ALIENATION AND THE INDIVIDUATION EXPERIENCE: A STUDY OF SELECT CHARACTERS FROM THE NOVELS OF ACHEBE, OYONO AND THIONG'O

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Norah M. Mumba, declare that this Dissertation presents my own work and that it has not been previously submitted for a degree or other award at any level, at this or any other university.

SIGNATURE ....   DATE 09 July 07

APPROVAL

This Dissertation of Norah Mbalose Mumba is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of Master of Arts in Literature by the University of Zambia.

SIGNED:...................................... DATE 09/07/07

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DEDICATION

This one is for you, Thulani, the door-opener for the third generation. You warm my heart so! Yes, indeed: "Peace, be still".

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

This study explores psychological, social and physical reaction by Africans to the colonial experience through literary characters created by three of Africa's leading writers. These are Chinua Achebe (*Things Fall Apart*), Ferdinand Oyono (*Houseboy* and *The Old Man and the Medal*) and Ngugi wa Thiong'o (*The River Between*). It considers how characters like Okonkwo, Toundi, Meka, Muthoni and others individually suffered alterations to the normal equilibrium of their individual lives upon being faced with the new circumstances prescribed upon them by colonisation. They all needed to develop some sort of coping mechanism in attempting to come to terms with their altered environment and challenged identity. The central thrust of the study is the concept of individuation as developed by Carl Gustav Jung in his Analytical Psychology. The process of individuation is a quest towards achieving psychic wholeness through psychological development. It entails emotional growth, discovery of meaning in life and occasionally enlightenment or victory over inner obstacles. The individuated person is one who has undergone a process of recovering the meaning of his life, after having lost it. The loss of meaning in life is occasioned by a feeling of alienation such as that brought on by colonisation upon the native populations. Such loss is usually accompanied by loss of one's religious belief. Colonialism introduced Christianity and forced a re-orientation of subjugated peoples from their original religious systems to embracing the white man's religion. This abrupt and forced departure from their own belief systems was not without cost. Not only were there major ramifications in psychological terms but also the colonisers set out to use the new religion as a tool for disempowering the natives. The result was a mixture of psychological as well as physical violence inflicted by the whites upon the subjugated black people. Analytical Psychology is employed to try to understand the workings of the human mind from the perspective of the 'victim' as well as to find the source in the human psyche of such orchestrated victimisation of one set of people by another. Jungian psychology attempts to identify the workings of the human psyche that may predispose one set of people to behave in a particular manner, to share particular mind DNA, and how an individual may inherit from the collective such a DNA pattern.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

There are three phases of colonialist impact on Africa, namely: (i) the actual conquest, characterised by the introduction of an alien form of administration, education, religion and the relegation of indigenous African systems; (ii) resistance, during which African engaged in a struggle to shake off the imperialist yoke; (iii) post-independence, which is the period in which African society set out to re-order itself (Palmer, 1979). Achebe, Oyono and Ngugi have created timeless literature that defines the African experience at a particular point in the history of the continent. The clarity and depth of their treatment is such that their work will always remain points of reference for their value of social commentary. This study will explore psychological, social and physical reaction by Africans to the conflict of colonial experience through literary characters created by three of Africa's leading writers on the theme.

In order to experience a meaningful reading and appreciation of representative African literature, one needs to delve into the prevailing ethos of the period in order to understand the motivation of both the characters and the novelists. Writers like Mphahlele (1974) and Drachler (1975) have offered political and social diagnoses of Africa's slavery and colonial history. Indeed, African awareness and expression of the degradation of slavery and its attendant evils is ascribed to the diaspora writers, initiated by the Harlem Renaissance poets and writers. On the continent, negritude emerged as an ideology fashioned by and influenced by the combined experience of slavery after-effects and the colonial experience, specifically the pervasive form of French style of colonialism.

The slavery and colonial experience was traumatic to Africans not only at the collective level, but also at the individual level. This study shall consider how characters like Okonkwo, Toundi, Meka, Muthoni and others individually suffered alterations to the normal equilibrium of their individual lives upon being faced with the new circumstances prescribed by the invasion of the (white) colonisers. The study shall employ psycho-social methods of understanding the ramifications of alienation, the processes that this alienation sets into motion and the consequent launch of the affected person into a frantic quest for re-alignment - the process of individuation.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The characters of Achebe (Okonkwo, Nwoye, Ekwefi, etc.), Oyono (Toundi, Meka, Kelara) and Ngugi (Waiyaki, Nyambura, Muthoni) live out the conflict of their lives in the same era of the upheavals and insecurity wrought by the coming of the white man and his imposition of his way of life to supplant the indigenous African way of life. These characters are geographically separated (West Africa, Central Africa and East Africa) and linguistically distinct, i.e. colonised by the English and the French. However, what they do have in common is that they are all individuals facing change in their lives emanating from the same condition (the colonial condition), change which creates an alienation and identity crisis. They are dislocated from the 'normal' and are forced into a quest for a place in which the self may feel at home, a place in which they may achieve both comfort and security. They must be understood, not as mere products of their environment but as live individuals seeking re-validation for their existence.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The central goal of this study is to examine the coping mechanisms employed by various individuals as portrayed by Achebe, Oyono and Ngugi in attempting to come to terms with their altered environment and challenged identity.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

(i)   In what specific ways did the individuals arrive at a place of their dislocation or alienation?

(ii) Do they always consciously or unconsciously initiate their individual process towards self-recovery?

(iii) What form do their journeys of self-discovery take?

(iv) Does being a woman have any peculiarising effects on the individuation experience, and if so what form do these take?

(v)   What is the place for religion in all the experience of the characters?

(vi) Where there is reconciliation, what form does this take?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Many literary studies have been carried out on the subject of the effects of colonialism on Africa and Africans. This study departs from the mainstream of enquiry to focus on individual journeys, experience and coping mechanisms, as opposed to the collective treatment. It has relevance to the study of the individual not only as part of a whole but is an inquiry into the internal processes that motivate man to formulate a specific response to his environment. It is, in this way, among other things a test of the validity of universality of archetypes that bind humanity across details of geography, race, class or any other defining attributes beyond just human.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. Alienation : the feeling of not belonging, can be physical, cultural, spiritual, etc.

2. Analytic psychology : a theory of personality developed by Carl Gustav Jung (a departure from Freud's psychoanalysis) according to which man's behaviour is determined not only by the conflicts already present in his individual and racial history, but also by his aims and aspirations.

3. Archetype : symbol, theme, setting or character type that frequently and prominently recurs in different times and places in myth, literature, folklore, dreams and rituals as to suggest that it embodies some essential element of 'universal' human experience.

4. Individuation : a process (as identified by Jung) of an individual's quest to achieve a better and more complete fulfillment of the collective (archetypal) qualities of the human being, self-actualisation.

5. Initiation : the act of self-examination by an individual in an alienated position, towards a decision to change the alienated situation.

6. Journey : in literature, a quest for change, symbolised by a physical journey or movement or by some non-physical shift of position.

7. Myth   : (i) a narrative, usually in supernatural or highly imaginative terms, through which a given culture ratifies its social customs or accounts for the origins of human and natural phenomena;

: (ii) fictional story containing deeper truths, expressing collective attitudes to fundamental matters of life, death, divinity and existence - sometimes deemed to be universal;

: (iii) it is also a value-bestowing area of belief, a superior intuitive mode of cosmic understanding.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Alienation, as defined by Reuben (2005) is about a sense of lack of belonging. A variety of reasons can cause or trigger this feeling of not belonging: it may be caused by some conscious act by someone or it may be caused by sanctions of society on the individual or even a combination of causal factors. The result of the alienation is that an individual faces a range of related emotions such as dislocation, marginalisation and / or a feeling of uncertain identity. This is the beginning of restlessness, discomfort and lack of security.

The theme of alienation is also discussed by Finkelstein (1965) with a leaning to existentialist thought, while Girgus (1990) examines alienation in relation to death in a discussion on American literature. Reuben further develops the theme by advancing a process as follows: the alienated individual consequently undergoes initiation, during which he does some self-examination which may lead him to decide to do something o reverse his alienation. This decision being made, one is then ready to proceed to the next stage in the process, which is the undertaking of a journey of self-discovery.

The motif of the journey in literature is highly recurrent. It may be a journey in the physical sense, or it may be a journey in figurative terms. The physical movement may be symbolic of a mental or spiritual process of growth or search. Literature is abound with journeys to the end of the world, to the underworld, into the labyrinth or journeys backwards into the past or forward into the future. Ultimately, they are all journeys of self-discovery.

The journey motif is rooted in Africa's oral tradition (Mortimer, 1990). It is central to the European novel, and is consistent with Africa's history of numerous human migrations, explorations and conquests across the continent. European readers, for example, were brought up on Cervantes' hero Don Quixote and Defoe's hero Robinson Crusoe - both itinerant heroes in literature. This type of reading , argues Mortimer, must have influence on their unconscious. Quoting Michel Bufor, Mortimer states: "All fiction is thus inscribed in our space as a journey and we can say in this regard that it is the theme of all novels".

According to Jungian psychology, the individuated person is one who has undergone a process of recovering the meaning of his life, after having lost it. This loss is occasioned by and / or accompanied by loss of their religious belief. An alienation from God is loss of one's soul. Such a person needs to discover his own myth as expressed in dream and imagination. This process of discovery is what Jung referred to as individuation, and the result of the process is that the individual would become a more complete personality.

The experience of individuation, though fraught with difficulties, does render benefits by way of emotional growth, discovery of meaning in life and sometimes even the overcoming of internal obstacles (Mattoon, 1981).

Pettifor (1995) discusses archetypes and their place in the process of individuation, while Beck (1999) discusses archetypes and modern manifestations.

Mattoon further states that the process of individuation is a chequered one, characterised at various stages by progress and regress, flux and stagnation. It is by no means a straight progression or a clear climb upward. Individuation, surmises Mattoon, is a process, and not a description of the totality of the psyche.

Religion holds a significant place in a discussion of both the colonialism experience and individuation. The religious factor in African literature is handled extensively by several writers. An East African interpretation of the effect of Christianity on individuals and communities is given by Mugambi, (1992). Ngugi, the writer, expresses particular concern about the cooperation and

collaboration that existed between the missionaries, the settlers and the colonial administration. Subjugation of African converts to Christianity was effectively used to subsume Africans totally to the system (colonial). This effect is clearly amplified in the characters of Ngugi's novels, especially his early novels: *Weep Not Child*; *The River Between*; *A Grain of Wheat*. The missionaries needed and raised black evangelists to help spread Christianity. These African evangelists were of necessity and consequentially alienated from their community and their environment. They became totally dependent on the (white) missionaries for their salvation.

Christianity was presented as The Answer to all spiritual problems and many other challenges facing Africans (Mugambi, 1992). Hill-Lubin (1985) quotes John Mbiti, author of African Religions and Philosophy, as declaring that Africans are a 'notoriously religious people'. Baldwin (1975) provides a direct link between 'the search' and religion.

The significant place of women in this era of literature is discussed by Charles Nnolim (1987) in his article 'Mythology and the unhappy woman in Nigerian fiction'. Local myths of Nigeria provide source for novelists and poets to draw from in developing profiles of unhappy women characters. Abiola Irele (1967) discusses the tragic conflict in Achebe's novels, while Palmer (1979) provides an overview to understanding the contexts of Achebe, Oyono and Ngugi.

Characters for examination will be drawn from four primary texts. The primary texts for study are Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Oyono's *Houseboy*, *The Old Man and the Medal* and Ngugi's *The River Between*.

METHODOLOGY

This research will be qualitative, based on a psychological reading and analysis of select characters from the four chosen primary texts, namely *Things Fall Apart, Houseboy, The Old Man and the Medal, and The River Between*. Secondary sources shall be used to establish thematic issues and directions.

Chapter Two will be a general treatment of the origins of alienation as well as the concept of individuation. Chapter Three will establish the alienation of Okonkwo (*Things Fall Apart*), Toundi

Houseboy), Meka (*The Old Man and the Medal*) and Waiyaki (*The River Between*). Chapter Four will trace the characters' journeys of self-discovery. Chapter Five will focus on the gender dimension of alienation and individuation, focussing on the experiences of Muthoni, Nyambura (*The River Between*), Kelara (*The Old Man and the Medal*), Ezinma and Ekwefi (*Things Fall Apart*). Chapter Six will discuss reconciliation in relation to the various characters. Chapter Seven will be a concluding discussion on the discoveries of the preceding chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CONCEPT OF INDIVIDUATION

The main thrust of this study is the Jungian individuation process in application to the characters of select works by specified authors. It is therefore essential to commence the study with a general treatment of ruling concepts in Jungian individuation.

Carl Gustav Jung (1875 - 1961) was a Swiss psychologist, a former professional colleague of Sigmund Freud who achieved fame and recognition for his work in the development of Analytic Psychology - a departure from Freud's Psychoanalysis. Jung's Analytic Psychology has given the broadest and most comprehensive view of the human psyche yet available (Edinger). Jung's writings provide a fully developed theory of (i) the structure and dynamics of the psyche in both its conscious and unconscious aspects (ii) personality types, and (iii) the universal, primordial images deriving form the deepest layers of the psyche - referred to as archetypes of the collective unconscious. The latter discovery led Jung into his famous study of the link between the unconscious images produced by individuals in dream and vision, and the universal motifs found in the religions and mythologies of all ages.

Structure of the Psyche

The psyche (or personality) is made up of several major components. Each of these components can be understood as a combination of mental and emotional contents (Mattoon, 1981). There are four major components, namely the *ego, persona, shadow* and *animus / anima.* A fifth, the *Self,* though not a component, has a significant relation to the components and therefore is discussed in the same breath along with the four. Components are not physical entities but are combinations of mental contents. They manifest in observable behaviours, emotions and attitudes. Components in analytic psychology are what the id, ego and superego are in Freudian psychoanalytic theory. Pettifor (1995) refers to the five as functions, rather than as components. (See diagram below.)

