Nigeria dates from 1914, when the British Protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria were joined. The country became independent on October 1, 1960, and in 1963 adopted a republican constitution but elected to stay a member of the Commonwealth.

HISTORY OF NIGERIA:

**Circa 800 BC** - Jos plateau settled by Nok - a neolithic and iron age civilisation.

**Circa 11th century onwards** - Formation of city states, kingdoms and empires, including Hausa kingdoms and Borno dynasty in north, Oyo and Benin kingdoms in south.

**1472** - Portuguese navigators reach Nigerian coast.

**16-18th centuries** - Slave trade sees Nigerians forcibly sent to the Americas.

**1809** - Islamic Sokoto caliphate is founded in north.

**1850s** - British establish presence around Lagos.

**1861-1914** - Britain consolidates its hold over what it calls the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria, governs through local leaders.

**1922** - Part of former German colony Kamerun is added to Nigeria under League of Nations mandate.

**1960** – Independence.

BIAFRA WAR: **Biafra**, secessionist western African state that unilaterally declared its independence from Nigeria in May 1967. It constituted the former Eastern Region of Nigeria and was inhabited principally by Igbo (Ibo) people. Biafra ceased to exist as an independent state in January 1970. In the mid-1960s economic and political instability and ethnic friction characterized Nigerian public life. In the mostly Hausa north, resentment against the more prosperous, educated Igbo minority erupted into violence. In September 1966, some 10,000 to 30,000 Igbo people were massacred in the Northern Region, and perhaps 1,000,000 fled as refugees to the Igbo-dominated east. Non-Igbos were then expelled from the Eastern Region.

**1993 November** - Gen Sani Abacha seizes power, suppresses opposition.

**1995** - Ken Saro-Wiwa, writer and campaigner against oil industry damage to his Ogoni homeland, is executed following a hasty trial. In protest, European Union imposes sanctions until 1998, Commonwealth suspends Nigeria's membership until 1998.

**2000** - Adoption of Islamic Sharia law by several northern states in the face of opposition from Christians. Tension over the issue results in hundreds of deaths in clashes between Christians and Muslims.

Modern Nigeria dates from 1914, when the British Protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria were joined. The country became independent in October.

The colonizer arrives, creates new boundaries, they mixed totally incompatible groups. So, there are several civil wars.

ABACHA (also the name of the protagonist of the first story).

NIGERIAN CULTURE:

Nigerian artistic heritage: naturalistic statues produced at Ife; the bronzes made for the king of Benin. The terra-cotta figurines of the Nok are some of the earliest statues in existence from sub-Saharan Africa. Ekpe masks and ikenga (personal shrines) from the Igbo in eastern Nigeria and ibeji (twin) sculptures from the Yoruba in western Nigeria are just three examples of the art produced in pre-colonial Nigeria.

Nigerian literature is known throughout the world. Wole Soyinka, who won the 1986 Nobel Prize for Literature, was the first black African to receive the award. Other Nigerian writers with a worldwide audience include Chinua Achebe, Buchi Emecheta, Flora Nwapa, Amos Tutuola, Gabriel Okara, Kole Omotoso, John Pepper Clark, Ben Okri, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

**CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE** (1977, Enugu, Nigeria) :

Her work has drawn extensively on the Biafran war in Nigeria during the late 1960s. Early in life Adichie, the fifth of six children, moved with her parents to Nsukka, Nigeria. **Nsukka**, university town, Enugu state, southern Nigeria. Nsukka is an agricultural-trade centre for the yams, cassava (manioc), corn (maize), taro, pigeon peas, and palm oil and kernels produced by the local Igbo (Ibo) people. Weaving is a traditional local craft. Coal deposits have been discovered east of Nsukka around Obolo. Nsukka is the site of the University of Nigeria (1960), the first university established in Nigeria after independence. Pop. (2006) local government area, 309,633.

A voracious reader from a young age, she found *Things Fall Apart* by novelist and fellow Igbo Chinua Achebe transformative. After studying medicine for a time in Nsukka, in 1997 she left for the United States, where she studied communication and political science at Eastern Connecticut State University (B.A., 2001). Splitting her time between Nigeria and the United States, she received a master’s degree in creative writing from Johns Hopkins University and studied African history at Yale University.

CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE’S WRITING :

In 1998 Adichie’s play *For Love of Biafra* was published in Nigeria. It was among the earliest works in which she explored the war in the late 1960s between Nigeria and its secessionist Biafra republic. She later wrote several short stories about that conflict, which would become the subject of her highly successful novel *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006).

As a student at Eastern Connecticut State University, she began writing her first novel, *Purple Hibiscus* (2003). Set in Nigeria, it is the coming-of-age story of Kambili, a 15- year-old whose family is wealthy and well respected but who is terrorized by her fanatically religious father.

*Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006; film 2013), Adichie’s second novel was built primarily on the experiences of her parents during the Nigeria-Biafra war. The result was an epic novel that vividly depicted the savagery of the war (which resulted in the displacement and deaths of perhaps a million people) but did so by focusing on a small group of characters, mostly middle-class Africans.

*The Thing Around Your Neck* (2009).

Americanah (2013) centres on the romantic and existential struggles of a young Nigerian woman studying (and blogging about race) in the United States.

POSTCOLONIAL ISSUES IN ADICHIE’S SHORT FICTION:

**Pre-colonial cultures**: **Nativism** (idealization of the pre-colonial condition)?

**Colonization**: military occupation of Nigeria by the British; expoliation of art; Christianization of part of the population; imposition of English; forced union of religions with different ethnic, linguistic and religious identities;

**Colonial discourse:** Superiority of the white race, culture and way of life; euphemism language to disguise the oppression. Discourse used by the colonizer to justify the colonization: the colonization was good, was necessary, “we go there to civilize you”. But then, they take their art to their museums. They usually use “pacification”: “we go there to pacify”. British in Nigeria, Spain in Morroco. They resisted the colonization so they have to be “pacified” with the military interventions. Word use by colonizers to justify their interventions. Colourism: they make comment about the dark of the skin, even though they all are black: being lighter is being more beautiful: “you have a handsome soon with a very light skin, but your daughter is so dark, she needed more the beauty than him”. Igbos have a lighter complexion.

Resistance to colonization: **anti-colonialism** (account of the past).

Effects of colonization on post-colonial Nigeria:

* **Civil War** (Biafra 1967 - 1970)
* **Dictatorships** that steal the country’s wealth (Nigeria’s oil and gas) and **neo-colonialim** (continued exploitation of the ex-colony’s natural resources); corruption.
* Social **conflicts between ethnic groups** (Muslim, poor, northern Hausas and Christian, richer and southern Igbos).
* **Linguistic conflict**: diglossia (character’s use of English and vernacular African language in different situations and for different purposes).
* **Hegemony**: (domination by consent) consumerism of Western products; desire to leave Nigeria and live in the USA (expatriates vs emigrants)
* **Mimicry**: social behaviour that imitate those of the colonizer of other Western countries (clothes)
* **Hybridity**: mixed identity (Western and African); example: language. Transitional identities: effects on gender and class relations, lack of belonging.

“Cell One”

Title: intrigue about what happens in this place (the story lacks closure, because it does not totally solve this enigma). (Genre and subgenre). With “cell” we already know would be something about a prison. After the brother is taken to cell 1, he refuses to tell what happened there. The story has lacks closure. The enigmas on the story are closed? Yes, on the majority, except the end. It does not solve the enigma from the title “Cell one”.

Bildungsroman: brother’s process of maturation.

Theme: violence; police corruption and brutality; passage from irresponsibility to solidarity; family bond. Violence on the campus, violence by the government. We also have some domestic themes. National context // Domestic context (explain one and the other). There are several Civil Wars, because there are several ethnics groups, and they fight each other’s. Nigeria is a rich country: petrol. Even though in the story we observe several times that there is not petrol. There are 2 reasons: there is a period of time that there were problems with the petrol places and also oil prices. Also, the corruption: there are sources, but dictators keep the sources for themselves.

Country that after the independence the dictator were full of corruption.

Narrator: protagonist’s sister (irony); she denounces the other character’s self-deception. The narrator is a woman. We see that she is receptable. She knows that her brother is the favourite one in the family, and she notices and understand the discrimination on the society around her. Deception about how the parent understand themselves: it seems that she is the only one that knows how everything works. She deals with different time of characters.

Places: Enugu, Nsukka campus.

Time: 3 years (from the brother’s first thefts to his imprisonment and release).

Characters: middle-class African family.

