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Universal Cry: Home Is a Home

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Abstract:

Home is the place where joint-family culture, group living, adjustments, patience, sacrifice, prudence, perceptiveness and other necessary qualities could be inculcated in a child. It is the home and the home country that provides him identification. It acts as a place of shelter. A child considers his home and home country to be comfortable only when the family members and the citizens lead an integrated life without a break up. He considers his 'Home' to be a home when he rejoices there in harmony. At times he considers it not to be a home when he is disturbed by discordance. This circumstance induces him to opt for migration. However, his stay in a non-native country makes him realize that no other place but for home could be considered superior. The emigrants long for homecoming and expect all their needs to be fulfilled at homeland. Similar incidents occur in most of the countries all over the world and especially in Africa. This paper explicates the fervor of the natives towards their home and homeland.

Keywords: Home, Homeland, Integration.

Human is the only species who desire to acquire everything beyond his needs. He is much interested in saving for his future. Every individual looks forward to attain what his fellowmen yearns for. This desire of individuals spread throughout the society and men began invading countries to obtain greater wealth. Exploitation grew vast because of the invasion of the outsiders. Economically and politically powerful countries overpowered the feeble in the name of colonization.

Colonization denied women the primary status by introducing capitalist economy, and granted limited rights and privileges at home and society. Besides, they were corrupted by the western culture by applying cosmetics, using wigs, wearing short dresses and getting employed in foreign offices. The bureaucrats of the government, who had to enhance the status of women, were held responsible for the decline and insensitivity displayed in attaining their needs. The authoritative as well as ordinary men continued to abuse women verbally and physically. They laid their own ethics and did not bother much about the deceit of conduct and action committed. They were careless in attending the needs of the women. An ideology of detracting women slowly developed and in adverse, prostitution spread wide. The prominent features of women were eradicated and they were looked at only as sexual objects by the Black and the White men. Colonization had affected women and forced them into the dark shadows of subjugation. They were exploited as labourers and held to be slaves.

Once, the colonizers intentionally caught hold of the colonists as slaves to serve them in their own country. But, now the liberated people of those colonies voluntarily migrate to the countries of the colonizers, expecting a better living. This paper records some of the incidents why the migrants couldn't feel at ease in a non-native land and long for homecoming. The immigrant experiences shared by many writers in much of their works reveal their longing for home and homeland. The movement of the main character from country to town and vice versa could be found in the African novels. The tendency for African women authors has been to portray the women characters as educated yet lacking self-empowerment. Women have faced and continue to face widespread poverty, heavy labour burdens, gender disparities and economic exclusion. But education inculcated a sense of individuality among women and aroused an interest in their human rights.

Gabriel Jibaba Okara, Nadine Gordimer, Mariama Ba, Chinua Achebe, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Ama Ata Aidoo and Buchi Emecheta are some of the African writers who represent Africa in various notions. These writers have concentrated much on wide variety of themes and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, the Nigerian writer has focused on the essentials of integration in her works. The central characters in the novels of Adichie could not feel being at a home though they are at their home and homeland. Even though Adichie writes about colonialism like all other writers, she deserves to secure a special place by incorporating the home of her people. In the first novel *Purple Hibiscus* the home is not a home for Kambili and Jaja and in the second *Half*

of a *Yellow Sun*, and in the third *Americanah* for many of the main characters the homeland is not their home. Everyone feels happy and secure to be in a non native place yet longs to have solace in their home, homeland. Similarly the characters Aissoton in Mariama Ba's *So Long a Letter*, Munira, Wanja, Karega and Abdulla in Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood* move out of their home while Sissie in Ama Ata Aidoo's *Our Sister Killijoy* moves out of her homeland.

Adichie's description in *Purple Hibiscus* is around the Nigerian politics which hinders democracy even after independence. While the traditionalists believe in pantheism some of the converted abuse their own religious traditions. The patriarchal home suffers under the strict rule of a sanctimonious believer. He afflicts his family by subjecting them in the name of God, the wife and children of the patriarch who obey him begin to defend owing to the intolerable punishments. Mostly, the head of the families do not pay attention to the wishes of their wives or children. They pressurize the family members to obey their words in spite of the fairness and their desire in executing the orders. When subjection by one's own family members is beyond the level of tolerance the sufferers tend to leave the home and move out in search of a secure place. The novelist centralizes the theme of attaining liberation from the rigid life.

