

Christianity and Africa's underdevelopment in *Swallow*, *News from Home* (Sefi Atta), *Not Without Flowers* (Amma Darko), *Purple Hibiscus* and *The Thing Around Your Neck* (Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie).

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Abstract - Sefi Atta's *Swallow*(2010), *News from Home*(2010) Amma Darko's *Not Without Flowers* (2007), Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*(2003) and *The Thing Around Your Neck* (2010) analyse the role Christianity plays in the underdevelopment of Africa. Introduced into Africa, on one hand to evangelise the Africans so as to put an end to the so-called Africans' heathen customs and to weaken any form of resistance to colonisation on the other hand, Christianity has had some drawbacks that hinder the development of Africa. Hence, I seek to explore through Sefi Atta and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Amma Darko's characters' conversion to Christianity how this religion affects the development of Africa. In this regard, this paper examines how Christian doctrines favour mass poverty and cultural alienation. Using Claude Ake's approach 'building on the indigenous' I advocate a Christianity that must not only empower African culture but it must also guarantee peace and social cohesion in Africa.

Key words: underdevelopment, heathen, Christianity, cultural alienation, poverty.

Résumé - Les œuvres *Swallow* (2010) et *News from Home* (2010) de Sefi Atta, *Not Without Flowers* (2007) d'Amma Darko, *Purple Hibiscus* (2003) et *The Thing Around Your Neck*(2010) de Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie analysent le rôle que joue le christianisme dans le sous-développement de l'Afrique. Introduit en Afrique, d'une part, pour évangéliser les Africains et mettre fin aux pratiques africaines soi-disant païennes et d'autre part pour affaiblir toute forme de résistance à la colonisation, le christianisme a eu des effets collatéraux qui freinent le développement de l'Afrique. Dans cette perspective, j'ai montré à travers la conversion des personnages de Sefi Atta, de Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie et d'Amma Darko au christianisme comment cette religion a affecté le développement de l'Afrique. A cet effet, cet article examine comment les doctrines chrétiennes ont favorisé la paupérisation et l'aliénation culturelle au sein des populations. En s'inspirant de l'approche de Claude Ake 'building on the indigenous' je plaide dans cet article pour un christianisme nouveau qui non seulement se repose sur la culture africaine mais qu'il soit aussi le garant de la paix et de la cohésion sociale en Afrique.

Mots clés : sous-développement, christianisme, païen, aliénation culturelle, paupérisation (pauvreté).

1. Introduction

Many development theorists relate the present state of Africa to its steady economic growth. But, in practice, there is another hidden factor that has unbelievably favoured the underdevelopment of Africa; this factor is Christianity.

Africans are inwardly religious and this is assumed through the different rituals performed at each individual's step of life as Holloway J.E (1990) writes:

Religion was (and remains) a vital part of the lives of most Africans. For some it encompassed their entire existence. It substantiated and explained their place in the

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universe; their culture, and their relationship to nature at large. Religion among most African ethnic groups was not simply a faith or worship system; it was a way of life, a system of social control, a provider of medicine, and an organizing mechanism. (Holloway, 1990: 5)

Then, religion is embedded in the psyche of the Africans right from the womb of their mother. Having comprehended that nothing but religion can lure them into domination; Europeans have greatly used some Christian doctrines to underdevelop Africa.

Introduced into Africa, on the one hand to evangelise the Africans to put an end to the so-called Africans' heathen customs and to weaken any form of resistance to colonisation on the other hand, Christianity has impinged on the development of Africa. Yakubu Joseph (2011) analyses the bond between faith and sustainable development and he concludes that faith can enhance a sustainable development. Yet, Solomon O. Azumurana (2011) interrogates psychological drawbacks using Ngugi Wa Thiongo's *The River Between*(1965), Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*(2004) and James Baldwin's *Go Tell It on the Mountain*(2001) to show how Christianity affects the bond between parents and their children and this leads to filial and familial alienation.