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Conscious

persona

ego

shadow

anima/animus

Self
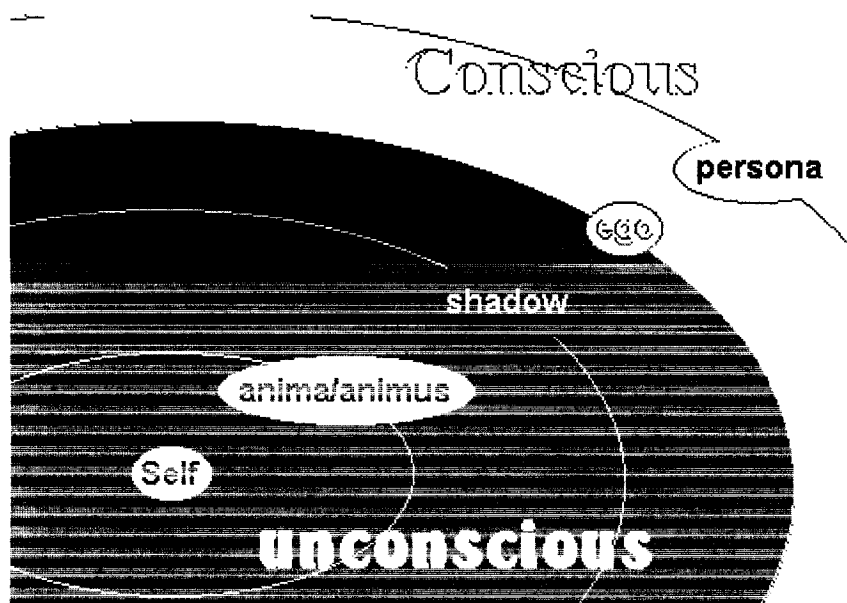
unconscious

Contents of the Psyche

Contents of the psyche are 'conscious' and 'unconscious', that is, under the control of the ego or not under the control of the ego. The ego is the centre of the conscious and is the starting point for all empirical psychology. The ego is the seat of individual identity (Edinger). All contents that are conscious are connected with the ego. The unconscious, on the other hand, includes all psychic elements which are outside conscious awareness and which therefore are not connected with the ego.

The unconscious part of the psyche is made up of many kinds of contents that vary from person to person and from time to time (Mattoon, 1981). In some cases these may arise from - are products of - individual and cultural experience, while in other cases they seem to be general to all humans. The latter are referred to as 'the collective' - shared with all members of the human race.

The conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche are mutually interdependent. The conscious needs the unconscious for continuous renewal, and the unconscious needs the conscious as a channel for expression in everyday life.

A further understanding of the five components (or functions as Pettifor prefers to call them) is necessary before further discussion.

(i)   ***The Persona***: 'Persona' is the Latin word for 'mask'. It is that part of the personality that one presents to the outside world in order to gain social approval. It isn't really ourselves, being a convenient and 'presentable' mask. Consequently it reveals little of what a person really is. Multiple masks are used for specific environments and conditions. An individual will pull an appropriate mask for specific use depending on how he wants to present himself. Masks may present occupation, religion, sexual orientation, politics, etc.   The sum total of masks used by an individual makes up the persona. The persona is necessary for adaptation to the world, and is consequently necessary for adequate psychological functioning (Mattoon, 1981). In cases where the ego is weak, the persona may function in its place. This condition is called 'identification with the persona'. The

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persona is the role one plays in society, and is also a protective covering that shields from public view what is personal, intimate and vulnerable (Edinger). The clothes we wear present a characteristic symbol for the persona, hence dreams involving missing clothes speak of a problem with our persona. Identification with the persona, according to Edinger, can cause inflation and alienation from reality.

(ii) **The Ego:** The ego is the centre of consciousness; it is identity. The term 'ego' in Latin means 'I'. Although it is the centre of consciousness, it needs to be understood distinctly from the 'Self' - which is the centre of the whole personality. The ego is the point of reference for one's conscious experiences. Jung saw the ego as directing behaviour (relatively conflict-free), and characterised by the dominant one of two attitudes - extraversion or introversion - and the dominant one of what Jung termed 'functions', i.e. thinking, feeling, sensation and intuition. The dominant attitude and functions are expressed consciously while those that are not developed are part of the unconscious.

(iii) **The Shadow:** The shadow, as implied by its name, consists of psychic contents which the person prefers not to show, parts of oneself that one considers unpresentable because they seem weak, socially unacceptable or even plain evil. Manifestations of the shadow may be embarrassing. The shadow is usually perceived as negative, but it can also be useful. It contains qualities that are awkward and perhaps destructive when they are unconscious but that can be valuable if they are made conscious and developed. Thus Jung considered the shadow not only necessary for wholeness but also capable of yielding treasure (Mattoon, 1981). For example, the negative of one shadow may be a propensity to anger while its positive may be assertiveness; another shadow may have vulnerability as its negative quality while this same quality in the positive produces a sensitivity to the needs of others. Although usually negative, some shadows are positive, taking one of two major forms: (a) seeing oneself as inadequate or bad, i.e. unconscious of one's good qualities (b) prizing one's negative characteristics. The first form denotes low self-esteem, while the second form categorises criminals who promote their cruel and destructive nature and are

ashamed of their tenderness and generosity. The shadow contains not only individual contents but also some collective contents. A clear example of this is Nazism where a whole race shared fatal hatred and contempt of another race. Awareness of one's personal darkness, however, helps one to understand that other people's shadows do not make them totally evil. This awareness ameliorates the we-they mentality that often produces hostile and punitive attitudes toward people who are outside one's social group (Mattoon, 1981).

(iv) ***The Anima / Animus:*** The anima is the female soul image of a man, while the animus is the male soul image of a woman. Jung found that a person's soul image was gender opposite, hence a woman has a primarily feminine consciousness and a primarily masculine unconsciousness. A man, on the other hand, has a primarily masculine consciousness and a primarily feminine unconsciousness.

(v) ***The Self:*** The Self, simply put, is the centre and totality of the entire psyche. It is the total personality inclusive of both the conscious and the unconscious. Jung referred to the Self as the centre of the personality, comparable to the sun in the solar system - the source of all the system's energy. It is sometimes glimpsed in dreams as the image of a person whom the dreamer sees as embodying wholeness. The Self is something of a paradox and is extremely difficult for the conscious ego to accept (Pettifor, 1995). More frequent experiences of the Self occur in individuation as the individuation process results in greater psychic integration (Mattoon, 1981).

Personality Types

Several personality types or psychological types are distinguished in Analytical Psychology. Innate differences in temperament cause individuals to perceive and react to life in different ways. Two attitude types are distinguished, namely *extravert* and *introvert*. In the extravert, there is an innate tendency for the libido (life energy) to flow outwards, connecting the individual with the external world. In the introvert, the tendency is for the libido to flow inwards, connecting the individual with the subjective, inner world of thought, fantasies and feelings. Whereas the extravert spontaneously gives greatest interest and value to the object (people, things, external accomplishments, etc.),

the introvert gives greatest interest and value to the subject - the inner reactions and images (Edinger).

Both have the defect of their strengths and tend to undervalue each other. To the extravert, the introvert appears self-centred and withholding of himself, while to the introvert, the extravert appears shallow, opportunistic and hypocritical. Every individual possesses both tendencies. However, one is usually more developed than the other. As a pair of opposites they follow the law of opposites - excessive one-sided emphasis on one attitude is likely to lead to the emergence of its opposite. However, because it is undeveloped and undifferentiated, this opposite will appear in a negative, crude and unadapted form. This manifests in, for example, an extreme extravert with negative inferior introversion in the form of depressions, or an extreme introvert with episodes of compulsive extraversion which are crude, ineffectual and unadapted to outer reality (Edinger).

Function Types

In addition to attitude types, there are also four function types, with four psychological functions, namely *thinking, feeling, sensation* and *intuition*. These four functions arrange themselves into two pairs of opposites: thinking ↔ feeling, sensation ↔ intuition. Although the individual has all four functions potentially at their disposal, practically only one function emerges as more developed than the others and is referred to as the superior function. The least developed one exists as the most primitive and unconscious and is referred to as the inferior function. There may be and often is a second function that achieves considerable development approaching that of the superior function. This is referred to as an auxiliary function.

The *thinking type*, found more often in men than in women, has a mental life concerned largely with the creation of intellectual formulae and fits all life experience into these forms. *Feeling* is the inferior function for this type. The *feeling type*, found more often in women than in men, has development and sustenance of personal relationships as their major aim, and has *thinking* as the inferior function. This type will only accept *thinking*

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as long as it plays a subservient role to *feeling*. The *sensation type*, characterised by excellent adaptation to simple, matter-of-fact reality, has *intuition* as their inferior function as they consider intuitive expressions as unrealistic fantasies. The fourth type, the *intuitive type* who is motivated by a steady flow of new visions and possibilities derived from active intuition, has *sensation* as the inferior function. This type has poor relationship to reality. The development of an auxiliary function may soften and modify the sharp characteristics of these four types. However, ideally all four functions should be available to the individual in order to facilitate a more complete response to life experience (Edinger).

Jungian psychotherapy endeavours to promote psychic wholeness by promoting inferior undeveloped functions by bringing them to consciousness. Psychological types are at the root of understanding many disputes and conflicts in human relationships.

Collective Unconscious / Archetypes

There have been frequent references to the personal unconscious and collective unconscious. A little more discussion on these two at this point should help to place the discussion in perspective.

The contents of the *collective unconscious* are called *archetypes* and their particular symbolic manifestations are referred to as archetypal images. The concept of the archetype may be equated with the concept of instinct, instinct in this case being a pattern of behaviour which is inborn and characteristic for a particular species (Edinger). These instincts are traced by observing behaviour patterns. Important to note is that instincts are the unknown motivating dynamisms that determine an animal's behaviour on the biological level. Comparatively, an archetype is to the psyche what an instinct is to the body. Similarly, the existence of archetypes is inferred by the same process as that by which we infer the existence of instincts, that is, by observing the uniformities in psychic phenomena. Archetypes are unknown motivating dynamisms of the psyche, they are the psychic instincts of the human species (Edinger).

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Archetypes are perceived and experienced subjectively through certain universal, typical, recurring mythological motifs and images. These archetypal images are the basic contents of religions, mythologies, legends and fairy tales across time. Archetypal images are varied and numerous. Some examples are: (i) archetype of the Great Mother, (ii) archetype of the Spiritual Father, (iii) archetype of Transformation (iv) the Central Archetype - the Self (presented by Jung in images of the *mandala*). Other archetypes are: child-god, hero, warrior, magician, trickster, wise old man, anima/animus, shadow, persona.

In Jung's own words, the unconscious "depicts an extremely fluid state of affairs: everything of which I know, but of which I am *not* now thinking; ..." (Moir, 2006).

Personal Unconscious

Jung used the term to denote experiences, thoughts and memories that slip out of the conscious and become unconscious. It is a dumping ground for things we are not comfortable with and which we would really rather not have in consciousness very often (Pettifor). The discarded contents of the unconscious may be: (i) simply too unimportant to remember (ii) subliminal impressions and perceptions that never entered awareness (iii) 'waiting in the wings' - they are available to consciousness if attention is turned to them (iv) suppressed or pushed out of consciousness but capable of being recalled (v) repressed, banished virtually irrevocably from consciousness presumably because they are painful (Mattoon, 1984).

Jung found that the contents of the *personal unconscious* constitute integral portions of the personality, they belong to it, and their loss to the conscious mind puts it in a state of inferiority. An individual setting out on a path of self-realisation must inevitably bring into consciousness the contents of his *personal unconscious*. This way the individual enlarges considerably the domain of his personality (Mattoon: p. 23). Jung found that the non-personal material of the *collective unconscious* is reflected in the individual's dreams, visions and fantasies.

Individuation Process

Having discussed the above concepts, we can now introduce the process of individuation, which hinges on an understanding of the foregoing.

Jung believes that the goal of human existence is development of the *Self*. This, in summary, is the definition of the process of individuation (Moir, 2006). According to Jung, an individual needs to get in touch with the *shadow* and *anima/animus* before he can truly get in touch with the *Self*. The order is sequential, and this is the initial step, or 'the first act of courage' (Pettifor). Getting in touch with the *shadow* entails simply acknowledging that it exists. In order to undergo the individuation process, the individual must allow himself to be open to the parts of himself beyond his own *ego*.

Individuation is a quest towards achieving psychic wholeness through psychological development. It is a lifetime process and, unlike physical development, is difficult to pinpoint as being fully achieved. The term individuation refers to a development process which, according to Edinger, begins in the adult individual at around age thirty-five and which, if successful, leads to the discovery of the *Self* and the replacing of the *ego* by the *Self* as the personality centre. The *Self* represents totality of the psyche and the process by which self-division may be healed, opposites united. The psychology of the *Self* is also the psychology of religious experience (Colman, 2006: 153). The rewards of the individuation process are worthy of the endeavour. These are, according to Mattoon, emotional growth, discovery of meaning in life and occasionally enlightenment or victory over inner obstacles.

CHAPTER THREE

ALIENATION AND IDENTITY

The term 'alienation' is almost ubiquitous in the sense that it is employed in multiple disciplines. Alienation is encountered as a concept in the disciplines of theology, philosophy, history, psychiatry, sociology, anthropology, economics, political science, education and literature. The word 'alienation' signifies separation, estrangement, with a connotation of anguish or tension accompanying such separation (Johnson, 1973: 4). As a concept, alienation has operational descriptions appropriate to its usage by a particular discipline.

Torrance (1977: xi) offers a definition of alienation as referring to the renunciation or relinquishment of possession, or of a claim to something, or of a liberty or power to do some action. In summation, it denotes a type of social action or practice which also has the effect of altering a social relationship previously existing between a person and others affected by the claims or powers relinquished. This definition tends to lean more towards economic rights or claims. There are several types of alienation: social alienation, economic alienation, political alienation and psychological alienation, among others. The basic condition is separation, estrangement, powerlessness and loss.

Alienation presupposes identity (Yetiv, 1986) in the sense that alienation implies a dislocation from one's original condition of identity. Oken (1973) calls identity the 'mirror image' of alienation. Having a sense of identity or knowing who one is, argues Oken, represents the polar opposite of estrangement from one's self as felt by the individual. Identity is a definition of the self, with an inward view of other parts of the world, thus representing a sense of continuity of one's meaning to others as well as to the self.