Plot: (is not the story) from ironic detachment to suspense about a life-or-death situation. Because of helping the old man, he is taken to the cell one and after to a place that is even more illegal, irregular... The suspense when they ask about the brother, the suspense is very well constructed.

Post-colonial aspects: dictatorship (reference to Abacha); hegemony, hybridity (the characters do not have a pre-colonial monocity identity: the food. The people in Nigeria imitate the people from the Western. Imitating an American campus: fraternities. English is the official language of Nigeria, but they have many many vernacular languages), mimicry, linguistic conflict; American way of life. (Define the aspect and find an example on the text). Diglossia: there is not a clear division, sometimes they use the native’s words (Ebo) instead of the English one. Two options: to use the metropolis (Britain) or American. Adichie herself choose America most of the stories will be connected with Nigeria characters in America. After the fall of the British Empire, how America is replacing the metropolis.

Narrated time: post-Independence Nigeria (reference to General Abacha as a prisoner’s nickname). General Abacha, President of Nigeria: 1993 – 1998.

1990s: tensions between foreign oil corporations (Shell) and ethnic groups of the Nigel Delta. Supply crisis due to continuous violence.

Spatial setting: Igbo region-Biafra (Nsukka, Enugu).

Police corruption, bribery, brutality, camouflaged police quarters, murder.

Christianization: Catholicism (Mass, catechism, Communion).

Mimicry & hegemony: lifestyle, university fraternities, imports, consumerism.

Colourism: light skin preferable as a result of colonial discourse (colonizer’s superiority).

Hybridity: body gestures (snapping fingers-local superstition) + Western lifestyle.

Linguistic conflict (diglossia: English/Igbo-vernacular).

Biafra: 1967.

“Imitation”

Post-independence temporal setting: late 1990s (no SMS texting or Skype).

Hybridity: Transnational identity (Nigeria-Lagos + America-Philadelphia), expatriates (class), food, language, problematic notion of belonging. Mimicry.

Intersections of race, class (Nkem-Bush Girl), gender.

Colonial discourse: motivates emigration to the metropolis. Hegemony.

Pre-colonial times: Benin masks, human sacrifices; Ife sculpture; Nok terra-cotta.

Nativism: husband’s idealization of the pre-colonial situation vs Nkem’s anti-nativism.

Colonization: Christianization; spoliation of art (heathen); ‘punitive expeditions’, ‘pacification’, place names.

Colonization patronage: promotion of trade with African art.

Woman’s silence: double colonization vs. Male Nigerian elite: Big Man. Woman-used for sex and motherhood.

Nigeria: land which is rich in natural resources but with: child labour, dilapidated public infrastructures, exploitation of workers.

“A Private Experience”

Narrated time: post-Independence Nigeria 1990s (General Abacha, President of Nigeria: 1993 - 1998).

Spatial setting: Kano (Northern Nigeria; predominantly Hausa-Muslim-poor).

Dictatorship: struggles for democracy. Promotion of ethnic conflicts; harassing soldiers.

Ethnic conflict: Hausas (Muslim, poor) vs. Christians (many of them Igbo, affluent). Unequal opportunities: education, travel… (intersections of gender, class, ethnicity).

Mimicry (and hegemony): Western clothes and brands, blond-hair attachments.

Chika’s patronizing attitude towards the Muslim woman (like the colonialist attitude towards natives, who are seen as uncivilized).

Plurilingual society: English, pidgin, Hausa, Igbo…

Hybridity: local superstitions (chi-individual’s personal god or guarding angel + English culture).

Colonial patronage: education in Western countries; dominance of British communication media (BBC, The Guardian).

Feminist reading: woman-centred story.

Chika is a bit patronised.

We have to pay attention to the WHERE? And to the WHEN?

It is the 1990’s because of the references to the general Abacha (Adichie usually use the name of Abacha). Why is not there a democratic system? It seems that even the colonizers promote chaos.

Mimicry, hybridity. First the missionaries went there and they started converting people to the Christianism. The go little by little, but the conflict start when the people from there starts to notice that the colonizers start to have more power than the people from there... It not only a religious problem, but also an economical and a political one.

The concept of subaltern as is an inferior charge, depending on the high one.

Which is the theme of the story? The encounter and the finding the possibility of understanding. In spite of the riots and the differences the story focuses on the possibility of understanding each other.

The name of the city is Kano: which is one of the largest cities in Nigeria. It is from the North, where the majority of the people is Muslim.

