MIMICRY IN POSTCOLONIAL NIGERIAN LITERATURE: A SOCIO-POLITICAL ANALYSIS OF CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE'S *AMERICANAH*

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of mimicry in selected postcolonial Nigerian Literature. The work contends that mimicry occurs in postcolonial Nigerian society as a result of cultural interaction with the British culture during the colonial period. The outcome of this cultural interaction gives birth to a new culture in postcolonial Nigerian society, leaving postcolonial Nigerians struggling to uphold two cultures. This research highlights the problem of identity crisis among the postcolonial Nigerians through assimilation of western culture and how they are perceived by their Western counterparts as the 'other'. In discussing ChimamandaNgozi Adichie's Americanah as Nigerian Postcolonial Literature, this study employs postcolonial literary theory as theoretical framework for the evaluation of how the characters in the selected Nigerian novel handle the issues of mimicry in the postcolonial era, whether they maintain their former identity before colonisation or incorporate their former identity and Western culture together to achieve a balance. However, the study finds out that it is impossible for postcolonial Nigerians to maintain their former identity because their culture has evolved and its authenticity has been lost due to their interaction with the British society.

Keywords: Mimicry, Colonisation, Postcolonialism, Nigerian Literature.

Introduction

Before the coming of the Europeans to Africa, Africans had a meaningful past; they were developed people, having their own institutions, ideas and government. They had their identity, culture, language and literature, until the Europeans invaded their continent in the fifteenth century.

The Europeans did not come to Africa as refugees, but as explorers, in search of greener pasture. Their invasion of Africa was economic oriented and specific. Africans, who are bound by communalism and known for their hospitality never had the slightest idea that these people (Europeans) never came to trade but to dominate and colonise them. The Portuguese were the first to arrive Africa, followed by the French, British, etc, they were all eager to tap from the riches of Africa.

According to Walter Rodney (2009), after the partitioning of Africa during the Berlin conference of 1884, Britain had total control of Nigeria, colonialism set in fully. The British targeted Nigeria because of its resources. They wanted products like palm oil, palm kernel, cotton, cocoa, groundnut and export trade in tin, etc (Graham, 2009). The British colonised Nigeria with the backing of their armed forces, and they gained control of Nigeria by alluring a part of Nigerian society to support the systems that they established. The systems set up by the British are administration, educational institution, and religion. Nigerians who were opportune to access these three systems of knowledge were placed in administrative positions within the colonial system, whereas those who could not gain access to these systems were at great loss, as they were alienated from the British colonial system. The British controlled and administered Nigeria with the policy of divide and rule (indirect rule), whereas the French ruled their own colonies with the policy of assimilation.

The colonial masters dominated their territory by imposing their culture, language, and ideas on the natives. The imposing of foreign culture on the natives brought about loss of culture and identity crisis on the lives of the natives. The natives were brainwashed by the colonists, to believe that everything about them

starting from the colour of their skin, to the manner they speak and dress in were inferior. This led to the natives abandoning their customs and traditions. After forty-six years of British colonisation of Nigeria, Nigerians lost significant parts of their culture and identity which were never fully gained even after the country attained independence from colonial rule (Wangare, 2021). As a result of this, inferiority complex overwhelmed the natives and they sought to become like the coloniser at all cost. The natives began to imitate their superior; thereby giving room to mimicry. According to Homi Bhabha, "Mimicry is an exaggerated copying of language, culture, manners, and ideas. And this exaggeration means that mimicry is a repetition with difference, and so it is not evidence of the colonized's servitude" (122). Bhabha further says that mimicry represents an ironic compromise between two ideas that things are eternally the same and that there is continual change.

By mimicking the colonisers, the colonised natives do not achieve perfection instead they achieved a "blurred copy" of the coloniser that is quite threatening. The natives' imperfection to become like their white masters is spotted by the colonisers who regard them as the "o*ther"*. The term "*other"* refers to the colonised subject. Theorists like Jean Paul Sartre, Jacques Derrida and Jacques Lacan used the term in their writings.

However, as they colonised go through the rigorous process of imitating their colonisers, they moved away from who they really are, and get trapped in the world of hybridity. At this point, hybridity takes the centre stage. Hybridity is a condition in which a person can be identified between two cultures. It is a condition of "in-betweenness". Hybridity challenges the idea of fixed identity because most postcolonial writers and critics who promote the cause of national consciousness in the quest for nativism and indigenous aesthetics are all products of colonial education who express their view in colonial languages.

