DISPLACEMENT AND IDENTITY CRISIS IN THINGS FALL APART

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Abstract - This thesis investigates the multifaceted effects of displacement on individuals and communities, with a particular emphasis on displacement's impact on identity. Through an interdisciplinary approach to studying the phenomenon of displacement, this study illuminates the many facets of this complex issue. The thesis explores various forms of displacement across various regions and cultures in an effort to expose the common struggle that unites humanity despite its variation. In addition, the study discusses how different novelists from different contexts use their literary works to educate readers about physical and psychological displacement caused by multiple causes. The thesis elaborates on this argument by discussing three case studies: the period of immigration and migration to the Midwestern states of the United States, colonization in Africa, specifically Nigeria, which led to the destruction of the nation's belief system, and the exile of Palestinians due to occupation and ethnic cleansing, which similarly resulted in a loss of authenticity and belonging. This thesis provides valuable insights into the effects of displacement on identity and the necessity of recognizing and dealing with the different aspects of this complex issue.

Keywords - Colonization, displacement, exile, identity, immigration, occupation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Things Fall Apart, written by the Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe, depicts exile and identity as two of the most important forms of displacement. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, exile is the state of being banished or held away from one's own country, village, etc., often for political reasons or social and cultural restraints (Cambridge, 2022). As for inner displacement, it may occur without the actual relocation of the body, as a person may be displaced in his own land owing to the loss of his cultural identity, which is often the result of a stronger power, such as colonialism. The European colonialism imposed on Africa resulted in serious repercussions as well as a few advantages, but its primary effect was to eradicate the identity of the native people. Throughout the novel, Achebe discusses types of exile and their consequences for an individual, as well as the colonial impact on Nigeria.

First, an overview of Achebe's own biography should be provided so that the direct connections between his own life experiences and the events and purpose of the work may be understood. According to Whittaker & Msiska (2007), Chinua Achebe, whose actual name was Albert Chinualumogo Achebe, was born on 16 November 1930 in Ogidi, in what is now eastern Nigeria, to an Igbo family. Both of his parents were devoted Christians; his father, Isaiah Okafor Achebe, converted to Christianity as a youth. Despite the fact that Isaiah Achebe had become an evangelical church catechist and a teacher for the Church Missionary Society, Chinua grew up in a village where many people still maintained a traditional lifestyle. Chinua was to receive a rigorous Christian upbringing, but he also grew up surrounded by neighbors and extended family members who continued to practice the Igbo traditional religion and follow the culture's varied rituals and festivals. In his 1973 autobiographical essay entitled "Named after Victoria, Queen of England," Achebe describes some of his early recollections of growing up in the 1930s Ogidi:

“We lived at the crossroads of cultures. We still do today; but when I was a boy one could see and sense the peculiar quality and atmosphere of it more clearly . . . On one arm of the cross we sang hymns and read the Bible night and day. On the other, my father’s brother and his family, blinded by heathenism, offered food to idols . . . What I do remember is a fascination for the ritual and the life on the other arm of the crossroads.”

Consequently, Things Fall Apart could be regarded a historical record that helps us to comprehend a part of Nigerian culture, traditions, customs and pagan beliefs, as well as the impacts of European colonialism on the Nigerian people and their land. As a Nigerian and an Igbo, Achebe provides a genuine account and representation of life before and after colonialism from the perspective of the colonized and oppressed.

According to Kenalemang (2013), Things Fall Apart was Chinua Achebe's first published novel. Achebe wrote Things Fall Apart in reaction to European novels that portrayed Africans as barbarians in need of enlightenment. Achebe presents the reader with the strengths and flaws of his people's history by describing, for instance, Igbo festivals, the worship of their gods and the practices in their ritual ceremonies, their rich culture and other social practices, and the colonial era that both disrupted Igbo culture and brought some benefits to it. With its depiction of Igbo culture, Things Fall Apart recasts the misrepresentation of Africans as savages in European novels and explores the repercussions of European colonization on Igbo society from an African

perspective. It is suggested that the contact between whites and the Igbo produced both harmful and beneficial outcomes. It is apparent from Achebe's narrative that Europeans had a significant impact on the lifestyle of Igbo societ