Moreover globalisation has begotten increasingly material societies and a high rate of jobless and hopeless people who, unfortunately, come to see Christianity as the only reliable source of wealth. In this paper, I show in Sefi Atta's *Swallow* (2010), *News From Home*(2010), Amma Darko's *Not Without Flowers*,(2007) Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* (2004) and *The Thing Around Your Neck* (2010) how some characters in the name of religion shamelessly exploit their countrymen and favour mass poverty. Others are so much indoctrinated that they look down on their own culture, which affects negatively the development process. In a word, in the first part of this article, Christianity and mass poverty, I analyse through these novels the strategies the pastors of some churches use to impoverish their fellows. In the second one, Christianity and cultural alienation, I emphasise how some converts shamelessly look down on their own culture.

2. Christianity and Mass poverty

My concern about mass poverty arises from Jesus' following statement:

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is there will your heart be also... Matthew 6 19:21

This biblical passage underscores how much the quest of wealth is alien to Christianity. A Christian's demeanour must encompass a permanent quest for happiness in heaven. He need not amass too much wealth on this earth. Yet this passage acts as a double side's knife because, on the one hand, it develops a sense of idleness since some people mistakenly give up their jobs and start preaching on the pretense that God will provide them with anything they lack, whereas Jesus himself

has worked as a carpenter and this does not prevent from him evangelising. On the other hand, others use this passage to exploit their countrymen financially. In this case they make them get rid of their wealth stating that this can only guarantee them a torment life in hell. This is the case of the new prophets and pastors who use Christianity to seek wealth since globalisation has deepened the gap between poor and rich. Because of its materialistic vision, men and women are money grabbing people today. Consequently the successful ones are those who are as cunning as a fox. In addition, African countries experience severe economic crises begetting increasingly jobless and hopeless (educated and non educated) young people. In this vein Christianity functions as the obvious source of employment and wealth, which Amma Darko condemns in *Not Without Flowers*.

Kofi Poku known as Raja Hey and later Prophet Abednego in *Not Without Flowers* becomes a knowledgeable pastor by assisting 'unscrupulous pastors' who used to hire him for specific job as it can be read:

unscrupulous pastors of little known churches of dubious shades and colours would come and hire people to go and pretend to be deaf and dumb or blind and receive instant miraculous healing at their church services to swell the members of their congregation" (NWF, 241)

This is clear evidence that such pastors not only lack a solid theological training but they are also in quest for money. An evidence of this can be seen in these pastors' interpretation of mental illness in *Not Without Flowers* where some prophets create a camp called WCS -We Conquer Satan. In their opinion, this disease means possession by evil spirits (NWF, 30). To release the body of the sick people from these spirits they have devised a whipping system as it can be read "so the idea of subjecting the person to the entire whipping is to make the physical body an uncomfortable abode for the evil spirit to continue its occupation. Which, it is hoped, will force it out" (NWF, 31). In the name of God, patients, mostly women, are shaved off, chained and put in a dark room. Besides, relatives are strictly forbidden to see their patients. In this camp food and money are collected at the reception to take care of the patients but, in practice, these patients "see nothing of it. Especially not the cash" (NWF, 32). In addition, the relations are expected to pay for their monthly upkeep. In case they are poor and money cannot be squeezed out of them, the patient is declared incurable and kicked out. In a word, money is the essential.

It is then understandable that they cannot operate in a vacuum. As a result they establish a vast swindle network employing "people who do a wonderful public relations job for them all over" (NWF, 31). Thus, there are some connection people who provide them with relevant information about the targeted people.

They had come in a taxi. The prophecy was cooked. The brother and sister knew already that the father of the woman working with the organisation of four women was afflicted in one leg. His prophecy had already come true.... The way Ghanaians loved miracles, he would have been declared a strong and powerful Man of God and they would have flocked to him like sheep ... (NWF, 236-237)

Preys are meticulously chosen. There are often markets women, single women in search of a good husband and jobless young people just to name these. The strategy here is casting demon, as witchcraft is said to be the root cause of people's misfortune.

The priest's ensuring prayer was more like a war cry: "May the evildoers that walk the face of this earth be consumed in the flames of hellfire! May the soldiers of Satan be devoured by serpents, Father Lord..." in a bottomless pit he said and the purveyors of witchcraft be pierced by arrows, through their hearts, and the demonic forces that perverted the sacred covenant of marriage fall prey to sickness and disease. May this and that be dashed and crushed and destroyed, all in the name of Jesus (*Swallow*, 222)

Amma Darko criticises this misuse of Christian doctrines in *Not Without Flowers* in order to exploit their countrymen.