After Nigeria became a sovereign state in 1960, there was need to build the pride of Nigeria into a unified national identity. In an earlier study, Toyin Falola and Matthew Heaton (2008) notes

that many people began searching for ways to develop a distinct and recognizable national culture in order to bring Nigerians together as a single people and to grow national pride by contributing something distinctly Nigerian to the world culture in general. Scholars, politicians, writers and artists developed diverse conceptions of what aesthetics and values best characterized Nigeria.

In literature, writers like Amos Tutuola, Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, etc, made notable contributions to the promotion of national culture. Nigeria's rich history and traditions formed the bases upon which national consciousness was built, also writers turned their focus on Nigerian pre-colonial past, no longer content with Eurocentric interpretations of their history and traditions. Nigerian scholars began to rewrite Nigerian history in a way that fostered pride and promoted the overarching similarities of experience shared by people in all corners of Nigeria.

Postcolonial Movement

A postcolonial study is one which seeks to provide critical reflections about western imperialism and colonialism. Since late 1970s, the concept was used by some literary critics to describe the emergence of a more critical understanding of the effects of colonisation on culture and society. According to Bill Ashcroft et al, the term postcolonial is used to: Cover all the cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day. This is because there is a continuity of preoccupations throughout the historical process initiated by the European imperial aggression. We also suggest that it is most appropriate as the term for the new cross-cultural criticism which has emerged in recent years, and for the discourse through which this is constituted. In this sense this book is concerned with the world as it exists during and after the period of European imperial domination and the effects of this on contemporary literature. (*The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Postcolonial Literature*, 2)

In relation to this, the definition captures the world as it was and still is during and after European imperial domination, and

includes literatures from Africa, Caribbean, India, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Malta, Pakistan, Singapore, South Pacific Island Countries, Sri Lanka, and including the United States of America. Postcolonial discourse emerged as there was no European discourse to best express the artistic thoughts of the colonised natives and also it is a response to the mono-centrism of the centre that serves to relegate the colonised to the margin.

In African / Commonwealth Literature, postcolonialism refers to the period after colonial rule as well as a set of theories in philosophy and various approaches to literary analysis which are concerned with literature in English, in countries that were or are still colonies of colonial powers. For Chinyere Nwahunanya (2010), it refers to the study of writings against the empire by the colonised natives of the former British colonies. Its meaning has now been extended to include criticisms about literature produced in countries that were once or are still colonies of other countries.

In essence, what postcolonial literary criticism does is to analyze literature written by colonial powers and by those who were colonised in order to look at the cultural impact of colonisation and also to analyse the process of decolonisation. Postcolonial criticism emerged in the literary sphere during the anti-colonial struggles for independence by Africans, Asian and Latin American nations. According to M. A. Habib (2005), the 1950s witnessed the publication of canonical texts of postcolonialism such as Aime Cesaire's *Discourssu le colonialism*, Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks,* Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart,* George Lamming's, *The Pleasures of Exile,* and Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth.*

Postcolonial literary criticism emerged from the colonised people's frustrations, their direct and personal cultural clashes with the conquering culture, and their fears, hopes, and dreams about their future and their own identities. In all, Postcolonial literature is an aftermath of colonialist literature, written in order to scrutinise colonial relationship, and it sets out to resist colonialist perspectives. In postcolonial writings, there is an attempt on the part of the colonised, to find words not only to express their voice,

but to describe their sense of being. Etymologically, postcolonial refers to the period of resistance, when the colonised writers began to write freely against the empire, giving way to nationalist literature.

Assimilation through Contact: A Socio-political Analysis of Mimicry in Adichie's *Americanah*

Nearing the end of African colonisation by the European society, another form of western domination came on board among the Africans; this is colonisation of the mind. This is executed by the implementation of the western culture in everyday lives of the indigenous culture through the help of mimicry. Bhabha affirms that mimicry does not only refer to the imitation nor assimilation of the dominant culture but, a blurred copying of the ideas, language, manner and culture of the dominant culture by the colonised. Chimamanda Adichie's novel *Americanah* tackles the issues of language, religion, and dilemmas of cultural identity but it does so in a more different way that is different from that of the past writer Chinua Achebe. In *Things Fall Apart* Achebe painted a picture of a country that was flooded by the British and first coming to terms with the reality of having a foreign culture enforced on them, whereas in Adichie's work *Americanah*, Nigeria is seen as a hybrid space in which many aspects of the European culture such as language, religion and social practices are now part and parcel of the Nigerian society and its citizens are comfortable with the new changes that they see nothing wrong with being influenced by the imperialists lifestyle. As ridiculous as it may sound, they praise the influence these impacts have over their local culture. In the words of Udumukwu, "in spite of its half-century experience as an independent nation state from British colonial rule, Nigeria is a nation in the process of becoming" (189).

