



Reclaiming Igbo Memory through Bremond's Narrative Logic in Adichie's *The Headstrong Historian*

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ABSTRACT

*This study aims to unveil the narrative structures and choices in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *The Headstrong Historian* by employing the theoretical perspective of Claude Bremond. Narratives have explicit structures, functions and components from the time of Aristotle to the present day, and Oedipus Rex is an epitome of a perfect narrative according to Aristotle and other virtuosos. Multiple scales, theoretical frameworks and models etc have been proffered over time to attenuate the narrative structures, functions and roles. Claude Bremond has incorporated the narrative logics and choices to a theoretical framework, which is an extension of Vladimir Propp's concept of narrative function, to unravel narratives. Adichie's *The Headstrong Historian* is a story spanning from a peaceful life to a perturbing and atrocious colonial era in Nigeria. The reclamation of identity and freedom in the post-colonial era to shatter the stereotypes entrenched by the colonizers about the indigenous individuals and culture. Adichie has deliberately preferred some narrative structures to others to emanate the narrative in a natural and meaningful way. This short story has been analyzed multiple times but Bremond's structuralist narrative logic has never been utilized to probe this story. This study not only bridges this gap but also paves the way for future researchers to employ the same theoretical perspective for other narratives. This study, thus, associates the narrative research to a broader spectrum.*

Introduction

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie stands as a prominent literary figure whose penmanship transcends boundaries, weaving narratives that resonate with the human experience. She meticulously presents the marvelous amalgamation of her personal experiences of diaspora, history and fiction.

At the core of Adichie's literary work is an unwavering dedication and hard work in order to capture the subtlety of identity, feminism, and the complex tapestry of cultural intersections. Her novels, including *Purple Hibiscus* (2003), *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006), and *Americanah* (2013), are masterpieces that illuminate the intricacies of human relationships while providing a profound commentary on societal structures. Her novels present diversified themes intertwined in an unparalleled manner. She pays special attention to her language. She has a superb command of the English language. Her way of portrayal is a testament to her intellectual prowess, effortlessly navigating the labyrinth of emotions and ideologies that populate her narratives. She has received multiple awards for her unparalleled works. Her second meticulous novel, *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006) has received the Orange Prize. Beyond the pages of her novels, Adichie has extended her influence into the realms of public discourse. She is an active feminist and human rights activist. Adichie's TED Talk, *We Should All Be Feminists*, has become a cultural touchstone and a beacon of enlightenment. Famous African novelist, Chinua Achebe remarked about her: "*We do not usually associate wisdom with beginners, but here is a new writer endowed with the gift of ancient storytellers. Adichie knows what is at stake, and what to do about it. She is fearless or she would not have taken on the intimidating horror of Nigeria's civil war. Adichie came almost fully made.*" (Achebe, as cited in Adichie, 2012, para. 3).

This study aims to probe Adichie's *The Headstrong Historian*, a story replete with Nigerian culture and identity quest. It is a story of a Nigerian woman, Nwamgba, who witnesses the carefree era of pre-colonial era but her husband's death leaves her so emotionally drained that she sends her only son to the Christian missionaries so that he can acquire the prestigious English language and western culture. Her son becomes Christian and changes his name. Nwamgba suffers a lot in the atrocious colonial hegemonic era where she has to face the atrocities of the colonizers, the sufferings due to family ties and the pangs of the stubborn son. Her granddaughter, Afamefuna, is spiritually connected to Nwamgba and becomes a great historian by climbing the hierarchical ladder, using the colonizer's language, knowledge, and their stunts. Afamefuna, then, reclaims her indigenous Nigerian identity and customs. She challenges the stereotypes of the colonizers about Nigeria and emphasizes the importance of Nigerian culture. She shattered the orientalist's views about Nigeria and highlighted the atrocities of the colonizers and uniqueness of Nigerian culture. As Edward Said also proffered in his book, *Orientalism*, how each colonized nation rose to unveil the truth about its culture and norms: "*Every single empire in its official discourse has said that it is not like all the others... as if one shouldn't trust the evidence of one's eyes watching the destruction and the misery and death brought by the latest mission civilisatrice.*" (Said, 1978, p. 121). Adichie has proficiently portrayed the indigenous hues of Nigerian culture in her story and she is said to have reclaimed the style of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958). Krishnan published an article in the University of Bristol with the name *New Literatures: West Africa* (2016) about the masterpieces of Africa, in which he remarks about the similarities between *The Headstrong Historian* (2008) and *Things Fall Apart* (1958) in the words; "*The next essay in the Matatu volume, Brian Doherty's 'Writing Back with a Difference: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's 'The Headstrong Historian' as a Response to Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart'*" (Krishnan, 2016, p. 18). The tapestry of narrative of *The Headstrong Historian* (2008) is teemed with narrative structures which is unraveled in this study.

