

THE PROCESS OF COLONIZING THE IGBO LAND IN NIGERIA: A STUDY FROM THE *ARROW OF GOD* BY CHINUA ACHEBE

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Abstract

The *Arrow of God* by Chinua Achebe is a master piece where the writer has precisely depicted how the white colonizers successfully colonized the Igbo land through certain processes. The white colonizers, at first, were not able to win the heart of almost all Igbo people and did not successfully convince them to accept the colonial power in the Igbo land. Though the white people came in the name of religion, they also established government in the Igbo land to help and inspire the converts. To devalue the existing Igbo culture and customs, they endlessly attacked them and tried to make the Igbo people accept the white man's culture and customs. They also built educational institution to make the Igbo people familiarize to the culture and customs of the white men and to make them prepare for doing clerical jobs. In the name of welfare activities, they also tried to torture and torment the Igbo people. The white Europeans also brought the idea of capitalism and employed it to make the Igbo people busy with money making and trade. By introducing money to them, the white colonizers tried to shift their minds to the materialistic world from their revolutionary thoughts. Being convinced by the white men, the native people also helped them to capture the political power of the Igbo land. When they got many converts, they thought to lead them by employing a puppet chief of the white man's administration from the native people. For example the white colonizers enforced Ezeule to be a paramount chief for Umuaro but he denied becoming the part of the white man's government, they arrested him and tortured and tormented him both physically and mentally. In this article, we will focus on the process of colonizing a new land employed by the white people in Africa with reference to *Arrow of God* by Chinua Achebe.

Keywords: Colonizing, Igbo land, Nigeria, colonizers, colonial power, materialistic world, revolutionary thoughts, Igbo people

Introduction:

The *Arrow of God* is the last fiction of Chinua Achebe's renowned Trilogy; it shows how the white people colonized the Igbo land through and through and gradually won the heart of the Igbo people. Throughout the fiction *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe has shown that though the white people came in the name of religion, they gradually made the Igbo land a colony through various processes. Though they colonized the Igbo land forcefully, they could not win the heart of the people. But they continued motivating the Igbo people for accepting the domination of the white people over the black Igbo people. They continued their endless endeavor to rule over the Igbo people and they established various forms of system or machineries to make the Igbo people colonized. A critic G.D.Killam said:

“The *Arrow of God* becomes the central volume in a trilogy of novel in which Achebe explores the colonial rule in one area of Nigeria”. (Killam, 1969:60)

Research Methodology and Techniques:

The study is explanatory in nature. Primary data were collected through in depth study from the main text of Chinua Achebe. Different magazines and journal articles, newspaper columns, books and reports also have supported the study as the sources for the secondary data.

Limitations of the study:

This study suffers from a number of problems. The numbers of researches on this topic were very few. There might have some limitations in data collection for the shortage of time. To do this study the researcher had limited books and resources regarding the subject. Now let us discuss about the Process of Colonizing the Igbo land in Nigeria in context of the novel the *Arrow of God* by Chinua Achebe.

The Process of Colonizing the Igbo land in Nigeria:

❖ Establishing Government System:

As the white entered Nigeria to get the political power of it, to colonize the Igbo people in Nigeria, they cleverly and intellectually established administration in the Igbo land. For example, the white people established the government led by the white men in Okperi. It was their central station where the District officer Captain Winter bottom lived. Chinua Achebe has precisely portrayed a vivid picture of the British administration in Okperi in the following:

Okperi was not a very big station. There were only five Europeans living on Government Hill: Captain Winterbottom, Mr. Clarke, Roberts, Wade and Wright. Captain Winterbottom was the District officer. (Achebe 32)

Captain Winterbottom was the most powerful man among the white people in Okperi because he was the king's representative in the district. He was holding the supreme power to do anything; to take any decision. He was highly respected by all. As he was the king's representative, he should be respected by all, especially by the neglected Igbo people to honor the greatest King of England. His order and decision should be obeyed by all:

“He took the salute on Empire Day at the march past of all the school-children in the area-one of the few occasions when he wore his white uniform and sword.” (Achebe 32)

There were some other white people who assisted Captain Winter bottom to dominate the Igbo people in Nigeria. They acted according to the direction of Captain Winter bottom. Among them, Mr. Clarke was Assistant District Officer. He was next to Captain in power. Both of them were the representatives of the king of England. They entered Nigeria to capture its political power destroying the native's culture, religion and existence. They were very much fond of power and colonizing various countries. To colonize the Igbo land, they cleverly established the government ruled by the white people. To support the white man's administration in Okperi, they also brought many soldiers and officers of police, who were well constructed and trained to fight, to kill and to torture the enemies. They were equipped with guns and other troops by which they had brutally killed almost all the people of Abame described in *Things Fall Apart*. By telling the story of such terrible incident, they tried to threaten the people of Okperi, Umuaro and other Igbo lands. Their police were always ready to do anything according to the direction of the administration of the white people. They were sent in the Igbo land to assist the white man's administration. Among the five white men in Okperi station, one was Roberts who was an assistant superintendent of Police in charge of the local detachment. There were also prisons run by the white men's government. If anyone tried to go against the laws and order of the white men's government, they would be sent to prison and were bitterly tortured and tormented by the white people. Even, they tried their best to protect the converts. If anyone made any harm to the converts and tried to go against the white men's laws, he would be sent to the prison. They had arrested so many Igbo people

in order to make them bound to obey their domination over the Igbo people. In order to control and conduct the prison, there was an officer entitled Assistant superintendent, for example Wade was in charge of the prison. He also lived in the Government Hill.

