

**IN SEARCH OF THE ORIGINS AND THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTER OF  
IGWEBUIKE IN AFRICAN LITERATURE: AN APPROCH TO CHINUA  
ACHEBE'S THINGS FALL APART AND ARROW OF GOD**

**Waïbèna DEB'MANA**  
University of Kara, Togo  
**Damlègue Lare**  
University of Lomé

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**ABSTRACT**

Based on Igwebuiké theory under the control of African humanism by D. A. MASOLO (2020), this article investigates in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God* the origins and the essential character of Igwebuiké. The analysis in the corpus under study comes with the result that Igwebuiké is an Igbo world view which stipulates that together we are strong in diversity as claims the African humanism. Based on this African origins and its authentic claims, the article believes that its implementation for ecological studies in African fiction can come out with efficient results to attenuate the ecological crisis.

**Keywords:** African humanism, Igwebuiké, ecology, complementarity, interconnection, African.

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

Igwebuiké is a philosophical concept rooted in Igbo ontology, emphasizing unity, complementarity, and interconnectedness. The term itself is derived from three Igbo words: Igwe (number), Bu (is), and Ike (strength), meaning "strength in unity". It is character is entirely the expression of African reality in an ecology where togetherness has been considered as a strong value for ecological cohesion. Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is a:

thorough in its delineation of the total cultural pattern of nineteenth-century Ibo life...the strength of the book partly lies in in its naturalistic description and its detailed presentation and analysis of the day by day and hour by hour issues of social living. But while he works at the level of ideas, Achebe also works at the level of symbols- that is, the level of concepts which have significance and validity on the level of different from that of logical thought" (G. D. Killam, 1969:14)

This extract presents the role of an African writer. That of depicting social facts in their authenticity. Previous research works on African ecology have mainly been focused on the use of conspiratory theories like eco-criticism. This orientation on conspiratory always provided wanton results as solutions for the restoration of the African ecological multifaced crisis. Trying to be away from conspiracy, this article proposes to use Igwebuiké as its theoretical framework under the coverage of African humanism to value African world view as it strongly fights for ecological integration. The relational ontology of Igwebuiké finds a powerful ally in African humanism, particularly as articulated by D. A. Masolo (2020), who argues that African conceptions of personhood are inherently communal and spiritually grounded. Masolo posits

that “The African conception of the person is fundamentally relational, and this relationality extends beyond the human to include the spiritual and natural worlds.” (D. A. Masolo, 2020, p. 7). This convergence offers a robust framework for addressing not only social fragmentation but also ecological degradation, as both philosophies affirm the sacredness of life and the necessity of harmony between humans and nature. Theorized by Kanu, Igwebuike fetches its functions from the African world-view where together in unity is an expression of power and strength. Based on *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, this article intends to analyze the origins of Igwebuike and its essential character and how it contributes for the ecological balance. The article is divided into three sections. The first section talks about the Wonder in the Power of the moon as an Origin of Igwebuike; the second section elaborates on The Character of Igwebuike as an African Ecological Force and the third section focuses on Igwebuike and African Sociopolitical Philosophy as Transparent in Literature.

### 1.1 Wonder in the Power of the Moon as an Origin of Igwebuike

Following the philosophical assertion of Aristotle (1941) when he writes that “It is through wonder that men now begin and originally began to philosophize” (p. 10), I. A. KANU (2023) thinks that “*Igwebuike* began with wonder as African traditional thinkers began to reflect on the nature of their immediate universe.” (p.25). By that means, *Igwebuike* philosophy emerged as a response to the African worldview, which values community, solidarity, and collective strength. It is deeply embedded in African proverbs, folktales, myths, symbols, and songs. Traditional Africans did not just live in the universe without questioning its functioning, I. A. Kanu (2023) recognizes that:

They raised questions about the nature of reality: its beauties and the negative vicissitudes the human person must face in life. Realities such as the nature of life, its brevity, human suffering, successes, failures, sorrows, joys, death, the after-life, the nature of the human person, disease, decay, etc. They asked if there is a particular way in which a person ought to behave and a way he ought not to behave. (p.25)