This study employs Claude Bremond's theoretical framework of *The Logic of Narrative Possibilities* to hint at the narrative structures and choices made by Adichie. The theory is an extension of Vladimir Propp's work about narrative functions. All the components of the Bremond's theory have been identified in the story to attenuate the narrative style of the story and how the story proceeds with various integrated narrative structures. *The Headstrong Historian* (2008) has never been analyzed with the theoretical lens of Claude Bremond and narrative

structural logics and choices. This study fills this gap and connects it to the broader canvas of hinting at the narrative style of writers, genres, and regions, for instance, Adichie has narrated other fabulae in her other masterpieces such as *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006), *Americanah* (2013), etc. have the same sequence of narrative i.e. Pre-colonial era (or pre-war era), colonial (or war) era and post-colonial (or post war) era but the narrative structures are not same in all the narratives which manifest that authors can alter the narrative choices depending on how they want to proceed the narrative and how to conclude it. Bremond's theoretical framework is very significant in unveiling the narrative structure and the gist of various deliberate narrative choices to cater to the readers. This study will be a guiding star for the future researchers to conduct narratological research with Bremond's theoretical perspective and to hint at the style of different authors, belonging to the same or different ethnicities. The future researchers can also probe how any author adopts different narrative logics in his or her different masterpieces.

Literature Review

Multifarious literary prospects of *The Headstrong Historian* have been attenuated in many research papers but the Bremond's narrative logic is a stone which is turned with much efficaciousness in this study.

Tunca (2012) probes in the research paper how Adichie has reimagined Achebe in her novel, *Purple Hibiscus* (2003) and short story, *The Headstrong Historian* (2008). In both of her masterpieces, Adichie drinks the cultural inheritance, literary adaptation, and narrative resistance to the lees. Tunca probes how Adichie has revered and critiqued the literary legacy of Achebe, particularly in her short story with the powerful female voices. The intertextuality and cultural appropriation and their intricate interplay in Adichie's *The Headstrong Historian* shows the empowerment of women from the marginalized and subaltern voices and a remarkable shift in the traditional African literary canon. The thematic intricacy in amalgamation of historical memory, historical narrative, female agency etc. with ideological tension and temporal complexity has been attenuated in the research paper.

Doherty (2014) probes *The Headstrong Historian* as a homage and critical response to Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. The author identifies how Adichie has made intertextual use of Obierika to hint at her powerful comeback of rewriting the post-colonial era in an innovative and catchy style. Instead of repudiation, Adichie recreates a compelling dialogue with a former literary forefather to portray the African classic narrative, neglecting the Eurocentric narratives. The author connects the Adichie's work with a larger canvas of literary expansion, reclamation, and intervention by employing the canonical reworkings such as Césaire's *Un Tempête* and Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* in the research paper. The powerful female protagonist is an interrogation of gendered and historically marginalized, subaltern and silenced voices.

Mikailu, & Wattenberg (2015) probe the cosmopolitan temporality and vernacular cosmopolitan in the research paper, "*My Name Will Not Be Lost: Cosmopolitan Temporality and Reclaimed History in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's 'The Headstrong Historian'*". The post-colonial impact in the short story has been argued in the study. The author examines the theoretical perspective of cosmopolitan temporality to probe the themes of identity, historical memory and historical consciousness and the author meticulously embeds it in the vernacular cosmopolitan and links it to ancestral memory and contemporary historiography. The study highlights how Adichie has portrayed the silenced and marginalized voices in the colonial era and reclaims indigenous Igbo identity and history throughout the story. Thus, Adichie plays the role of a historian as well as of a literary creator and cultural custodian.

VanZanten (2015) has lauded *The Headstrong Historian* that it is a nuanced way of exploring and reimagining the Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and the paper is named as; "*The Headstrong Historian: Writing with Things Fall Apart*". The name shows how meticulously Achebe's seminal novel is portrayed again with the pen of Adichie. The intricate and beautiful interplay of variation, repetition, and narrative temporality have been unveiled in the study using the narratological and theoretical lens of Gerard Genette. The paper highlights how Adichie not only honors but also challenges Achebe's literary legacy in portraying Nigerian culture and identity quest. The female perspective of Adichie in giving vent to the silenced, and marginalized voices along with the reframe of African identity in the story have been attenuated with a special focus on the themes such as religion, gender, customs, and historical authorship. VanZanten employs the concept of "human time" proffered by Paul Ricoeur to highlight the focalization and temporal shifts of the short story. The narrative of the story is a multigenerational act of resistance and reclamation of identity. The cultural memory, historiography and post-colonial narrative depicted in the story has also been highlighted along with the Adichie-Achebe scholarship.