II. ANALYSIS

In the novel, several Igbo religious and cultural practices are portrayed and explained, in addition to several specific laws and regulations associated with their heathen faith. Despite appearing odd and irrational to many, these rules and conventions held the Igbo and other tribes in Nigeria together as a group that knew and respected its norms and generally lived by its own norms. For instance, during the "Week of Peace," no one is permitted to do damage to another person or even speak harshly to a neighbor. This ritual is performed so that the goddess of the earth may bless their harvest and planting season. Okonkwo, the protagonist of the novel, beats his wife during this week. Although beating wives was not considered inappropriate at the time, his action was regarded as extremely shameful and disrespectful because he violated the traditions of their forefathers, which, according to their beliefs, would harm the entire Igbo community. "Take away your kola nut. I shall not eat in the house of a man who has no respect for our gods and ancestors."(Chinua, 2021, 30). With these words, the priest scolded Okonkwo and attempted to emphasize how much evil he had committed. Afterwards, he was punished in accordance with their own rules so that he might repent.

In addition, they believed in an oracle named "Agbala," and people traveled great distances to consult it; they came to learn about their destiny or to communicate with the spirits of their deceased forefathers.The Igbo believed the Agbala to be very holy and of immense importance. They also visited medicine men to treat their ailments and accomplish things that were onerous to them by inventing medicines. Furthermore, Igbo society saw twins as a negative omen brought by "the Gods." They believed that twins were supernatural entities who posed a threat to mankind. “Twins were put in earthenware pots and thrown away in the forest,” (Chinua, 2021, 61-62). As a result, whenever twins were born, their parents were forced to abandon them in the "Evil Forest" to perish (Adewumi, 2014). They also believed and practiced other minor superstitions, such as warning children not to whistle at night for fear of evil spirits. Thus, it is evident to the reader that the cultural and religious beliefs of the Nigerian tribes regulate and influence every aspect of their existence. Consequently, these particular beliefs and superstitions helped the British colonists seize power and convert a considerable proportion of them to Christianity. On the other hand, the Igbo exhibited several admirable qualities that ought to be highlighted, such as their appreciation for figurative language and expression: “Among the lbo the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten.”(Chinua, 2021, 7). Thus, they had a great regard for people who knew how to discourse, and they employed creative and powerful proverbs, which Achebe translated into English and included into the novel. Another positive principle in their society was that men were evaluated based on their own value and work, not on the accomplishments of their fathers. For instance, Okonkwo's father was lazy, always in debt, and a total failure. However, Okonkwo was very hard-working, powerful, and he gained several titles, and was admired by everyone in his tribe, regardless of his father's reputation. In other words, each individual creates his own fortune and prosperity independently from his ancestors. Moreover, they revered the elderly and cherished the customs of their ancestors; hence, it was uncommon for anybody to oppose them or their "gods." They were also grateful for help and hospitable, and they valued hard work and dedication. The villagers of Umuofia, the fictional village in the novel, were so bound by their predecessors' customs and regulations that, in the case of emergency, a single call from the town crier to the nine villages would summon all the men.

The Igbo formed their own judiciary system and created laws in line with their beliefs. Ikemufena, a fifteen-year-old boy from the neighboring clan Mbaino, is sacrificed for the murder of one of the women in Umuofia. In a society where every action had an equal and opposite consequence, they adhered to these rules to prevent wars and the shedding of blood as much as possible. However, Ikemufena, who had nothing to do with the crime and had no clue why he was banished from his family, was unfairly punished despite their efforts to avert conflict and maintain peace. Some of these activities demonstrate that these tribes were not as barbaric as they are often represented in the European narrative; they just had a distinct way of life and culture that was difficult for outsiders to comprehend.

Subsequently, readers were exposed to the first depiction of political/religious exile in the novel. Ikemufena was alienated from his home and family and taken to Umuofia, where he was displaced. In terms of displacement, he embodied a moderate representation, in which he was nostalgic and emotionally unhappy at first, but then became used to the idea and functioned well in his new life and home.

