

**Linguistic acculturation: Representation of Igbo Cultural Traditions and Folklore in Chinua Achebe's Novels**

**Prepared by**



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**Abstract:**

This research paper aims at examining cultural traditions, and folklore as represented in Chinua Achebe's Novels *Things Fall Apart*, *No Longer at Ease*, and *Arrow of God*. Its main purpose is to demonstrate how well Achebe uses his linguistic and communicative competences in the presentation of cultural traditions, socio-ethnic dimensions and communal values; and exposing them to the Western world by giving them new dimensions via linguistic acculturation. For the analysis of the selected primary selected texts; descriptive and analytical method is adopted to sort out all the different aspect under investigation. Thus from the analyses of the texted , it's concluded that Achebe's use of language for the representation of cultural traditions and folklore show that art literature does not exist in a vacuum, it states the experiences, moral intensions, and guidelines for people.

**Keywords: Igbo, Traditions, Culture, Proverbs, Folklore, Fauna and Flora**

**Background**

The use of linguistic manipulation in representing culture, beliefs, cosmology, norms, traditions, and societal portrayal of Igbo community is one of the striking and fascinating characteristics of Chinua Achebe's fictional writings. The distinguishing fact that sets him and other notable African writers like Ngugi Wa Thiong'o , Ayi Kwei Armah, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Ben Okri, Mariama Bâ, Altayeb Salih, Nuruddin Farah, Nadine Gordimer. , Pat Amadu Maddy, Ousmane Sembène, and Nageeb Mahfouz are their cohesive integration language and the content of their writings. These writers and many others – despite their writing in the colonial languages- were able to uplift the African mostly oral cultures and traditions and represent them beyond African continent.

This paper attempts to investigate the influence of Igbo cultural traditions, norms, and beliefs on Chinua Achebe fictional writings. The essence of this paper stems out from the fact that the flawless extraordinarily expressive language use in representing cultural traditions and beliefs in Chinua Achebe Novel emerge as a new characteristics in African literature. Thus, this paper reflects how accurately Achebe manipulates and uses English language which is not his mother tongue to portray and represent his people's culture, tradition and communal practices in an artistic mold, which hence brought him fame as one of the leading fictional writers in the African continent and beyond.

**Objectives of the Study.**

The main objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To demonstrate how well does Chinua Achebe use his linguistic competence in the presentation of his own cultural traditions, socio-ethnic dimensions and communal values.
2. To analyze and explain what cultural aspects and traditional societal practices are fully represented in his fictional selected writings?
3. To investigate how Chinua Achebe has been able to reflect the African life and expose it to the Western world by give it a new dimension via linguistic acculturation.

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this research paper stems out of the fact that, it tries to investigate the distinctive linguistic representation of culture in Chinua Achebe's writings and to explain how he uses the language which is not his mother tongue to portray Igbo Tribe cultural traditions. It also attempts to investigate the influence of Igbo cultural traditions, cosmology, customs, communal practices, religious beliefs, and societal norms on Chinua Achebe's fictional writing style.

### **Methodology of the Study**

In this paper, textual analyses and descriptive methods are adopted in the analysis of the selected texts. The paper focuses on how well Chinua Achebe has rendered English language and made use of devices such as proverbs , folktales, metaphors, imagery, rituals, cosmos, to accomplish to difficult task representing and portraying Igbo culture from being indigenous oral tradition to an alien European form without distorting its freshness despite the differences between them. The paper will focus on three novels, namely; *Things Fall Apart*, *Arrow of God*, and *No Longer at Ease*. It will depict the culture and traditions of the Igbo people as they are represented in these three novels.

### **Literature Review**

#### **The Igbo: People, Language and Culture**

**According to** Encyclopedia Britannica (2020), Igbo, also called Ibo, people are one of the largest ethnic groups living chiefly in southeastern Nigeria who speak Igbo, a language of the Benue-Congo branch of the Niger-Congo language family. They are grouped into four main cultural divisions: northern, southern, western, eastern or Cross River, and northeastern.

They are mostly craftsmen, farmers growing yams, cassava, taro, corn (maize), melons, okra, pumpkins, and beans and traders. Fardon, (1994) mentions: *“Igbo people are a nation caught inside of Southeastern Nigeria. They speak Igbo, which includes various Igbo languages and dialects”*.

They are versatile in their cultural traditions, such as in art styles, attire and religious practices. Various subgroups were organized by clan, lineage, village affiliation, and dialect. It comprises archaic practices as well as new concepts added into the Igbo culture either through evolution or outside influences.