As the white people were able to establish government in the Igbo land, they started enlarging their colonial power throughout the Igbo land. They gradually tried to capture the political power of the whole Igbo land through using various techniques. They didn't try to capture it by using their military power directly rather they used various techniques. For example, they tried to frighten the Igbo people by bringing the horrible picture of Abame before their eyes. They wanted to apply their power over all Igbo people. By showing their power, they wanted to dominate the Igbo people so that they could not raise their voice against the white people and their administration established in Okperi. Though Okonkwo tried to go against the white men and killed a messenger of the white man's administration as described in *Things Fall Apart*, he could not save his clan rather he was bound to commit suicide as he was not supported by his clansmen. The Igbo people were very much afraid of the white people and their power. As they knew that because of killing a white man, the whole clan Abame had been brutally destroyed by the white men, they didn't dare to go against the white men. Rather they desired to get help from the white men's government to fight one another. The white government took such kind of situation as an opportunity to enlarge their territory. When the white people found any anarchic situation in the Igbo land, they interfered and tried to control the situation according to their own will and benefit. For example, when the people of Umuaro and Okperi engaged in war over a piece of land, the situation of the Igbo land became very bad. The people of both sides didn't tolerate each other. They hate them very much. They wanted to kill one another looking at first sight:

“The war was waged from one Afo to the next. On the day it began Umuaro killed two men of Okperi.” (Achebe 28)

When the white people's government found that the people of two clans were engaged in bloody war, they thought that it was the right time to show their real power to the Igbo people. When the war between the two clans of the Igbo land was going on, the district officer captain Winterbottom came to interfere the war and brought soldiers in Umuaro and stopped it. As the Igbo people were aware of the power of the white government, they didn't go against the captain's order:

The white man, Wintabota, brought soldiers to Umuaro and stopped it. The story of what these soldiers did in Abame was still told with fear, and so Umuaro made no effort to resist but laid down their arms. (Achebe 29)

And thus the white people's government tried to apply their power in various incidents in the Igbo land and tried to convince them to accept their colonial power. The white people's government played a vital role to make the Igbo land a colony of England through and through. Almost all techniques were used by the white people and their administration to colonize the Igbo land. The white administration precisely monitored the whole situation from the Government Hill. Everything happened in the Igbo land was closely monitored by the white man's administration. Having established the government in the Igbo land, the authority of the white people desired to capture the total political power of the Igbo land winning the heart of the Igbo people so that they could rule the Igbo land successfully.

❖ Attack on Igbo Culture and Customs:

Having established the white man's government in Okperi, the white colonizers tried to devalue the existing Igbo culture and customs. They attacked the Igbo culture and customs in order to make them inferior to the Igbo people. A critic Franz Fanon said:

"The colonial world is a Manichean world... the colonist turns the colonized into a kind of quintessence of evil' Colonized society is not merely portrayed as a society without values....The native is declared insensible to ethics; he represents not only the absence of the values, but also the negation of values"(Fanon,1968:6).

Having entered the Igbo land, they tried to expose the existing superstitions of the Igbo people. Disclosing various superstitions, they tried to devalue the Igbo culture and customs and tried to convince the Igbo people to accept the culture and customs of the white men. They cleverly attacked the Igbo culture and destroyed it gradually. But the converts didn't understand it rather they also played a significant role to establish the white culture in the Igbo land. Chinua Achebe brilliantly describes in *Arrow of God* how the white people came and cleverly attacked the Igbo culture and customs to destroy. The Igbo people believed that the royal python was sacred to Idemili. As it was sacred to Idemili, they didn't hurt it. Even it was forbidden to kill the royal python:

From that day the six villages decreed that henceforth anyone who killed the python would be regarded as having killed his kinsman. Moses ended by counting on his fingers the villages and clans which also forbade the killing of the snake.
(Achebe 50)