Stability in one's sense of identity involves the capacity to remain oneself even in the face of radically changing conditions. Essential to this stability is the quality of resiliency as opposed to rigidity. From this one gets to be confident about assuming a variety of roles

without getting subsumed and losing one's 'self-sameness'. The process of developing a healthy identity starts from infancy through childhood and continues throughout life, though it is generally agreed that an individual's identity crystallises at the close of adolescence. Interference with the natural progression of identity development has long-lasting effects that will manifest along the way. A child, for example, whose development needs have not been met, experiences 'basic anxiety' that provokes a process of negation of the 'real self' which in turn is substituted by an artificial 'ideal self'. The manufactured 'ideal self' is designed to manipulate the environment in order to meet the needs that were neglected during the child's development. This is a process of self-alienation which results in a sense of lost self-determination, as well as a tendency towards feeling 'resigned' from the world (Oken, 1973: 87).

During the progressive development of an identity, there is a reciprocal interplay between one's concept of himself and his recognition as that particular by others. An individual's perception of others is tied to that individual's sense of self. Consequently, disturbances in the process of identity formation carries with it impaired capacity to relate with others. On the other hand, an individual whose basic needs are satisfied during the developmental stage develops confidence in himself and trust in others. He develops a sense of self-esteem from which derives capacity for developing bonds of affection for specific others as well as a sense of belonging to larger social groups, ultimately to the whole of humankind. Paradoxically, concludes Oken, identity thus implies simultaneous recognition and manifestation of one's common humanity simultaneously with one's uniqueness. Identity denotes both singularity and shared similarity. Identity is progressively realised during the course of one's encounters with life's experiences. Alienation is a failure in the process of identity achievement. Thus a search for identity, or self-consciousness, signifies that identity has not been achieved or that there is a disturbance. In this sense, alienation is a product of identity as well as a sign of its (identity) disturbance.

Alienation in *Things Fall Apart*, *The River Between*, *Houseboy* and *The Old Man and the Medal*.

Alienation of the subjects in the four texts may best be understood from two perspectives: (i) the external environment, and (ii) the internal environment. The external environment refers to circumstances surrounding the subject, which are outside of his own personality. Specifically, this refers to their social environment as affected by the advent of the white missionary activity and white administration. The subjects - Okonkwo, Waiyaki, Toundi and Meka all lived in an era that was freshly altered by the coming of the 'white order' which took the form of introduction of a new 'white' religion by white missionaries as well as the establishment of colonialism and white administration. The internal environment, on the other hand, refers to the psychological make-up of the subjects, their individual personality as it relates to how they react to their circumstances. It is about whether the subjects are able to adjust to their environment without suffering major alterations to self.

The colonial environment

The devastating and long-lasting effects of colonialism on Africa and Africans has been and continues to be a subject of study by writers and academicians of various disciplines. The underlying character of colonialism for the purposes of this study is alienation of people arising from the violence of colonialism. Among the forerunner white players of colonialism were the explorer, the soldier and the missionary. These three laid down the groundwork for the entry onto the scene of the white administrator - the District Commissioner. These two figures re highly visible in Things Fall Apart - Mr. Brown, the white missionary who subsequently was succeeded by Mr. Smith, and the nameless white District Commissioner whose title alone was enough identity. It has been observed by some writers that the colonial situation did not in fact begin with district officers but began with the missionaries.

The weapon of the white missionary was the bible. Introduction of Christianity to Africa by the white missionaries presupposed not only a complete lack of religious belief on the part of Africans, but a void of any form of human civilisation. Europeans perceived Africa as the dark continent, or as expressed by the African philosopher Kwasi Wiredu, Africa is the mad, unreasonable and dark other by which the West states its claims of

difference (Osha, 2005: 152-153). Africa was thus turned into an object for elaborate Eurocentric demonology. European posture was coloured by their attitude of inherent superiority of the white race and the complementary perception of Africans as primitive beasts. Achille Mbembe referred at length to Hegel's slave-master dichotomy that determined the native in the colonial state as being the 'other', an animal, alien, a being devoid of any power of transcendence (Osha, 2005:154) - a Caliban in the eyes of Prospero. This animal - the African - was a bundle of drives but not o capacities, reacting only to his animal drives but not equipped with human capacity for thinking and reason. Consequently the only possible relationship with the native could only be one of violence and domination. The whites thus set out to colonise the African's consciousness through force of brutalisation taking the form of violence, force and domination. Mudimbe notes that European activity involved domination of physical space, reformation of natives' minds (colonisation of consciousness) and integration of local economic histories into the Western perspective - economic exploitation (Osha, 2005:166). Colonisation was about the complete subjugation of both the African people and their lands.

Okoknkwo's world

The picture described above was the background for the lives of the various subjects of this study. Umuofia, Okonkwo's homeland in Nigeria, reluctantly became a stage for the enactment of the colonial drama. Awoken from the tranquility of the traditional order by the arrival of Mr. Brown and all that he stood for, life for Okonkwo and his tribesmen underwent a radical alteration.

The first white man to arrive in neighbouring Abame, presumably an explorer, was killed after the Oracle had prophesied to the people that "the strange man would break their clan and spread destruction among them" (p. 15). The Oracle had further foretold that other white men were on their way to invade the land like locusts. Months later, three white men led a massacre of the residents of Abame. Before long more white men came to settle in the land. Christian missionary activity reached Umuofia, challenging the traditional religious order. It was not long before the white missionary started to convince a few locals and send them out as evangelists into surrounding towns and villages.

"That was a source of great sorrow to the leaders of the clan; but many of them believed that the strange faith and the white man's god would not last. None of his converts was a man whose word was heeded in the assembly of the people. None of them was a man of title. They were mostly the kind of people that were called *efulefu*, worthless, empty men." p.130, _Things Fall Apart_.

The white man's religion could not accommodate traditional religion. Christianity introduced a 'new god, the creator of all the world and all the men and women'. The white man was thus a brother to the black people because they were all sons of God. Mr. Brown "told them that they worshipped false gods, gods of wood and stone", p. 131 *ibid*. Mr. Brown's faith offered Christian salvation. "We have been sent by this great God to ask you to leave your wicked ways and false gods and turn to Him so that you may be saved when you die" p.132 *ibid*.

The forces that would ultimately distort and destroy Okonkwo's world were thus set in motion and there was no stopping them. The people's gods were no match to the persuasive power of the white man's God who was omnipotent. "Your gods are not alive … They are pieces of wood and stone." p. 133 *ibid*. The white man's god appealed to and touched that innermost place of need inside a man's heart, the place that other people could not touch and help soothe. Okonkwo's son, Nwoye, was thus touched. "It was the poetry of the new religion, something felt in the marrow. The hymn about brothers who sat in darkness and in fear seemed to answer a vague and persistent question that haunted his young soul - the question of the twins crying in the bush and the question of Ikemefuna who was killed. He felt a relief within as the hymn poured into his parched soul" p. 134 *ibid*.

Okonkwo's alienation

Okonkwo's process of estrangement or alienation has its genesis well before the events of the white man's invasion, although this event was to provide the ingredients for Okonkwo's final disastrous encounter with life's events. The stage for Okonkwo's tragic

fate had been set in the form of his psychological make-up. He was a bundle of inner psychic difficulties stemming from his over-riding need to escape from his father's perceived effeminate nature. All through his life, Okonkwo despised his father Unoka who was inclined towards the finer, softer things in life that were far removed from the hardness of 'manly' preoccupations. Unoka was an artist, a musician who appreciated the beauty of life and nature such as the dazzling beauty of the rising sun. The adult Unoka was a failure - he lived in poverty, had no earning power and constantly borrowed and never returned his debts. Moreover, despite living in warlike Umuofia, Unoka "was never happy when it came to wars. He was in fact a coward and could not bear the sight of blood." p. 6. Thus up to the time of his death, Unoka had none of the manly achievements of men on Umuofia, specifically he had taken no title at all. All this caused Okonkwo to be ashamed of his father.

In Jungian psychology, Unoka would be said to be an individual whose female soul image - the anima - evidently predominated his male soul image. Okonkwo, on the other hand, actively set out to promote his animus - the male soul image - and obliterate any inclinations of the anima that he associated with his failed father. Okonkwo thus set value on personal achievements and physical strength. He achieved fame as a wrestler, was big and strong and easily prone to violence. "He was tall and huge, and his bushy eyebrows and wide nose gave him a very severe look. He breathed heavily, and it was said that, when he slept, his wives and children in their out-houses could hear him breathe" p. 3. He had no patience with unsuccessful men. Once, at a men's meeting, he derided a man who held no titles for contradicting him and called him a woman. "Okonkwo knew how to kill a man's spirit" p. 24. Okonkwo was a man obsessed with the need to achieve. His whole life was dominated by fear, the fear of failure and of weakness:

> "It was not external but lay deep within himself. It was the fear of himself, lest he should be found to resemble his father ... Okonkwo was ruled by one passion - to hate everything that his father Unoka had loved. One of these things was gentleness and another was idleness." p.12 - 13.

Okonkwo's lifestyle, his choices in life are thus coloured by this obsessive nature. His 'masculinity' will not, for example, permit him to show affection for his wives and children. His son Nwoye, who does not share his father's hardness, is starved of a father's closeness and ends up looking elsewhere for answers to his life's needs. Okonkwo finds it difficult to openly show affection for his daughter Ezinma who he often wishes was a boy because she displays strength of character. Okonkwo's nature is such that he needs to subject everything to his will. What he cannot subject to his will, he must reject. Herein lies the root cause of his alienation.

When he and his community are faced with the white man's strange religion, Okonkwo has no ability to accommodate this new and strange phenomenon. His instincts are physical expression of violence. There is not room in him for negotiation and for adaptation. He is bewildered when his tribesmen seem to react 'softly' to the effrontery of the white man.

> "Let us not reason like cowards," said Okonkwo. "If a man comes into my hut and defecates on the floor, what do I do? Do I shut my eyes? No! I take a stick and break his head. That is what a man does. These people are daily pouring filth over us, and Okeke says we should pretend not to see." Okonkwo made a sound of full of disgust. This was a womanly clan, he thought. Such a thing could never happen in his fatherland, Umuofia" p.145.

Typically Okonkwo always associated manliness with his fatherland Umuofia, and gentleness (womanliness) with his motherland Mbanta.

In the end, when at the moment of crisis Okonkwo had chopped down the black messenger of the white man, he looked around him and it dawned on him that none shared his militancy in his fatherland.

> "He knew that Umuofia would not go to war ... They had broken into tumult instead of action" p.184. Okonkwo finally stood alone in his fatherland. Years earlier, Unoka had told Okonkwo: "It is more difficult and more bitter when a man fails alone" p.23.

Toundi and Meka's world

French colonialism is generally acknowledged as having been particularly brutal, characterised by violence not only to the native's body but to his psyche as well. French colonialists not only meted out extreme physical abuse on the African natives, but also assaulted their pride (Ssensalo, 1984:105). The African is considered to be less than a human being. "There is no doubt that the Negroes of French West Africa are a dispirited, miserable and resentful people, who can only be ruled by fear. It is not merely the colonial policy which has brought them to this state, but the brutal and abusive manner in which the French treat them on nearly every occasion ..." (Gorer, 1935: 111).

Toundi's alienation

The alienation of Toundi, externally triggered by the social environment created by the alteration of traditional life caused by the French colonialists, is greatly supported by his own psychic make-up. Like Okonkwo, Toundi is an interesting character study in his own right outside of his external environment.

From the outset, Oyono presents Toundi as an individual with an identity crisis. He is a Frenchman, a black Frenchman from the Cameroons. When his compatriot discovers him at the point of death in M'foula, Toundi is reflective. "Brother," he said. "Brother, what are we? What are we blackmen who are called French?" p.4 *Houseboy*. In the final stage of his reflection, shortly before his death on foreign soil, he supplies an explanation that surmises his identity and source of alienation. "I am from the Cameroons, my friend, I am a Maka ... I'd have made old bones if I'd been good and stayed at home in the village" p.4 *ibid.*

As Ssensalo (ALT 14, 1984: 102) notes, with colonialism the African continent took on a European identity. Frenchmen and other colonialists who 'discovered' Africa set out to 'civilise' not only the land but the people as well. Rivers, mountains and other natural phenomena lost their African names in favour of European names such as the Victoria Falls which the natives had always called the Musi-o-Tunya. The people were persuaded or coerced into Christianity and, like the rivers and mountains, they too acquired so-

called Christian names signifying their new civilised status. In his diary, Toundi introduces himself initially as Toundi Ondoua and, in the next statement, explains that when he was baptised he was given the name Joseph. In the same breath he states the rather ironical cultural projection by the Europeans (French):

> "I am Maka by my mother and Ndjem by my father. My ancestors were cannibals. Since the white men came we have learnt that other men must not be looked upon as animals." p.9 _Houseboy_.

It is ironical that the people that set out to civilise another people and teach them that their fellow kin were not animals (to be eaten as food) then proceeded to dehumanise, debase and treat their converts no better than primitive beasts. Toundi's interaction with the whites as recorded in his diary was characterised by senseless violence and brutality.

Toundi interestingly acquires his new identity (of Christianity) at the very point in his life when he was supposed to undergo his initiation rite of passage. He ran away from his parents' home the day before initiation day and went to join the white priest Father Gilbert. By this act, as by the acts of baptism and acquisition of the Christian name 'Joseph', Toundi physically and symbolically estranged himself from his family and his society. Initiation was a rite of passage that was going to open the way for Toundi to move from childhood into manhood. However, because he chose to run away and put his hands on the glitter of the white man's world (which glittered of fool's gold, as Toundi was to discover), Toundi gave up the chance to become a man and instead condemned himself to the role of a permanent child, a boy to successive white masters (Ssensalo, 1984: 102).