Traditional Igbo religion includes belief in a creator god (*Chukwu or Chineke*), an earth goddess (*Ala*), and numerous other deities and spirits as well as a belief in ancestors who protect their living descendants.

The Igbo people have had heavily fragmented and politically independent communities. Levinson, (1995: 120) explains that: *“Before knowledge of Europeans and full exposure to other, the Igbo did not have a strong identity as one people.”*

Due to the effects of migration and the Atlantic slave trade, there are descendant historical Igbo populations in countries such as Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea as well as outside Africa; many African Americans and Afro-Caribbeans are assumed to be partially of Igbo descent. Their traditional political organization is based on a quasi-democratic republican system of government as Furniss claims,(1995:65) :*“In tight knit communities, this system guaranteed its citizens equality, as opposed to a feudalist system with a king ruling over subjects.”*

Igbo culture is mostly oral with its diversity and depth. As all other African cultures it has undergone so many changes especially after the advent of colonialism. Mark Pizzatto (2003:3) rightly observes: *“Postcolonial cultures feel the loss of the past communal self and its uncanny return-in a more specific way caught between the postmodern lures of global capitalism, the modernist inscription of national identities and the pre-modern heritage of tribal communities”*

Of course as Pizzatto noted above, after colonialism Igbo cultural traditions as many colonized cultures have become hybrid, especially the one in written forms as almost all the written and documented traditions were in English language which is the language of the colonizer.

Kolawole (2005:11) throws some light: “*Literature is an extended metaphor and a symbol whose intertextual interactions transcend literary transactions*” It derives from the impact of a wider range of pretext - linguistic, cultural, philosophical, ideological, historical or political contexts which confronted most of colonial and postcolonial African writers. Igbo language is one of the largest languages of West Africa. It is spoken by about 18 million people in Nigeria. It belongs to the Benue-Congo group of the Niger-Congo language family. The language is thought to have originated around the 9th century AD in the area near the confluence of the Niger and Benue rivers, and then spread over a wide area of southeastern Nigeria. It is written in the Roman script as well as the Nsibidi formalized ideograms which is used by the Ekpe society and Okonko fraternity, but is no longer widely used. Oraka, L. N. (1983:17) explains that: “*Nsibidi ideography existed among the Igbo before the 16th century, but died out after it became popular among secret societies, which then made Nsibidi a secret form of communication*”.

It is observed that Chinua Achebe fictional writings are perhaps the most popular and renowned writings that deal with the Igbo and their traditional life and cultural practices in spite of being written in English language.

### **Chinua Achebe’s Brief Background:**

The novelist, the poet, the critic, Albert Chinualumogu Achebe popularly known as Chinua Achebe is a Nigerian who was born on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 1930 in Ogidi, Nigeria. He attended Government College in Umuahia and University College in Ibadan where he studies medicine and literature. He then received his B.A. from London University in 1953. He studied broadcasting at the British Broadcasting Corp. in London in 1956, and was later the director of External Broadcasting for the Nigerian Broadcasting Service in Lagos. Achebe has received numerous honors, such

as Honorary Fellowship of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, and the award of a Fellowship of the Modern languages Association of America. He is also the recipient of the Nigerian National Merit Award, signifying high intellectual achievement that has shaped the culture of Nigeria.

Chinua Achebe was a Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and also at the University of Connecticut, Storrs. Currently, he lives with his family in Annandale, New York. A serious car accident left him paralyzed from the waist down.

His first novel *Things Fall Apart*, a deafening yet balanced description of the cultural clash between native African culture and traditional white culture was first published in (1958). The novel describes what happened to Igbo society in the late 1800s, when European missionaries and colonizers laid claim to Nigeria. It was followed by *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *A Man of the People* (1996), and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987). He also authored short stories and children books, an anthology of poems *Beware soul brother* (1971), and, *Hopes and impediments*, a collection of essays and literary criticism which was published in (1988) by Heinemann.

### **Chinua Achebe's writing Style:**

Chinua Achebe's style is one of the most well regarded styles of current African authors, nearly revolutionary in impact. Although it may have a de-familiarizing effect upon some readers because of its stark simplicity, it is actually full of depth and complexity despite appearances. Very realistic and brief, it conveys as close as possible in English the language also spoken by his own people, the Igbos. By sprinkling the language with proverbs and other cultural references, Achebe slowly and naturally introduces the reader to Ibo culture. Achebe's honest and stunning style makes him the ideal spokesman for African Literature, or as little of it as the West can understand.