The novel *Americanah* is a postcolonial diasporic novel that shed light on the challenges which postcolonial subjects outside Nigeria faced. Ifemelu the protagonist is seen as a consumer of American culture, although when she arrived the United States she negatively perceived changes of cultural identity among her fellow

Nigerians, she frowned at it and decided to keep her African culture, but being faced with the same American discourse every immigrant faces upon their arrival, she gradually began to blend to the white society which she frowned at while describing the new Aunty Uju and Ginika. She began to go through this same transformation. As a black immigrant in the white society she is stereotyped and looked down at as an *other*. Coming from a country where everybody is dark-skinned and taken equal base on complexion, she feels safe and had a sense of belonging in the society, but upon her arrival to United States of America, she is robbed of her pride as a human being. She feels the difference between having a skin and having a white skin. The western society brought her blackness to her consciousness and this made her a second class citizen. The process of her cultural transformation started after she was humiliated by the way Cristina Tomas spoke to her on realising she was an international student, thus she started faking her accent. This confirms Fanon's idea that when black people use coloniser's language, it is regarded predatory and not transformative which in turn may create insecurity in the black consciousness: She shrank like a dried leaf. She had spoken English all her life, led the debating society in secondary school, and always thought the American twang inchoate, she should not have cowered and shrunk, but she did. And in the following weeks, as autumn's coolness descended, she began to practice an American accent. (*Americanah*, 157-158)

Ifemelu's process of transformation in her cultural identity begins by copying television presenters' accents with the aim of suppressing her own idiolect by imitating Afro-Americans. Also she had to unlearn so many things like using the word "thin" for slim, "biracial" for half-caste, etc. As one of the most representative units of culture, language is the first thing to be replaced in the process of displacing cultural identity, that is in shaping a sort of transculturalism of the individual (Mavrinac, 2019). "The act of speaking in a foreign voice marks the beginning of a conscious doubling of Ifemelu's identity" (Sackeyfio, 217). After she has learnt how to talk with a clean American accent, she

was commended for it by white Americans, and then she was caught in the web of in-betweenness, that is the third space that Bhabha talked about, at that point she had to give up. Oh really? How long have you been in the US? "Three years" Wow cool. You sound totally American""Thank you" Only after she hung up did she began to feel the stain of a burgeoning shame spreading all over, for thanking him… Her fleeting victory had left in its wake a vast, echoing space, because she had taken on, for too long a pitch of voice and a way of being that was not hers. And so she finished eating her eggs and resolved to stop faking the American accent. (*Americanah*, 205)

Ifemelu's decision to drop her American accent is not a random one; it is a very conscious decision. She is caught in the web of the third space and is now classified as an *other*. Furthermore, Ifemelu became conscious of her looks, in terms of her beauty and shape just like every other female immigrant in America. We were meant to understand by the author that Ifemelu took pleasure perusing the internet and reading magazines about fashion and beauty. In these fashion and beauty magazines African American women are most times excluded and because of this, you see these women trying to incorporate what is meant for the white American women into their life style, and they start imitating their white counterparts. Ifemelu, having spent some time in America came to a shocking realisation that carrying ones' kinky hair or braids to an interview is unprofessional, if you must land a job, Ruth told her "my only advice lose the braids and straighten your hair. Nobody says this kind of stuff but it matters. We want you to get that job" (*Americanah*, 236), same goes to Aunty Uju who had to take out her braids and relax her hair because she was going for an interview: I have to take my braids out for my interviews and relax my hair. Kemi told me that I shouldn't wear braids to the interview. If you have braids they will think you are unprofessional. So there are no doctors with braided hair in America? Ifemelu asked. I have told you what they told me. You are in a country that is not your own do what you have to do if you want to succeed. (*Americanah*, 144-143) Carrying one's kinky hair

becomes a critical problem for black women as they feel inferior and unequal to compete with white women. So in other to get what they want from the society, they resolve to mimic the white women by relaxing their hair, to at least look like them, sadly the outcome of their mimicry turn out to be what Bhabha called a "blurred copy", "repetition with a difference".