“At first Ikemefuna was very much afraid. Once or twice he tried to run away, but he did not know where to begin. He thought of his mother and his three-year-

old sister and wept bitterly. Nwoye's mother was very kind to him and treated him as one of her own children, but all he said was: "When shall I go home?""(Chinua, 2021, 27).

Ikemefuna's initial period away from his home was as bitter as it should be. He cried a lot, felt miserable, and even lost his appetite and refused to eat due to his sadness. He was terribly homesick and wished to return home at all times. However, his young age and lack of understanding of the purpose of his exile should be taken into account when analyzing his situation of dislocation.

After some time had passed throughout Ikemefuna's journey of exile, he began to somewhat adjust to his new family's way of life. He was loved by the family members, and he grew to be like an elder brother to Nwoye. Even Okonkwo, who was known for having the toughest character, grew to like him. As a result, he started to feel more like a member of the family and less like an outsider. Despite this, he had periodic bouts of sorrow, during which he reminisced about his mother and his younger sister.

According to Vaso K. (2009), since the time of ancient Greece, exile has been a subject of literature in its various forms, including political banishment, voluntary expatriation, and economic emigration. The subject of exile is central to a number of the earliest works of Western literature, such as Homer's Odyssey. Vaso K. (2009) adds that exile continues to act as a brutal kind of punishment throughout the century of suffering, war, fascism, Nazism, communism, and capitalism. Through Okonkwo, Achebe depicts a significant type of physical exile as a sort of punishment. As previously established, the Igbo developed their own set of rules and processes to maintain as much peace and stability as possible among the clans. Accordingly, as a direct consequence of accidentally killing a sixteen-year-old boy during the rituals of a funeral, Okonkwo was sentenced to seven years of exile to the land of his mother "Mbanta".

This sort of forced displacement had numerous ramifications for Okonkwo's identity and sense of self. He had worked very hard in the past to achieve the level of power and wealth that he possessed in his homeland, and he had been successful as a result of his efforts. Suddenly, he was shamed, deprived of all his possessions, and forced to redo all his previous tedious work. "Okonkwo and his family worked very hard to plant new fields. But it was like beginning life anew without the vigor and enthusiasm of youth, like learning to become left-handed in old age." (Chinua, 2021, 131). He reverted to a time when he had neither a stellar reputation nor wealth; unfortunately, at that moment, he did not have the power nor the zeal that he had when he was younger to reclaim his former glory all over again.

The character of Okonkwo was notably conceited and full of pride. As he feared resembling his father in even the tiniest manner, he viewed himself as invincible and refused to experience any failure. He valued strength the most and raced away from the notion of failure, but eventually he found himself in a situation where he lost his self-worth and everything that he had fought for throughout his life because of a reckless blunder. This undoubtedly caused him a tremendous deal of grief and sorrow. "His life had been ruled by a great passion-to become one of the lords of the clan. That had been his life-spring. And he had all but achieved it. Then everything had been broken. He had been cast out of his clan like a fish onto a dry, sandy beach, panting" (Chinua, 2021, 131). Even though he had lost practically everything he had held dear, his uncle's words of consolation and assurance that he would someday find happiness again provided him with solace and strength.

However, his home village, as well as the villages that surrounded it, had been through a lot during the years that he was away. Even if he was able to handle his displacement and endure it, it is probable that his return to Mbanta, his homeland, after seven years of exile and his ability to survive there despite all of the changes could be seen as impossible. During Okonkwo's period of exile, his close friendObierika would pay him visits and notify him of the changes that the "white men" were bringing to the region. First, he narrated the tragedy of "Abame," a destroyed village in close proximity to Mbanta. Two years later, he informed him about the arrival of white missionaries as well as their subsequent expansion throughoutUmuofiaitself:

"When nearly two years later Obierika paid another visit to his friend in exile the circumstances were less happy. The missionaries had come to Umuofia. They had built their church there, won a handful of converts and were already sending evangelists to the surrounding towns and villages." (Chinua, 2021, 143).