Before the arrival of the white men in the Igbo land, almost all Igbo people respected the laws and orders of the clan. They were fond of obeying the customs of the clan. As they were very much religious, they could not dare to hurt the royal python. It became the part of their life. The royal python was highly loved by the Igbo people. Though they saw it at home, at their sleeping bed; they didn't hurt it. When the colonizers entered the Igbo land, they treated it as

one of the superstitions obeyed by the illiterate Igbo people. They became greatly shocked to see that the Igbo people were praising and praying the snake royal python. When the white people knew it, they became greatly surprised and talked against it. They tried to convince the Igbo people by saying that they were doing unworthy thing praying the royal python. It was nothing but a snake only. They should not do so. Though the Igbo people were afraid of killing the royal python, the white colonizers inspired the black Igbo people to kill it. The Igbo people believed that if they killed the royal python, it would be harmful to them as it was sacred to Idemili. But the white people governed them to go against their own custom killing the royal python. Because the white people wanted to colonize the Igbo land through and through. If they convinced the Igbo people to go against their own customs and culture, it would be easy to the white men to capture the Igbo land. They tried to make them belief that if they kill any royal python, there will be no harm to him rather it will be the best way to prove himself or herself to be the pious and good Christian. As they wanted to colonize the Igbo land, they wanted to make them agree to hate themselves and to hate their own culture and customs. For example, Oduche, son of Ezeulu, was highly inspired to kill the royal python as he accepted Christianity. He was highly motivated by the white men to kill the royal python:

“But since you have also become our teacher I shall be waiting for the day when you will have the courage to kill a python in this Umuaro.” (Achebe 51)

As the white people were very clever and intellectual, they cleverly made the Igbo people stand against their own people and customs inspiring them to kill the royal python which was liked by every Igbo people. They knew that if they killed the royal python, it would create anarchy and disorder in the clan. This sort of anarchic situation was helpful to the white men to make them bound to obey the laws and orders of the white man's administration. Being influenced by the white men's religion, Oduche committed a dangerous crime locking the python inside the box:

“He opened the box which Moses had built for him, took out his singlet and towel and locked the python inside.” (Achebe 51)

By doing so, Oduche committed a great sin. His action has been taken as a tool of the conflict between Ezeulu and his rival the priest of Idemili. Though he was the son of the most powerful priest Ezeulu, he raised his voice against the old custom because being a convert, he wanted to be as like as a white man, wanted to do whatever was told by the white men and their government. Though he committed a sin, he was not punished by the god Idemili. Even, a young and energetic convert became very desperate and violent to his old customs, he killed a royal python and consequently the situation became violent in Umuaro:

A young, energetic ordained had led his people on a shrine-burning adventure and had killed a python in the process, whereupon the villagers had chased out all the Christians among them and burnt their houses. (Achebe 216)

As the white people knew that to attack the Igbo culture might create anarchy, they did so because they wanted to destroy the Igbo culture and customs to make the Igbo land a colony of England. To do so, they needed to attack the Igbo culture blindly and they did so perfectly.

❖ Disseminating Education as a tool of colonization:

In *Arrow of God* Achebe has also described how education was also used as a tool of colonization in Nigeria. As the white entered Nigerian Igbo society in the name of religion, they got many converts. But all these converts needed to be taught culture, manner and customs of the white men. If they didn't know the reality of the white people and their esteemed culture, they couldn't distinguish themselves from the white Europeans. To make them aware of the white culture and customs, the converts were sent to schools, where they were highly convinced to do anything whatever was told by the white teachers. For example, Oduche was sent to school where he was taught English language, culture, manners and behaviors of the white men. To inspire the converts, they were also given various gifts. Taking those gifts, the converts became very happy and they gladly went to school to learn more and more things regarding their Christian brothers:

“As he thought about these things Oduche came out from the inner compound wearing a white singlet and a towel which they had given him in the school.”(Achebe 44)

At the beginning of the white men's arrival in the Igbo land especially in Umuaro, the Igbo people ignored the white men's school. They were not willing to be educated going to their school. They didn't even send their children to the school. They thought that by building the school, the white men started applying their plan to destroy the Igbo culture and to create division among the Igbo people. That is why the powerful Igbo people started hating their new built school. Instead of sending their children, they used to send their servants to school. The marginalized people used to go to the white men's school. But with the passage of time, the scenario had been changed. When the white people started giving jobs to the educated Igbo people, the other people became interested in their new built school. The white people also tried to convince the Igbo people saying that the educated people would be future leaders of the clan. Being inspired by the white men's speech, being attracted by the gifts and jobs, the Igbo people started sending their children to school:

“As a result many people- some of them very important-began to send their children to school. Even Nwaka sent a son-the one who seemed least likely among his children to become a good farmer.” (Achebe 216)

So the white authority was almost successful applying this process to compell the Igbo people to follow the order and ideas of the white people. They tried to convince the Igbo people to go to school, where they used to make the Igbo people bound to be dominated. The Igbo people, at first, did not willing to go to school but being allured by the white men's speech, various gifts and opportunities; they, at last, started going to school. When the Igbo people started going to school, it became easy to them to convince the Igbo people. In this case, the white became almost successful.