In Jung's analytical psychology, the concept of the 'eternal child' is explained as a crisis of inadequate or absent transition from one stage of life to the next in psychological growth. In the process of individuation, there are two major crises and these fall in the transitions between the three stages of the process: first in adolescence and early adulthood and the second at mid-life. The three stages of the individuation process are (i) the containment / nurturance stage, identified as the maternal or matriarchal stage, (ii) the

adapting / adjusting stage identified as the paternal or patriarchal stage and (iii) the centering / integrating stage identified as the individual stage. The corresponding stages in life for these stages are (i) childhood (ii) early and middle adulthood and (iii) middle, late adulthood and old age (Murray, 2006).

The mother symbolises the first stage of containment / nurturance in that she is the first and primary nurturing figure. She is the womb, which is a complete containing and protecting environment. After the womb, she provides the earliest care and emotional support, hence the first stage may be referred to as the mothering function, regardless of whether it is performed by any other apart from the mother. People living in this stage of development are said to be 'living in the mother' (Murray, 2006).

The second stage is characterised by the 'reality principle' which dictates that an individual is required to perform and achieve in the world, and must face the consequences of his / her actions. This world of reality that the person has been introduced to demands standards of performance and exacts consequences for behaviour. The individual is rewarded by how he acquits himself. It is a world of expectations and conditionalities, and a person living in this environment is said to have entered the 'father world' of harsh reality, that is, a world of achievement, work, struggle, competition and authority. The 'father world' is evidently very different from the dependency of the 'mother world' and may be fearfully threatening to the young individual making the transition without adequate preparation. In such an unprepared individual, there may be resistance to leaving the mothering / nurturing environment because he / she is unable to cope with the anxiety that accompanies harsh reality. This wish to remain in the safety of the 'mothering world' is responsible for the phenomenon of 'eternal child' or *puer aertenus* (male) / *puella aeterna* (female). Jung referred to this as the 'incest wish' - the desire to remain 'in the mother', to live in the Garden of Eden forever. An individual thus afflicted cannot go forward in life because he / she is refusing to move past the ego's defences that resist any collisions with the environment. This is a neurotic condition that has the effect of stagnating the psyche.

Meka

The external factor affecting Meka, that is, the effects of colonial brutality, is the same as that affecting Toundi. They are two different people caught up in the same circumstantial snare. Whereas one is an impressionable young man, the other is an old man with a wife and children. Commentators have observed that whereas Toundi is an inadvertent victim of his circumstances (because of his youth and naivety), Meka on the other hand is a participant in his fate, almost an accomplice.

Meka and his wife Kelara are devout Christian (Catholic) converts. So committed is Meka that he did not hesitate to hand over his family land to the church, although in reality he had little choice in the matter.

> "He (Meka) had the special grace to be the owner of a piece of land which, one fine morning, had proved to be pleasing to the eye of the Lord. A white priest had revealed his divine destiny to him. How could he go against the will of the Lord-who-giveth?" p.10 *The Old Man and the Medal*.

It is in recognition of his 'generosity' that Meka is to be recognised by the white government with a medal of honour.

Meka's affair / relationship with the church and whites had the effect of distancing him from his own people. This is illustrated graphically by his predicament at the medal award ceremony.

> "He realised what a strange situation he was in. Neither his grandfather nor his father nor any member of his huge family had ever been placed as he was inside a whitewash circle, between two worlds, his won world and the world of those who had been called ghosts when they first came into the land. He was not with his own people, and he was not with the others. He wondered what he was doing out there." p.85 *ibid*.

This sums up the predicament of Meka's life. He had embraced a foreign world that did not in turn embrace him back, consequently he belonged to neither the foreign world nor to his own people's world. His alienation is complete. All he can do is utter a pathetic prayer, to a foreign god:

"Almighty God', he prayed to himself. 'Thou alone seest all that passeth in the hearts of men, Thou seest that my dearest wish at this moment as I wait for the medal and for the White Chief, alone in this circle, between two worlds' - he opened his eyes, looked in front of him and behind, then shut them again - 'between two worlds, O God, which Thou hast made utterly different form each other, that my dear wish and great longing is to take off these shoes and to have a piss …Yes, a piss … I am only a poor sinner and not worthy that Thou shouldest hear me … but I beseech Thee to aid me in this position which I have never been in before in all my life. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. So be it. I make the sign of the cross inwardly." p.88-89 *ibid.*

Waiyaki

"There shall come a people with clothes like butterflies". These were the white men." p.2 *The River Between*. This was a prophecy by Mugo wa Kibiro, a Gikuyu seer, speaking long before the people of Kameno and Makuyu encountered the white man. The rest, as they say, is history. Colonialism arrived in East Africa, as elsewhere, actively facilitated by the selling of Christianity. Ngugi's character, Waiyaki, s a young man living at a point in history when the way of life in Gikuyu land was facing the serious challenge posed by the new faith - Christianity. Kameno had enjoyed a serenity that supported the peaceful life of the tribe. "These ancient hills and ridges were the heart and soul of the land. They kept the tribes' magic and rituals, pure and intact." p. 3 *ibid.* Waiyaki's father, Chege, a well-known elder in Kameno, warned his tribesmen about the activities of the white man in surrounding areas. "They are there, beyond the ridges, putting up many houses and some taking the land … Who from the outside can make his way into the hills?" p.9 *ibid.*

Waiyaki, who before long takes over his father's role, is presented early in the story undergoing a re-birth ceremony, in preparation for the rite of circumcision. Circumcision would be the biggest of all rituals making final initiation into manhood. "Then he would prove his courage, his manly spirit." p.14 *ibid.* During his symbolic getting 'born again' ceremony sitting between his mother's spread out legs, Waiyaki had broken into an uncontrolled fit of agonised crying, over and beyond the light symbolic cry expected of a

new born. Later that day his mother dipped him into the cleansing water of the Honia river. This was the beginning of a new life for him.

Waiyaki is strong physically with 'burning' eyes and a charismatic authority. He has the power to subdue Kinuthia and Kamau, both boys older than him, with his authoritative presence. Later in life he chooses education as the weapon to counter the assault on the future of his people. Being a teacher gives him more authority, but he must contend with the fierce opposition and antagonism in the form of, on one hand, Kamau, Kabonyi and the traditional council - the Kiama, and on the other hand Joshua and his band of Christian converts. Alienation was reigning strong and hurtling towards crisis level with the rapid encroachment of the whites on traditional land.

> "There was indeed a growing need to do something. This feeling had been strengthened by this most recent alienation of land near Siriana forcing many people to move from places they had lived in for ages, while others had to live on the same land working for their new masters." p.73 *ibid*.

Waiyaki's alienation thus stems from both the threat to collective identity with his people losing their land and their way of life, and from a personal crisis of relationships with others.

The phenomenon of paying tax was an added burden on Africans who were already losing their ancestral land to the colonialists. In the words of one British anthropologists writing during the colonial era: "In principle the negro does not object to the head-tax. Tribute from the conquered to the conqueror is not a foreign notion to them … This does not mean that it does not lie very heavy on them and cause them breat anxiety; one man said to me 'I can't sleep for thinking of the taxes; if I am put in prison what will happen to my children? " (Fetter, 1979: 110) He further concedes that taxation caused break-up and destruction of the family and tribe, causing deep resentment and misery, for the negro (African) does not live as an individual therefore to separate him from the environment in which he was born is by consequence to cause distress to his entire family / tribe.

Waiyaki the teacher, having taken on the role of leader of the tribe, found himself under stress for choosing education as the means for his people's survival. His detractors convinced the people that education was a long-term solution but what the tribe needed was an immediate solution. Distance started to loom between Waiyaki and the people. His life is further complicated by his association with, and his love for Joshua's daughter Nyambura. Joshua and Christianity represent the ultimate threat to the tribe, denouncing as they do the tribe's customs and way of life as heathen and pagan. "Waiyaki felt himself standing outside all this. And at times he felt isolated." p. 69 *The River Between*.

At an individual level Waiyaki is a man with a strong driving spirit that kept him on the move. He "yearned for something that would fill him whole, a thing that would take possession of the whole of himself ... (his eyes) spoke of that yearning, that longing for something that would fill him all in all" p.69 *ibid*. Upon the death of his father, he felt he had all of a sudden become a grown man. His vision had come to him at this point in his life.

In Jungian terms, Waiyaki had successfully advanced beyond the containment / nurturance stage of his psychic development. He was no longer living 'in the mother'. Unlike Toundi, he had been 'born again' and then he had proceeded into the father world upon going though the rite of circumcision. His fresh entry into the world of reality was made even more harsh with the death of his father. Chege's death at this point in Waiyaki's life deprived him of a bridging figure to help him settle into the new world of achievement, work, struggle, a world of fierce competition and antagonistic forces. Waiyaki must stake his own claim in this world with strength of his own inner resources. Mercifully he was armed with an inner fire that burned strongly inside him.

CHAPTER FOUR

JOURNEYS OF SELF-DISCOVERY

Alienation of the individual, discussed in the previous chapter, occasions loss - loss of self, something, some part of oneself and / or one's identity. Loss manifests in discomfort, restlessness and the need to recover what has been lost. Often the individual has no clear conception of what has been lost but feels the loss nonetheless, and a sense of dislocation often accompanied by a feeling of lack of security.

The process of recovering what has been lost in order to resolve their alienation is a process towards self-understanding and self-realisation. It is generally an attempt towards reintegration. It may be a journey in the physical sense, with the physical movement symbolising a mental or spiritual process of search. It may also be a journey in figurative terms where the individual is reaching inside himself / herself to gain some understanding of themselves. A spiritual journey is one such symbolic journey. Mortimer (1990) identifies several dialectics of the journey motif: male versus female, individual versus collective, inner versus outer and successful versus thwarted journeys.

Okonkwo

Our first subject, Okonkwo, manifests inner psychic difficulties as evidenced in the discussion of the previous chapter. As observed earlier, his life is ruled by the fear of failure.

> "... his whole life was dominated by fear, the fear of failure and of weakness. It was deeper and more intimate than the fear of evil and capricious gods and of magic, the fear of the forest, and of the forces of nature, malevolent, red in tooth and claw. Okoknkwo's fear was greater than these. It was not external but lay deep within himself. It was the fear of himself, lest he should be found to resemble his father." p. 12-13 *Things Fall Apart*.

So pervasive and obsessive is this fear that it drives Okonkwo even to committing the ultimate crime of parricide when he killed his adopted son Ikemefuna. The relevance of this crime is that it causes a chink in the armour of the great Okonkwo who knows no

fear. Although he won't admit it, Okonkwo is deeply affected by the death of Ikemefuna at his own hand.

> "When did you become a shivering old woman,' Okonkwo asked himself, 'you, who are known in all the nine villages for your valour in war? How can a man who has killed five men in battle fall to pieces because he has added a boy to their number? Okonkwo, you have become a woman indeed." p. 59 *ibid.*

This social crime and an additional one at a village funeral forms part of the baggage that Okonkwo carries with him on his journey of self-discovery. Okonkwo's journey is not self-initiated. It is a physical exile forced on him as a societal sanction for the crime of taking the life of a clansman albeit accidentally. Okonkwo is exiled from his fatherland for seven years. The notable feature of Okonkwo's exile is that he is banished from his fatherland Umuofia and goes to live out seven years of his life in his motherland, Mbanta. In Jungian terms, he is cut off from the 'father world' and returns to the 'mother world'. Like the ghost in Hamlet, he is doomed for a certain term to walk the night. For a man of his nature, this is a traumatic experience.

An examination of Okonkwo's new situation reveals some interesting paradoxes in the context of the individuation process. Okonkwo is an individual who effectively has partially skipped or circumvented the first stage of the individuation process - the maternal containment stage. In his anxiety to obliterate any personal qualities that would link him with Unoka, the father he so despised, Okonkwo has trivialised any remnant connections with and significance of the mother world and fast-tracked into the father world of, in his understanding, violence, war and physical prowess. Paradoxically, Unoka represents to Okonkwo the very opposite of the qualities of the father. Unoka is effeminate, abhors violence and other 'male' activities.

In analytical psychology, the 'incest-wish' - the wish to remain a child - is countered by the (symbolic) appearance of the heroic, i.e. a surge of ambition and energy that provides the necessary push from the comfort and security of Eden into the outer world of challenging reality. The hero in this case is the archetypal energy that kills the dragon

(incest wish) and liberates the princess (the soul) thus allowing the ability to move forward in life (Murray, 2006: 206).

Okonkwo has certainly never displayed the incest wish. In physical terms, he had made his farewells to his mother thirty years earlier when he accompanied her body from Umuofia to her homeland Mbanta for burial, and he was only a boy then. The female qualities that he despised were embodied not by his mother but by his father. Okonkwo made his entry into the patriarchal stage of individuation in a much hurried and over-compensatory way. His crisis, therefore, is not failure to enter the second stage but an abrupt and ill-prepared entry with haste, his motivational energy (libido) coming from an altogether wrong source! Consequently, Okonkwo has inadequate social decorum and social graces that are part of acceptance of one's responsibilities towards others in a social environment.

Hence it is not surprising that he finds himself catapulted backwards - back into the mother world instead of moving forward into the third stage of his life. The seven years of exile in Mbanta encapsulate his journey of self-discovery. The mother figure for him this time around is his uncle Uchendu. It is Uchendu who organises ceremonial sacrifices and rites for Okonkwo after he learns of his misfortune. Okonkwo was a much troubled and frustrated man.

> "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 on to a dry, sandy beach, panting. Clearly his personal god or *chi* was not made for great things. A man could not rise beyond the destiny of hi *chi*. The saying of the elders was not true - that if a man said yea his *chi* also affirmed. Here was a man whose *chi* said nay despite his own affirmation. The old man, Uchendu, saw clearly that Okonkwo had yielded to despair and he was greatly troubled. Hew would speak to him after the *isa-ifi* ceremony." p. 119 *ibid.*

It is Uchendu who explains to Okonkwo the fact of his new status. He rebukes Okonkwo for sorrowing over his getting thrown back to his mother explains to him the importance of the mother. "You have many wives and many children - more children than I have. You are a great man in your clan. But you are still a child, my child." The child may belong to its father, but its source of protection is its mother. This is an affirmation of the nurturane role of the mother world.