The questions they put was to know how to cope with their environment for a peaceful coexistence. In African literature, Achebe does not lack depiction of this questioning on the functioning of the universe. In his *Arrow of God*, Ezeulu has been given as role to control the movements of the moon. Especially the time when it appears first. On the daily basis, he has to watch in the sky in control of that:

It was the third night since he begun to look for the signs of the new moon. He new it would come today, but he always began his watch three days early because he must not take the risk. In this season of the year his task was not too difficult; he did not have to peer and search the sky as he might do when the rains come. Then the moon sometimes hid itself for days behind rain clouds so that when it finally came out it was already halfgrown. And while it played its game the Chief Priest sat up every evening waiting. (AOG, 1)

In this extract, Ezeulu has to be serious with his job as the reader of the manifestations of the moon. This desire in the people comes from the power and the meaning they have found in the new moon. In the African folklore, the new moon plays a very important cultural role for the people. Being associated with femininity, she is considered as the mother and the provider of fertility, birth and growth. This knowledge has not fallen from the sky onto the people; it has been a day-to-day analysis of the impact the moon has on them. Ezeulu has no excuses to miss the opportunity of seeing the moon on her first appearance during which specific ceremonies are performed for the wellbeing of the whole community. For this reason:

His Obi was built differently from other men's huts. There was the usual, there was the usual long threshold in front but also a shorter one in the right as you entered. The eves on this additional entrance were cut back so that sitting on the floor Ezeulu could watch that part of the sky where the moon had its door. It was getting darker and he constantly blinked to clear his eyes of the water that formed from gazing so intently. (AOG,1)

This constant and absolute proximity of traditional Africans with the happenings in the universe has finally helped them discover that strength is only when there is interconnection among people and their environment. Igwebuiké is then the result of the intent gaze at the various elements that constitutes the African universe and how these various elements complement to make a home for all the beings. From this angle, it is the belief of this thesis that Egwebuiké philosophy reflects the holistic nature of African thought, where reality is seen as interconnected rather than fragmented. So said, the origins of Igwebuiké take an ancestral dimension older than humanity. In the case of Ezeulu's daily exercise, it is something he has inherited from his grandparents: "Ezeulu did not like to think that his sight was no longer as good as it used to be and that someday he would have to rely on someone else's eyes as his grandfather had done when his sight failed." This shows that the origins of Igwebuiké have not been gathered in one generation, but has gone through generations after generations through a systematic study based on observations. Such origins can be classified as cosmological, Ontological, anthropological and Epistemological foundations based on the works of Kanu. The same thing is depicted by the novelists of the novels under study in respect of the Ghanaian poet, novelist and essayist K. Awonor's point as he says that the: "African writer must be a person who has some kind of conception of the society in which he is living and the way he wants the society to go" (1969:31).

Moreover, it is not only the celestial appearance of the moon that makes the strength of Umuaro; setting of *Arrow of God*. The strength becomes complete with the presence of the other beings around a common sacrifice to the god of the land, Ulu. For this reason, when Ezeulu sees the moon, he quickly informs his community through the beating of *Ogene*:

the moon he saw that day was as thin as an orphan fed grudgingly by a cruel foster-mother. He peered more closely to make sure he was not deceived by a feather of cloud. At the same time he reached for his *Ogene*. It was the same at every new moon. He was now an old man but the fear of the new moon which he felt as a little boy still hovered round him. It was true that when he became Chief Priest of Ulu the fear was often over powered by the joy of his high office; but it was not killed. It lay on the ground in the grip of the joy. He beat the *ogene* GOME GOME GOME... and immediately children's voices took up the news on all the sides. Onwa atuo!...onwa atuo!...onwa atuo!...He put the stick back into the iron gong and leaned it on the wall. (AOG, 1-2)

The beating of the *ogene*, the drums, the flutes and the children's cry to welcome the moon, is an awakening of all the beings in the surrounding universe. In this awakening, children take the opportunity to learn the values of the moon and what it can do to people. at this specific moment, all the eyes of the people are oriented towards the sky in contemplation of the moon. Which means the whole community has joined hands on one thing to produce power and strength. That calls for Ezeulu's eating of the sacrificial yam:

Ezeulu went into his barn and took down one yam from the from the bamboo platform built specially for the twelve sacred yams. There were eight lefts. He knew there would be eight; nevertheless, he counted them carefully. He

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had already eaten three and had the fourth in his hand. He checked the remaining ones again and went back to his obi, shutting the door of the barn carefully after him. (AOG,3)

This extract shows that the moon is not just admired, it is venerated by the people and by Ulu himself on whose orders the ceremony is performed. The sacrificial element used here is yam, the king of crops through which the igbo defines his bravery and courage at farming and family responsibility.