❖ Welfare Activities as a tool of colonization:

To capture the total political power of the Igbo land, they wanted to convince the Igbo people. They wanted to capture the entire power of the Igbo land but they wanted to have it by achieving the consent of the Igbo people. For doing so, they took some welfare activities like building roads and drainage construction, establishing schools and hospitals etc. In the name of welfare activities, they actually tried to capture the total political power of the Igbo land. By doing such welfare activities, they planned to convince the common Igbo people that they were the real blessing of the Christian God Who sent them in Umuaro and other Igbo clans. Because, they were doing many welfare activities only for the sake of the Igbo people in Umuaro and Okperi. They wanted to make the Igbo people understand that they took many welfare activities which would be useful to the Igbo people. As they were doing such welfare activities for the sake of the native people, they should help the white people so that they could do all these things successfully. As these welfare activities would be useful to the Igbo land, the most of the common Igbo people thought that the white people would adorn their villages and make their life happy and comfortable. But in the name of such welfare activities, they actually tried to go near to the mass people of the Igbo land. If they accept the white man's government, they would help them to lead happy and luxurious life in the Igbo land. For example, the white man's administration undertook a big project of building roads and drainage construction in Umuaro to convince the Igbo people, to show their so called responsibility to the native people:

“There was at that time a big programme of road and drainage construction following a smallpox epidemic.” (Achebe 58-59)

By doing such kind of welfare activities, they tried to win the heart of the Igbo people. They wanted to make them understand that they were deciding to build a link road between Umuaro and Okperi so that the people of both villages could easily move to one another's

villages. In reality, they had taken such a big plan to construct this link road for their own sake. In the name of this road and drainage construction, they wanted to show their power to the Igbo people. This sort of welfare activities were taken as a tool of colonization. When the white man's administration thought that they needed to apply their power over the Igbo people in Umuaro and Okperi, they decided to build a link road to connect the two villages of the Igbo land Umuaro and Okperi. In the name of road construction, they started dominating the Igbo people. Though they were building roads and drainage construction in the Igbo land, they didn't consult any Igbo man rather they imposed their decision on the Igbo people in Umuaro and Okperi. Even, they enforced the Igbo people to give money to the white men, as they were making road for the Igbo people. As they were dominating the Igbo land, they enforced the Igbo people to give them money. The native people were bound to give them money. They were not able to make them free from the white man's decision. When they went to their native leaders and elders, they told that they were unable to do anything for them:

But this overseer went around intimidating the villagers and telling them that unless they gave him money the new road would pass through the middle of their compound. When some of them reported the matter to their chief he told them there was nothing he could do.... (Achebe 59)

Later on, the white people wanted to get free labor from Umuaro. As the coast of the road construction was increasing, the authority decided to take free labor from the Igbo people. As they were making it for the sake of the Igbo people, they should participate directly in the biggest programme of constructing the link road. They were convinced to give free labor to the white man's construction. They were not able to deny. They called a meeting and decided to send the young people of Umuaro to the construction of road:

When the leaders of Umuaro were told to provide the necessary labor for the white man's new, wide road they held a meeting and decided to offer the services of the two latest age groups to be admitted into full manhood: the age group that called itself Otakagu, and the one below it which was nicknamed Omumawa. (Achebe 78)

The white people showed that they were constructing a new and wide road between Umuaro and Okperi for the sake of the native, they actually did it for their own sake. By doing such a big construction, they tried to make the Igbo people bound to obey the orders of the white man's administration. They tried to dominate the Igbo people and also tried to make them bound to do whatever is told by the white men. As they were trying to capture the total power of the Igbo land, they governed the Igbo land desperately. They didn't tolerate any fault and mistake done by any Igbo man whether he was poor or rich. They desperately governed the Igbo land and its people. They didn't give them chance to disobey the order of the white man.

When anyone went against the white man's command, he would severely be punished by the white man. For example, once Obika was late in going to the new road construction. When the white man Wright found him late in work, he became angry to him and brutally whipped him:

“It flashed again and this time caught obika around the ear, and stung him into fury. He dropped his matchet and hoe and charged.” (Achebe 83)

And thus the white people started dominating and controlling the Igbo people in the name of welfare activities. They also built school and hospital to show that they were helpful to the Igbo people. In reality, they did everything for their own sake, for colonizing the Igbo land and its people. That is why Chinua Achebe writes:

The white man, the new religion, the soldiers, the new road- they are all part of the same thing. The white man has a gun, a matchet, a bow and carries fire in his mouth. He doesn't fight with one weapon alone. (Achebe 86)

❖ Capitalism as a tool of colonization:

The Idea of capitalism was also brought in Umuaro by the white colonizers as a tool of colonization. They wanted to make the Igbo people money oriented so that they became busy with money, trade and commerce. By bringing money in the Igbo land, they also changed the power table of the feudal Igbo society. Earlier the people who had so many lands and agricultural products were rich and respected by all. The Igbo religious people were the leading persons of the clan. When the white people entered Umuaro and other Igbo lands, they brought money and the idea of trade and commerce which brought about a revolutionary change in the Igbo land. Because of introducing trade and commerce in the Igbo land, some active and industrious people went close to the white people and caught the idea of trade and commerce and became successful businessmen. They became fond of money. They wanted to earn more and more money by running business in the new built market. The idea of trade moved the minds of the Igbo people to money. We find in the novel:

“Unachukwu was a carpenter, the only one in all those parts. He had learnt the trade under the white missionaries who built the Onitsha Industrial mission.” (Achebe 48)