Ejikeme (2017) has given vent to the silenced voices of females in the human history by meticulously highlighting the female characters and powerful female protagonist of *The Headstrong Historian*. The female voices of the story are foregrounded in the study to highlight the difference between Adichie's female focused work and Achebe's male centric *Things Fall Apart*. The study highlights the dual-sex system or gender discrimination in the Igbo culture and probes how the women are now changing this narrative. The story celebrates autonomy, resilience, resistance, reclamation, and strength of Nigerian women. The reclamation of identity and silenced history of Africa with a particular focus on female perspective have been attenuated in the study. The author meticulously unravels the European colonial and Christian traditional subjugated and subaltern female agency which is openly challenged in the story. This is a gendered study of Nigerian and African literature that probes the compelling and unparalleled storytelling capability of Adichie that has the transformative power and potential.

Muse (2025) explores the Adichie's *The Headstrong Historian* with the ideological and stylistic perspectives. The author analyzes the story using the theoretical framework of Paul Simpson to unveil the multiple layers of language in the story. Muse has delved into multiple layers from phonology, graphology to the complex syntax and discourse level and examines how various linguistic levels and features contribute to meaning and ideological construction. The study probes how Adichie's remarkable capability of narrative structures and choices resist the colonialism and reclamation of identity and silenced voices. Adichie has employed various shifts in perspectives, narratives, verb choices and cultural presentation which intricately interplay to weave the themes of gender, silenced voices, resistance, resilience, historical authorship and historical memory. The patriarchy and colonial influence on the Nigerian society are brutally and truly unmasked in the story with the post-colonial and feminist lens.

Muse (2025) maps out the three stages proffered by Gabriela Leighton, i.e. rebellion, assimilation, return along with the analysis of the story, *The Headstrong Historian*, with the theoretical lens of post-colonial feminism in a conference paper; "*Return in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's 'The Headstrong Historian'*" (2025). The compelling and meticulous analysis of Muse unravels the female voices in the colonial and post-colonial Nigeria with the remarkable use of language, history, identity and historical memory. The author examines how the protagonist of the story reclaims and challenges her position and identity in the patriarchal and colonial agency. The research paper presents the portrayal of collective as well as individual identity along with the reclamation of identity, history and silenced voices. The study shows how the story is an epitome of gendered storytelling and rich in feminist narratology.

The brochure of this literature review clearly hints at the copious space to analyze *The Headstrong Historian* with the lens of Claude Bremond's structuralist narrative logic.

Theoretical Framework

This study employs Claude Bremond's semiological theory of narrative structure logic. Bremond has extended the work of French functionalists and Russian formalists, particularly Vladimir Propp's narrative function's concept. Bremond rejects the fixed linear progression and supports a network of various narrative choices that can be diverged, halted or looped back and leads to the complex nature of human narratives. He proffers the narratives as a complex system of choices and consequences which may or may not be accomplished. Bremond's theoretical framework is utilized for the logic analysis of his various narratives unfold and how they reflect universal behavior patterns such as task, obstacle, negotiation, aggression etc. It has various parts:

Semiology of Narrative

Bremond classifies the semiotic of narrative into two basic categories; the techniques of narration and the laws of narrative logic. He defines it as; "*The semiology of narrative draws its very existence and its wealth from its roots in anthropology.*" (Bremond, 1980, p. 387). The main unit and purpose of the narrative is the function that it plays in the fabula and story and these functions are grouped together to form various elementary sequences that can be outlined, defined and analyzed to unveil the structured sequences along with the chronological descriptions of the events of the narrative. The schema of semiology of narrative presented by Claude Bremond (Bremond, 1980, p. 387) is:

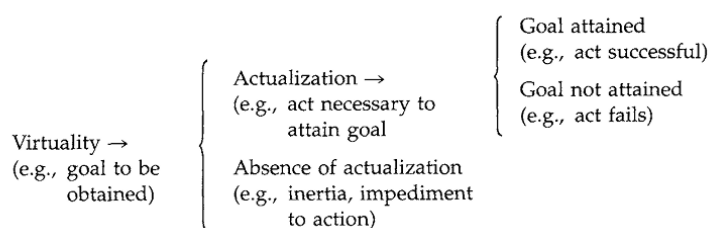


Figure 1: Bremond, 1980, p. 387

The Narrative Cycle

The concept of the narrative cycle introduced by Bremond consists of two main processes; amelioration and degradation. "*Narration can alternate phases of amelioration and degradation according to a continuous cycle... this alteration is not only possible but necessary.*" (Bremond, 1980, p. 393). Amelioration is climbing up the ladder i.e. movement towards the upper hierarchy or improvement while degradation is the shift towards the lower part of hierarchy or decline. Each cycle comprises stages such as amelioration to obtain, amelioration process and amelioration obtained for amelioration and for degradation, it includes possible degradation, degradation process and degradation produced. Amelioration and degradation go hand in hand and occur in the form of end to end succession (first amelioration and then degradation or vice versa), enclave structures (in which either amelioration or degradation is embedded within another) or coupling (when both amelioration and degradation are interlinked and go together like a couple). The overall schema of narrative cycle, consisting of amelioration and degradation (Bremond, 1980, p. 393), is presented as:

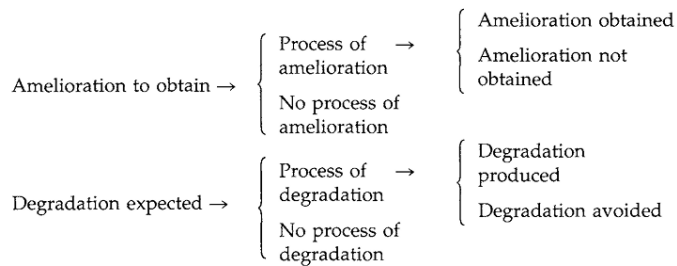


Figure 2: Bremond, 1980, p. 393

Amelioration Process

Amelioration is a gradual process and keeps on taking place throughout the narrative. It is defined in easy words by Bremond as; *“His initial state of deficiency implies the presence of an obstacle which prevents the realization of a more satisfying state.”* (Bremond, 1980, p. 396). There is usually an obstacle which is the amelioration to be obtained. It should be identified timely and by the end of the narrative, obstacle needs to be overcome. The process of amelioration includes elimination of the obstacle which can be obtained either actively (with the intervention of an ally or agent) or passively (naturally by fate or chance). The resolution or ameliorated state is the amelioration obtained. Bremond (Bremond, 1980, p. 396) describes the amelioration as the following schema:

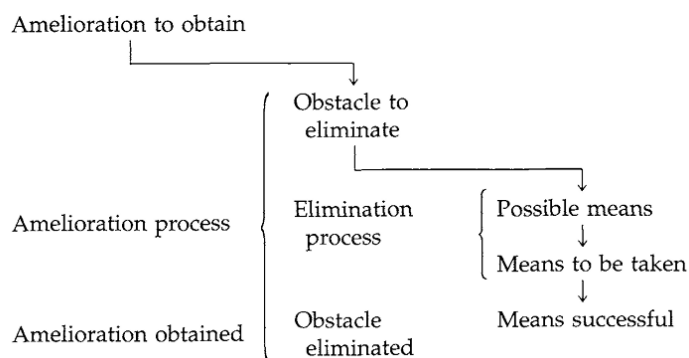


Figure 3: Bremond, 1980, p. 396

Completion of the Task

The removal of the obstacle or amelioration process is obtained, is actually the task which should be completed in the narrative either actively (i.e. by the personal efforts of the agent or actant or protagonist) or passively (naturally by chance or by fate). *“Things either work out by themselves (heaven may unexpectedly provide the sought-for solution) or an agent may assume the task of arranging them.”* (Bremond, 1980, p. 398). The nature of the completion of the task, either actively or passively, shapes the narrative and the characters (whether heroic or passive).

Intervention of the Ally

According to Claude Bremond, the protagonist needs an ally to remove the obstacle, whose aid helps the protagonist to get over the difficulties. The aid is usually provided due to a reason. *“The aid is a sacrifice consented to within the framework of an exchange of services.”* (Bremond, 1980, p. 399). The multiple reasons of alliance can be the ally and the protagonist are the mutual associates and they have shared goals and they help each other to achieve their goals. The ally is a creditor and is offering aid to the protagonist in hope for some future recompensation or

repayment. The ally can also be the debtor of the protagonist and helping the protagonist to repay some past aid or as a gratitude. The structural depth of the narrative is defined by the ally's motivation, timing of alliance, and the type of aid provided. The schema presented by Bremond (Bremond, 1980, p. 398) is:

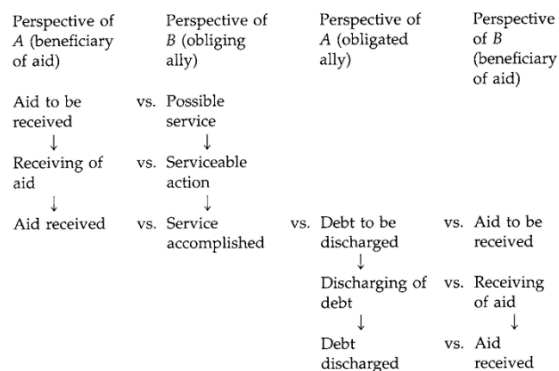


Figure 4: Bremond, 1980, p. 398

Elimination of the Adversary

The obstacles are usually caused by some adversary which needs to be eliminated. Adversaries can be passive obstacles or some active opponent. The process of elimination can be through different ways i.e. negotiation, coincidence, strategy, aggression, or direct action. The elimination process chosen by the writer depends on the complexity or need of the narrative. *"The procedure for eliminating the adversary must be organized according to more or less complex strategies."* (Bremond, 1980, p. 401).

Negotiation

It is not necessary to eliminate the adversaries through violence or direct action. Other methods can be used which are explained by Bremond as; *"He can use either seduction or intimidation."* (Bremond, 1980, p. 402). Seduction refers to offering the adversaries something favorable and desirable in return while intimidation is threatening the adversaries about the negative consequences. Both seduction and intimidation come under the umbrella term of "Negotiation", that can turn the adversaries into the allies. The schema presented by Bremond (Bremond, 1980, p. 401) is:

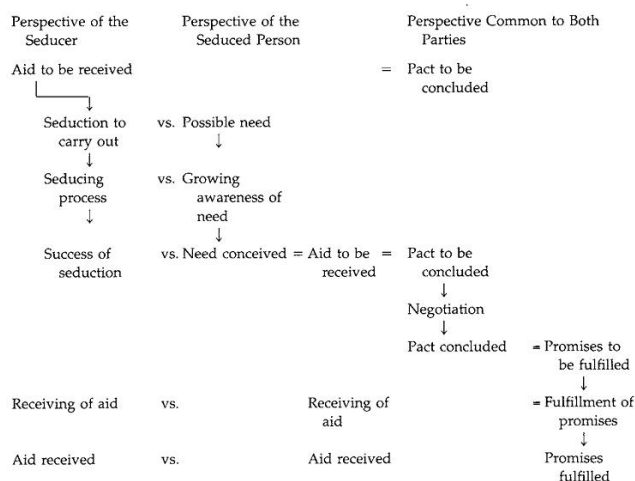


Figure 5: Bremond, 1980, p. 401

Aggression

When negotiation flops, the alternative way to eliminate the adversaries i.e. aggression is employed. Various traps and ways are used in aggression. *“To use a trap is to act so that the victim... cooperates unknowingly with the aggressor.”* (Bremond, 1980, p. 403). Aggression can manifest itself in the form of injury or avoiding danger or deception. Aggression can be in the form of injury includes the direct harm to the adversary. Avoiding danger consists of various strategies or preemptive actions to avoid the loss afflicted by the adversary. The schema for these two as proffered by Bremond (Bremond, 1980, p. 403) is:

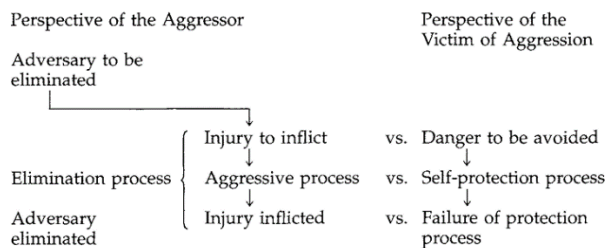


Figure 6: Bremond, 1980, p. 403

Deception is also a form of aggression which is further divided into simulation (includes feigning the intention) or dissimulation (which is concealing the true and actual intention). This is used to entrap the adversary, usually in three stages; deception, error and exploitation. The complex schema of deception (Bremond, 1980, p. 404) is:

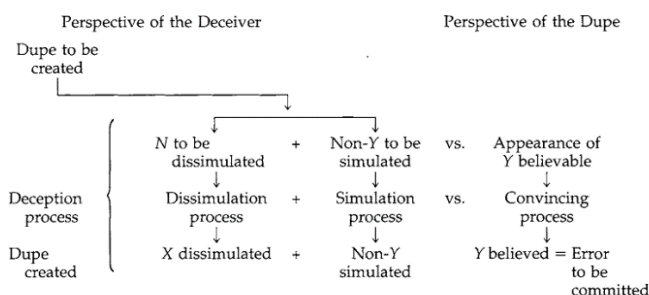


Figure 7: Bremond, 1980, p. 404

Retributions: Recompense and Vengeance

Retributions lead to the narrative justice which affirms the moral economy of the narrative. Retributions lead the dimensions of the narrative by ensuring either closure or continuation of the narrative through the new cycle or cycles of action. Retributions are accomplished through two ways as per Bremond; *“Reward for a service rendered; recompense and vengeance... are the two faces of retribution.”* (Bremond, 1980, p. 405). Recompense is usually for the good deeds or aid provided to the protagonist while vengeance is the punishment for the afflictions, atrocities or betrayal.