Her hair was hanging down rather than standing up, straight and sleek, parted at the side, and curving to a slight bob at her chin. The verve was gone. She did not recognize herself. She left the salon almost mournfully… (*Americanah*, 237)

The societal pressure that comes with being an *other* in a foreign land made Ifemelu to relax her hair but her imperfection is spotted by Curt, her white boyfriend who questioned her why she had to relax her hair, "Why do you have to do this? Your hair was gorgeous braided. And when you took out the braids the last time and kind of let it be, it was even more gorgeous, so full and cool… It's so fucking wrong that you have to do this" (*Americanah*, 235). This brings us to what Bhabha said, that as much as the colonised tries to imitate the colonisers that the same colonisers will spot out their imperfection and use it against them if need be. Bhandari (2020) in a recent study notes that it is a self-destructive act of transforming non-white female's body into the white one. This can be considered as an act of violence committed by internalised sense of the white supremacy which causes both bodily and emotional pain to the black females. Banks (2000) elucidates the desire to have long hair relates to perceptions of what is considered feminine, and those traits are associated with white women. He went further to explain how blacks are excluded in the discourse of the beauty: What is deemed desirable is measured against white standard of beauty, which includes long and straight hair (usually blond, that is hair that is not kinky or nappy). Consequently, black women's hair, in general fits outside of what is considered desirable in mainstream society.…Even if hair is only one of many markers of femininity or lack thereof, it is definitely one of the most powerful (91-93)

From the above excerpt one could see that the white society's standard for beauty is not in any way near to black women hair type. The black women hair portrays a picture of inferiority and unattractiveness. The justification used by these black women for imitating their white counterpart is simply because they are foreigners and not just foreigners but Africans living in a country that is not theirs, so they have to do whatever they can to succeed even if it means depriving oneself of your natural beauty. Ifemelu's inferiority gives birth to a sense of not belonging. She embraces the idea that fitting into the white society is the only option and anything white should be universally embraced, because white is superior and should be fully adopted in order to be included into their society.

However, a lot of culture has a distorted idea of beauty. Consequently, the mimicry of whiteness via hair extensions and skin bleaching have become repeated beauty rituals of many Africans. Aunty Uju's boyfriend Bartholomew and Ginika are among the category of blacks who use skin- bleaching products to make their skin fair but the end product is disaster. It is not an error if one says that African immigrants in the west mimic virtually everything they see the white Americans do. Also Ifemelu imitated Blaine in everything he does, she joined him in eating organic foods not because she likes it but because she wants to fit into his world, "You should floss everyday", Blaine told her. And she began to floss, as she began to do other things that he did-going to the gym, eating more protein than carbohydrates- and she did them with a kind of grateful contentment, because they improved her. (*Americanah*, 356)

Westernisation of Nigerian Society

American returnees, upon returning to Nigeria still uphold their American identity and lifestyle for the sake of being noticed and giving special attention. They parade themselves as "been-tos" and feel superior to those who are at home (Nigeria). According to Ranyinudo, Ifemelu's friend, she emphasised how Lagos is now full of American returnees. "Every day you see them carrying

bottle of water as if they will die of heat if they are not drinking water every minute" (*Americanah*, 25). Some claimed to be vegetarians whereas they are not. They do this just to show off that they have attained some level of exposure. Back in the United States, immigrants copy the kind of food the Americans eat, not necessarily because they enjoy it, but just to fit into the mainstream. These returnees maintain their American accent; they use this as a tool to oppress the non been-to's in the society. Indirectly they now fill the gap of the white colonisers, although in their own case they oppress and ridicule people of their race. Someone like Doris claims she could hardly breathe if the air conditioner is not turned to the lowest temperature; all these are just pretenses to be like the Whites.