Like Unachukwu, many Igbo people were greatly influenced by the idea of white people and they became fond of money making. Because they knew from the white people that money is powerful agent for joy and happiness. The white people were very much money oriented. They came to Africa only for earning more and more money. Though they came in the name of religion, they actually came for wealth especially for earning more and more money. It

was their sole purpose to colonize the Nigerian Igbo people. As they were very much money oriented, they wanted to earn money by using the men power of Africa. Whatever they did in Nigeria, they wanted to earn money by doing so. For example, the white man's administration had undertaken a big project of building road to connect Umuaro with Okperi. Though they told that they wanted to make such link road for the sake of the native Igbo people of Nigeria, they actually wanted to make money more and more by using such construction, to move easily from Umuaro to Okperi. The white colonizers enforced the native to give them money. They also threatened the Igbo people that if they didn't pay more money, they would destroy their houses:

The overseer took his toll and moved on to another compound, choosing only the wealthy villagers. And to convince them that he meant business he actually demolished the compounds of three people who were slow in paying, although no road or drain was planned within half a mile of their homes. (Achebe 59)

As they were very much money oriented, they wanted to make the Igbo people money oriented too. If the Igbo people became fond of earning money, they would be busy with trade and commerce forgetting to raise their voice against the white colonizers who destroyed their own culture, religion and customs and made them unworthy people in their own land. When the Igbo people started loving money and wealth, they became very busy with money making. To earn more and more money, they started becoming corrupted too. For example, chief Ikedi, an Igbo person, became extremely corrupted who wanted to have illegal tax from his own people:

“Needless to say, Chief Ikedi took a big slice of this illegal tax.”(Achebe 59)

And thus the white people also destroyed their morality, ethics and innocent minds introducing them to the idea of capitalism. Having lost their morality, they only wanted to have more and more money at any cost. They started becoming machine ignoring their old delightful life style and various joyful events. Instead of enjoying their lives observing various festivals and rituals, they wanted to have more and more money; they became very much fond of money and business. Almost all Igbo people wanted to change their old life style by earning more money. They understood that only money could change their luck. The marginalized people especially the poor people were very much interested in trade and commerce introduced by the white men in the Igbo land as Nwabueze says:

My eye is on starting a small trade in tobacco as soon as I have collected a little money. People from other places are gathering much wealth in this trade and in the trade for cloth. People from Elumelu, Aninta, Umuofia, Mbaino, they control the great new market. (Achebe 171)

So the idea of trade and commerce brought a revolutionary change in almost all Igbo clans. The Igbo people became very much fond of money making selling their necessary goods. Earlier they used to spend their valuable time and wealth without utilizing them. When the white people entered Nigeria, they found that their necessary goods yam, tobacco, palm oil and so on were the valuable products which could bring them a lot of money. Having known this, almost all Igbo people wanted to have money selling them in the market built by the white administration:

“Every Nkwo market they brought new yams to Umuaro and sold them like anklets of ivory.”
(Achebe 220)

Therefore, the white colonizers became successful in shifting the Igbo people's revolutionary minds to the trade and commerce. Though Okonkwo wanted to destroy the root of the white people from Umuofia yet with the passage of time, Nwabueze became very much interested in the white man's idea of capitalism, trade and money making. He was almost proud of being the cook of the white men. And thus, the white colonizers used the idea of capitalism as one of the processes of colonization. By making the Igbo people busy with money making, trade and commerce, they wanted to capture the total political power of the Igbo land. When they brought business in Umuaro, the businessmen started holding the power of the clan. When a new merchant group started coming in power, the feudal and the religious powerful people fall in tension of losing their power. As the new merchant class was influenced by the white man's administration, they also played a vital role to make the white man's position strong in the Igbo land.

❖ Taking help from Natives:

As the white people wanted to have the total political power of the Igbo land, they needed to get help from the native Igbo people. The white European people came to Nigeria from too far away. As it was not their own country, it was very difficult for them to win the heart of the Igbo people in Nigeria. So to get the total political power of the Igbo land they needed to know the circumstances of the Igbo society. Without having help from the native people, they couldn't settle in the Igbo land. The white people wanted to implore the Igbo people so that they willingly helped the white people. To colonize the Igbo land, they, at first, tried to convince some native people who could help them to go forward to achieve their goal. For having help from the native people, they shown themselves pious and religious persons and tried to make the Igbo people know that the white people entered the Igbo land in order to do something good and valuable for the Igbo people. Even, because of their desperate arrival in Abame, the most of the Igbo people didn't hurt the white people rather they started helping

the white people in almost everywhere in the Igbo land. If they didn't co-operate with the white men, they would not colonize the Igbo land thoroughly as Ezeulu said:

“With all their power and magic white men would not have overrun entire Olu and Igbo if we didn't help them.” (Achebe 133)