Taking a simple example of the African communal farming, it is remarkable that many African communities engage in cooperative agricultural practices, such as shared labor during planting and harvesting seasons. This way of conducting communal life is the expression of Igwebuike. As P. O. Idialu says:

The Igwebuike tradition expresses the notion that the African community is a closely knit society, beginning from the extended family unit, where there is the emphasis on a person being his brother's keep. From the family unit, it extends to the village, the clan, and the whole of the tribe. The idea is that a person cannot exist on his or her own without supporting or being supported by members of his/her kindred. The consciousness of this interdependence of one with the other makes individuals realise that their unique talents only make meaning as long as they are used for the benefit of others. This Igbo philosophy of life is entrenched in their social-cultural lives and reflected in their conduct, morality, folklores, myths, rites, norms, rules, ideas, cognitive mappings and theologies. (I. A. Kanu, 2021, p.208)

If the elements in the universe are able to contribute for the wellbeing of humanity, then human beings have no right to refuse assistance among themselves. This world view enlarges the domain of action of Igwebuike by strengthening social bonds and ensuring that everyone has enough food, fostering both ecological balance and collective well-being.

The origins of Igwebuike are not limited to what the people saw and their life experience; it also includes the invisible power that manifested in their lives. Ezeulu is not just a simple human being, he is half spirit and half human. This gives him the ability to see in the invisible world in order to report to his people the will of the gods. This is why in the domain of sacrality, in several African traditions, specific areas like forests or groves are preserved as sacred spaces. These areas are communally protected and serve as vital ecosystems, preserving biodiversity and acting as natural carbon sinks and spiritual protectors. Commenting and paraphrasing from I. A. Kanu (2017), Adialu writes as follows:

The African's relational character is such that ensures that he/she does not suffer alienation. It is an anthropocentric ontology - a complete unity or solidarity which is difficult to break; an intricate web of the African philosophical experience. The individual's life depends on that person identifying with the group making it imperative to show obligation to the members of the group; by thinking and acting in ways that promote corporate survival of the group. A person's sense of responsibility is, therefore evaluated in terms of responsiveness and sensitivity to the needs and demands of the individuals that make up the group (I. A. Kanu, 2021, p.209)

The Igwebuike philosophy underpins the shared responsibility to safeguard all spaces and beings across African communities in a variety of ways. This collaborative diversity includes the implication of nature and her spiritual manifestations. For that reason, many African cultures perform communal rituals to pray for rain, which sustains their crops and environment.

These ceremonies emphasize collective effort and acknowledgment of the interdependence between people and nature.

The natural acceptance of nature to share natural elements like water, has given the rise of seed sharing and preservation. As depicted in *Things Fall Apart*, African communities often share indigenous seeds to ensure genetic diversity and resilience in crops. This practice reflects Igwebuiké, as it acknowledges that agricultural sustainability is a shared responsibility. This philosophy is also seen in arid regions, where water sources like wells and rivers are often communally managed. Decisions about water use are made collectively to ensure equitable distribution and prevent overuse, reflecting a spirit of unity and cooperation. Such African community life quickly entered African literature in a period where disruption has been introduced through a colonial force. Igwebuiké, as the philosophy of African unity needs a valorization on its different origins away from foreign influence. Expecting this to happen, Adialu writes:

Social order of African community as demonstrated in the traditional and socio-cultural structure and government of the Ogoni people and by extension Africa as a whole, is such that could be positively exploited to solve myriads of problems beleaguering the continent if only the people could lay aside negative foreign views that have infiltrated their minds through formal education and other cosmopolitan influences. (I. A. Kanu, 2021, p.209)

As said, Africa needs to reconsider her social order away from foreign dictate. In traditional African principles of life, every domain has its Igwebuiké principles that function for the preservation of the forces put together within it. Igwebuiké force takes an ecological character beyond human control just like Ezeulu cannot master the specific time when the moon will appear, but still controls and waits until it appears. From observation in the functioning of the African ecology, traditional Africans succeeded in building a strong and interwoven community. The following section will try to discuss Igwebuiké as an African ecological force of internal control and collective lasting growth.