Nevertheless, Okonkwo, Obierika, and many clan leaders were not very concerned about the issue since, in their judgment, the men who joined the "new faith" were the weak and useless individuals. In addition, no man of rank had joined or been impacted by the white missionaries, but they had no idea that even though it began with the less powerful members of society, it would spread as rapidly and effectively as cancer cells. Obierika's visit to Okonkwo was prompted by his son Nwoye's presence among the new missionaries in Umuofia, which was his major concern.

Generally, religious beliefs and cultural norms are the glue that holds many communities together. Therefore, the power of imperialism and European colonialism was not derived only from their physical capabilities, but rather from their willingness to obliterate an entire national identity by destroying its religious and cultural beliefs. This helped the colonizers weaken the political power of the colonized nation, as well as prevent the colonized people from resisting their power. In other words, many colonial powers began by spreading Christianity and gaining converts and believers, which is represented in Things Fall Apart by the first proliferation of churches. In On the Postcolony, Achille Mbembe (2001) argues that colonial violence has an impact on all cultural practices of the colonized. The violence penetrates the economy, domestic life, language, and mentality. Not only does it permeate every place, but it also chases the colonized during sleep and dreams. It develops a culture; it is a cultural praxis. According to Fanon (1963),colonialism not only dominates and oppresses a people, but also distorts and destroys their history, culture, and identity. By devaluing the pre-colonial history of the oppressed people, colonialism seeks to create an inanimate 'thing' that can be subject to unlimited appropriation. However, Fanon asserts that this strategy is unsustainable, as the oppressed people begin to re-awaken, to start their own history, and to reclaim their humanity.

Using the Igbo's own beliefs and naiveté in several parts of the novel, Achebe brilliantly portrayed how Europeans had successfully disseminated the tribes and gained converts in Nigeria. For instance, the white missionaries were able to construct their first church in Mbanta without resorting to physical violence because they relied on the religious beliefs of the people. The rulers of Mbantaoffered them the "evil forest" as a place to build their first church. “It was such a forest that the rulers of Mbanta gave to the missionaries. They did not really want them in their clan, and so they made them that offer which nobody in his right senses would accept.” (Chinua, 2021, 148). People who perished from "evil diseases" such as smallpox were buried in the forest, along with the potent fetishes of famous medicine men when they passed away. Thus, it was believed to be alive with evil energies and powers. Therefore, it was anticipated that allowing the missionaries to construct their church there would be their doom. However, days passed, and to their astonishment, nothing happened to the white men. It was then that they won their first converts by demonstrating that their native tribal beliefs were false.

By also relying on the Igbo's beliefs and practices, the white colonists were able to win more converts, not only by convincing them that much of what they believed was provably false, but also by demonstrating that Christianity and God welcome everyone regardless of their background. In contrast to their religion and traditions, which ostracize a significant number of individuals, murder the innocent like twins, and demean women, their religion, Christianity, does not discriminate against anybody. According to the novel, the Osu, who are the outcasts of the Igbo, are a prime example of the preceding idea. The term "Osu" is defined according to tribal norms as an outcast who is required to obey particular restrictions. These outcasts are shunned and excluded in a certain area of the village. They are forbidden from cutting their long, tangled, dirty hair or marrying one of the “free born”. Even when they die, they are buried in the Evil Forest without a funeral. The Osuthemselves believed that they would perish if they shaved their heads. In contrast to the Igbo, the missionaries accepted the outcasts, which encouraged them to attend church and learn about Christianity, as Mr. Kiaga says in the novel:

“Unless you shave off the mark of your heathen belief I will not admit you into the church," said Mr. Kiaga. "You fear that you will die. Why should that be? How are you different from other men who shave their hair? The same God created you and them, but they have cast you out like lepers. It is against the will of God, who has promised everlasting life to all who believe in His holy name. The heathen say you will die if you do this or that, and you are afraid. They also said I would die if I built my church on this ground. Am I dead? They said I would die if I took care of twins. I am still alive. The heathen speak nothing but falsehood. Only the word of our God is true.” (Chinua, 2021, 157).