Being convinced and being afraid of the white man's power, almost all native people started helping the white people to their adventure. They were able to know Igbo culture and customs very easily because having entered the Igbo land, they started spreading Christianity in the Igbo land, got some converts quickly who helped them very much to colonize the entire Igbo land. Having known the terrible incident occurred in Abame, almost all Igbo people became afraid of the white man's power. They wanted to have a close connection to the white men and their government. For instance, Ezeulu, the priest of Ulu, sent one of his sons to the white men. Though he was the most powerful people of Umuaro, he wanted to have a link with the white men and their government. That is why, he sent his son Oduche to accept Christianity. When Oduche accepted Christianity, it influenced many common Igbo people to accept Christianity because Oduche is the son of the priest of Ulu. To spread their language, culture and customs all over the Igbo land, the colonial authority wanted to use the native as colonial tool. If they could use the Igbo people to spread their religion, it would become easy to make so many converts. To go very near to the Igbo people, they wanted to appoint a warrant Chief for Okperi selecting an active converts from the Igbo people:

Three years ago they had put pressure on Captain Winter bottom to appoint a warrant chief for Okperi against his better judgment. After a long palaver he had chosen one dames Ikedi, an intelligent fellow who had been among the very first people to receive missionary education in these parts. (Achebe 58)

As they appointed some native people, they were able to spread their ideas and thoughts among the Igbo people. Because the native converts were more active than the white missionaries. They eagerly and spontaneously preached the idea of the white men's religion and wanted to convert their friends and family members. The white people were not able to go to all because they were the strangers in Umuaro and other Igbo lands. It was very difficult for the white colonizers to convert the Igbo people. The native people helped them very much to go near to the Igbo people. They showed them the way to spread religion and to convert the Igbo people into Christianity. If they didn't help the white people, they couldn't dominate the Igbo people thoroughly in the whole Igbo land. As the Igbo people showed them the way to come to the Igbo land, they were too responsible for their own suffering as Ezeulu said in grief:

“Who showed them the way to Abame? They were not born there; how then did they find the way? We showed them and are still showing them.” (Achebe 133)

Therefore, the white colonizers were successful in convincing the native people to help them to spread Christianity. The converts undoubtedly played a vital role to capture the political power of the Igbo land. Because of taking help from the natives, the white were able to colonize the entire Igbo land. Ezeulu cannot access his power properly to save his people from the colonial power. Killam, a critic, said:

“Ezeulu, the protagonist is compelled to defend his unique position as a priest of Ulu, the most powerful of the village deities against, on the one hand, reactionary forces within the tribe and, on the other, against European Culture and religion”(Killam,1969:61).

❖ Establishing Indirect Rule:

The British attempted to apply a new policy of dominating the Igbo people in Nigeria by appointing the native chief. The idea of indirect rule, advanced by Lord Lugard, governor-general of Nigeria from 1912-19, allows the white colonizers to rule the Igbo people through appointed native chiefs. When the white people started governing the Igbo land, they thought that if they could use the native people as the chief of the white man's Administration, it would be easy to govern the native. Because in that case the native people thought that they were governed by the native chief. So they couldn't raise their voice against the Administration. To do so, the colonial authority wanted to appoint a 'puppet chief' who would govern the country according to the direction of the white men. As he was appointed as 'puppet chief', he would not take any serious decision denying the orders and ideas of the white man's authority. Though he was appointed as a king or ruler, in reality, he didn't hold any power to take any decision which would be helpful to the people of his own country rather he was bound to do whatever was directed by the white man's authority. They wanted to appoint a puppet king like, Mir Jafor²⁶ a British agent and a puppet ruler in Bengal, in Umuro. The authority asked Captain Winterbottom to find out a suitable person for being a "paramount Chief" (108) for Umuro. Though Captain Winterbottom had been asked to select the native chief, he was not able to do it quickly. Having thought a lot, he chose Ezeulu to be the Paramount Chief for Umuro as he was the most powerful person in Umuro and was highly respected by almost all Igbo people in Umuro. Winterbottom chose him because he proved himself to be a truthful person to him. When he came to settle the conflict between Umuro and Okperi by telling the truth to the white men, Winterbottom said:

“Well, I have now decided to appoint him Paramount chief for Umuro. I've gone through the records of the case again and found that the man's title is Eze Ulu.” (Achebe 108)

Making Ezeulu the chief of the Administration, the white people wanted to get the true taste of the Igbo land. They thought that as Ezeulu was the priest of Ulu and was liked by all for his fame and title, he could easily govern the Igbo people in Umuaro. They thought that when the Igbo people would find an Igbo as their chief, they would easily accept the orders and decision of the Administration. By using this indirect rule, they attempted to colonize the whole Igbo land rapidly. They planned to govern the Igbo land through and through. For doing so, they ordered Winterbottom to appoint such indirect ruler for Umuaro and other Igbo lands quickly:

“He was now under orders to find a chief and his duty was clear.” (Achebe 60)

The Igbo people were loyal to the elders and the priests of various Igbo gods and goddesses. They were run by the elders of the clans. When the white people's government was established in the Igbo land, the Igbo people didn't accept it from the core of their heart. The white people's authority attempted to win the heart of the Igbo people by using an Igbo people being a chief of the Administration. Chinua Achebe precisely disclosed the assessment of the policy of indirect rule in Umuaro throughout his renowned novel *Arrow of God*. It was the most effective way of colonizing the Igbo people. By using the idea of indirect rule they wanted to bring the whole Igbo land under their colonial power.