Similarly Atta and Adichie condemn this new system whereby Christian doctrines are purposefully misinterpreted to get cash. In this respect, they demonstrate that money donation known as tithes instituted by these pastors is a device to amass wealth while their followers remain poor. In this regards, they usually design meaningful strategies to make people see it rather as a duty. Therefore the converts come to realise that money donation is the very first vocation of any Christian as the narrator in *Swallow* notes; "It was devilish to say that people should not give money to the church and to say that poverty made people wholesome" it was also devilish to criticize God's anointed who preached prosperity" (*Swallow*, 221-222). Pastors successfully convince their followers that the more cash they make, the more The Good Lord will turn his generosity machine to reward them. And this is what a pastor recommends:

money, money, money. Ten percent of this and that. Tithes. It was there in the Bible, a covenant, and those who did not give were sinners. The church has a prophecy to fulfill through money. Money was power. It was God's promise that the congregation be enriched and empowered. Those who received God's promise must fulfill His prophecy, in order that missions and other works to turn around the devilishness in the world. ... (*Swallow*, 221)

In the first short story of Sefi Atta's collection of short stories, *News From Home* tithes payment becomes the point of contention between Bisi and her husband, Makinde. In fact, Makinde cannot understand the reason why his wife pays so much in tithes while they are very poor. As the narrator says:

too much in tithes to her church. Ten percent was not enough for Bisi. She had to prove just how born-again she was, and each time she visited the Abundant Life Tabernacle, she placed a little extra on the collection tray for the married women's fellowship (*NFH*, 1)

What is outrageous is that these God anointed praise and deliver electrifying prayers to those who donate much as it can be in *Purple Hibiscus*. Father Benedict, presents Eugene as an illustration of gospels because he is known for "making the biggest donations to Peter's Pence and St. Vincent de Paul....paying for the cartons of communion wine for the new ovens at the convent..." (*PH*, 5). In addition, Father Benedict during his sermons always refers to "pope, Papa and Jesus- in that

order" (PH:5) and he adds; " *when we let our light shine before men, we are reflecting Christ's Triumphant Entry*". (PH,5)

Another device is "offering Masses" which, as the narrator said in 'A private experience' (*The Thing Around Your Neck*) "is just fund-raising for the church" (TTAYN, 52). During mass these priests and pastors repeatedly stress upon the necessity to raise fund for church building rather than focusing on gospels. So does the catholic priest in Abba, Kambili's village as she stresses "the priest did not talk about the gospel during the sermon. Instead he talked about zinc and cement" (PH, 89). After Mass a fund-raising has been organised to rebuild the priest's new house. Unwillingly, Eugene hands over a check to the usher the amount of which is so high that "the priest got up and started to dance jerking his behind this way and that....." (PH, 90) what use is then a Mass if a priest enjoys more fund-raising than focusing on spirituality.

Just like the pastors, the prophets or the priests, the churches are also very splendid. Atta gives a thoroughly description of the church in order that Africans beware of the way Christianity is preached today and how much wealthy God's anointed are; "the church was as big as a palace, with white pillars. Inside the church, the floor was marble and wood; the pulpit was red velvet...." (swallow, 221) Although Eugene is a catholic, he condemns such practices that discredit Christianity. Adichie uses Eugene as her mouthpiece to remind both pastors and Christians that faith is not so much demanding. Eugene rightfully objects to attending native Igbo mass as the narrator Kambili, says:

Papa said that the parish priest in Abba was not spiritual enough. That was the problem with our people, Papa told us, our priorities were wrong; we cared too much about huge church building and mighty statues. (PH: 104)

In a word, Atta, Darko and Adichie meticulously advocate a new form of Christianity that integrates African cultural values. In this vein, it can guarantee love and social cohesion.

3. Christianity and cultural alienation

The concept of cultural alienation I debate in this paper relates to Africans' rejection of their own culture. Christianity creates in the African psyche a sense of the 'otherness'. In fact, In sub-Saharan African countries, the stakes of Christianity and more importantly evangelisation as Ludodvic Lado a Cameroonian catholic priest, writes: "came to mean replacing African religions with Christianity". (Lado, 2006:9), In other words, Christianity has begotten new African communities whereby the death of the African religions has been proclaimed. Then, there is no room for a sustainable development since they (African religions) guarantee political and social cohesion.