When the first outcasts went to church, they were instructed to shave their heads, or they would not be allowed to enter. This was done to demonstrate that the Igbo religion is false. The missionaries demonstrated and emphasized that the Christian god embraces them regardless of who they are and that in his sight, all individuals are equal. All of this persecution against the outcasts has turned them into some of the most devout Christians and staunch colonial allies against their own people. When the outcasts went to church for the first time, the Igbo converts who were already in the church refused to accept them and disapproved of their presence. This episode demonstrates how much their culture influences them. Even though they were beginning to attend church and study the teachings of Christianity, their old beliefs and customs continued to profoundly impact them and guide parts of their behavior.

In addition to the outcasts, another example of the former idea is a pregnant woman. She has witnessed the deathsof her children on several occasions due to the fact that they were twins, which, according to Igbo custom, is rare and the work of the devil. She

becomes a Christian to save her unborn child or children (Kenalemang, L. M. 2013). Some Igbo society members' decision to convert to Christianity is heavily motivated by the suffering, alienation and psychological displacement they endured at the hands of their own culture. Because they are so desperate to escape the misery that the Igbo religion has inflicted upon them, they do not comprehend that by joining the white missionaries they are making their lives more difficult in the long term (Kenalemang, L. M. 2013).

Correspondingly, education is undoubtedly another method of controlling and changing a nation's identity and principles. According to Abu Jweid, A. N. A. (2016), Things Fall Apart depicts various racial interactions between Europeans and indigenous Igbo people. By introducing education, the concept of hegemony extrapolates the conquering of the Igbo. The European colonizers aim to conquer the Igbo people primarily via culture, education, and innovative learning approaches. They build schools and include women in educational fields.Mr. Brown, who was the first white Christian missionary in Umuofia and Mbanta, directed that people first alter their social traditions. Then, they participate in the colonial educational system. Consequently, they gradually adopt the colonial mindset and viewpoint. A new pattern of education guarantees that the white Christian blueprint is implemented. The colonial power gives inducements such as education to assist in the conquest of the Igbo and the other nine communities. This colonial practice pertains to the colonial power's hegemonic prototype enterprise. In the context of postcolonial theory, "hegemonic prototype enterprise" refers to a system or model of domination and control that is used by colonial powers to subjugate and exploit colonized peoples. This prototype often includes various forms of cultural, economic, and political domination that are aimed at maintaining the power and privilege of the colonizer.Education is one way of implementing the aforementioned strategy, as it serves to indoctrinate the colonized people with the values and beliefs of the colonizer, thereby reinforcing the power dynamic between them (Loomba, 1998).

On the other hand, Okonkwo portrays the resisting power of the indigenous. He kept resisting, along with some other men, both when he was exiled to Mbanta and when he returned to Umuofia. His resistance was never affected by the new government; this may be due to his exile and his memory of a strong, resisting Umuofia where his word was heard. However, to his surprise, it was not the same anymore, and his status is not as strong as it used to be.

“Umuofia did not appear to have taken any special notice of the warrior's return. The clan had undergone such profound change during his exile that it was barely recognizable. The new religion and government and the trading stores were very much in the people's eyes and minds. There were still many who saw these new institutions as evil, but even they talked and thought about little else, and certainly not about Okonkwo's return.” (Chinua, 2021, 182-183).

The former quotation represents the strong, deep-rooted effect of colonialism. Furthermore, after gaining ground through a variety of methods on the colonized land, the white colonizer evidently bared its teeth and employed physical force and brutality to prohibit any kind of opposition and assure their survival. They have created their own government, which adheres to its own laws regardless of Igbo law: “But apart from the church, the white men had also brought a government. They had built a court where the District Commissioner judged cases in ignorance. He had court messengers who brought men to him for trial” (Chinua, 2021, 174).Doubtlessly, a government, courts, prisons, churches, and schools amount to total control over the acquired area. European colonialism had invaded every element of Nigerian society, making it exceedingly impossible to fight imperialism, and those who wanted to do so would be punished severely:

“They were beaten in the prison by the kotma and made to work every morning clearing the government compound and fetching wood for the white Commissioner and the court messengers. Some of these prisoners were men of title who should be above such mean occupation. They were grieved by the indignity and mourned for their neglected farms.” (Chinua, 2021, 175).