❖ Using the ideology of RSA

The white colonizers attempted to convince the Igbo people in various ways. When they found that they were not able to dominate the most of the Igbo people by nurturing their minds ideologically, they started applying different forces like administration, court, police, prison, various weapons like guns, whips etc. to make the Igbo people bound to obey the laws and orders of the white man's Administration. The white man's Administration attempted to convince the Igbo people by doing some welfare activities. In reality, in the name of welfare activities, they wanted to make the Igbo people bound to obey their orders and decision. As, the white man's Administration ordered the Igbo people to give money to the white men so that they could build it quickly. They enforced the native people to give them money. The Igbo people were bound to give them more and more money. They were not able to go against the white man's decision. Rather they were bound to give them money whether they had or not. They threaten the native:

“But this overseer went around intimidating the villagers and telling them unless they gave him money the new road would pass through the middle of their compound.” (Achebe 59)

The Igbo people of Umuaro were bound to work in free for the road construction. They were asked to give free labor so that they could finish the project rapidly. They were not able to go

against the white man's representative Wright's order. Rather, they were bound to do whatever is told by him. He was cruel enough to torture the black physically and mortally, for example Obika was severely tortured by Wright because of doing a tiny mistake. Though he unwillingly was late in coming to the project of the road construction, Mr. Wright became very much angry to him and bitterly whipped him:

“At the same time Mr. Wright's two assistants jumped in quickly and held Obika while he gave him half a dozen more lashes on his bare back.” (Achebe 83)

The white men tortured the Igbo people mentally and physically to obey their orders and decision. No black Igbo People was able to go against the white man's order and decision. They were forced to do whatever was decided by the white man's Administration. If anyone tried to go against their order and decision, he would be punished, tortured or tormented both mentally and physically. By using various forces, they attempted to make the Igbo people bound to accept their unjust rule over the Igbo people, for example Ezeule was selected to be the paramount chief for Umuaro. As he was honest and truthful, Captain Winterbottom liked him very much and chosen him to be the chief of the white man's Administration in Umuaro. He was asked to meet Captain Winterbottom at the Headquarters but Ezeulu refused to come. As he was the chief priest of Ulu, he denied to go out of his home to meet Captain Winterbottom. Having known this, Captain became very angry to him and immediately sent police to arrest Ezeulu and also ordered Clarke:

“As soon as he comes, you are to lock him up in the guardroom. I do not wish to see him until after my return from Enugu. By that time he should have learnt good manners.” (Achebe 150)

Though he was not willing to go to Okperi to meet Captain, he was not able to make him free from not going to meet the white man's authority. Rather he decided to go alone. When he went to the Government Hill, he was arrested and sent to the guardroom, where he was tortured both mentally and physically. And, thus, the white colonizers wanted to make the Igbo people bound to obey the orders of the white men in Umuaro and other Igbo lands. They, at first, attempted to motivate the common Igbo people using various ideologies. When they thought that it was not possible to fully convince anyone, they enforced him to obey the laws and orders of the white man's government. If anyone tried to go against the decision of the white man's authority, he would be tortured or tormented by the greedy white men in the colonized nation.

❖ Religion, the most effective tool of colonization:

Religion was the most effective tool of colonization. The white Europeans entered Africa in the name of religion. Though they seemed to be religious and pious in nature, they actually entered Nigeria to colonize the Igbo land thoroughly. As they wanted to colonize the Igbo people, they cleverly attempted to convince the common Igbo people talking about new religion. They attempted to make them believe the new religion Christianity. Because they knew that if they converted the Igbo people in a large number, it would be easy to colonize the Igbo land. When the Igbo people were converted into Christianity, they would help the English people. As they were strangers in the Igbo land, they had no friend and family in the new land. To make them settle in the Igbo land, they should find some native people who would help them to go wherever they wanted, to do whatever they wanted. To have some native people, they used their religion as a tool. They tried to make the native people understand that they were praising and praying the false and worthless gods and goddesses made by them. Instead of praying those gods and goddesses made of woods and stones, they should come to the right path and should accept Christianity as their religion. Because the white men actually followed the right God Who created the whole universe. They also talked about Bible and Jesus Christ. By telling so, they attempted to convert the native people into Christianity. With the passage of time, they got many converts in the Igbo land. Being afraid of the white man's power, some Igbo people wanted to have close connection to the white men and their religion. When the white men built church by Ezeulu's house in Umuaro, he in spite of being a chief priest of Ulu, wanted to send one of his sons to be a Christian. For instance, Oduche, son of Ezeulu, accepted Christianity. His father says:

“I want one of my sons to join these people and be my eye there. If there is nothing in it you will come back. But if there is something there you will bring home my share.” (Achebe 47)