Margaret Laurence (2001), in her book *Long Drums and Cannons: Nigerian Dramatists and Novelists, 1952-1966*, writes: *Since the 1950's, Nigeria has witnessed "the*

*flourishing of a new literature which has drawn sustenance from both traditional oral literature and from the present and rapidly changing society".* Thirty years ago, Chinua Achebe was one of the founders of this new literature, and over the years many critics have come to consider him the finest of the Nigerian novelists. His achievement, however, has not been limited to his continent. He is considered one of the best African novelists who are writing in the English language. Using English, he wanted to represent his own cultural traditions, customs, norms, folklore, and social practices to the outer world. He did it by drawing readers in with the familiarity of the English language and traditional folk tales and then showing them his own culture by writing with an advanced African vocabulary and knowledge of Ibo proverbs, idioms, and sayings to tell the western world especially the colonizers to correct their misconceptions about African as being cultureless, primitive, savage uncivilized beings before the arrival of the Whiteman. Azohu, (1996:413.) Achebe once said: " *One big message of the many that I try to put across is that Africa was not a vacuum before the coming of Europe, that culture was not unknown in Africa, and that culture was not brought to Africa by the white world.*"

Thus, unlike some African writers struggling for acceptance among contemporary English language novelists, Achebe has been able to avoid imitating the trends in English literature. Rejecting the European *notion "that art should be accountable to no one, and [needs] to justify itself to nobody,"* as he puts it in his book of essays, *Morning Yet on Creation Day*(1975), Achebe has embraced instead the idea at the heart of the African oral tradition: that "art is, and always was, at the service of man. Our ancestors created their myths and told their stories for a human purpose." For this reason, Achebe believes that "any good story, any good novel, should have a message, should have a purpose."

Moreover, Achebe's fictional writing style draws heavily on the oral tradition of the Igbo people. Gera, (2001:33), says: "He weaves folk tales into the fabric of his stories, illuminating community values in both the content and the form of the storytelling."

Another hallmark of Achebe's style is the use of proverbs, which often illustrate the values of the rural Igbo tradition. He sprinkles them throughout the narratives, repeating points made in conversation. Critic Anjali Gera, (2001:32), notes that the use of proverbs in *Arrow of God* "serves to create through an echo effect the judgment of a community upon an individual violation." The use of such repetition in Achebe's urban novels, *No Longer at Ease* and *A Man of the People*, is less pronounced.



For Achebe, however, proverbs and folk stories are not the sum total of the oral Igbo tradition. In combining philosophical thought and public performance into the use of oratory (in the Igbo phrase), his characters exhibit what, Egejuru, (2001:394) called "*a matter of individual excellence ... part of Igbo culture.*"

In addition Chinua Achebe always uses folk songs and descriptions of dancing in his work. His short stories are not as widely studied as his novels, and Achebe himself did not consider them a major part of his work. In the preface for *Girls at War and Other Stories* (1972), he writes: "*A dozen pieces in twenty years must be accounted a pretty lean harvest by any reckoning.*" Like his novels, the short stories are heavily influenced by the oral tradition. And like the folktales they follow, the stories often have morals emphasizing the importance of cultural traditions.

After the independence of most of the African states in the 1950s, a debate about choice of language erupted and pursued authors around the world. One school of thought, championed by Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ WA Thiong'o, urged the use of indigenous African languages. English and other European languages, he said in 1986, were "*part of the neo-colonial structures that repress progressive ideas*". Although in his essay *Ogbaa*, (1999:193) notes that:

*For an African writing in English is not without its serious setbacks. He often finds himself describing situations or modes of thought which have no direct equivalent in the English way of life. Caught in that situation he can do one of two things. He can try and contain what he wants to say within the limits of conventional English or he can try to push back those limits to accommodate his ideas ... I submit that those who can do the work of extending the frontiers of English so as to accommodate African thought-patterns must do it through their mastery of English and not out of innocence.*

Nonetheless, Chinua Achebe thinks that, colonialism despite its drawbacks, it has provided colonized people from different linguistic backgrounds "a language with which to talk to one another". That's why he uses the Language of the colonizer in



order to communicate with people and represent his culture and tradition, and society locally and worldwide.