Why do they change to the official language when it stops being compulsory? Because of hegemony, because the see the language as more new, more advance. (There is an Indian girl that says that the language was her botín de guerra) With the new language with have more possibilities. There are so many languages that they use the English to communicate between them. So, we have the linguistic problem there.

Mimicry and hybridity are completely related. If you imitate someone, she is going to be an example of hybridity as well. When there is third person narrator they speak the standar language: the difference between the narrator and

Narrator ≠ focaliser. “ “ The woman sighs and Chika imagines that she is thinking of her necklace, probably plastic beads threaded on a piece of string” ”. The narrator is the one speaking, but is not the narrator saying, “it seems plastic”. But we also find the narrator “Chika’s thins…”.

Different religion, ethnic background, different economic levels… Something that Adichie will criticize with the character of Chika is those people who do not acknowledge their privileges.

Chika admits is her sister’s opinion, she is less political conscious.

“She and Nnedi are her mother’s only children. Besides, her mother always had Dr. Igbokwe, with his British training and affectation, a phone call away”.

Hybridity: imitate the colonizer. Querer usar extensions loiras.

Very frequent in religion and with superstitions. They may be Christian or Christianised, by they still believe on their own believes.

There are many flash-forwards on the story. What she will find out (about the sister). What is the effect of this structure? Retroprespective. Contrast of both.

“Ghosts”

Narrated time: 2004. Memories (vs forgetting) of main past event: Biafra war 1967 – 1970.

Spatial setting: Nsukka (Igbo/Biafra region).

Hybridity: James-science & superstition (throwing sand to a ghost); belief in ghosts’ visits. Vernacular culture: seasons (harmattan), food; diglossia (Igbo to speak of death and for emotional reactions; English for the rest).

Corruption (university, medicine, deteriorating infrastructures).

Class charm: Professors-middle class vs. employees, servants, peasants…

Colonial discourse: daughter in America (emigration); Christianization; imports of Western products; BBC, CNN.

Colonial patronage: university education in Britain (Ikenna) or America (James).

Biafra war-Ikenna (a ghost like James’s wife?); famines because of blockade; loss of relatives; International aid (World Council of Churches); emigration to Europe and America (privilege).

Ghosts of dead people: people for different purposes (wife: caring; Ikenna raises questions of loyalty/betrayal to the Biafra nation).

PAY ATTENTION TO THE INTERSECTIONS: - It’s a woman: from what social class?

“On Monday of Last Week”

Narrated time: Post-independence Nigeria. 1990s (Rugrats animated TV series, 1991).

Spatial setting: Philadelphia (USA).

Emigration: transnational identities (communication with homeland: telephone); conflict of lifestyles (on parenting) and cultural clash (food); national stereotypes (US-violence in films; linguistic conflicts: Nigerian (British) English vs American English and Igbo/English; African and African-American (Africa as motherland); visas and green cards; exploitation of immigrants.

Intersections of gender, sexual desire, class, education (degrees), race, religion (Jewish, Evangelical) …

Mixed ethnicity/biracial vs “half-caste” (colonial discourse: glamourous in Nigeria; racist in the U.S.).

Blackness and Jewishness: discrimination against Ethiopian Jews.

Class conflict: employer-employee (Kamara as a baby-sitter cf. Nigerian house girls) and dignity.

Mimicry: Tobeichi’s desire for a house like middle-class American’s houses (middle-class ideals); his imitation of American English.

Vs nativism and African traditions (paying bride price when making a woman pregnant; polygamy; preference for male heirs).

Conflict about how to raise the child. Immigrants try to imitate the accent. Immigrants also exploit other immigrants. She does not idealize Nigeria at all, in fact, she is very critic with Nigeria.

“Jumping Monkey Hill”

Narrated time: year 2000.

Spatial setting: Cape Town (South Africa, ref. to Apartheid). Tourist resort (sanitized wilderness) used for the African Writers Workshop.

Colonial discourse: to Western tourists, etc. Africa is the repository of wilderness (animals-title of the story), violence (refs. to Mugabe, Congo); defining what is truly African and what’s realistic.

Colonial patronage: Workshop organized by an Englishman and the Chamberlain Arts Foundation; the British Council selects English-language writers only and excludes writers in vernacular languages; Lipton African Writers’ Prize.

Mimicry: Nigerian people imitating the English posh accent like Edward’s. Mocking mimicry (Conrad’s Africans).