Enugu, a city in Nigeria is beset by political instability which has wide-spread corruption in the government. The administrators of the home as well as country rein their region with utmost autocratic notion; the unelected sole administrator from the military subdues the country by ordaining the soldiers to employ bestial attack on the combatants. Nigeria, liberated from the rule of the British mourns under the power of the military. The sole administrator wields his position to obtain money by all means and he keeps the people of his country in drought. Some defensive acts start ascending from the citizens demanding him to give up his post, but he survives behind all those discrepancies by executing the protestors. The victims who face atrocious violence at home and country later on grows increasingly bold after several occasions. In both the case, the victims recoil and strive to flee away in search of a refuge. By the end, the despots are poisoned and paid for their retribution.

The life of Kambili is a circumscribed one. Her home is silent and suffocating because her needs and wishes is never recognized. Her father Eugene determines her every minute action. He ruins the personal as well as social life of Kambili by interrupting in all her activities. Kambili kills her wishes and does not feel free to speak the truth to her father. Furthermore, when Kambili steps into the outer world, she has to face the people with authority

appearing as terrifying figures, overcome the begetting coups that attack children and the public, understand the coded conversation of parents about tyranny, pass the despotic demolition of public properties on her way to school and yet more. Since Adichie has understood that the ultimate purpose of a good literary work is to provide man with opportunities for attaining self-fulfillment she makes aunt Ifeoma to support Kambili and help her to overcome the distress and fulfill her needs.

Home as a laboratory experiments each aspect of life for the children to make a practice of existence outside home. Families tend to shower love and affection upon its members, but one's home and the pertaining environment at times inject brutality, later which matures into the quality of human association. Home of a family or of a nation incites the belongingness in the inhabitant and he is psychologically and physiologically influenced by the people in and of the atmosphere. No other institution or organization other than home performs various functions for the well-being of an individual. A home that heartens, protects and moulds the dwellers at times turns adverse and threatens destructs and mangles them. A comfortable home is where health, wealth, aims, achievements, likes, dislikes, love, art, religion and education are gifted to and not forced upon children. Only such homes become successful in providing a valuable citizen to the nation with developed human nature of intelligence, adaptability, perseverance and self-management. In some occasions, one particular member of a family would be concerned about his self and violate the ethics of family. He lays his own ethics and does not bother much about the deceit of conduct and action committed. Those violations at small level might result in great adversarial acts at later. It is the environment of home that shapes the character of its members and every evil thought and deed of the aged would reflect in the upcoming generation. If this is the condition of the home, the situation at the homeland is yet worse.

Half of a Yellow Sun published in 2006 is set during the civil war of 1967-70 in Nigeria due to the ethnic clashes. In an interview Adichie herself has stated that she was agitated by the impacts of Biafran war even though she was born after seven years of the war ended and it provoked her to write a novel about war. Adichie has dedicated this novel to her grandfathers whom she lost in the Nigeria-Biafra war and her grandmothers. Ugwu, a houseboy, Olanna, a young woman and Richard, a shy, British white expatriate are the main characters whose lives intersect and entangle during the war. Adichie has intertwined the plots of family relationship, love affairs and conflicts around the main characters. Adichie's worries that modern and

bureaucratic way of life had changed some of the tribal ways. The early 1960s and the late 1960s are the period when the events took place and it intervenes in four parts of the novel. The end of colonialism and rise of ethnic allegiances is clearly stated in the novel and it is emphasized that even a minor political event would have a great impact on the people and the country.

While there are different ethnic groups in Africa the native religious beliefs and practices have some characteristics in common while generalization of religion is difficult, belief in a supreme being, spirits and other divinities, homage to ancestors, use of magic and medicine are universal. No single ethnic group could be identical where thousands of different groups exist. At times ethnic clashes rise among the people and it leads to civil wars. Violence is an inexorable consequence of all revolutionary and class struggle. Strikes failed to obtain the demands while more ruthless the instruments of oppression became. The strikers, women and children could not survive in the struggle as their basic necessities were deprived of.