A sustainable development must be human centered; that is to say it must take into account the cultural values of the communities. As Obioma Nnaemaka states, "culture should not be dismissed as a negative or neutral factor in development; rather, attempts should be made to find out in what ways culture is a positive force that can serve

development well" (Nnaemaka, 2003:375). That is why, in its early stages, Christian missionaries knowingly brainwash Africans into rejecting their own culture.

The very first attempt is the dismissal of the African converts' name. In fact, a name epitomises personality, destiny and a name is the link between the departed and the living ones. So, its shift from African to European and more particularly to Christian names implies people's rebirth. Thus, the converts are baptised and given English and more preferably Christian names as is the case of Anikwenwa in 'The Headstrong Historian' (*The Thing Around Your Neck*)

Father Shanahan told her that Anikwenwa would have to take an English name, because it was not possible to be baptized with a heathen name....As he poured some water on the boy's head, he said, "Michael, I baptise you in the name of the Father and the Son of the Holy Spirit (TTAYN, 208-209).

Adichie thoroughly condemns this Roman Catholic practice and sees in it the loss of the Africans' identity and personality. She rather appeals for the use of indigenous names. In this perspective, she compares the Anglican mission's policy to that of the Catholics and concludes through the narrator that "*the Catholic missionaries were harsh and did not have the best interests of the natives at heart*" (TTAYN, 208). Furthermore, she makes Nwamgba, Anikwenwa's mother; keep her son's name as the narrator says "*his name was Anikwenwa as far as she was concerned*" (TTAYN, 208). Paradoxically some Africans (Christians) consider the indigenous names as pagan ones and others use them as middle names. In the latter case these names are unknown to the public because they feel ashamed to be called by these names.

Another distinctive feature of African cultural alienation is their contempt for African religions. Africans' universe is controlled by supernatural forces that guide and protect the livings and provide a tight bond between them, those to be born and the departed. That is why there are some rituals and rites that are performed at a very precise moment in a person's life. Missionaries come to realise that unless they discard these religions nothing can be achieved. As such the special vocation of Christianity has been "*the redemption of black heathens*" (TTAYN: 210: 209). Thus, converts regard all cultural practices and festivals as pagan or heathen. For instance, Anikwenwa in the 'Headstrong Historian' refuses to participate in his *ima mmuo* ceremony because "*it was a heathen custom for boys to be initiated into the world of spirits, a custom that Father Shanahan had said would have to stop.*" (TTAYN ,211). Even food is not an exception. Anikwenwa stops eating his mother's food "*because he said it was sacrificed to idols*" (TTAYN, 210). Similarly, Eugene objects to his children attending the Aro Festival whereas Richard, a British, appreciates it in *Half of A Yellow Sun*(2006).

Clearly, Adichie denounces the loss of the African identity since there is hardly any cultural legacy for future generations, this can be seen in Nwamgba's rebellious attitude about her son's reaction when she "*roughly yanked his ear and told him that a foreign albino could not determine when their customs would change,..*" (TTAYN, 211). Hence, Chimamanda advocates the rehabilitation of the African rites, at least the useful ones.

Greeting is another cultural practice perpetuated through generations. Unlike Europeans, Handshaking is not allowed in Africa especially when it has to do with elders or chiefs like the 'Igwe'. To greet one should bend and let the elder bless you his hands on your head. It is a sign of respect and deference. For Eugene, this is obviously pagan. And he rebukes his wife for greeting the Igwe in "*the traditional way that women were supposed to, bending low and offering him her back so that he would pat it with his fan made of the soft straw-colored tail of an animal.*" (PH, 93). Eugene says, "*you did not bow to another human being. It was an ungodly tradition, bowing to an Igwe*" (PH, 93-94). Yet, he sees to it that the bishop be bowed to as he "*was a man of God; the Igwe was merely a traditional ruler.*" (PH: 94). It is unfortunate that such a custom is obsolete. Nowadays, very few young people can greet decently since handshaking is a fashion.