## 2 -The Character of Igwebuiké as an African Ecological Force

African ecological thought often treats the environment as a living, sacred entity. It recognizes the symbiotic relationships between humans, animals, plants, and the land itself. This mirrors the principle of Igwebuiké, which suggests that survival and thriving come through cooperation and interconnectedness. According to I. A. Kanu (2021):

Igwebuiké, is employed as a unifying concept of African thought, especially, that aspect concerning the human person's conception of the spiritual and material universe in which he or she lives. It is an explanatory theory or principle that interprets the puzzle of our complex relationship with the non-corporal world and human social life, that is, major social institutions that ensure social continuity and group identity, and further, underpins the epistemological manifestations of the human person's universe. (p.19)

Following this point of Kanu, Igwebuiké is not limited to the Igbo people; rather, it has universal relevance best understood on the African setting, promoting solidarity and complementarity in various aspects of life, including politics, philosophy, and social structures. It fundamentally recognizes the principles of identity, contrariety, hierarchy and unity as being at the center of life in the universe. It is a way of recognizing the shared essence of all beings, accepting differences while maintaining harmony, understanding the structured nature of relationships and emphasizing holistic cooperation over individualism.

In African ecology as transparent in African literature, Igwebuiké encourages a holistic approach to environmental preservation, recognizing the deep relationship between humans,

nature, and spirituality. This perspective often integrates indigenous knowledge systems, which view the environment as sacred and interconnected with human existence. For instance, traditional African beliefs often associate natural elements like rivers, forests, and mountains with spiritual entities, fostering a sense of respect and stewardship. In this regard, it is clear that the concept of Igwebuiké, “strength in unity”, extends beyond sociopolitical philosophy into the realm of ecological consciousness as depicted through Chinua Achebe’s novels under study and even those not considered. Therefore, in *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, Achebe subtly embeds Igwebuiké as a guiding principle which shows how traditional Igbo society interacts with the environment, revealing a worldview where nature, community, and spirituality are deeply interconnected. In *Things Fall Apart*, the *egwugwu* and their environment of life express authority and spiritual concern on justice in the life of the people, following the Igwebuiké philosophy which promotes complementarity and rationality, viewing all beings—human, animal, plant, and spirit—as part of a unified whole. When Okonkwo has been sent on exile under the order of the Earth goddess, Obierika mourns Okonkwo as follows:

Obierika was a man who thought about things. When the will of the goddess had been done, he sat down in his obi and mourned his friend’s calamity. Why should a man suffer so grievously for an offence he had committed inadvertently? But although he thought for a long time he found no answer. He was merely led into greater complexities. He remembered his wife’s twin children, whom he had thrown away. What crime has they committed? The Earth had decreed that they were an offence on the land and must be destroyed. And if the clan did not exact punishment for an offence against the great goddess, her wrath was loosed on the land and not just on the offender. As the elders said, if one finger brought oil it soiled the others. (TFA,89)

In this extract, the character of Igwebuiké is presented as not fighting for an individual cause at the extent of endangering the life of the majority. Obierika mourns the calamity of his friend and his own calamity because, as human, he worries about the individual case over the collective interest. The earth goddess has the role to protect the whole, not a part. If the twins had to be thrown away, it is because the earth has remarked that they were an offence to the land in a certain way beyond human understanding. Even in the Igbo socio-cultural reality, the number two is not associated with good. This explains the rejection of twins to avoid calamities on the whole.