As a probable consequence of colonization, an identity crisis was likely to emerge. Indigenous clan members with titles who attempted to protest the situation have become passive, although they had previously held power and control. Similarly, many individuals of low status or who were deemed worthless in the eyes of the Igbo had earned some recognition and significance. Nevertheless, the new government was clearly the dominant party, and regardless of how much freedom and prosperity some Igbo folks assume they have been granted, it is still occupation, and they will always be viewed as inferior and subordinate to the European colonizer. In other words, they have no authority over their own lands, and their national and personal identities will be entirely shaped by European ideologies.

According to Abu Jweid, A. N. A. (2016), critical subtleties of identity in postcolonial theory pertain to those seeking sanctuary from the emergence of the "other." Consequently, identification entails a "desire" to protect national heritage. Therefore, the individuals' nationalism may be a result of a

considerably larger urge to identify their cultural identity. For example, Oduche and other men from Okonkwo's villages are imprisoned. Eventually, Oduche dies of grief, and his companion Anedo is executed. These horrific occurrences show a resolute national resistance against the whites. This opposition suggests a national determination to preserve indigenous identity.

Through Okonkwo, Achebe again illustrated this unending fight and urge to preserve one's own identity. In the novel, Okonkwo could not comprehend the changes that occurred to his people and land. Many of them, including his own son, were influenced by the more rational principles of the new religion and the influence of schools and education on their life: “They worked on their farms in the morning and went to school in the afternoon. And it was not long before the people began to say that the white man's medicine was quick in working. Mr. Brown's school produced quick results” (Chinua, 2021, 181).

In addition, the Igbo were stolen by trading that brought prosperity and money to Umuofia and, ultimately, to its people. “There were many men and women in Umuofia who did not feel as strongly as Okonkwo about the new dispensation. The white, man had indeed brought a lunatic religion, but he had also built a trading store and for the first time palm-oil and kernel became things of great price, and much money flowed into Umuofia” (Chinua, 2021, 178). Many people were split between their religion, customs, and condition before the arrival of the colonizer, and the reality that abundance and wealth were easily given to them by methods that their gods had never taught them. However, they appeared to forget that the price of all this was the loss of their cultural identity and their surrender to European dominance.

Okonkwo experienced a significant identity crisis as a result of all the changes he observed and was unable to tolerate. Before he was exiled, he was familiar with a nation inhabited by strong, brave warriors who cherished their traditions and lived according to a well-known way of life. They were also strongly bound by cultural and religious ties that may have appeared nonsensical to others, but to Okonkwo and his people at the time, they were legitimate and maintained their own sense of peace and stability. In the meantime, his people appeared weak, inattentive to all the losses, and no longer united as one nation. Perhaps, the following significant passage from the novel encapsulates their dire situation:

"Does the white man understand our custom about land?" "How can he when he does not even speak our tongue? But he says that our customs are bad; and our own brothers who have taken up his religion also say that our customs are bad. How do you think we can fight when our own brothers have turned against us? The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart." (Chinua, 2021, 176).

The above quotation directly relates to the significance of the novel's title, which suggests that colonization completely shattered an entire nation's ideals and foundations. Despite the fact that imperial and colonial actions and conduct throughout history were terribly cruel, it is indisputable that the tactics they used to thoroughly tear down a community and infiltrate every part of its existence were extremely ingenious.

Moreover, a member of the Igbo named Enoch, who grew more devoted to the British than the British themselves, unmasked one of the Egwugwu in one of the novel's incidents, making the confusion between the old and new identities rather evident. According to Igbo traditions, the Egwuegwu are high-ranking members of the village who wear masks and embody the spirits of the ancestors. According to them, revealing the identity of a holy Egwugwu is a grave transgression and should be punished severely. At that point, Umuofia descended into chaos, since many people were still influenced by their indigenous manner of evaluating such an act, yet they were now subject to the new government and laws. After the incident, the clash and differences between the colonizer and the colonized were evident.