> "Its true that a child belongs to its father. But when a father beats his child, it seeks sympathy in its mother's hut. A man belongs to his fatherland when things are good and life is sweet. But when there is sorrow and bitterness he finds refuge in his motherland. Your mother is there to protect you. She is buried there. And that is why we say that mother is supreme." p.122 *ibid.*

Okonkwo has been brought to his knees, figuratively speaking, after collisions with the world of reality, and has had to go back into containment to be nurtured and healed for a period before he can emerge and face harsh reality again. That, in summary, is the nature of Okonkwo's journey.

Toundi

Toundi's story starts at the point where he has banished himself from his own world and attached himself to Father Gilbert's world where he is doomed to live as an 'eternal child'. The rest of the account is a spiritual journey in the sense that in the period that he has embraced his new world after cutting himself away from the old, he has had to launch into a process of learning, and much of it accidental and not of his own making. It is based on his embracing Christianity.

Much like Okonkwo, Toundi has taken premature leave of the mother world, but for different reasons. He is fascinated by the white priest who rides on a motor-bike and distributes sugar-lumps to black children. His father accused him:

> "Your greediness will be the ruin of us. Anyone would think you don't have enough to eat at home. So on the day before your initiation you have to cross a

stream to go begging lumps of sugar from some white man-woman who is a complete stranger to you." p. 10 _Houseboy_.

His mother had also made the same observation: "My mother often used to say, laughing, 'Toundi, what will your greediness bring you to ...?"p. 14 _ibid_. Father Gilbert, the white priest, has a different opinion of the cause of Toundi's defection. "Father Gilbert believes it was the Holy Spirit that led me to him" p.9 _ibid_.

Toundi's father, like Okonkwo and other men of his persuasion, ruled his household with a strong arm and physical violence was a prescription for correcting and instilling discipline in both Toundi and Toundi's mother. On one such occasion Toundi's father decides that Toundi will not eat his food that day, and orders his wife to give up the food she had reserved for Toundi.

> "My mother got up and fetched he pot. I saw my father's hand and my uncle's hand go in. Then I heard my mother crying. For the first time in my life I thought of killing my father." p.12 _ibid_.

This incident marks a significant point in Toundi's psychological development. There is no love lost between him and his father, hence no love with the world that his father represents. This is the world of authority and physical violence to enforce that authority. It is much to his tragedy, then, that he chooses to leave his father's world and enters an even more violent world of the white man. Toundi is not to be mocked over his poor choice, for what he saw of that world at the time was a sugar coating. He was not to know what lay underneath the sugar coating.

Typical of the child that he is, Toundi so identifies himself with Father Gilbert that upon his (Gilbert's) death, he sums up his feelings thus: "But for me, it more than mourning. I have died my first death." p.20 _ibid_. It is after this that he becomes the Commandant's boy, and starts to encounter progressive violence that culminates in his death. Slowly, but steadily, the violence he has seen inflicted on other African as a sport by the whites, starts to find a target of him and builds up into a personal nightmare.

In his naivety, Toundi's eyes stray and explore his masters' world. He sees things he is not supposed to see. Ultimately he even discovers that the Commandant, the man he had always feared, is uncircumcised.

"I was relieved by this discovery. It killed something inside me ... I knew I should never be frightened of the Commandant again." p.28 *ibid.*

This incident in Toundi's journey signifies the beginning of the loss of enigma that the white man's world has always held for him. Unfortunately for him, the colonial world was built on the foundation of master / slave relation, and a slave who sees through his master's shell of superiority becomes an instant liability. This is the diagnosis of Toundi's ailment. Matters come to a head when the Commandant has a confrontation with his wife in Toundi's presence after discovering her adulterous affair with Moreau. He accuses Toundi of being a go-between for his wife and her lover.

Kalisia, the new African chambermaid, is wiser than Toundi and warns him of the danger he is in.

"If I were in your place,' she said, 'I'd go now before the river has swallowed me up altogether. Our ancestors used to say you must escape when the water is still only up to the knees. While you are still about, the Commandant won't be able to forget. It's silly, but that's how it is with these whites. For him, you'll be ... I don't know what to call it ... you'll be something like the eye of the witch that sees and knows ... A thief or anyone with a guilty conscience can never feel at ease in the presence of that eye ...because you know all their business, while you are still here, they can never forget about it altogether. And they will never forgive you for that." p.100 *ibid.*.

Despite such elaborate warning, Toundi is lethargic almost to the point of imbecility. It is this innate quality that will cost him his life in the end. He is unable to escape his fate as the train of his tragic life picks up speed hurtling downhill into the abyss. He has enough sense of awareness to express contempt at his torturer the Commandant by spitting into his glass of drinking water but lacks enough motivation to save himself. By the simple act of handing Toundi over to Gullet, the Commandant has sentenced Toundi to death and

literally handed him over for crucifixion. There are no tears for Toundi, except from Kalisia. "I went after the two white men. Big tears ran down Kalisia's cheeks as she tied my apron round her waist ... Madame went over to her flower-bed, skipping like a little girl." p.106 *ibid*. Later, in his pain as he is being mercilessly whipped, he recalls three people: "The image of Kalisia came up before my eyes. It was followed by Madame's image and then my father's ..." p.113 *ibid*. Kalisia had shown him human concern and affection; Madame is the woman he had imagined he loved but who was his undoing. His father represents the missed identity he had run away from, the bridge he had refused to cross when he ran away before his initiation into manhood.

Meka
Meka in *The Old Man and the Medal* undergoes a psychological journey in the form of his ill-fated trip to the medal award ceremony. It is an experience made more poignantly sad by the fact o his advanced age. To be caricatured and humiliated by the whites is one thing but to have this done to one at an age when one is supposed to command the respect that comes with advanced years is double humiliation.

At the opening of the account, Meka is in trepidation after getting a summons from the white Commandant. He is relieved when he gets there to find it is good news after all.

> "You have done much to forward the work of France in this country. You have given your lands to the missionaries, you have given your two sons in the war when they found a glorious death. (He wiped away an imaginary tear.) You are a friend ... The medal that we going to give you means you are more than our friend." p.19 *The Old Man and the Medal*.

When the much-awaited day of the ceremony arrives, Meka is to suffer much discomfort occasioned by his being positioned conspicuously away from other medal recipients who are white and being made to wait an inordinately long time. His discomfort is exacerbated by his wearing shoes and clothes that are new and ill-fitting. "Meka peered around him cautiously like an animal that feels watched. ...He was not with his own

people, and he was not with the others. He wondered what he was doing out there". Meka realises what a ridiculous figure he is at that moment, less than a man, a circumcised man at that being an embarrassment to his ancestors. As if that were not enough, an urgent call of nature conspires to aggravate his already unenviable position. Meka closes his eyes and prays to the white God in pitiful tones.

The whole farce of the award ceremony makes Meka take a critical look at himself and he comes to several realisations: he is a black man and the whites will never accept him as an equal. There is no meeting point between black and white. Even his Christianity does not bring him any closer to brotherhood with the whites, neither does the surrender of his ancestral land to the church not the sacrifice of his sons who died in a white man's war. All that he is is an old fool. Even his wife Kelara comes to this realisation.

> "She saw her husband, his head gleaming in the sun, grin foolishly at the Chief of the whitemen. Something happened inside her which she could not understand. Meka seemed to her like someone she had never seen before ... The man laughing over there had no connection with her. She felt frightened at herself. She rubbed her eyes and looked at Meka again. The corners of her mouth drooped in a grimace of contempt." p.95 *ibid.*

A sodden drunken mess, Meka reflects:

> "Man is a lonely creature ... I have lost my medal. I have lost everything ... everything. I am all alone, alone in the world." p.121 *ibid.*

Meka continues his solitary walk through the rain, winds up arrested for being a vagabond and spends the night in the police cells.

> "The constable flung a kick at him which knocked him off balance and he fell inside. The door slammed on his heels. Meka was once more in the primeval dark." p.129 *ibid.*

At the end of his ordeal, all Meka can do is philosophise. 'Poor us' becomes his refrain. His has been a traumatic journey.

Waiyaki

Waiyaki's journeying is rather different from that of the other subjects. Despite his young age, he is a highly spiritual individual, a legacy from his father Chege who was believed to have some extra-human powers. Waiyaki does not encounter direct conflict situation with the whites as the others under study, but his position of teacher and leader in his community places upon him the responsibility of searching for solutions to the threat posed by spread of Christianity and the white people. This position ultimately places him up against the rest of his community. Waiyaki's father had been guardian of the ways of the tribe.

> "For he knew, more than any other person, the ways of the land and the hidden
> things of the tribe. He knew the meaning of every ritual and every sign. So, he
> was at the head of every important ceremony." p.8 *The River Between*.

Chege's social position in the tribe was inherited by Waiyaki. Chege had prepared him well. Waiyaki's preparation started with a physical and spiritual journey to the sacred grove in the hills south of Kameno.

> "Waiyaki was excited. He felt ready to start on the journey there and then. What
> were they going to do together, what were they going to see? It was a secret, a
> man's secret. What other hidden things did his father hold in his ageing body? He
> wished Chege had told him more, but he would know all, everything, tomorrow.
> It would be a great day. The journey was important. As he ran into his mother's
> hut and sat down, he felt important and very big." p.17. The next day, on the hill
> of God, Waiyaki encounters for the first time the sacred tree that towered over the
> hill and stood watch over the whole country. "It looked holy and awesome,
> dominating Waiyaki's soul so that he felt very small and in the presence of a
> mighty power. This was a sacred tree. It was the tree of *Murungu* (God). From up
> there, the two ridges Kameno and Makuyu lost their antagonistic stance and lay in
> peace. The sacred grove was to remain for Waiyaki a rallying point, a source of
> strength and rejuvenation. It was at the grove that Chege that day revealed the
> prophecy to Waiyaki: "Salvation shall come from the hills. From the blood that

flows in me, I say from the same tree, a son shall rise. And his duty shall be to lead and save the people." p.24 *ibid*.

With the revelation to Waiyaki of his role among the people, Chege additionally charged him:

"Arise. Heed the prophecy. Go to the Mission place. Learn all the wisdom and all the secrets of the white man. But do not follow his vices. Be true to your people and the ancient rites." p.24 *ibid*.

Waiyaki was to follow this charge faithfully, even in times of severe conflict. During difficult times when he needed strength and comfort Waiyaki would make the journey to the sacred grove or to the Honia river which flowed always peacefully and never stopped.

As per instructions given him, Waiyaki did make the journey into the white man's world of learning. So convinced was he about the need to acquire the white man's learning as a weapon of his own people's survival that this was to be used against him by his detractors. They accused him of selling out by embracing the ways of the white man at the expense of preserving the purity of the tribe.

In their various journeying, the subjects have encountered a range of experiences. Okonkwo has endured exile and spatial dislocation. Toundi endured violence and spatial dislocation, while Meka has undergone psychological and physical degradation. Waiyaki has undergone spiritual searching and wandering.

CHAPTER FIVE

GENDER AND INDIVIDUATION

Preceding chapters have examined man's alienation and subsequent search for self-understanding from the perspective of male characters - Okonkwo, Waiyaki, Toundi and Meka. This chapter examines the process, particularly the journey to self-understanding, from the female perspective, based on the characters in the four texts. This is necessitated by the possibility that man's reality and woman's reality have variations rooted in the fact of gender dynamics. Women's journeys take distinct and different forms based on the peculiarity of the circumstances that surround them as subjects.

The African female protagonist is engaged in a twofold struggle against the vestiges of colonialism on the one hand, and the grip of traditional patriarchy on the other (Mortimer, 1990). In fact to these two could be added a third obstacle - internal psychic difficulties in the make-up of the individual. African tradition has generally reserved the public space for men and confined women to the private (domestic) space. It is against this background that while men journey outward, women generally tend to journey inward because of the spatial limitation imposed on women's freedom of movement (Mortimer, 1990:10). Mortimer quotes a Berber proverb that says: "Man is the outer lamp; woman is the inner lamp". The inner journey includes personal thoughts, past memories, the collective experience of the family or clan, among other contents, and similarly leads to clarity of thought and self-understanding, just as the outer journey does. The emphasis lies on the external (for men) and internal (for women).

In *The River Between* while Chege reveals to Waiyaki the hidden things of the hills, he gives him a historical (fable) account of women and loss of power:

> "Once they disturbed an antelope from its hiding place. It leapt - leapt - leapt away. Waiyaki liked antelopes. He always felt a desire to touch their smooth bodies. "They see men and run away." "Why? Don't they run away from women?' Waiyaki asked, puzzled. The forest was quiet. One could still catch the fading throb of the river. "You don't know this! Long ago women used to rule this land

and its men. They were harsh and men began to resent their hard hand. So when all the women were pregnant, men came together and overthrew them. Before this, women owned everything. The animal you saw was their goat. But because the women could not manage them, the goats ran away. So why should they fear them?' It was then Waiyaki understood why his mother owned nothing." p.18 *The River Between*.

In Okonkwo's, Toundi's, Meka's and Waiyaki's world, women are generally and universally relegated to the status of 'eternal child'. The validation of their existence is their relationship to fathers or husbands. Okonkwo's wives and children are as much a part of his estate as are his fields, his crops and his dwelling structures. Occasionally, though, the reader gets a view of the influence of a woman character in the unfolding of particular strands of the novels. One such woman character Muthoni in *The River Between*. Although not a central character, she does influence and affect the pathos of the tale with her relentless and tragic search for self-definition.

Muthoni

Muthoni's reason for wanting to undergo the rite of circumcision is very simple and straightforward:

"I want to be a woman. I want to be a real girl, a real woman, knowing all the ways of the hills and ridges." p.26 *ibid*.

Muthoni is an individual with a strong need to come into her own, that is, to achieve a higher level of existence than she has done so far, and the path to this is the path of circumcision. When she is circumcised, not only will she become a 'real' woman, but she will also attain wisdom that is elusive to those who have not walked the path of circumcision. When her sister Nyambura reminds her that her father is a Christian, She accepts that she too is a Christian but

"... the white man's god does not quite satisfy me. I want, I need something more." p.26 *ibid*.

When Muthoni is discovered to have gone to Kameno for circumcision, her father's reaction is at first extreme anger then eventually pious resignation.