### **Cultural and Traditional Aspects in Achebe's Novels**

Chinua Achebe's works portray Nigerian societies in general and the Igbo people in particular. Somehow, they describe the transformation of the traditions and cultural norms. Through his fictional writings, Achebe wants to explain to the reader worldwide, a great deal about Igbo tribe society and translates Igbo cultures, traditions and customs; and explains the role of the social bond (clan). He uses local traditions in terms of folklores and legend as one of the many elements that puts fascination to his works.

#### **Igbo folklores:**

folklore is the unrecorded traditions of any ethnicity which are reflected by any means in their fictional writings, customs, beliefs, magical practices, religious ritual, superstitions, and proverbial sayings idiomatic expressions . It also includes their mythologies, legends, heroic stories, omens, charms, spells found among a certain ethnic group; it is an overall component in the total folk cultural traditions

Throughout his fictional writings Chinua Achebe shows that , folklore use enables the writers to convey the richness of their culture, and provide solutions to many intricate questions and dilemmas which are related to people's identity and overall communal settings. That is, folklore which is a fundamental characteristic of the Igbo culture is evident in all his novels; such as Things Fall A Part (TFA), Arrow of God (AOG), and No Longer at Ease (NLE). Moreover, the characters he impersonates make use folklore to emphasize their and ornament their speech effectively. In his view, folklores also enable writers to explain the vices and virtues of the society and present their moral and sociocultural values. He also believes that the wealth and richness of any culture is usually stored and kept in the folklore of any ethnicity. This folklore is represented in many ways in his above mentioned novels, and exemplified in animal tales, Igbo cosmology, customs, proverbs, idioms, and the use of figurative language. Moreover the folklore represents the everyday practices of the people. There are of course many instances whereby Achebe uses folklore to represent the

culture of his people; especially the ones related to teach lessons to young people of criticize a wrong doing or maintaining a clan bond and collective works. As in the following examples:

*“If a child washes his hands, he will eat with kings” (TFA, p6)*

*“Only a foolish man can go after a leopard with his bare hands” (AOG, p85)*

*“He who has people is richer than he who has money” (NLE, p72)*

*“Mother is supreme” (TFA, p 92)*

*“It is only a fool who treats his brother as a stranger” (AOG, p94)*

*“When two brothers fight, a stranger reaps their harvest” (AOG, p131)*

*“A man who bring home ant-infested faggots should not complain if he is visited by lizards” (AOG, p59)*

*“It is not bravery when a man fights with a woman” (TFA, p85)*

*“No matter how strong or great a man was, he should never challenge his Chi” (AOG, p27).*

*“A man who pays respects to the great , paves the way for his own greatness” (TFL, p14)*

*“No man however great can win judgment against his clan” (AOG, p131)*

Chi in Igbo cosmology is the personal god as we will see later.

### **Reference to Fauna and Flora:**

In all Chinua Achebe’s fictional writings, the constant reference to Fauna (animals of a particular area or epoch) and Flora (plants of a particular area or a period), from the Igbo folklore and culture is widely used. Most often these animal tales are intended to teach lessons especially for less careful, unfortunate, or arrogant people who usually violate the social norms. For instance, the tale of the willy tortoise (TFA, p38, p67) shows the wicked nature of beings. Whereas in No Longer at Ease (NLE, p149), it indicates indifferences and inconsiderateness of the human beings. The story of leopards represents the greediness and selfishness of the people (NLE, p53). The story of mother kite in Things Fall A Part (TFA, p98) illustrates the folly of the people of Abame.

Moreover, the story of the lizards in Arrow of God, *“A man who brings home ant-infested faggots shouldn’t complain if he is visited by lizards.” (AOG, p59), and “The Lizard who threw confusion into his mother’s funeral rite, did he expect outsiders to carry the burden of*

*honoring his dead?*” (AOG, p125) show that one has to shoulder the consequences of his action.

Birds, domestic and wild animals, reptiles and even spirits are also represented in his novels:

*“The little bird Nza who so far forgot himself after a heavy meal that he challenged his Chi”* (TFA, p22)

The story of this bird shows that, man should not provoke his fate for whatsoever reason.

*“Very lizard lies on its belly so we cannot tell which has a bellyache”* (AOG, 171)

Although these reptiles are not man’s enemies, it is hard to predict what is in their bellies.