Due to the actions of these returnees, media houses in Lagos started incorporating western life style in their blogs and magazines in other to accommodate these set of people, while reverse is the case in America as the western society never bothered to include Africans in their blogs and magazines. The inclusion of western lifestyle by Lagos media houses shows the level of pride and admiration that the African society has over the White culture. The returnees are highly respected and worshipped by the Nigerian society; they have better work conditions and occupy high positions unlike those who did not study abroad. Years spent abroad have westernised their taste and they use their positions to consciously and unconsciously promote western ideas in Nigeria. Ifemelu had to oppose the idea of Nigerians mimicking American tabloids on food which is impossible to find in Nigerian markets and also writing about clothes that most Nigerians cannot afford. Ifemelu did not stop here; she went further in her blog: Go back where you came from! If your Cook cannot make perfect Panini, it is not because he is stupid. It is because Nigeria is not a nation of sandwich- eating people and his last Oga did not eat bread in the afternoon. So he needs training and practice. And Nigeria is not a nation of people with food allergies, not a nation of picky eaters for whom food is about distinctions and separations. It is a nation of people who eat beef and chicken and cow skin and

intestines and dried fish in a single bowl of soup and it is called assorted, and so get over yourselves and realize that the way of life here is just that assorted. (*Americanah*, 477-478)

Africans in the diaspora are faced with diasporic conditions and acculturation while those at home (Nigeria) are faced with societal pressure and inferiority complex. They compete with one another to become like those abroad, who have close interaction with the Whites. This inferiority complex subjects parents into enrolling their wards in schools that teach with foreign curriculum rather than Nigerian curriculum. For these parents, anything foreign is the best and should be sought after at all costs, while anything home is local and lacks quality: You must send her to French school. They are very good, very rigorous. Of course they teach in French but it can only be good for a child to learn another civilized language, since she already learns English at home … The French school is not bad, but I prefer Sidcot Hall. They teach the complete British curriculum (*Americanah*, 42)

The melancholy longing to become like the colonisers has beclouded Africans sense of judgment. From the above excerpt none of the Nigerian languages was ever mentioned, which means to a postcolonial subject the native languages are inferior and cannot stand side by side with other foreign languages because of that it should be dropped. Fanon (1968) concludes that domination over land and body is not the final goal of colonial repression; it is the control of consciousness, that is, the intention of Africans to see themselves in the western frames of reference. In a recent study by Glorija Mavrinae (2019), he notes that a mind seduced in this way will not oppose the neocolonialism systematically destroying the economy of African countries and will be susceptible to colonial domination for decades after the end of colonialism. Africans have been colonised mentally and this gives birth to postcolonial inferiority.

The colonisation of the African mind develops on two levels. The first one relates to the westernisation of the education system in Africa, and the second one is the westernisation of the media content. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (1986) hints that the colonisation of

the mind is the domination of the mental universe of the colonised, noting that economic and political control which the West sees as imperative in the neocolonial system, cannot be effective without a mental domination which is achieved through controlling the minds of the colonised. Ngugi's conclusion is that the penetration of colonialism in African educational institution is the bedrock of a westernised collective mentality. The main purpose of colonising the educational system and media is for the creation and settlement of the Western culture in a non-western area which is particularly visible in the Western types of accepted knowledge, as specified through curricula. This amounts to a paradox of a non-western person producing western beliefs in a geographic region outside the west. Schools in Nigeria base their curriculum around subjects pertaining to Europe, totally ignoring or misinterpreting African pre-colonial past. Fanon (1968) notes that this is the best indicator of the colonisers wish to impose its rule upon the present and future of a dominated country. So the educational system becomes an avenue for the colonisers to dominate the mind of their subjects. Paulo Freire (2000) concludes that an oppressed society allows such mind domination due to an internalised image of freedom being a gift and not a product of indigenous fighting, which is why one should be grateful for it. However, Mavrinac (2019) asserts that: Fanon, Thiong'O and Freire imply that the domination over the mental space of the oppressed is determined by western culture entering institutions, in this case through dominating the African education system. According to these authors, the colonization of the mind is the final result of European domination manifested through the westernization of non western models of behaviour, that is black people aiming to imitate the white culture… (238)