Punishment

Punishment is the resolution of the narrative or the act of aggression. It is a narrative device that closes the cycle of action or degradation. It may be symbolic or actual, deserved or afflicted, questioned or justified. *“Amelioration, degradation, reparation: the narrative circle is now closed...”* (Bremond, 1980, p. 405). It is the official end of the narrative.

Analysis and Discussion

Clause Bremond has extended the works of the Russian formalists and French functionalists, particularly based on the work of Vladimir Propp. The linear progression of the narrative is not how the narrative proceeds. There are several narrative structures and choices which an author has to make at innumerable points and levels of narratives. These narrative choices are defined and proffered by Bremond in his, *The Logic of Narrative Possibilities* (1973), originally published in French but it was translated later on in 1980 in English and his model was considered a dynamic model of various narrative possibilities. Bremond's model assists in comprehending the narrative levels and possibilities on each of these levels. He proffered 10 levels of narrative possibilities and this study aims to impel all the levels of the narrative possibilities as explained by Bremond in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *The Headstrong Historian* (2008) to hint at the narrative style of the Nigerian authors, particularly Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's style.

Semiology of Narrative

Adichie has blended oral storytelling style with the modern and contemporary narrative forms. She has used rich symbolism, imagery and ancestral memory to present the personal, and collective identity with the historical perspective across the three generations of Nigeria. The narrative of the story is replete with tone, rhythm, and intimacy of the tale narrated with three generations. Oral traditional storytelling is used due to adoption of repetitive and incantatory style of the narrative, particularly using the phrases such as; "It was Grace who....". The claim of the study that Adichie has employed oral storytelling style will be strengthened with the following definition of oral storytelling tradition; "*Oral storytelling depends on communal memory, repetition, and the communal nature of transmission. It allows for constant reinforcement of the cultural knowledge, relying on repetitive structures to guarantee accuracy and continuity in knowledge transmission.*" (Goody, 1977, p. 19). Thus, it's evident from the repetition of the phrases and incantatory tenor that Adichie has deliberately employed this technique to lend a unique beauty to the narrative.

Adichie reclaims the silenced voices of the narrative in the colonial context using the omniscient point of view. Third-person omniscient point of view belongs to the modern Western narrative technique. Adichie focuses on the generational shifts while portraying three generations, instead of focusing on a single protagonist. The narrative is symbolically linked with Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, as both of them end with reclaimed truth (*Pacifying with Bullets: A Reclaimed History of Southern Nigeria* in Adichie's *The Headstrong Historian*) and records of colonial atrocities (*The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of Southern Nigeria* in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*). With the lens of Said (1978), it can be said, Afeefuna "gazed back" at the colonizers by unraveling the truth and their true loathsome face before the world. Adichie reclaims the indigenous cultural identity and marginalized female voices by penning indigenous language, naming, customs and religion. This remarkable semiotic layering in the narrative leads the readers to realize what actually happened in the colonial era and imposed histories. The Bremond's schema for this semiology of narrative will become as follows:

The Narrative Cycle

The narrative cycle of the succession of amelioration and degradation is present in the story, *The Headstrong Historian* as well. Nwamgba, the female protagonist, wants connection, love, justice and dignity and resists the societal pressure to marry Obierika but he dies early and ultimately, her goal changes to achieving the amelioration of preserving Obierika's ancestral legacy, bright future for his son, protecting and reclaiming native Nigerian ancestral identity. In order to achieve this amelioration, Nwamgba strives remarkably and makes several strategic decisions. She decides to

raise her son in a male dominated patriarchal society. She wants her son to reclaim the seized land, power and legacy of her husband, so for giving him legal, and linguistic expertise, she sends her only son Anikwenwa to a missionary school. She wants him to acquire a prestigious English language and legal proficiency. The amelioration is not fully obtained because Anikwenwa reclaims his father's ivory tusks, power and land but being in a missionary school, he loses his cultural roots and becomes a christian and changes his name to Michael. He absorbs and accepts the colonial hegemonic ideologies. Frantz Fanon (1952) has proffered this physiological impact of the colonial era in which the subjugated colonized people internalize the colonizer's gaze through innumerable ways that lead to identity quest and identity conflict. Fanon states; *"I am being dissected under white eyes, the only real eyes. I am fixed"* (Fanon, 1952, p. 116).