Life in Africa is shorter and brutish since democracy is not properly attained by the government. Though the country liberated from the rule of the Westerners mourns under the power of the military. The administrators of the country rein their region with utmost autocratic notion, they wield their position to obtain money by all means and keep the people of their country in drought. Government and the people are less bothered about the rules and law, family planning, highly learned society and advancing in modernism. It is a well-known truth that the Africans are hampered of malnutrition. The skinny image of women and children prevails even now; women are crippled in providing enough for the children under five and they have stunted growth. Those children do not even get their mother's milk as they are too weak. Food stuffs of a season do not last until the crops grow for the next, yielding of a harvest runs out in all stores before the new edible arrives. Death in Africa is more frequent than the other countries as the children are less potential of malnutrition and hence unprotected of deadly diseases. The villagers also had to travel along the wicked roads of wild animals and vulnerable snakes to get water as the wells in the villages were not overhauled. At times, they lose their lives becoming a prey to wild animals and vultures in search of water. On one hand, people migrated to other countries to earn their livelihood and on the other they are forced to migrate in fear of losing their lives in war.

In the first part of *Half of a Yellow Sun*, Adichie has presented the views of the intellectual community and the necessity of Pan-Africanism. The Africans resisted the Western

imperialism and demanded freedom to vocalize their dumb natives. They ignited their conscious to throw away the ignorance over the Europeans who robbed and made them subjects. The denial of freedom and justice flared up into burning flames and the strong urge to emerge as a free man and nation created many leaders among themselves to fight against injustice done. Women traded beyond the boundary lines and supported the army by distributing materials and supplying information. Olanna in Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* experiences the threats of war when the food supply is greatly affected. She trades across enemy lines to support her family. Day-to-day food resources became scarcer that people have to starve and die. Nwapa's short story *Wives at War*, Pauline Onwubiko's novel *Running for Cover*, Catherine Obanaju's play *Into the Heart of Biafra* and Rose Njoku's *Withstand the Storm* are the few literary works that highlight the women who joined in the civilian-militia units. One's love for country and culture is determined, the damage impinge on to it would outburst the suppressed agonies and create a sense of awakening to free themselves from the clutches that efface their lines in the palm.

Americanah, a lengthy novel of Adichie written in seven parts published in 2013 moves on easily from Nigeria to America and England tells the story of Ifemelu, a spirited young girl who emigrates to America. With love, race, identity, integrity and independence as main themes Adichie has produced a story stressing the need for globalization. Ifemelu and Obinze like Kambili and Jaja in *Purple Hibiscus* come of their age in *Americanah*. To escape from the military dictatorship of Nigeria they leave their troubled homeland and move abroad to America and England. Before attaining adulthood they are immersed by betrayal, disillusionment and loss of identity. When Adichie was nineteen she left for the United States to pursue her studies with the scholarship gained. As of Adichie, her character Ifemelu too wins a scholarship to attend University in America but life is not that easy though she stays with her Aunt Uju. The novelist has portrayed the Nigerian immigrant experience in America who suffers defeats and loses relationships and friendships. The same while Ifemelu gains success by writing "Raceteenth or Various Observations About American Blacks" a lifestyle blog. Her thoughts and experiences about race and migration are expressed in this blog. She was told that a couple was looked at as martyrs because of adopting a black child. Adichie has made a clear observation on race which states that the black child is not liked even by the black people in America. She is more specific about being honest in personal relationships. Chief, the very rich man in Lagos just brings out the fact in words, that everybody either rich or poor is hungry but honesty alone is to be found

nowhere, where he too fails to be. She decides to return to Nigeria after thirteen years in United States to regain her lost identity.

The migration of the Africans to some other foreign countries would never bring them a solution to their problems. The very first step of the non-natives in a country would create a feel of alienation in their mind. Adapting to a new way of life would be difficult for every man. Unfortunately when an unfavourable thing occurs the migrant blames the native for such an incident. It's the nature of man. The migrant has already faced unbearable crisis at home, yet he moves on to experience some new predicament in some other unknown nation. The favourable occasion for living should be created at one's own home for a peaceful survival.

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