In the sense of Igwebuiké, the land is sacred, governed by deities like Aní, the Earth goddess, and protected through taboos and rituals. Trees, rivers, and animals are not just resources but spiritual entities with roles in maintaining cosmic balance with human beings playing the role of intermediary to guide the community on the ways of the will of the gods. As Adialu says, “with the Igwebuiké culture, there are indisputable rights and privileges enjoyed from the possessive nuance of belongingness, pointing to the fact that the meaningfulness of an individual’s life is based on his or her relational connectivity with others.” (Kanu,2021, p.209). African literature does recognize this philosophy of believing in others to grow strong, as characters believe in the power of the spiritual world to be guided and protected.

In *Arrow of God*, Ezeulu, the priest of Ulu, embodies the tension between spiritual authority and ecological stewardship. Rituals like the New Yam Festival are timed with agricultural cycles, reinforcing the spiritual-ecological bond with humanity. In the Igwebuiké philosophy, no spicity is excluded. The sacred python, a symbol of divine presence, is protected. Its mistreatment is seen as a rupture in the moral and ecological fabric. Quoting from Kenshin (2016) Aliadu rightfully believes that

the way people see reality affects their value system and attitudinal orientations. It is this positive inclination of seeing the oneness of family, tribe and by extension the nation that should be exploited for the transformation and humanization of society especially in tackling the problem of toxic waste and pollutants in Ogoni Land (I. A. Kanu, 2021, p.209).

Unfortunately, the colonial intrusion disrupts traditional land use and spiritual practices in families and tribes as recommended by Igwebuiké, leading to ecological and communal fragmentation that caused the contemporary disorganized African nations. Thus said, Achebe uses Igwebuiké to critique both colonial exploitation and internal rigidity, suggesting that ecological sustainability depends on communal solidarity and spiritual humility. It is a way to say that the breakdown of Igwebuiké values leads to environmental degradation, family dislocation and national fragmentation, mirroring the collapse of cultural and spiritual systems. Therapeutically, Achebe's call for ecological restoration through Igwebuiké is strongly expressed in his depiction of the power of the gatherings of people when evil occurs in his setting of creation. In *Things Fall Apart*, when Okonkwo and his fellow group of elders have been tortured as prisoners against socio-cultural norms, the town crier calls for a community gathering to decide with one voice which positive decision to take in order to protect their land. Such a call has mobilized the whole Umuofia at the market place. It reads as follows:

The market place begun to fill as soon as the sun rose. Obierika was waiting in his Obi when Okonkwo came along and called him. He hung his goatskin bag and his sheathed machet on his should and went out to join him. Obierika's hut was close to the road and he saw every man who passed to the market-place. He had exchanged greetings with many who had already passed that morning.

When Okonkwo and Obierika got to the meeting place there were already so many people that if one threw up a grain of sand it would not find its way to the earth again. And many more people were coming from every quarter of the nine villages. It warmed Okonkwo's heart to see such strength of numbers. (TFA,144)

The concluding sentence of this extract comes with an affirmative definition of Igwebuiké, as the Igbo proverb says: "there is strength in number". Okonkwo has witnessed this strength in the gathering of the people around the matter that is destroying their homes, their traditions, their lands and the dear environment they have inherited from their ancestors to whom they still owe respect and continuity. The description of the gathering is a force that can fight against any negative force of influence over the customs of the land and its spirits. To explain this gathering, Okika in *Things Fall Apart* speaks as follows:

'You all know why we are here, when we ought to be building our barns or mending our huts, when we should be putting our compounds in order. My father used to say to me: "When you see a toad jumping in broad daylight, then know that something was after its life." When I saw you all pouring into this meeting from all the quarters of our clan so early in the morning, I knew that something was after our life.' (TFA, 145)

In comparison with the toad, the contemporary Africans are jumping on the road chased by the ecological crisis which comes with much pressure in all the directions. Something bigger is really after our life'. That bigger thing is a consuming force from within that needs to be uprooted for the rebirth of the African nations. Okika does not stop at narrating the proverb around the jumping toad in daylight. He goes up to name the reason why the people of Umuofia

like a toad have to gather in number at the market-place in the morning: “Our gods are weeping. Idemili is weeping. *Ogwugwu* is weeping. Agbala is weeping, and all the others including. Our dead fathers are weeping because of the shameful sacrilege they are suffering and the abomination we have all seen with our eyes.” (TFA, 145) The abomination committed to the African mother earth is so dreadful that all the gods, the spirits and the ancestors are grieved and weep in river flow tears. Everything has fall apart and the center cannot hold. The union of spirit that held Africans and their environment has been scatted by colonial influence and the sacred biota is violated. This scatted spirit of the people cripples the power of Igwebuiké, there is power in number. Through Okika, Achebe expresses this failure despite the number as follows:

‘There is a great gathering. No clan can boast of greater numbers or greater valour. But are we all here? I ask you: are all the sons of Umuofia with us here? A deep murmur swept through the crowd.

‘They are not’, he said. They have broken the clan and gone their several ways. We who are here have remained true to our fathers, but our brothers have deserted us and joined a stranger to soil their fatherland. If we fight the stranger we shall hit our brothers and perhaps shed the blood of a clansman. (TFA, 146)

This extract exposes the complexity of Igwebuiké as used in the ecological revival. This explains why they gods who are supposed to be strong enough are weeping face to the ecological crisis. If the land and its environment was destroyed by strangers, then Igwebuiké principle could easily solve the problem by bringing natives together. Now it is being destroyed by the stranger with the help of the natives themselves; those supposed to protect it. As a matter of fact, the blow of retaliation will unavoidably cause other harms, that of shedding the blood of a clan’s man, the abomination that brought Okonkwo on seven years of exile; thus, showing at which extent hybridism is coasty to the African land. When one is mission in the number, the number becomes powerless. An efficient functioning of Igwebuiké requires a collective agreement toward the fulfillment of the common goal. This is where the sociopolitical organization of African land needs a serious implementation of Igwebuiké in order to set regulation based on international relationships and the indigenous principles of life. The following section will shed light on how socio-political organization can facilitate the implementation of Igwebuiké, towards the rise of an authentic African ecological minded form of governance.

### 3-Igwebuiké and African Sociopolitical Philosophy as Transparent in Literature

Igwebuiké plays a significant role in African sociopolitical philosophy, emphasizing fluency in unity, complementarity, and collective strength in governance and social structures. According to I. A. Kanu (2023) from whose work the title is inspired and adapted to African literature, Igwebuiké socio-political philosophy derives its root from the Igbo-African concept: “Igwebuiké, which is the underlying principle and unity of the African philosophical experience.” (p.2) It serves as a foundation for indigenous political systems, promoting participatory democracy that balances autocratic leadership with community-driven decision-making. In Governance, as transparent in African literature, traditional African societies often functioned through consensus-based leadership, where decisions were made collectively rather than imposed by a single ruler. This is the case of *Things Fall Apart* where no single ruler is pointed out to decide on behalf of the people. In every circumstance where need is claimed, decisions are made by titled men, submitted to the agreement of the gods before being applies to the whole community. This shows how Igwebuiké highlights the interdependence of individuals and communities, fostering cooperation over individualism in governance. By this

character, it does not step out of Iroegbu (1995)'s understanding of African world view as being "characterized by a common origin, common worldview, common language, shared culture, shared race, colour and habits, common historical experience and a common destiny" (I. A. Kanu, 2023, p.2).

In a clear way, the Igwebuiké philosophy challenges Western political models, advocating for African-centered governance that aligns with indigenous values. Even though the African land is soiled by evil, that evil must be destroyed through the use of indigenous theories like Igwebuiké to analyze the African corpus texts away from all conspiracy. In *Things Fall Apart*, Okika posits as follows:

Our fathers never dreamt of such a thing, they never killed their brothers. But a white man never came to them. So we must do what our fathers would never have done. Eneke the bird was asked why he was always on the wing and he replied: "Men have learnt to shoot without missing their mark and I have learnt to fly without perching on a twig". We must root out this evil. And if our brothers take the side of evil, we must root them out too. And we must do it *now*. We must bale this water now that it is only ankle-deep...' (TFA, 146)