"Degradation possible" arises with the death of Obierika that leads towards lineage erasure (as Anikwenwa becomes Micheal), land theft (by cousins of Obierika) and colonialism in Nigeria. The process of degradation unfolds through the internal betrayal of Obierika's cousins who snatch his land as soon as he dies and the external oppression by the colonial system that builds its hegemony in law, education and religion by calling Nigerians, primitives. The degradation is produced when Anikwenwa becomes Micheal and becomes assimilated in the Western culture, leaving his identity and culture. This assimilation is best depicted in the words; *"Assimilation is the decline, and at its endpoint, the disappearance of an ethnic distinction and the cultural and social differences that express it."* (Alba, R., & Nee, V. (2003, p. 11). Nwamgba becomes emotionally drained and feels isolated after losing her only son to colonial brainwashing. She is left with nothing but mourning her lost values, culture, language and authority of the Nigerians. The schema will be:

The structure type of amelioration and degradation is coupling in which the process of amelioration i.e. reclaiming lands, power, dignity etc. goes hand in hand with cultural erosion, identity crisis, and the distortion of the history. The schema for this coupling structure type will be as follows:

Amelioration Process

The amelioration process usually consists of an obstacle which is to be eliminated. In *The Headstrong Historian*, there is a complex series of obstacles in the form of personal, societal, cultural, patriarchal and political obstacles, which are removed gradually as the narrative proceeds. Nwamgba has to face the patriarchal dominance by her close relations that limit her gender expectations. She has to face the betrayal of her in-laws who seize the Obierika's land, and legacy using the societal pressure and cultural customs to manipulate her and to make her silent of their oppressions. Her difficulties are increased by the colonial intrusion that negates indigenous Nigerian authority. To eliminate the obstacles, Nwamgba maneuvers gradually with the patriarchal society. She confronts Obierika's cousins by shaming them publicly in female rallies and develops the Women's Council to challenge the injustice against women, thus, igniting female solidarity. In order to eliminate the colonial intrusion, she sends her only son to the missionary school so that they can reclaim their land and authority by learning the language and legal system of the colonizers. The obstacle of cousin's oppression ends when Anikwenwa reclaims the land and legacy of his father but he loses his cultural roots and belief system and reverts to Christianity, and that's what taught in missionary schools. *"The Church in the colonies is the white people's Church, the foreigner's Church. She does not call the native to God's ways but to the ways of the white man, of the master, of the oppressor."* (Fanon, 1961, p. 42). However, the complete obstacle of the colonial intrusion is removed when her granddaughter, Afamefuna, becomes a historian and reclaims indigenous Igbo identity in her book, *Pacifying with Bullets: A Reclaimed History of Southern Nigeria*. The schema will be:

Completion of the Task

The completion of the task occurs both actively and passively. Nwamgba strives and confronts the oppressions and raises her voice in the patriarchal society. She sends her son to the missionary school so that indigenous identity is reclaimed. However, her son is influenced by the colonial supremacy and deception. Fate helps Nwamgba in fulfilling her ancestral vision and memory. Her granddaughter, Grace (changes her name afterwards), becomes emotionally and spiritually connected to her grandmother and changes her religion and Christian name. She questions the colonial supremacy and is an epitome of resistance. She acquires education and becomes a historian and reclaims Nigerian identity and rewrites Nigerian history from the "within" perspective in her book, *Pacifying with Bullets: A Reclaimed History of Southern Nigeria*.

Intervention of the Ally

The reclamation of Nigerian identity and culture by becoming a historian is not an easy task which could be accomplished alone. Afeefuna has three allies in her struggles. All the three allies are the mutual associates of Afeefuna because they share the common goal, i.e. free Nigeria and shattering the colonial stereotypes. One of the allies is her sincere friend Ayaju, just like a sister to her. She is her strategic advisor who helps her in mapping out her strategies and her emotional support. She suggests Afeefuna to join missionary school to learn their language and legal system. The schema of Ayaju's help will be:

Her second ally and mutual associate is Father Shanahan. He becomes an ally and transfers his knowledge of English language, western education and colonial legal system to Afeefuna so that she can be fully equipped to reclaim and rewrite the Nigerian history. The last ally is her grandmother, Nwamgba, who helps her in knowing the indigenous and native Nigerian ancestral legacy and culture. She helps her to change her name and decolonize the historical orientalist narrative of white supremacy by becoming a historian. Nwamgba helps her in penning her masterpiece, *Pacifying with Bullets: A Reclaimed History of Southern Nigeria* by imbuing her with true Nigerian beliefs, customs, rituals, and religion. The schemas for these allies will be same as portrayed earlier as all the allies are Afeefuna's mutual associates.