"All right. Let her go back to Egypt. Yes. Let her go back. He, Joshua, would travel on, on to the new Jerusalem." p.36 *ibid.*

Having undergone circumcision, Muthoni feels that she is now complete. She has found whatever it is she was looking for, despite the fact that her wound is fatal and the rift between her and her father over her decision is unto death. She also has to resolve the conflict of her choice to perform a 'pagan' rite despite her belonging to the (new) Christian faith, but in circumcision Muthoni has found her salvation.

"Tell Nyambura I see Jesus. And I am a woman, beautiful in the tribe." p.53 *ibid.* She went out seeking, and she found. The path to self-realisation for this young Gikuyu woman is circumcision, this despite the fact of circumcision being a loss, an act of excision of part of one's body. She chose to lose a part of herself in order to attain (spiritual) completeness. It is remarkable that she has found completeness not only by entering the gates of tribal life and wisdom, but she has also grown close to Jesus of the Christian faith. According to her personal conviction she has managed to unify the two opposing forces in her life, albeit at the cost of her life.

In analytical psychology, Muthoni could be said to have achieved a feature that signifies an individual finding her 'Self'. This feature is the unifying of opposites. In doing so, she has also achieved wholeness. Jung saw the Self as a *complexio oppositorum*, a site of inner conflict and opposition which is resolved through the individuation process to achieve a *coincidentia oppositorum*, a union of opposites which brings about wholeness (Colman, 2006). In fact, the goal of psychic development is the Self.

Nyambura, on the other hand, lacks the courage of conviction that Muthoni has. She (Nyambura) spends a long time trapped between her need to be loyal and obedient to her father and the need to beat her own path in life. She has been brought up to believe that deviating from her father's directives is tantamount to rebellion and is sinful. Hence when she realises that she is in love with Waiyaki, she has to hod herself away from him because Waiyaki belongs to the tribe and not to the Christian faith espoused by Joshua and his followers. Muthoni had told Nyambura when she asked why Muthoni did what

she did: "I wanted to be a woman. One day, Nyambura, you will know.' 'Let me never know, let me ...' 'You too will have to make a choice one day." Nyambura eventually does make a choice, after a long period of conflict between her need to obey her father Joshua and the drive to give in to her love for Waiyaki. Life has not given her the freedom to choose who to love. Joshua hates all that Waiyaki stands for and will not permit Nyambura to go anywhere near him

> "Let me catch you! Let me catch you with him again'. There was more than malice in that voice. Nyambura did not say anything else. This was her reward for being true and obedient to him. And because of her obedience she had lost the one man whom she loved. And with him her salvation. That night she could not sleep. She wept all the time, praying that God should kill her." p.116 *ibid.*

When she finally makes her choice, Nyambura does so in a dramatic manner, choosing to step out of her father's house with Waiyaki the night Waiyaki went over to warn Joshua of the Kiama plot to harm him and other Christians. It was a complete rebellion when Nyambura took Waiyaki's hand and declared "You are brave and I love you" p.136. For that, Joshua disowns her. "You are not my daughter." p.136.

The impediments in Nyambura's psychic development are illustrative of the difficulties faced by women in her social milieu generally on the path of individuation. She has to contend not only with her path of human development, but with conflicting external factors in the form of societal obligations placed upon the woman. Her male counterpart will have none or little of these limitations. Where a man is expected to forge forward, the woman is expected to hold back, regardless of the characters of the individuals. They are simply required to fit into pre-shaped moulds.

Kelara

Kelara, in *The Old Man and the Medal*, is presented in the stereotypical image of a woman totally subjugated to her husband Meka. All her married life she has lived under the shadow of Meka. Meka makes all the decisions in their home. Even her Christianity (Catholicism) is a decision made by Meka. She is Catholic by virtue of being Meka's wife and she even faithfully goes through the rituals of crossing herself in the name of

'Yesooss Christooss' without questioning. She was first 'given' to Meka as a wife-to-be by her father when she was yet a baby and Meka had nursed the chubby baby on his man's lap.

What is remarkable about Kelara is that despite her status, she does have a character of her own that occasionally manifests. Regarding Meka's situation with the medal ceremony, Kelara is the first to arrive at the truth of their situation before Meka does. Kelara's moment of truth was triggered by a remark by a man (the Commandant's boy) who stood near her at the ceremony and who evidently did not know who she was.

> "I think they ought to have covered him in medals. That would have been more like it! To think he has lost his land and his sons just for that ..." p.94 _The Old Man and the Medal_.

At that moment for Kelara the penny dropped. The excitement of Meka getting a medal from the great white man paled into insignificance against the sorrow occasioned by the loss of her two sons. At that precise moment Kelara saw the ridiculous position that Meka had been put into by the white man.

> "She saw her husband, his head gleaming in the sun, grin foolishly at the Chief of the whitemen. Something happened inside her which she could not understand. Meka seemed to her like someone she had never seen before. Could that be her husband who was grinning away over there? ... The man laughing over there had no connection with her. She felt frightened at herself. She rubbed her eyes and looked at Meka again. The corners of her mouth drooped in a grimace of contempt." p.95 ibid.

Kelara's contempt for Meka at that point was the contempt of an African whose eyes had just been opened and was able to see the degrading spectacle of the black-white relationship that assumed no human intelligence on the part of the black, the slave and master relationship. Kelara's revulsion was directed at the hypocrisy of a system that demanded the ultimate sacrifice of the African and kept him blindfolded from the truth of

his true position of a mere tool. The African laboured under the illusion of a brotherhood between back and white as espoused by Christianity.

Although Kelara has grasped the truth, she has no power to change anything. She is only a woman and a wife. She thanks the Commnadant's boy for helping to open her eye.

> "It was you who spoke just now,' she said to him. 'Thank you. The Holy Spirit spoke through your mouth."p.95 *ibid.*

Back at the village, Kelara vents out in active wailing.

> "Is any wife or mother more wretched than I am? I thought I had married a man, a real man ... instead I married an arse-full of shit. My children, my poor children - sold like the Lord who was sold by Judas ... He at least did it for money. The man who lay with me so that I should bear you did not get a good price for the drops of his seed. Both of you together, my little ones, priced at one medal ... Is any wife more wretched than I am?' she repeated." p.99-100 *ibid.*

Achebe's women, in *Things Fall Apart*, are generally plastered into the background like wallpaper. They are there for functionary reasons, but are not meant to be particularly noticed as characters in the way that their menfolk are. For most of the time they are nameless. Among Okonkwo's women, his daughter Ezinma is the one who particularly breaks to the surface as a factor in Okonkwo's life, even then this is by virtue of her possessing qualities that Okonkwo considers 'manly' therefore worthy of note. In the period just after Ikemefuna's killing, Okonkwo is often reflective about his life and particularly about his offspring. He is disappointed with his son Nwoye who he considers less than manly. In admiring the young Maduka, son to Obierika, Okonkwo enthuses:

> "He will do great things,' Okonkwo said. 'If I had a son like him I should be happy. I am worried about Nwoye. A bowl of pounded yams can throw him in a wrestling match. His two younger brothers are more promising. But I can tell you, Obierika, that my children do not resemble me. Where are the young suckers that will grow when the old banana tree dies? If Ezinma had been a boy I would have been happier. She has the right spirit." p.59-60, *Things Fall Apart*.

By 'the right spirit', Okonkwo means that Ezinma is more 'male' than Nwoye. She exhibits 'male' qualities whereas Nwoye exhibits 'female' qualities.

Ezinma, daughter of Ekwefi - Okonkwo's thrid wie, is close to her father, shares an attitude of heart with him which is absent in Nwoye. She offers to carry Okonkwo's stool to the wrestling match and he has to remind her that it is a boy's job. He even reminds her to 'sit like a woman' when they are together. Ezinma and her father are soul-mates. Were it not for societal sanctions, Ezinma would have potential for developing her animus - the male side of her personality, but as she is a girl, that tendency towards 'male personality is to be ignored or actively discouraged. Jungian psychology, however, prescribes that for a man or woman to achieve wholeness, it is essential that they develop both the feminine and masculine sides of his/her personality (Mattoon, 1984: 84).

Despite their fitting into their tailored minor roles as Achebe created all his female characters in _Things Fall Apart_, Ezinma and Ekwefi's characters have the inherent potential to subvert the partriarchal balance of the text; Ezinma for the occasional glimpses of her 'male' personality and Ekwefi for her ability to influence Okonkwo such as in the manner of her marriage to him and the allure of her beauty.

Kalisia

Kalisia, the new chambermaid to Toundi's Madame, stands out among the female characters in _Houseboy_. Even though she is only introduced nearly at the end of the story, she has a major contribution to the story in so far as she relates with Toundi. Kalisia is a strong personality. Although she suffers the 'handicap' of being African in his violent colonial environment, she has learnt to stand her ground and stake her claim as a human being - regardless of being white or black. Her first encounter with the white Madame is a silent clash out of which Kalisia emerges the undisputed 'victor'.

"Madame put her mail to one side and crossed her legs. Kalisia stared at Madame with that look of insolent indifference that always infuriates her when it comes from an African. The contrast between the two women was striking. The African

was completely calm with a calmness that seemed nothing could ever trouble. She looked at Madame without concern, with the look of a ruminant sheep ... Madame changed colour twice. Suddenly her dress became damp at the armpits. This wave of perspiration always heralded one of her rages. She looked Kalisia up and down. The corners of her mouth were turned down. She stood up. Kalisia was slightly taller. Madame began to walk round her. Kalisia although she pretended to be staring intently at her hands was now completely absent. Madame came back and sat down in front of her. She stamped her foot ..."p.93-94 _Houseboy_.

In her own crude way, Kalisia understands white people. It is she who encourages Toundi to escape his fate after the Commandant had a confrontation with his wife in Toundi's presence over her cuckolding him with Moreau.

"If I were in your place,' she said, "I'd go now before the river has swallowed me up altogether. Our ancestors used to say you must escape when the water is still only up to the knees. While you are still about the Commandant won't be able to forget. It's silly but that's how it is with these whites. For him, you'll be .. I don't know what to call it ... you'll be something like the eye of the witch that sees and knows. A thief or anyone with a guilty conscience can never feel at ease in the presence of that eye..."p.100 _ibid_.

Kalisia warns Toundi she has a premonition of something terrible to happen but unfortunately Toundi does not act on her advice. During his moment of extreme pain as the hippopotamus hide whip is coming down on him, Toundi's mind conjures up the images of three people: Kalisia, the white Madame and his father, in that order.

Sophie

Smith (1986) views the women in _Houseboy_ as playing the politics of collaboration and secretly undermining the power of the colonial oppressors under the veneer of their typical secondary and supportive role to the menfolk and in their society. Sophie, the black African mistress of the white French engineer has learnt to cope with her unhappy role as both a woman object of pleasure for her white lover as well as an inconvenience

for being a colonial subject. She suffers abuse both physically and emotionally. While her white lover is appreciative of her 'female' services in secret, he cannot allow himself to be seen with her in public. He makes her ride in the back of the van while he is in front, and passes her off a s a cook. Sophie endures only for what she can get out of him. Ultimately she gets her own back by emptying the engineer's cash box and walking out on him - a crime of theft for which Toundi is conveniently implicated when Sophie is nowhere to be found. Sophie has all along had plans for a new life out in Spanish Guinea and the engineer's money and clothes provide the break she needed. Both Sophie and Kalisia employ sexual politics as survival strategies. Although their sex is a disadvantaging factor, they calculatingly use it to gain whatever advantages it can offer them.

The Female Psyche

In the second stage of the individuation process, one encounters what Jung referred to as the 'soul-image'. This is an archetypal image: *anima* for a man and *animus* for a woman. The anima / animus archetype is said to be the mediator between the conscious ego and the unconscious and reconciles the two (Ackroyd, 2006). The soul-image (anima / animus) is said to have characteristics which are the opposite of those possessed by one's persona. Jung emphasises that 'female' elements exist in every man and 'male' elements exist in every woman (Kast, 2006:113). For individuation to take place, one needs to understand one's anima or animus in order to distinguish the conscious personality from the archetypal influences (Kast, 2006:117). As long as they remain unconscious they are liable to behave as autonomous complexes, with negative effects. When they are brought into consciousness they add meaning to life. Jung refers to this differentiation between ego and anima / animus as the masterpiece of analysis (Kast, 2006:117).

The animus functions differently in different women, positively or negatively. In what Harding refers to as 'animus-hounds', it manifests in a woman being opinionated, abrasive, competitive and aggressive (Mattoon, 1984:87). In anima-type women, the animus is scarcely perceivable. This type tends to be overly dependent on men. Mattoon (1984:.88) describes a woman who has 'played the anima' as one who has lived according to men's expectations and assumed men to always be strong, knowledgeable and

competent. A character like Kelara falls neatly into this category, until she is rudely forced into the realisation that her male hero is, after all, vulnerable. Mattoon, however, notes that there are some women who cannot be described as either anima or animus type as they are well-balanced in personality, i.e. well developed in both femininity and masculinity.

Other scholars have identified structural forms of the female psyche. According to Wolff's enquiry (discussed by Mattoon), there are four possible forms (usually occurring in pairs) namely: (i) the Mother and Hetaera forms and (ii) the Amazon and Medial forms. The former's major interest and energy go into personal relationships while the latter are interested primarily in 'objective cultural values' such as ideas (Mattoon, 984:90-91). Guggenbuhl-Craig (1977) offers a larger number of distinctions, *inter alia*:

- Maternal: nourishing and protective (or devouring) in earthy form, inspiring (or threatening) in spiritual form; examples are Toundi's mother and the goddess Ani.
- Mater dolorosa: the mother who has lost her son in war or in an accident in his youth and who identifies with the role of the bereaved mother; an example is Kelara.
- Hetaera: a woman who is independent but enjoys the company of men and is their uninhibited companion in sexual pleasure, wit and learning; an example is Kalisia.
- Aphrodite: named for the goddess of love, she is the desirable beloved; some examples are Nyambura, Ekwefi, Sophie and Madame Decazy.
- Athene: the woman who is energetic, self-sufficient, non-sexual, nevertheless helpful to men; an example is Ezinma.
- Conqueror: widows and divorced women who are independent and relieved to have the man absent.
- Amazon: the independent career woman who rejects men, loves 'conquests' (e.g. achievements) and enjoys the company of women.
- Artemis: the woman who is hostile to men, except for her brothers. Named for the goddess of the hunt, she has goals to pursue that are incompatible with relations with men.
- Vestal Virgin: the nun or priestess. These women devote their lives to God or to a cause, but not to men and children; an example is Muthoni.