However, despite the British colonizer's barbaric and ignorant perceptions of the Igbo, it is important to note that the Igbo dealt with the matter in a far more civilized manner. Consequently, one of the most noteworthy quotes in the novel was spoken by an Igbo and interpreted to Mr. Brown as follows: "We cannot leave the matter in his hands because he does not understand our customs, just as we do not understand his. We say he is foolish because he does not know our ways, and perhaps he says we are foolish because we do not know his. Let him go away." (Chinua, 2021, 191). In other words, these cultural differences should have been respected, and not understanding someone's ideas does not imply that they are incorrect or that it is the white man's responsibility to impose his beliefs and customs on other cultures.

After that event, Okonkwo got ecstatic as he began to reclaim a period when the Igbo standards were enforced and his opinions were respected. He yearned for the strength of his people and preferred to react to events as he had in the past rather than in accordance with the law of the white man. However, the conflict

ended when the Commissioner deceived the six leaders, including Okonkwo, by agreeing to further debate the subject with them before proceeding to handcuff them and enforce his authority. He continues by explaining:

"if only you agree to cooperate with us. We have brought a peaceful administration to you and your people so that you may be happy. If any man ill-treats you we shall come to your rescue. But we will not allow you to ill-treat others. We have a court of law where we judge cases and administer justice just as it is done in my own country under a great queen" (Chinua, 2021, 191).

It is evident from the above remark that Achebe intended to convey the entire imperial mindset of the white colonizers. You must adhere to their customs and regulations, or else you will be disciplined. In addition to their view that they are the saviors of those they colonize, Europeans claim that those they colonize are inferior and primitive and must be civilized by Europeans. As Edward Said describes in his book Culture and Imperialism "They weren't like us and for that reason deserved to be ruled." (Said, 1994, xi), reflecting the ideology of white colonialism.Merely, it could be argued that just because something is "done in their country" does not mean it is the correct action or that they have the right to impose it on the rest of the world because they believe it is the "white man's burden."

Later, the six men were released, and they returned home in silence and humiliation. "The village was a stir in a silent, suppressed way" (Chinua, 2021, 199). Their identities and voices were practically suppressed and crushed. And despite Okonkwo's later attempts to resist and awaken the once-united spirits of his people, he was unsuccessful because it was already evident that the Igbo were not only physically subjugated by the colonizer, but that the national union of the community had been wrecked, rendering them too weak to resist as long as they were not as united as they once had been.

In the end, Okonkwo was unable to withstand the crises of his own homeland, so he commits suicide. His death and fall symbolize the deterioration and collapse of the Nigerian national identity. Individually, he was unable to cope with the conflict between his old identity and the new one that was being imposed upon him. Additionally, he was unable to cope with his nation's rapid transformation and the extinction of the Nigerian indigenous identity, so he chose death to embody the fall of both individual and national identity.

III. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the displacement of Nigerians and Africans in general did not take the form of physical relocation. They were displaced on their own land, whereby their indigenous identity was disrupted and many people were torn apart by the colonial powers' reforms. Being in one's homeland among one's people yet lacking the freedom to express one's original identity is a harsh form of alienation and displacement. In addition to the inferiority and exploitation that colonialism imposes upon its subjects, it also causes the worst type of alienation and a definite individual and communal identity crisis. Lastly, colonialism frequently entails a concerted effort to eradicate indigenous cultures and traditions and supplant them with those of the colonizers. This can result in profound confusion and disorientation among the colonized, who may feel cut off from their own history, language, customs, and beliefs. Individual and communal identity crises resulting from colonialism can have long-lasting effects on a society and may require generations to overcome. True healing and reconciliation cannot commence until the colonial legacy is acknowledged and efforts are made to rectify its ongoing effects.

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