

# Analysis of the sacrificial egg

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In "The Sacrificial Egg", the author, Chinua Achebe "presents the conflict between an African civilization called Igbo and Westernization, specifically European." (Joaquin, 2003) The protagonist, whose name is Julius Obi, is a product of European and African culture-- he is a Western educated Igbo. The story begins in the empty market named Nkwo. Since Umuru people think the god of smallpox is staying at the market, they are afraid to come. Julius Obi thinks such folklore is a kind of superstition.

He is careless of the warning sign that traditional native people tell him, and he has a frightening experience. Before the Westerns came, Nkwo was a quiet, clean and small market. The Westerns carry the business and dirt to the market. The smallpox and fear come following one after the other. The story shows the differences between viewpoints of the colonials and traditional Africans. Because of the difference, conflict happens. Being Western educated, Julius believes from what he has learned that the smallpox is a kind of disease.

But native people think it is carried by Kitikpa, a god of smallpox. His girl friend's mother, Ma, warns him to stay at home as long as possible, because Kitikpa is in the street. "Chinua Achebe is one of Africa's most influential and widely published writers." (NYS Writers Institute, 1998) "He was born November 16, 1930, in Ogidi, in eastern Nigeria, the son of a mission-school teacher, one of the early converts to Christianity in his community." (Hastings, 2001) His name in full is Albert Chinualumogu Achebe.

He was educated in Western missionary schools and obtained an arts degree at the University College in Ibadan. As the "author of one of the enduring

works of modern African literature, Achebe sees post colonial cultures taking shape story by story. "(Bacon, 2000) He uses English in writing African fiction, in order to make Europeans understand African culture and tradition more directly and truthfully. He also writes to criticize the postcolonial African leaders who are corrupt. The Sacrificial Egg was firstly published in the April 1959 Atlantic Monthly, as his earlier work.

His background and biography help me to understand he was very familiar with that condition which he describes in the " The Sacrificial Egg". Achebe is a Nigerian, and Nigeria was a British colony. Since he and his father grew up in a traditional African family, converted to Christianity and attended colonial missionary and government schools, Achebe knows well that the traditional Igbo life clashed with colonial powers in the form of missionaries and colonial government. From the above, I can find the text was written to show us how the Europeans changed the natives in a post-colonial African country.

They only educated very few of the native people in the Western way, but didn't tell them how to integrate this new knowledge with their native culture. The colonizers often thought they were the civilized people who brought culture, knowledge and riches to the African people. They never thought about bringing illness, " sprawling, crowded, and dirty" (Gary, P. 3) to the African people. Nor did they think about the impact of the estrangement that occurred between the educated and uneducated native people. The educated Africans were isolated and not accepted by the traditional African.