On the whole, treatment of women characters in the four texts is typical of the colonial era in the history of Africa. They fail to come out clearly as individuals because the author created them for the purpose of playing supportive roles to the main male characters. In some cases this is much more striking than in others. _Things Fall Apart_ is a case in point. Interestingly, Achebe clearly brings out the feminine principle in Umuofia's governing cosmogony in the form of the goddess Ani who is an earth goddess and source of all fertility. She is declared to play a greater part in the life of the people than any other deity. However, observes Quayson (1994), at all times the feminine principle always attracts some masculine essentiality in its definition. The all-powerful goddess Ani is declared to be "in close communion with the departed fathers of the clan whose bodies had been committed to earth." p.33. In other words, he power is qualified by the fact of her affinity with the males, dead though they may be.

Muthoni in _The River Between_ is often criticised by critics for not being sufficiently developed as a character. Even her self-sacrifice to the fatal circumcising knife is considered to be futile in terms of achievement as it does not in real terms bring any reconciliation to the two opposing societies - traditional and Christian. She is twice alienated, from the tribe and from Christianity, yet her quest for achieving wholeness through mutilation fails to bear fruit. There is no reconciliation between tribe and Christianity (Levin, 1986:214). Perhaps without expressly intending to, _The River Between_ displays the oppressiveness of colonialism to the African and how, consequently, repression of the African male translates into scapegoating of the female. This scapegoating manifests in promotion of vile customs such as female circumcision. Increasingly disempowered and emasculated, males tended to intensify pressure on females. History documents how at the height of the land crisis in Kenya when colonialists were encroaching on Kikuyu land, the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) were maligned by the missionaries for defending clitoridectomy. The KCA, on the other hand, were bent on defending Kikuyu land and culture (for land and culture were to them an inseparable pair). Consequently the issue of the harm of clitoridectomy on women became intertwined with the Kikuyu's grievance against white settlers taking their land (Strobel, 1984:96). Caught in the middle of the conflict were females like Muthoni.

Colonialism thus dealt women a double blow that affected the psychological welfare of the woman. Alienated they certainly were, but their journeys of self-discovery also tended to be thwarted or pathetically misdirected.

CHAPTER SIX

RECONCILIATION

The theme of this chapter - reconciliation - implies resolution. Accordingly the discussion will centre on the process of psychic resolution with regard to the subjects under study. To set a background for that, the discussion must be predicated by an exploration of the Jungian view, particularly of the part of the individuation process that captures attainment of psychic completion, or near completion.

The centering or integrating stage of the individuation process, said to be mostly entered in the second half of an individual's life, is the quest to become a centred and whole individual (Murray, 2006). The individual at this stage is looking for something more than simply the refining of patriarchal attitudes and the disposing of lingering residues of childish complexes acquired in the earlier stages of the process. Integrating is about finding a personal centre, free of the baggage of stereotypes of collective culture. It entails gravitating towards a centre based on intimations of the Self (archetype). The integrated person is one that is grounded in the archetype of the Self rather than in thew unconscious mother or father images. In addition, Jung speaks of integrating the Shadow and relating in a new conscious way to the anima or animus. Jung's perception of the psyche places the individual at the mid-point of psychic life with the collective conscious and collective unconscious at opposite extremes as follows (Colman, 2006:154):

Collective consciousness / external reality

↓ ↑

persona

↓ ↑

individual

↓ ↑

anima

↓ ↑

collective unconscious

The goal of integration is the union of pairs of the psyche that make up or characterise the bits and pieces of the psyche, pairs such as conscious / unconscious, individual / collective, person / shadow (good/bad), masculine / feminine, child / adult, right brain / left brain, thinking / feeling, introversion / extraversion, etc. In this regards Jung perceived the Self as a *complexio oppositorum*. The process of individuation offers a resolution of this inner conflict and opposition into a *coincidentia oppositorum*, a union of opposites, thereby achieving wholeness (Colman, 2006:154).

It is this wholeness or completion that preoccupied Jung when he started exploring quartenity symbols, specifically when he started painting mandalas. The climax of this came in the form of his famous 'Pool of life' dream that depicted the city of Liverpool as a typical mandala and the dreamer found himself at the centre of a square where many streets converged. He described a round pool in the centre of the square, in the middle of which was an island. What is interesting is Jung's recollection of the import of the dream:

> "The dream brought with it a sense of finality. I saw that here the goal had been revealed. One could not go beyond the centre. The centre is the goal, and everything is directed towards that centre. Through this dream I understood that the self is the principle and archetype of orientation and meaning. Therein lies its healing function... The dream depicted the climax of the whole process of development of consciousness. It satisfied me completely, for it gave a total picture of my situation." (Jung 1963:224 (quoted by Colman)).

On the whole, definitions of the Self as defined by Jung are inclusive of: individuality, midpoint between conscious and unconscious, union of opposites, totality of the psyche, centre of the psyche, archetype, wholeness, organising principle.

It is to be noted that even before Jung developed his theory many thinkers across disciplines had pondered on the subject of what is broadly termed 'the human condition'. Man is always in search, and it is this notion of a search that has fascinated and continues to fascinate and preoccupy people over the generations. This explains how the concept of

'alienation' is to be found in a variety of disciplines such as in theology, philosophy, history, psychology, sociology, economics, politics, literature and others.

Contribution of Existentialism

The Danish existentialist philosopher Soren Kierkegaard (1813 - 1855) generally recognised as the 'germinal existentialist thinker' credited with providing the existentialist 'theme' (de Ruggiero, 1946:23) depicted in his theory the drama of a soul thirsting for God and from the abysses of despair arriving at moments of pacification and serene certitude. This despite Kierkegaard's basic theme being 'despair'. All life is infused with despair.

Anguish is the leit-motif of the Kierkegaard spirit (de Ruggiero, 1946:27) but from his despair, Kierkegaard felt the promise of salvation. From impending death, he saw the vivifying touch of grace (de Ruggiero, 1946:24). After Kierkegaard, existentialism was orchestrated notably by Heidegger and Jaspers, with many others after. Heidegger and others thereafter advanced existentialism along a path that ignored the spiritual values that it had in Kierkegaard's form, hence lacking the positive affective tonalities of joy, enthusiasm and dedication which may well override the anguish that characterises man's existence. Existentialism (post Kierkegaard) thus spoke of, or confirmed, the vanity of existence. Described as the philosophy of crisis, existentialism expresses not the spiritual crisis of man but a nihilistic solution of the crisis (de Ruggiero:1946). In moments of crisis the individual loses confidence in the collective order which supports him feels an acute anxiety to escape and save himself. Although the existentialist lives in society, he lives as an 'outsider' because he sees society as corrupt and questions what 'existence' or 'being' is. He does not withdraw physically as did the hermits of the ancient world who withdrew to monasteries. The existentialist's withdrawal takes place in the mind (Finkelstein, 1965:293).

The existentialist, however, is preoccupied with self preservation of his own dignity and is not encumbered with the need to the improvement of the human lot. Hence his religion

projects no image of God, of the after-life, heaven or hell but a personal and exclusive relation to God based on a morality of 'faith' or 'love of God'.

Religion

At the centre of religion is the concept of man's separation from God. This goes back to the fall of man and his subsequent exit from the Garden of Eden. The theme persists for instance in the New Testament account of the prodigal son who, in the 'far country' (vivid symbol of alienation) 'came to himself' - which is the mental point of realisation which launched his return to his father. Away from God, man is imprisoned in darkness, alone and lost in a vast alien world (Macquarrie, 1973:316). The philosopher Nietzsche explored this mood of forlornness of man after the death of God. Albert Camus refers to the world as an 'absurd' place to be rebelled against, while the writings of Jean-Paul Sartre, Frantz Kafka and Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* are further forays on the same path.

The predicament for man is whether to trust in the order of reality or accept the fact of 'dark, chaotic, threatening forces' otherwise termed 'cosmic nihilism'. Should man accept eternal 'anxiety', 'despair', 'separation' etc. or embrace a theology of atonement and reconciliation?

To return to Jungian individuation, realisation of the Self denotes final arrival or resolution. The mandala is an image at whose centre is the human being rather than a god (Main, 2006:305) because Jung equates the archetype of the Self with the God-archetype. Hence archetypal images of the Self are equated with God-images (Main, 2006:310)

The integrating stage of individuation discussed earlier is the point in the individual's life when spirituality takes a high profile. This is the stage where the individual is seeking the meaning of life, to discover the meaning of one's life.

Okonkwo

Earlier we explored Okonkwo's journeying or search for self-realisation. Okonkwo's journey can be said to end at the point of his return to Umuofia after his seven years of

exile in his motherland. Upon his return to Umuofia, Okonkwo is immediately plunged into the upheaval of the presence of a new religion, Christianity, which has been introduced by the white men (colonialists). The Umuofia that Okonkwo left at his banishment is no longer the Umuofia that Okonkwo returns to. "The church had come and led many astray. Not only the low-born and the outcast but sometimes a worthy man had joined it." p.157. Along with the church, the white man had also established government and a justice system that included courts of law and prisons. Erosion of traditional values came about with condemnation of traditional customs. African Christian converts voiced condemnation of their own customs.

> "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." p.160 *Things Fall Apart*.

Okonkwo's old world was now altered not only by the new religion but also by the 'benefits' attendant on colonialism - trade and economic benefits, schools and education, hospitals and medicine. Okonkwo's own son Nwoye, now christianed Isaac, had been recruited to train as a teacher. Against this background, there was no stir about Okonkwo's return, as he had hoped because he was the kind of person who enjoyed public recognition. He was no longer relevant to the pulse of life of the new Umuofia.

> "Okonkwo was deeply grieved. And it was not just a personal grief. He mourned
> for the clan, which he saw breaking up and falling apart, and he mourned for the
> warlike men of Umuofia, who had so unaccountably become soft like women."
> p.165 *ibid*.

It is consistent with his character and the way he had always lived his life that Okonkwo's end is so tragic. He is a man who literally lived by the sword. However, it cannot be denied that his circumstances were to a large extent determined by the accident of his living at a particular time and place in history, and powers greater than his won (Haddad, 1976). Okonkwo is a man of great personality conflicts that he lacks the ability to bring

under control. Driven by his need to subject everything and everyone to his will, he rejects that which he cannot bring into submission. Along with his community, he is driven by the need to protect himself from something new and strange (white men Christianity) but it turns out that the extreme extent to which he is prepared to go is not shared by others in his community. Okonkwo's drive is obsessive. Hence his bravery turns out to be folly. Further, Okonkwo's character is not identifiable with any sense of spirituality. Spirituality might have tempered his personality. Instead, he is a man who had enough folly to 'challenge' to gods of Umuofia by his belligerent behaviour. He thus refuses to submit himself to the order of life in Umuofia which is rooted in harmony between the gods and men.

Waiyaki

In Waiyaki's world, there are similar forces at play in the outer world of reality coloured by colonialism and Christianity. Waiyaki's people are steadily losing their land and heritage to the usurping white men. Christianity, as in Umuofia, has unleashed a conflict of allegiances that divides a wedge between children of the same god. Joshua and his band of Christians are in direct conflict with their fellow tribesmen because the former have been de-culturalised in their assumption of what they consider to be Christian values. The 'traditionalists', including Waiyaki, fight to retain their identity, and their identity includes their customs (good or bad) as well as their land.

Unlike Okonkwo who is very carnal, Waiyaki is a highly spiritual person. He draws his strength from his spirituality and his whole character speaks of strength beyond the physical. His mission is to unite the two adversary ridges of Kameno and Makuyu. Being the last in the line of descendants of the ancient seer Mugo wa Kibiro, Waiyaki was charged by his father Chege with the duty of saviour of the people in the face of the threat of the white man - the 'butterflies' of Mugo's vision.

> "Arise. Heed the prophecy. Go to the Mission place. Learn all the wisdom and all the secrets of the white man - but do not follow his vices. Be true to your people and the ancient rites." p.20 *The River Between*.

Thus on his young shoulders Waiyaki carried the burden of the future of his people. He was ushered into the outer world of reality at a point when other enjoyed their carefree youth. Equipped with his ability to tap into a power higher than himself, Waiyaki acquitted himself well, carrying the all-powerful vision of education as a tool for the salvation of his people. However, that which he sought to harness for good use was to be used against him. For attempting to be a bridge for his people, he is eventually to be accused and condemned of betraying them. The destruction of Waiyaki comes from forces outside of his control. He is simply the victim of a self-destructive community that has lost the ability to distinguish between friend and foe.

The hostilities created by loss of land to the white an, obligatory paying of taxes to an alien (white) government and the Christian-led onslaught on traditional customs - especially circumcision - all compounded and clouded the judgement of the people. Condemning their own (Waiyaki) is the beginning of disintegration for the people. Waiyaki had pondered on the paradox of both religions - the white man's and his people's.

> "...Waiyaki knew that not all the ways of the white man wee bad. Even his religion was not essentially bad. Some good, some truth shone through it. But the religion, the faith, needed washing, cleaning away all the dirt, leaving only the external. And that eternal that was the truth had to be reconciled to the traditions of the people ..." p. 141 *ibid.*

Joshua's Christianity, on the other hand, was fundamentally faulty.

> "He had clothed himself with a religion decorated and smeared with everything white. He renounced his past and cut himself away from those life-giving traditions of the tribe. And because he had nothing to rest upon, something rich and firm on which to stand and grow, he had to cling with his hands to whatever the missionaries taught him promised future." p.141 *ibid.*

Waiyaki's tragedy is that he cannot humanly survive the collision of the raging forces that are set for inevitable confrontation, and he is standing in the middle.