Hegemony: refusing to contradict Edward because he can visibilize African writers in England. Silence: “But why do we say nothing?”

Structure: story within a story; both denounce sexual harassment; both are about events that actually happen to Ujunwa, the protagonist. Both attempt to portray “real” Africa.

Feminism: women as sexual objects for both Nigerian and English males (for the latter: colonial desire). Homosexuality being suppressed.

Isabel’s animal rights activism: patronizing. Westerners telling Africans how to take care of their environment. International illegal trade of animals.

Hybridity: magic powers of the *babalawos*. Neocolonialism: arrival of Christian fundamentalism (Holy Spirit Revival, Pentecostalism).

The hill is the hill of the Jumping Monkey.

Where is the story taken? Country: South Africa.

The year is 2000. Is the story about that period of colonization? No, it is not. We could see this as neo-colonialism.

There are a lot of animal references in the story. There is this animalization of Africa.

Post-colonial studies give you tools that can be applied to more than one country. Western fantasies. The name of the cabins has an animal name. It is an idea to present Africa as if they were in a safari. The servants are black: representation of BLACKNESS. All the hard work is made by black people, so the white can relax. The West puts them in the position of servants.

Edward when looks at Ujunwa does not look at her eyes “you do not look a white girl like that”, but he looks like that at the African woman.

With the comment from mimicry, Adichie is actually making fun and ridiculing him because of trying to imitate the accent.

He is dismissing several topics: sexuality and sexual harassment. We see Edward’s prejudices with these topics. He wants to exclude those topics.

Isabel is always behaving with superiority as trying to impose her view.

Exotic: objectiveness and exhibition.

Yellow woman: “yellow” is used in an offensive way even though being lighter was something good.

Hegemony: with the silence of the several offensive comments and behaviours.

British Council selected the writer, Edward from Oxford organise everything, Lipton Prize: tea is connected with the British Empire.

African countries do not assume the writers Fin Western.

“The Thing Around Your Neck”

Narrated time: late 1990s (*The Lion King*, 1994).

Spatial setting: USA (Maine, Connecticut).

Emigration: family networks (uncle in America); visa lottery (arbitrariness); green card (immigration control); assimilation (hybridity: “give-and-take”); national stereotypes (U.S. violence and prosperity; Africa as savage); cultural clash (privileges, food waste, parenting, clothes, overweight, condescending attitudes); exploitation of immigrants by other immigrants, transnational bonds (money sent but not letters); migrant’s invisibility and breathlessness.

Hybridity: English + Igbo.

USA: Multicultural? “Looking diverse”; racism; opposition to mixed-race couples; travel to third-world countries ‘to gawk at the lives of poor people who cannot gawk back’.

Feminism: denunciation of sexual abuse in Lagos and NY.

Intersection of race, gender, class (Akuna is a poor, black woman).

Mimicry: desire for Western consumer products.

Home: Nigeria-extreme poverty; alcoholism; corruption in school system; strikes at universities; class division and humiliation.

“The American Embassy”

Narrated time: 1990s (reference to General Abacha 1993-1997).

Spatial setting: Lagos (Nigeria).

Dictatorship, brutality of the army and of unidentified security forces. Prodemocracy movements and risks to their families. People leaving to country: Migration (Embassy; visitor, asylum, immigration visas; interviews, queues, humiliation process, fees). Protagonist’s refusal to leave the country if that entails “hawking Ugonna for a visa to safety”.

Neo-colonialism: Western communication media (BBC, The Guardian…).

Hybridity: food (palm oil + Quarter Oaks); languages (beggars’ use of several languages – English, pidgin, Yoruba, Igbo… -- and religious); Christian/Moslem religions + superstitions (fortunes tellers).

Colonial patronage: husband’s training in the USA.

Hegemony: some Nigerians in favour of dictatorship.

Western deciding what is realistic and what is not.

“The Shivering”

Narrated time: 2005 (reference to plane crash and first lady’s death). New civilian government (Obasanjo, President of Nigeria, 1999-2007).

Spatial setting: Princeton – New Jersey.

Contrast of lifestyles: US (announcing visits, different food, Catholicism practised different).

US: Immigration control (visa, deportation notice, police workplace raids).

Colonial discourse conveyed though religion (Catholicism, Pentecostalism – ‘pugilistic exercise’, extremist-, ‘shivering’ – spirituality).