Though Ezeulu sent Oduche to be his 'eye', Oduche had been lost in the new religion. Instead of helping his father, he himself went against the old custom of the Igbo land trying to kill a sacred python. His accepting Christianity also influenced many common Igbo people to accept the new religion. With the passage of time, the white man's administration started getting more and more converts from the Igbo land. When there were many converts in the Igbo land, the white man became hard in nature to the Igbo people. They started motivating the Igbo people to go against their old culture and custom and inspired them to attack their old faith of religion. They started convincing them that their forefather's belief in many gods and goddesses was totally worthless. They should make their own people understand the real truth of Christianity. Being influenced by the white man's speech, Oduche dared to hurt the sacred python. And thus the white men attempted to motivate the converts to go against their old faith and to bring the idea of new religion in light. The Igbo people were being greatly motivated by the white man's religion. That is why there were many converts in Umuaro within a few years. As there were many converts, as they were increasing rapidly in number,

the white also started ignoring the old faith of the Igbo religion and also started neglecting Ulu and his priest. Ezeulu saw the right thing once in a dream:

“Why should we rely on him to tell us the season of the year? asked Nwaka. “Is there anybody here who cannot see the moon in his own compound? And anyhow what is the power of Ulu today?” (Achebe 160-161)

They created an artificial problem arresting the chief priest of Ulu. When Ezeulu went to The Headquarter, he was forced to be a puppet chief of the white man's administration. As he denied being a puppet chief of the white men, he was arrested and sent to the guardroom where he was extremely tortured and tormented both mentally and physically:

“Ezeulu had given enough warning to the white man during the four markets he had been locked in prison.” (Achebe 180)

As he was not able to have the sacred yams during those black months, he was not able to announce the Feast of the New Yam. Because, being a chief priest of Ulu, he should eat the sacred yam regularly in each month. When he was in prison in Okperi, he did not eat it. Being an ardent follower of Ulu, he did not want to go against the religious custom:

You all know what our custom is. I only call you a new festival when there is only one yam left from the last. Today I have three yams and so I know that the time has not come. (Achebe 209)

Though he was requested by almost all the elders and friends, Ezeulu was not convinced to go against the old faith and custom. When he was in prison for not obeying the white man's proposal to be a puppet chief, no Igbo man and woman raised their voice against this unjust thing rather they also blamed him for keeping good relation to the white men's Chief Captain Winterbottom. Consequently Ezeulu didn't agree to announce the new festival. That is why the farmers couldn't take their ripe harvest from the field. It would create almost a famine in the Igbo land. The white colonizers were the sole responsible for such crisis. When the crisis was going at the zenith of its cruelty, the people of Umuaro were being divided into groups. Some people blamed Ezeulu for creating such kind of crisis and for hurting his own people whereas some people blamed the white men who unjustly arrested Ezeulu for their own sake. When the people could not tolerate such terrible crisis created in the Igbo land, the common Igbo people desired to escape from such severe suffering i.e. though they had ripe harvest, they became the worst victim of famine. As the white people created this artificial crisis arresting the chief priest of Ulu, they wanted to have the ripe fruit of such crisis. As, John Jaja Good country took this crisis as blessing and a wonderful opportunity to the white men sent by God to convert them into Christianity. Since the Igbo people were in danger for their

old faith of religion, Good country offered the Igbo people to send their thank offering to the Christian God telling that if they did so they could save their harvest and the white man's God would save them from the anger of Ulu:

His plan was quite simple. The New Yam Feast was the attempt of the misguided heathen to show gratitude to God, the giver of all good things. This was God's hour to save them from their error which was now threatening to ruin them. They must be told that if they made their thank-offering to God they could harvest their crops without fear of Ulu. (Achebe 217)

His plan had been highly successful. As the Igbo people were going to face the upcoming famine, they started believing the speech of the white man's priest and started sending their offerings to the church. Having known this, Ezeulu became angry to his clansmen but no one tolerated him and his god Ulu. Rather they started praising the Christian God. By this time, Obika, Ezeulu's son, died. His death also made the Igbo people think that Ulu has left his priest Ezeulu. That is why he was not able to do anything good rather everything was going on wrong to him. Instead of believing Ulu and his priest Ezeulu, the Igbo people accepted Christianity and believed the Christian God through and through:

The Christian harvest which took place a few days after Obika's death saw more people than even Goodcountry could have dreamed. In his extremity many a man sent his son with a yam or two to offer to the new religion and to bring back the promised immunity. Thereafter any yam harvested in his fields was harvested in the name of the son. (Achebe 232)

Finally, the white colonizers were successful in converting the Igbo people of Umuaro into Christianity. The Igbo people, at last, willingly accepted the white man's religion leaving their old faith on many gods and goddesses. As religion acted in favor of colonization, the European colonizers at last colonized the whole Igbo land without facing any terrible bloodshed and war. In the name of religion, they entered the Igbo land and finally they converted almost all the Igbo people into Christianity. And, thus the white colonized the whole Igbo land and governed the Igbo people through and through.

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