Toundi and Meka

Oyono's two protagonists - Meka and Toundi - both live out their experiences in the same colonial environment characterised by violence and total disregard of the African's status of a human being. As in Okonkwo and Waiyaki's cases, religion spices the entire cocktail of colonialism. Of the two, Toundi bears a more intense form of the violence in form of physical flogging, a punishment unto death. His life was characterised by an innocent 'voyeurism' into the world of the white man, for which he paid with his life. Toundi is an eternal child who never gets to grow up. Having jumped onto the train that is taking him on a ride to destruction, he stays on it and never considers jumping off even when danger signals are flashed continually in his face. He is in a state of lethargy and watches himself hurtling towards his demise. Toundi saw his destruction coming but would not save himself. He finally dies on foreign land, having escaped to Spanish Guinea with fatal injuries. On his deathbed he philosophises on his identity: "Brother, what are we? What are we black men who are called French?" p. 4, _Houseboy_. Finally, he laments his self-alienation. "I'd have made old bones if I'd been good and stayed at home in the village." p.4 _ibid_.

Meka, on the other hand, gets the opportunity to realise the folly of him, a black man, believing that he could ever be respectable in the eyes of the white man. Even when they offer him a recognition medal, they still regard him as a sub-human and treat him as such. The insulting and humiliating treatment he receives in place of honour leads him to reflect on his worth in the eyes of the whites and about his place in life. He can only repeat a pitiful mantra: "poor us, poor us". When he arrived at the village the following morning after his night of humiliation and was asked what happened, all he could say was:

"The whites! Just the whites." p.145, _The Old Man and the Medal_.

He who had embraced the white man's religion and its cause so much that he had sacrificed not only his land to the church but his two sons to die in a white man's war. For what? To end up realising that all he is and has ever been in the eyes of the white man is just a ridiculous figure of an old black man. His age is what adds more poignancy to Meka's sense of disillusionment. Had he been younger there might have been a chance for him to redeem himself in some way, but he is an old man who should have known better. At the end of his life, he is a man who can only feel resignation about the inevitabilities of life.

> "The women go to the river. The men to their work ... We can't do anything about what has happened. The whites will always be the whites ...' said Meka, looking round full of pity. 'Perhaps one day ..." p.167 *ibid.*

In a society where everything is communal (sorrows, joys, wives even) his humiliation is the humiliation of his family, his village and all black people. Engamba, Meka's brother-in-law, tries to cloud their communal humiliation in humour by suggesting that Meka should have turned up for the ceremony wearing only a patch of cloth big enough to cover his genitals.

> "I - I say, he should wear a *bila* ... because if he did ... the chief of the whites ... have to bend down and pin the medal on - on - his *bila*!" p.165-166 *ibid.*

The humorous mental picture of the great white Chief bending (bowing) down to pin a medal on a near-naked black old man gives the villagers a point of relief from the solemnity of the atmosphere. Not so with Meka who can only mumble at the end:

> "I'm just an old man now ..." p.167 *ibid.*

The common factor in the lives of Okonkwo, Waiyaki, Toundi and Meka is the presence of the (new) white man's religion, which is inextricably linked with introduction of the white (colonialist) government. This religion aggressively and invasively compromised and transplanted native religious systems but, as evidenced by the experiences of the subjects, did nothing to fill the void left. Divorced from their own spiritual well-springs,

and not fully accepted into the new Christian system, these Africans were left in a spiritual vacuum. Conversion to Christianity, for these subjects, was not so much a question of voluntary conversion but a bullying into acceptance of the new (civilising) religion. Always, it is accompanied by loss, loss of land, loss of life, loss of dignity. Even Okonkwo who outrightly rejects Christianity is still affected by it. He loses his son and eventually his life, to say nothing of his dignity. A compliant participant, Meka in the end comes to the realisation that he had always been an outsider after all, on account of the fact of his race. He was not welcome to sit at the master's table and partake of the meal, but his sacrifices of land and the lives of his sons were gladly accepted.

In the end, Okonkwo is unable to fit into the altered world he finds himself in and winds up dangling at the end of a self-administered noose, a situation that he has been driven into. Waiyaki is rejected and alienated by the people that he dedicated his life trying to serve and save. They are in turmoil and destroy the one man who could have ameliorated their condition. Toundi is like a happy deer prancing into a trap and once there howling to the end of his life. Meka labours under the illusion of inclusiveness until he discovers that all he is is an old black fool. In the end, each of their lives has been like Macbeth's: "... a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

Alienated from their gods and their traditional order, they have suffered estrangement, separation and become familiar with the taste of anguish, despair and sorrow. Quite unlike the prodigal son of the New Testament who 'came to himself' in a far country, for them there is no promise of atonement, reconciliation and salvation. They have become outsiders, locked out of their world but not admitted into any other.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

The UNESCO manifesto states in its preamble that wars start in the minds of men, therefore it is in the minds of men that defences of peace must start. To borrow the spirit of this declaration, meaningful life starts in the psyche of man and therefore the psyche must be paid special attention to in the quest for meaning in life. Our inquiry has shown that it is the state of one's psyche that determines the quality of life that he/she will live. The psyche consists of the conscious and the unconscious. In order to attain a meaningful life, an individual needs to get in touch with the contents of his/her unconscious because it houses contents that have relevance to one's understanding of life. Because it is a shadow, it also houses contents that may be unacceptable to the conscious man. However, because these contents do exist, they need to be confronted and to be reconciled with the conscious. Opposites need to be reconciled in order to eliminate any conflicts within one's personality.

The unconscious or shadow is both individual and collective, that is, collective experience is stored as a psychic DNA in the mind of an individual. Hence groups of people or nations tend to share certain qualities because they have imprinted in their minds the shared experience of their group or nation. An individual inherits through the psyche some learned experiences of the group that he / she belongs to. This has major ramifications. It accounts for 'mob psychology' or shared traits such as love or hatred. It was referred to earlier as the *participation mystique*.

Archetypal Images

In concluding the discussion, this chapter seeks to isolate some archetypal images that are commonly encountered in reading the four texts. The chapter also attempts to examine violence as a culture and therefore to be found rooted in the collective unconscious of societies.

The archetypes are contents of the collective unconscious that is otherwise termed the 'shadow'. An archetype is to the psyche what an instinct is to the body (Edinger). Unlike the personal unconscious / shadow which houses contents belonging to the individual, the collective unconscious / shadow contains transpersonal, universal contents. These contents are 'primordial images' and 'mythological motifs' (Hauke, 2006:67) and the collective unconscious is a record in, and of, the psyche of humankind going back to its remotest beginnings. Jung consequently concludes that humankind's myths, legends and fairy tales are carriers of a projected unconscious psyche. Through the ages of human history, the collective unconscious has found expression in consciousness through forms of philosophy and religion (Hauke, 2006:68).

Two universal archetypes of the (nurturing) mother and the (authoritative) father occur in the texts under discussion. The mother comes out consistently in _Things Fall Apart_, _Houseboy_ and _The River Between_ as an archetypal image of the nurturing mother. She gives sustenance to the individual from the earliest stage of his existence until he is ready to leave the nurturing stage and move on to face the next stage of life. Even then, she remains in the background as a point of reference when the individual needs comforting thoughts. Even for an individual like Okonkwo who was anxious to become assertive male and renounce the feminine in him, fate returns him to the mother in form of his exile from his fatherland to his motherland. Toundi pathetically remembers his protective mother whom he left abruptly through poor choice in life. Waiyaki, though successfully transitioned into his male phase of life, still treasures his mother and the contact he had with her. His love for Nyambura may well owe its genesis to his ties with his mother.

The father in _Houseboy_ and _The River Between_ comes out as the authoritative figure. The father in the two texts is the symbol of unquestioned authority - right or wrong. In _Houseboy_ father is tough, physical, even punitive while in _The River Between_ father is an authoritative and guiding principle. The father is the source of knowledge and discipline. The absence of this image creates psychic imbalance complications, as in the case of Okonkwo.

The Forest as a Place of Darkness or Shadow

The image of the forest appears most strongly in _Things Fall Apart_ and, to a lesser extent but still significantly so, in _Houseboy_. The evil forest of Umuofia undoubtedly signifies darkness. It is a place where the socially unacceptable elements of society are discarded. Twins were thrown into the evil forest because the phenomenon of multiple births was an abomination. Okonkwo's father Unoka died of a swelling disease considered an abomination to the earth goddess. He therefore was not accorded the honour of a grave but was instead carried to the evil forest and left there to die. People like him could not be allowed burial because they would contaminate the bowels of the earth. The white missionary Mr. Brown and his band of Christians were permitted to build their house of worship in the evil forest as they could not be permitted on Umuofia land. In _Houseboy_ there is an account of a black man who refused to be converted to Catholicism on his deathbed whose spirit was condemned to eternal torture in the forest, in the form of an owl. This is the same forest that the narrator had to cross to get to where Toundi lay dying, away from his native land. The forest is the place of relegation for anything incomprehensible hence fear-evoking. Anything unexplainable and / or threatening is conveniently banished into the darkness of the forest. The archetypal image of the forest as presented here bears close affinity to the Shadow archetype of analytical psychology.

The Guardian Serpent

The image of the serpent as a guardian spirit is amplified in Camara Laye's _African Child_ and appears in _Houseboy_ briefly but significantly in establishing the serpent as the protector of the race. Toundi missed his encounter with the serpent when he abdicated his initiation rite. Significantly, Toundi in his simplicity makes an important inference to the Christian Holy Spirit usurping the place of the native serpent in his life. This came about when he ran away from his native world and joined Father Gilbert and the white world, apparently led by the Holy Spirit.

The Hills as a Wisdom Symbol

In _The River Between_ the archetypal image of the hills runs through the text. In the text, as in popular African myth, hills symbolise wisdom. The hills are old, they have stood

there from time immemorial, are unshakable, observe all around them and are thus full of knowledge and wisdom. They are as dependable as the wisdom figure of the individuation process. In individuation, the wisdom figure is seen to have arrived at an inner centre, has contained the opposites within him and has acquired the ability to remain intact and balanced even in the most tension-ridden situations that send ordinary mortals into various levels of panic.

The Collective Unconscious and Human Destructiveness

Our reading of the texts establishes the fact of the physical and psychological violence occasioned on Africans by colonialism, or to be more specific, by colonial agents. The assault was not only inflicted by one or more individuals on another or others but also it was an assault inflicted by one race upon another. This brief discussion cannot presume an analysis of the roots of this malignancy of aggression, but attempts a cursory understanding of the form it took. The concept of the collective unconscious opens some doors to understanding the issue. Understanding how one nation / race can collectively share and express hatred for another in extreme forms as has been witnessed in history in experiences of Nazism and slavery may well teach mankind how to avoid repetition of such catastrophes. The German Nazis under the leadership of Hitler religiously implemented anti-Semitism in horrifying levels of aggression, bound together by a participation mystique. A participation mystique is an unconscious psychosocial bond that is capable of feeding mob psychology, or an identification with a collective dynamism.

Other thinkers have pondered this phenomenon of human destructiveness and drawn some assumptions and premises. Fromm (1973) isolates man's character-rooted passions from organic (bodily) drives and finds that the former are stronger than the latter. The organic drives are what Abraham Maslow referred to as survival needs which consist of biological and physiological needs such as air, food, shelter, warmth, sex, sleep etc. According to Fromm, the major motivations of man are his rational / irrational passions which he enumerates as follows: love, tenderness, solidarity, freedom, truth, the need to control, to submit, to destroy; narcissism, greed, envy and ambition. These are what move

and excite man because they make life meaningful and worth living. Man's dreams, religions, myths, drama, art are all based on these passions and not on the organic drives. So motivated are people by these drives that they will do almost anything to attain the goal of their passion.

Failure to achieve the goal may lead a man to suicide. So intense are these passions that they actually belong to the realm of the devotional or sacred (Fromm, 1973:298). Whether the drive is hate or love, the force or power of passion remains the same. Such deep-rooted passions are fertile ground for human violence and destructiveness when attainment of the goal is thwarted or frustrated or when passions are otherwise stirred.

Jung identifies the root of human destructiveness as the psyche. In his treatise on 'the spiritual problem of modern man' he surmises that disruption in the spiritual life of an age leads to a reversal of the (psychic) current, causing the inner man to want something which the visible man does not want. Consequently, war rages within ourselves. Each culture, according to Jung, has given birth to its destructive opposite. The source of evil is within ourselves and that is where it can be combatted (Jung, 1933:237). Regarding colonialism, Jung brings out some pertinent insights: "What feelings do we (whites) arouse in the black man? And what is the opinion of all those whom we deprive of their lands and exterminate with rum and venereal disease?" (Jung, 1933:246). He describes insatiable lust of the 'Aryan bird of prey' that causes him to lord it in every land indiscriminately and he questions, above all, that "megalomania of ours which leads us to suppose among other things that Christianity is the only truth, and the white Christ the only Redeemer." (Jung, 1933:246).

The archetypal image of the wisdom figure, the saviour or redeemer, observes Jung, lies buried and dormant in man's unconscious since the dawn of culture. It gets awakened at certain points in history when the times are out of joint and humanity is in serious error. It would appear that this modern era of individualism and egotistical behaviour is a product of modern man's solitariness as a result of being removed from his original (benign) 'participation mystique' with the rest of mankind.

The violence of colonialism was in psychology terms the projection of a European (white) collective shadow upon the Africans. It impacted severely on the individual psyche of the victims to varying results as has been established through examination of subject characters. At the centre of the experience lies a force of human destructiveness and aggression.

Analytical psychology advances the concept of individuation as a method for individuals to come to terms with both their positive and their negative attributes, reconcile opposites and attain a state of absence of conflict. It recognises that every entity has its opposite (good / bad) that will remain in a perpetual state of conflict unless there is deliberate effort to reconcile them. The individuated person, for example, has found the centre of himself/herself (the Self) by reconciling the conflicting parts of his/her psyche. The truth is that man is in a perpetual state of seeking to arrive at this centre. For people of different persuasions, the centre may be defined as something or other, but the common denominator is that there is a search. Religion offers the context for this process that preoccupies mankind, with a variety of perspectives to the theme.

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