Neo-colonialism control: BBC, internet, oil companies in the Niger Delta.

Colonial patronage: going to the US and England – elite universities – for graduate school.

Nigeria: class contrast (urban middle class vs bush people, different education opportunities), corruption; “Big Man” class and values.

Hybridity: English language, American lifestyle + vernacular expressions and gestures (Chail, sucking sound showing sadness) + Nigerian peppery food.

Gender relations: The protagonist Ukamaka, yielding to her ex-boyfriend’s plans and ideas; similar power relations in Chinedu’s concealed homosexual relationship.

“The Arrangers of Marriage”

Narrated time: probably the 1990s.

Spatial setting: Brooklyn – New York.

Emigration: migrant’s narrative of success (house vs apartment); customs control: green carf; fake marriage.

American films shown in Nigeria: Neo-colonialism, colonial patronage, hegemony.

Critique of native practices in Nigeria: arrange marriages without the bride’s consent, rape (wife duties) within marriage; rejection of American wives -less submissive- for Nigerian sons.

Husband’s mimicry and assimilation to mainstream American culture vs wife’s resistance (language; names; colourism “light-skinned blacks fare better in America”).

Hybridity: Nigerian food (wife) + American junk food (husband); Chinaza speaks Igbo to herself.

Cultural clashes: US: food, courts, shopping malls, clothes; black Americans claiming their African ancestry while Chinaza’s husband want to erase it.

Configurations of femininity: bad role models (Nia-independent): good model: quiet, a virgin.

Linguistic conflict: British English vs American English; diglossia (vernacular expressions).

“Tomorrow Is Too Far”

Narrated time: 18 years before the time of the narration.

Spatial setting: Nigeria.

Nigeria (father’s family) vs America (mother’s country).

Nigeria: gender roles. Preference for male hairs and other male privileges (even climbing tress as children). Nigeria vs African-American women. Sibling male-female rivalry.

Narrator’s transnational identity: Nigerian-American. The narrator returns to Nigeria 18 years later for her grandma’s funeral.

“The Headstrong Historian”

Pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods in Nigeria.

Pre-colonial times:

• Patriarchy and promotion of male superiority; polygamy; importance of fertility and having many children/heirs (male impotence or infertility is out of the question); slavery; pagan gods punishing of helping people; goddess protector of women; consulting oracles; use of black magic; animal sacrifices; family rivalries and betrayal; generation gaps; labour division according to gender (female pot makers); duties of the offspring towards their parents.

• First colonizers: traders with guns; dispossessing the natives of their land; merchants of the Royal Niger Company and army of the British government; natives fear the colonizers might be cannibals (vs usual Western representations of African cannibalism).

• Colonial patronage: colonizers start schools to change the natives’ mentalities; 1885: French missionaries of the Holy Ghost Congregation; competition between Anglican and Catholic missions; colonizers open courthouses to impose their judicial system. Spread of the use of English to constitute a privileged elite. Nwamgba’s initial resistance (critical with colonizers); Nwamgba’s hegemony by later yielding to the colonizers’ power (aiming to implement her revenge against her husband’s cousins). She sends her son to a mission to learn English, but he comes out totally transformed.

• Transformation of the indigenous population: names changed to English ones; religious conversion to Christianity; teaching different uses of discourse (Western style: ‘to the point’); physical punishments in the missions (‘discipline’); teaching shame about the body (nakedness as sinful); discarding food sacrificed according to native religious rituals; making people renounce their ‘heathen’ religions; sending students to study far from their community (growing estrangement); progressive creation of a native elite that promotes Western values (comprador class): “a person diligently acting a bizarre pantomime”. Gender relations: women’s expected virginity before marriage.

• Textbooks on the ‘Pacification’ of Nigerian tribes (colonial discourse). Schools with hymns to the English King on Empire Day. Granddaughter’s book: Pacifying with Bullets…

• Colonial patronage: ‘primitive tribes did not have poetry’ vs folk stories on mermaids and fighting tribes; refusal to accept the study of ‘African history’. Mimicry: Kings College, Lagos.

• The indigenous population begins to consider the christianized, English-speaking natives as superior, and the latter become authoritarian.

• Hybridity (or conflictive society): Christian and pagan gods in competition; belief that ancestors’ souls return to their heirs.

• Descendants’ rootlessness (Grace/Afamefuna).