In addition to name, greetings and African religions, Christianity has favoured social discrimination since generosity is congregation oriented. The concept of family, sisterhood and brotherhood are misused today for they happen to preclude blood relation. Instead, they refer to membership; people of the same congregation. This is the case of some overzealous African converts like Eugene who violates one of the fundamental principles of Christianity and African custom: charity. Eugene happily celebrates Christmas in his village, Abba, allowing only Christians to come and enjoy themselves in his house while, at the same time, he sends out a traditionalist like Anikwenma, an old man of his father's group. He forcefully screams: "*what is a worshipper of idols doing in my house? Leave my house*" (PH,70), which is not African not even Christian since both recommend to love one another. Indeed charity begins at home but Eugene's sense of charity is not extended to his own father and sister. When Eugene has decreed that heathens are not allowed in his compound, he has not made an exception for his own father either. He, unwillingly lets his children visit his own father as he says; "*I don't like to send you to the home of a heathen, but God will protect you*" (PH, 62). Once in their grandfather's compound they must strictly follow some regulations as he states; "*don't touch any food, don't drink anything. And, as usual, you will stay not longer than fifteen minutes. Fifteen minutes.*" (PH, 61). He swears to feed, to build a house, to hire a driver, to buy his own father a car provided the latter converts to Christianity and throws away the *chi* in the thatch shrine in his yard. Eugene's daughter, Kambili, castigates this kind of belief as she declares; Papa never greeted Papa-Nnukwu, never visited him, but he sent him wads of naira through Kevin or through one of our *umunna* members, slimmer wads than he gave Kevin as a Christmas bonus. (PH, 62)

In the context of African culture, a neglect of one's parents is a sinful and unworthy act since children are expected to take care of their aging parents. Even in Europe, this is called 'non assistance to ones' parents. By so doing, he commits a crime and it hurts Papa-Nnukwu, Eugene's father, a lot as he desperately laments;

give me both wealth and a child, but if I must choose one, give me a child because when my child grows, so will my wealth....my son owns a house that can fit in every man in Abba, and yet many times I have nothing to put on my plate. I should not have let him follow these missionaries" (PH, 83)

Even Eugene's daughter, Kambili, criticises vehemently this disgraceful behaviour of her father because she cannot bear her father caring kindly and tenderly for her maternal grandfather until his death whilst he let her dying paternal grandfather in a filthy poverty. The old man's compound "*was barely a quarter of the size of our backyard in Enugu...*" (PH, 63). Besides it "*was small, compact like dice*" and his bathroom "*was a closet size building of unpainted cement blocks with a mat of entwined palm fronds pulled across the gaping entrance.*" (PH,63). This situation irritates Ifeoma, a university lecturer and Eugene's sister who fiercely declares:

O joka! Eugene has to stop doing God's job. God is big enough to do his own job. If God will judge our father for choosing to follow the way of our ancestors, then let God do judging, not Eugene. (PH, 95-96)

Really, African converts are mistaken since the essence of all religions is love and tolerance. A typical African man cannot be so rude and establish coercive regulations even if he is the wealthiest man in his village. It is unfortunate that African communities have become money-oriented to the extent that hardly few people appreciate the perversity of religion as Ifeoma points out: "*you know that the members of our umunna, in fact, everybody in Abba, will tell Eugene only what he wants to hear. Do our people not have sense? Will you pinch the finger of the hand that feeds you*" (PH, 96). For the sake of Christianity, Eugene disfigures his son's finger for failing two questions in his catechism test, reports those missed communion on two successive Sundays because he *believes "nothing but mortal sin would keep a person away from communion"* (PH, 6), beats his daughter for breaking the "*Eucharist fast mandated that the faithful not eat solid food an hour before Mass*" (PH,101), soaks his children's feet into hot water. Clearly, Eugene is a fanatic and he is representative of those African who misinterpret Christian doctrines.

Fortunately, his younger sister, Auntie Ifeoma, a university lecturer, and Father Amadi's introduction in the novel is the catalyst for a change in the social integration of Eugene's family. Adichie has purposefully used these two characters to awake Africans. As a university lecturer, a mother and a widow, Auntie Ifeoma embodies the worthy role of a university in the development of a country. Firstly, students are taught all useful theories they need to be open-minded. Secondly, it is in universities that their thirst for good governance, political awareness and nationalism is fostered. Therefore, Africans should theorise themselves their development discourse that shall be building on the indigenous. As Nnaemeka comments

building on the indigenous creates the feeling of ownership that opens the door to a participative, democratic process where stakeholders' imagination, values and worldviews are taken into account while mitigating stakeholders' alienation which could result from the invalidation of their worldviews and values. (Nnaemeka, 2003:377)