The birth of a different perception of life on the African soil needed serious attention to maintain the ancestral systems of life that was not just human oriented, but ecologically minded. It goes in line with the principle of the bible that says to cut the organ that leads to sin. In the African context, everybody is bound to live according to the existing principles set by the gods and perpetrated through ancestors and family lineage. Everybody in the African traditional society understood that life is based on togetherness and justice building. This understanding of life is not far from Kanu's understanding of Igwebuiké as expressed in African socio-political context. As he defines,

Igwebuiké socio-political philosophy is...a description of the rationally framed distinctive African social and political organization, which borders on the African people's polis, weaved around their everyday life, everyday experience of alliances and collective actions to build together a humanized and humanizing community through pursuing the well-being of the members of the political community, the acquisition, use and justification of power and suited paradigms for the socio-political organization. (2023, p.2)

In that logic, if some Africans have decided to conspire with the white man to fragilize the power in the number, then such disturbing minority needs destruction to avoid contamination. In *Things Fall Apart*, the native brothers who joined the white man are like cancer that consumes Igwebuiké. The earlier the evil is rooted out the better. Because of the divorced brothers of the African land, the crowd that stood for correctness as discussed in the above extract is scatted by the word of a stranger under the guide and protection of indigenous corrupted people against the principle of unity. The incident reads as follows:

There was a sharp bend in the road that led from the market-place to the white man's court, and to the stream beyond it. And so no one had seen the approach of the five court messengers until they had come round the bend, a few spaces from the edge of the crowd. Okonkwo was sitting at the edge [...]. In that brief moment the world seemed to stand still, waiting. There was utter silence. The men of Umuofia were merged into mute backcloth of trees and giant creepers, waiting.

The spell was broken by the head messenger. 'Let me pass!' he ordered. 'What do you want here?'

The white man whose power you know too well has ordered this meeting to stop.’ (TFA, 46)

As such depicted, it resonates that in the name of the white man’s politics, the African sons are ready to destroy the power of Igwebuike. This means that the foreign individualistic ruling has no positive power on the African ecology. If the white man has a power, it is to fulfil the interest of an obedient minority through force and oppression. This uncommon principle has led to Okonkwo’s furious behavior toward the court messenger: “In a flash Okonkwo drew his matchet. The messenger crouched to avoid the blow. It was useless. Okonkwo’s matchet descended twice and the man’s head lay beside his uniformed body. (TFA, 146). Instead of war, Igwebuike promotes dialogue and reconciliation, ensuring that disputes are settled through mutual understanding rather than force. This is why Kanu (2016) as quoted by I. A. Kanu (2023) clarifies that “Igwebuike represents the perspective that ‘to be’ is to live in solidarity and complementarity. ‘To be’ is ‘to be with the other’, in a community of beings. It is not an innate value of the African person, explaining why, as soon as a child is born, it is transmitted through education” (I. A. Kanu, 2023, p.3). Here, the type of education through which the child is transmitted is not the indoctrination African modern school system has inherited. That type of education is an initiation process into the sociopolitical values of the land.

This is the case with Okonkwo who has been raised to be a defender of his tribe against all forms of destabilization. In the community gathering as presented in the above extract, the court messenger has not intervened in peace. He intervenes with power and influence believing in the authority of his new master. In this case, Okonkwo is obliged to retaliate. The mood that prevails after the killing of the messenger, explains the mediatic principle of Igwebuike. In the principles of African sociocultural organization, by killing the messenger, Okonkwo has declared war against the evil that seeks to destroy Umuofia, his fatherland without the final word of the gods, weather it will be a just war or that of blame. So, his clansmen do not join in the war because they are still held by the ancestral oath of Igwebuike. As a matter of fact, the rage that expressed in the gathering give way to pity, sympathy and culpability. The mood reads as follows:

The waiting backcloth jumped into tumultuous life and the meeting was stopped. Okonkwo stood looking at the dead man. He knew that Umuofia would not go to war. He knew because they had let the other messengers escape. They had broken into tumult instead of action. He described fright in that tumult. He heard voices asking: “why did he do it? (TFA, 147)

The people have no power to join Okonkwo in the war. The gods have not said what to follow as instruction nor has the gathering come to a common conclusion. The gods and all the spiritual powers are just weeping, weeping the loss of the land and the brave sons who have turned their back away to serve the devil shaped in the angel form. Fighting means killing more sons of the land and by that tearing the land into more pieces. The confusion witnessed in *Things Fall Apart* is similar with that depicted in *Arrow of God*.