In the Twenty-first century, the postcolonial Nigerians are now being colonised mentally by their colonial masters, through the concept of education and mass media. This is the reason Nigerians still struggle among themselves to act and think like their western counterparts. Had it been that the colonial master did not leave education behind and there was nothing like mass media in Nigeria, Nigerians won't have something to fall back to, they

would have still gone back to their way of life before the colonial period, but since education has come to stay and mass media content still transmit western culture and ideology, Nigerians cannot stop imitating the westerners. In *Americanah,* Adichie presents us with students whose parents could afford a vacation abroad, how they would come back after the vacation and start acting like Europeans. They would try to emphasise how much the foreign country has changed them, how they learned the correct and modern way of pronouncing words: "Bisi, a girl in the form below them, who had come back from a short trip to America with odd affectations, pretending she no longer understood Yoruba, adding a slurred r to every English word she spoke" (*Americanah*, 82). To Bisi she no longer belongs here (Nigeria), she sees herself as someone who belongs to a different world, which could not be understood unless visited. Those who are not privileged to visit European countries for vacation gasp in awe of those who have been: "After Kayode came back from a trip to Switzerland with his parents, Emenike had bent down to caress Kayode's shoes, saying "I want to touch them because they have touched snow" (*Americanah*, 82). Students whose parent or relatives stay abroad command respect from their fellow students who are not as fortunate as them. Bisi's action shows her level of mental colonisation while Emenike's action depicts inferiority complex.

However, Obinze's decision to divorce his wife Kosi who had borne him a child to reunite with his secondary school lover Ifemelu is another form of mimicry that is gotten from western colonisation. All pleas from Kosi his wife to keep their marriage never soothed Obinze. Instead of keeping his marriage and flirting with his mistress or sending his wife away and marrying his mistress just like any typical Nigerian man would do, Obinze preferred moving out of his matrimonial home to be with his mistress Ifemelu. Okwudiba, Obinze's friend, calls this: "White people behaviour" (532). Okwudiba tells Obinze: "You can keep seeing her… but to get up and say you have no problem with your wife but you are leaving for another? Haba we don't behave like that please" (*Americanah*, 532). Despite the pleading from family

and friends Obinze walked out of his four years old marriage as if it never existed. Obinze's action reminds us of Dike's father (the General) and Aunty Uju's sugar daddy. The General is legally married and has children in wedlock yet he still kept a mistress in the person of Aunty Uju. The General's action shows that he is a true Nigerian man unlike Obinze whose action has all the traces of westernisation.

Conclusion

The postcolonial Nigerian society has been influenced by colonisation as depicted in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah*, there is no doubt that colonisation of the Nigerian society by Britain brought about cultural and ideological changes, as no culture will remain the same after having interacted with a foreign culture. Adichie sneers at the idea that there is an authentic Nigerian culture as all Nigerians have the unintentional sense of duality and uncertainty in them. She presents us with postcolonial characters who settle for mimicry in order to blend with their colonisers. Adichie's *Americanah* effectively reinforces the belief or notion that cultures are susceptible to external influences. The current mixing of culture and people demonstrates that the idea of a pure and original culture has passed. Once there is contact with a foreign culture, to maintain the former culture becomes difficult as the people involved in the contact are seen struggling to uphold the two cultures, which results to culture inclination and this leaves the people floating without direction. Funny enough no gender or class is exempted from these postcolonial issues. It is important to note that majority of the postcolonial subjects who embrace western culture and identity, lose contact with their native identity. Just a few of the postcolonial subjects still maintain contact with their native identity. The quest of securing a spot in the fast evolving world gives birth to the problem of identity crisis and double consciousness, and when this happens they become confused and are left with the decision whether to continue or retrace their steps. Ifemelu is an example of a postcolonial subject who incorporates traditional and western culture to achieve a balance; to her being a

hybrid does not necessarily mean throwing away ones origin rather it shows that she has embraced universalism. It is this idea of universalism that makes the postcolonial society a multicultural one. The postcolonial subjects who are hybrids are now in a union with tradition and modernity; between the Nigerian way of life and the European way of life, and this leaves them on the crossroads of "in-betweenness", where originality of their identity is stained with impurity and can never be cleansed. This brings us to the conclusion that mimicry will remain a postcolonial blight that will keep tormenting Nigerians in the postcolonial era, because their identity has been threatened and their world is gradually changing every day and it is impossible for the colonised natives to maintain their former identity. There is no way they can be emancipated from the negative effects of colonisation in the postcolonial era but little can be done to restore what is remaining of the Nigerian culture and identity. This could be done by having a proper documentation of the pre-colonial Nigerian society and also setting up national cultural centers where one can go and learn traditionally and historically what makes up his or her identity and origin. With these, generations unborn will have fragments or some traces of their identities still preserved. The promotion of Nigerian indigenous languages in schools and homes would also help revive Nigerian languages in the society.

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