In this regards, Father Amadi's preach on the necessity for Africans to grasp their culture is praiseworthy. That's the reason why, it is at Nsukka by the sides of a lecturer and a priest that Jaja and Kamily come to realise that a Christian need not be so violent with non Christians and with his own family; but rather he must be deeply rooted in his culture so as to be as much tolerant as possible. This, indeed, has been

one of the recommendations of Late Pope John Paul II's post-synod exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*:

the adherents of African Traditional religion should therefore be treated with great respect and esteem, and all inaccurate and disrespectful language should be avoided. For this purpose, suitable courses in African traditional religion should be given in houses of the formation for priests and religious. (Lado, 2006:11)

Similarly, many other African theologians such as Bishop Watio argues for a recognition of African ancestors as mediators just as catholic saints:

I hope, then that the church can gradually accept the possibility of acknowledging that Christians can invoke their ancestors too, just as they invoke the Christian saints: having recourse to them as mediators and intercessors with God at difficult moments, and this without fear of possible excommunication on the church's part. I have already stressed that the cult of ancestors is not idolatry, but rather an expression of filial piety. It seems to me that if a good catechesis about the mediation of saints and ancestors were to be given to our Christians, and if for its part the church could accept the need to look more seriously into the cult of ancestors in order to capture better its spirit and actual function, then Christian recourse to and invocation of the ancestors would be possible, just as it is now for the Christian saints. (Lado, 2006: 14)

Adichie conveys the same message when she paints Papa-Nnukwu a heathen as a wise, righteous man who embodies all the qualities that his narrow-minded son misses. He is an old man ahead of his time. Eugene's dramatic death is the expression of his religion intolerance as one says; violence begets violence. And the old man, Anikwenwa, has warned him as he says: "*Ifukwa gi ! you are like a fly blindly following a corpse in the grave*" (PH, 70).

Adichie raises another issue in *Purple Hibiscus* (2004); that is the use of African Language versus European ones. For instance, Eugene's love for his father-in law stems from the old man's ability to speak English and read Latin. Eugene is representative of these intellectuals who discredit their own languages whereas language is "a home of culture" (Lado 2006: 12). Paradoxically the first missionaries have learnt the African languages, developed an Alphabet in order to translate the Holy Book, Bible, and invent "*African words suitable for the translation of Christian concepts such as God, Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ, Angels and Saints*" (Lado, 2006:12). Meanwhile some Africans feel so humiliated when speaking their language. Eugene hardly holds a discussion in his mother tongue. He sees it unworthy that some Christian rituals be performed in Igbo. He cannot bear Igbo priests singing songs and speaking Igbo. He can neither receive communion from them nor make his confessions to them. He enjoys sounding British especially when interacting with Whites. Thus, he prefers his daughter being tutored by a White Sister than a Black one.

Adichie pleads for the acquisition of native languages. And this can be achieved through their teaching at school. That is why she makes the Anglican teacher advice Nwangba to register her son in his school because, as he said, "*children learned best in their own language, and the children in the white men's land were taught in their own language too.*" (TTAYN, 208)

In a word, Atta, Darko and Adichie through this portrayal of their characters show their full immersion in their communities. Unlike fanatics, they argue for a better interpretation of Christian doctrines that can enhance collective sustainable development, wisdom and social cohesion.

4. Conclusion

These three gifted Anglophone African women writers, Sefi Atta, Amma Darko and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, have artfully analysed the effects of Christianity on the development of Africa and they come to realise that the great search of money and power make some overzealous priests and pastors misinterpret Christian doctrines, which affect negatively the development of African. Christianity, on behalf of civilisation, has misled some of the African intellectuals who only favour the Whiteman's culture.

However no sustainable development can be fostered in such a way. Culture –its positive aspects- provides a good framework for the pursuit of good strategies that can enhance development since this process is not only economy oriented. In this vein, Adichie has introduced two other characters, a university lecturer and a priest, who see to it that Eugene's children understand and master Christian doctrines not as a handicap to their cultural identity, but rather they have to make a synthesis both of them. Then, these women writers argue for a useful and genuine dialogue between Christianity and African culture. In other words, Christianity does not make anyone deny his cultural identity. Instead, it can show the right way for a education in Africa

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