As the chief priest of Ulu, Ezeulu embodies both spiritual and political authority. His isolation and refusal to compromise reflect a breakdown in communal harmony against Igwebuike principles:

The Igwebuike philosophical enterprise presents a promising avenue for promoting the diversity that characterizes the African continent. This philosophy recognizes diversity as the foundation for achieving equilibrium or equality in terms of rights and dignity, as well as for realizing common interests that can enhance the efficiency and credibility of political governance. Moreover, the Igwebuike spirit has the potential to foster

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renewed efforts towards socio-political integration at the global, regional, and national levels of human society. (Kanu,2023, p.4)

The villages of Umuaro, once united under Ulu, begin to fracture; symbolizing the erosion of Igwebuiké principles. Achebe critiques both colonial imposition and rigid traditionalism, suggesting that African sociopolitical systems must evolve while retaining their core values. Through Igwebuiké, he proposes a philosophy of integration; where diversity is embraced, and unity is forged through mutual respect. The village of Umuofia thrives on collective decision-making, especially in matters of justice, war, and tradition. Even spiritual practices, like consulting the Oracle of Agbala, show that human and divine realms must cooperate for a global harmony. The Week of Peace and New Yam Festival reinforce the idea that peace and productivity go hand in hand. Okonkwo's individualism and obsession with masculinity often clash with communal values, leading to isolation and rejection.

The arrival of colonial forces, new forms of governance and Christianity, fracture the African community's undermining of Igwebuiké's principle of unity in diversity. In *Things Fall Apart*, the loss of shared identity and the breakdown of traditional institutions mark the tragic unraveling of Umuofia. In essence, *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God* mourn the disintegration of Igwebuiké values under colonial pressure and internal rigidity. Achebe subtly champions the philosophy by showing its beauty and the cost of its collapse. The African system of governance needs to be revisited to meet with the local principles as is the case with Igwebuiké. For a fair sociocultural dynamism, "we have men of high title and the chief priests and the elders" (TFA, 107) who can play the role in collaboration with our gods and the spiritual ecology. No powerful corrupted individual in the form of a king, but collaborators who work under the control of the gods. In this process of leadership, it opens doors to a certain form of interconnection and continental integration. Human, animal species, insects, vegetation and spirituality abide by the principles of Igwebuiké, together we are strong in our diversity.

#### Conclusion

Trying to be away from conspiracy, this article has proposed to use Igwebuiké as its theoretical framework to value the African world view on togetherness and unity as it strongly fights for ecological integration and ecological minded governance. For analysis, it has used Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God* as corpus texts. The discussion has been structured around three sections. The first has explored the Wonder in the Power of the Moon as an Origin of Igwebuiké. It has come out with the result that together we are strong as an African world view is the fruit of the Africans observation of the happenings around them and how it contributes for the holistic well-being. Ezeulu's observation of the moon in *Things Fall Apart* and the sacrifices he performs have been central to the discussion. The more humanity connects to its environment, the more human beings learn on how to live harmoniously and lasting. The second section has discussed on The Character of Igwebuiké as an African Ecological Force. Here, the analysis has tried proven that in African ecology as transparent in African literature, Igwebuiké encourages a holistic approach to environmental preservation, recognizing the deep relationship between humans, nature, and spirituality. When one is mission in the number, the number becomes powerless. An efficient functioning of Igwebuiké requires a collective agreement toward the fulfillment of the common goal. The section recognizes that the land is sacred, governed by deities like Ani, the Earth goddess, and protected through taboos and rituals. Trees, rivers, and animals are not just resources but spiritual entities with roles in maintaining cosmic balance with human beings playing the role of intermediary to guide the community on the ways of the will of the gods. The third section sheds light on Igwebuiké and African Sociopolitical philosophy: toward an African ecological minded form

of governance. The power of ruling must be ecologically inspired and spiritually guided by the ancestral powers to insure efficiency.

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