*“If snakes lie together in one place , who will approach the tub”*(NLE, p73)

It means that if people are together they will fear nothing

*“A toad does not run in the day light unless something is after it”* (AOG, p21)

Nothing happens without a reason

*“A fly that has no one to advise it follows the corpse to the grave”* (AOG, p27)

Moreover, constant references to Flora are also present in his novels. This of course implies the close attachment of the Igbo people to their environment and nature. For instance, in *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe describes Okonkwo’s fame by saying: *“Okonkwo’s fame had grown like a bush fire in the harmattan* (TFA, p2). And he also *“felt like a drunken giant walking with the limbs of mosquito”*.(TFA, p44). Okonkwo had also felt when he was exiled to his maternal village like; *“like he had been cast out of his clan like a fish onto a dry sandy beach, panting”* (TFA, p92). His daughter Ikemefuna, *“grew rapidly like a yam tendril in the rainy season”* (TFA, p37). Kola is symbolic of prosperity and, *“he who brings kola; brings life”*. (TFA, p5). Okonkwo’s hard work is also described as *“pouring grains of corn into a bag full of holes”* (TFA, p16). His friend Obierika is *“as busy as an ant hill”*. (TFA, p78).

Thus, all these instances and references to flora and fauna shows the proximity of the Igbo people to nature and their environment; and that is what Achebe wanted to present to the readers in most of his novels.

## **Igbo Naming Traditions**

The naming system is one of the striking elements in Igbo cultural traditions. One traditional aspect in Achebe's novels is attempting to name children by names they think they save them especially after series of abortions, stillborns, or children deaths. Obiego, (1984:32) says, *"Igbo names are not mere tags to distinguish one thing or person from another; but are expressions of the nature of that which they stand for."* Thus, names have different and fundamental connotations in Igbo society. For instance, in *Things Fall Apart*, after the death of her nine children, Ekwefi named her last born Ezinmma( which means, "May it not happen again.") for her survival, to break the cycle of Ogbanje children (in Igbo culture and belief, Ogbanje are children who die, usually very young, and return to be born and die again.. It is said they have a connection to the spirit world of the ogbanje). Very few wer Onwumbiko, which means, "Death, I implore you".

*"A few were Onwumbiko, Death I implore you, "Ozoemena, May it not happen again", and finally Onwumna, Death may please himself". (TFA, p7)*

Moreover, Igbo names may refer to the circumstances of birth, or in reference to the day of birth, or to indicate a theological belief or to instill an expected moral or communal virtue in the child. In addition, according to Nwaka, (2012: 416) , *"an Igbo child at birth is dedicated to a god called a chi, who is responsible for the guidance and protection of that child."*

In *No longer Ease and Arrow of God*, naming also plays an important role for showing respect, praise, curse, blessing, prayers, and traditional taboos. For example:

As a sign of respect for the essential role of the woman in Igbo community a man is usually called as *"Son of our daughter"* (AOG, p22). Calling names such as *"long throat"* and *"ant-hill nose"* (TFA, p125) are also evident in his novels.

## **Proverbs as socio-cultural Vessel:**

*"Proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten". (TFA, p3)*

All over the world, proverbs are used for the transmission of wisdom, knowledge, heritage, morals norms, traditions, customs, experiences, cosmology, beliefs, and

other communal practices in a given society or an ethnic group. According to Oladele A. Balogun(2006:86):

*“Proverbs are cultural relics preserved a mid-countless destruction by reason of brevity, laconic and in-depth meaning. Proverbs, which are and pithy sayings, are popular devices usually used to state metaphorically certain general truth about life”.*

They are also contributing in assigning meaning to different experiences of traditional communities. This is illustrated by Taiwo Oladele (1976:32) as follows:

*Proverbs deal with all aspects of life. They are used to emphasize the words of the wise and are stock in trade of old people who use them to convey the precise moral lessons, warnings, and advice, since they make a greater impact on the mind than ordinary words. This judicious use of proverbs is usually regarded as a sign of wit.*

These proverbs are in the African context are mostly seen as cultural heritage, which is held in high regard since they embody their philosophy, values, wisdom and knowledge of their ancestors. C. S. Momoh, (2000:361) notes that: *“proverbs are to the traditional Africans what the Quran or the Bible is to the religion leaders”.*

Thus knowing the importance of proverb amongst his community, Chinua Achebe was able to mould English language which is not his mother tongue, to represent and expose his culture and traditions worldwide. Hence his novels; namely Things Fall Apart, No Longer at Ease, and A Man of the People and Arrow of God includes many proverbs, sayings and idiomatic expressions which reflect Igbo culture in all walks of life.

Some of these proverbs explicate some moral and spiritual wisdom of Igbo ethnicity: as the continuity of life will remain as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end:

*“Whenever something stands, another thing stands besides it”.* (NLE, 145)

Another proverb that indicates the how life changed amongst the natives after the advent of the Whiteman and the spread of anarchy:

*“If one hand brought oil, , it soiled the others”.*( TFA,p89)

Some other proverbs show the importance and necessity of the social bond, collective work, teaching a lesson, respect; especially the elders, some other moral, cultural, social and traditional values, as follows:

*“If a child washed his hands, he could eat with kings” (TFA, p8)*

*“It is not bravery when a man fights with a woman” (TFA, p85)*

*“A man who pays respect to the great paves the way to his own greatness”.*  
(TFA, p14)

*“He who has people is richer than he who has money”.* (NLE, p72)

*“Anger against a brother was fat in the flesh. Not in the bone”.* (NLE, p4)

*“If snakes lie together in one place, who will approach the tub”.* (NLE, p73)

*“If you want to see a dancing mask well, you don’t stand in one place”.*(AOG, p46)

*“No man however great can win judgment against his clan”.* (AOG, p131)

*“When two brothers fight, a stranger reaps their harvest”.* ”. (AOG, p131)

*“A man’s debt to his father-in-law can never be fully discharged”.* ”. (AOG, p62)

*“It is only a fool who treats his brother as a stranger”.* ”. (AOG, p94)

*“Wisdom is like a goatskin bag, everyone carries his own”.*(AOG, p16)

Thus, Achebe uses proverbs to pepper his fictional works. These proverbs serve as tonic and ornament that help in the easy designation of the intended message. They function like moral values, conventional wisdom, and explicit codes of conduct. The use of proverbs in Achebe’s fictional writings gives in-depth meanings and elaborated broad picture of his people’s overall sociocultural and traditional setting.

### **Achebe’s Use of Figurative Language:**

In all his literary fictional writings Achebe uses figurative language for great effect and to instill his cultural embodiments to the reader. Namely; he successively uses similes, metaphors, imageries, symbols to add flavor to his narratives. He realistically and vividly uses similes, metaphors and imagery which aggravate the quality of his language. In *Things Fall Apart* for instances there are a frequent use of metaphors, such as the description of Okonkwo as: *“tall and huge, and his bushy eyebrow and wide nose gave him a severe look.”* (TFA, p3). And the Whiteman’s bicycle is an

“iron horse” and the white skin is an “albino.” (TFA, p124). And the same Whiteman is described in Arrow of God as: “The white man is the masked spirit of today.” (AOG, p 85). In No Longer at Ease he also uses metaphors in a number of instances: “suicides ruins tragedy” (NLE, p36) “That’s what I call colonial mentality.” (NLE, p37), “... feel a tiger” (NLE p80).

Moreover, Achebe also uses similes in his novels for direct comparisons as comparing life with wormwood: “life was like a bowl of wormwood which one sips a little at a time.” (NLE, p36). Describing Okonkwo after he killed the small girl Ikemefuna in Things Fall A part: “He felt like a drunken giant walking with the limbs of mosquito”. (TFA, p57). Other examples of similes are used as follow:

Obika his friend in Arrow of God, “were like a pair of night masks caught abroad by daylight”. (AOG, p79). Obika also “shivered like the sacrificial lamb”. (AOG, p 82). Okonkwo’s fame had grown “like a bush-fire in the harmattan”. (TFA, p3). “The earth burned like hot coals”. (TFA, p17)

### **Conclusion:**

From the above analysis and description it is observed that, the collective thoughts, beliefs, social norms, traditions, customs, and moral values of people can be discerned from their cultural setting. Hence, can be represented in a narrative form via whatever way possible for expressing their ideas, knowledge, skills, and experiences.

Thus the main thrust of this paper is to demonstrate that, the hallmark of Achebe’s fictional representation particularly, Things Fall Apart, No Longer at Ease, and Arrow of God is vital in comprehending African cultural traditions generally and Igbos in specific. His narrative mode is a direct reflection to his people’s experiences. Then his mastery of English language has also enabled him to transform the oral culture and mould it to serve his fictional writings. That is; his use of language is not merely as a communicative device, but as a total cultural experience. His mastery of both his own cultural aspects was not just technique but, embodiment of his people holistic civilization and representation of their socio-cultural settings.

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