Elimination of the Adversary

Adversaries include traitorous patriarchal family and colonial hegemony. Both adversaries are eliminated through strategy. Nwamgba sends her son to missionary school to reclaim the legacy of Obierika and mobilizes the women's power through rallies and the Women's Council. She succeeds in getting her rightful share of the legacy of her husband but loses her only son who starts following the colonial masters blindly. Colonial domination is partially eliminated in her life when her granddaughter, Grace, connects with her spiritually and changes her name to Afeefuna. Her granddaughter learns colonial education as well as native Nigerian customs. Her granddaughter fulfills her dream after her death by writing a book as a historian that reclaims Nigerian identity and authority.

Negotiation

Afeefuna employs pragmatic adaptation i.e. using the tools of the colonizers such as their school, education, language, baptism, etc. against them to reclaim the colonized identity and heritage. She, thus, negotiates with the colonizers by engaging in their given educational and legal system. Her father imposes colonial Christian identity to her but when her teacher mocks her grandmother, she laughs and Michael slaps her which ignites the rebellion in her and she starts observing everything silently, using silence as an initial tool. She starts doubting her father's imposed "dour certainties"

and “sanctimonies” and critiques the Christian and westernized system of school and her household. She changes her name and learns colonial education as a strategy and finally reclaim her native identity without any violence by presenting the truth in her book; *Pacifying with Bullets: A Reclaimed History of Southern Nigeria*. The step-by-step transformation and negotiation of Afamefuna in reclaiming her ancestral legacy, identity and history will be presented by the following schema:

Aggression

No direct aggression is used, neither by Nwamgba nor by Afamefuna. However, both of them use the form of aggression termed as deception by Bremond, in the form of simulation and dissimulation. Nwamgba uses simulation, feigning the intentions, which is defined as; “*To simulate is to feign to have what one hasn’t. [...] Simulation threatens the difference between ‘true’ and ‘false,’ between ‘real’ and ‘imaginary.’*” (Baudrillard, 1994, p. 3). Nwamgba plans on reclaiming her lost ancestral legacy and abhors the name of his son, Michael, which is the representation of colonialism but feigns as if she has no issue with her new name. She adopts the name Michael for her son just to keep him close to her so that she can alter his mind slowly. Dissimulation, adopted by Afamefuna, is defined as; “*Dissimulation is the art of covering the inward thoughts of man, and of dissembling the motives of the actions, especially when one intends to deceive others.*” (Hobbes, 1651, p. 88). Afamefuna hides her true intent and silently observes everything and acquires the colonial education to defeat them. She keeps on deceiving until she is fully ready to be a historian who can reclaim her native identity, legacy, culture and history with the power of pen. The schema for this use of simulation and dissimulation will be:

Retributions: Recompense and Vengeance

Retributions in this story include both recompense and vengeance. The recompense includes the recovery and reclamation of the lost legacy of Obierika in the form of land and ivory tusks. Anikwenwa reclaims it after being educated at a missionary school and this reclamation is a recompense of Nwamgba's strategies and innumerable sufferings. Obierika's cousins who manipulated Nwamgba and seized the legacy of Obierika had to face the vengeance when Nwamgba publicly shamed them with the protests and rallies of the Women's Council. One of the cousins died and the other one lost all the seized land when reclaimed by Anikwenwa. Afamefuna's vengeance is silenced initially but subtle and she reclaims her indigenous Nigerian identity as a historian that is a form of vengeance for the colonizers. “*My basic point being that stories are at the heart of what explorers and novelists say about strange regions of the world; they also become the method colonized people use to assert their own identity and the existence of their own history.*” (Said, 1993, p. xiii).

Punishment

The punishment in Bremond's model doesn't mean physical violence or aggression. It is actually the resolution of the narrative. The term, punishment, is used symbolically. The punishment mirrors the result of greed, lust, and cowardice of Obierika's cousins who were publicly shamed and suffered. One of them died and the other one was left powerless and penny less. Michael was rejected by her own daughter and is left alone with her fanatic colonial ideas. The imposed and fabricated truth of the colonizers was reclaimed by Afamefuna in her book; *Pacifying with Bullets: A Reclaimed History of Southern Nigeria*. The stereotypes were shattered and the marginalized female voices were allowed to give vent to their feelings and to raise voice for their rightful and just rights. *The Headstrong Historian* ends with a positive note in which a historian raises voice and tries to awake other slumbering members of the society for cultural revitalization, the process

of reclaiming the suppressed and subjugated cultural norms, language, identity, etc. Cultural revitalization can be defined as; “*Deliberate, organized, conscious efforts by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture by reasserting elements of traditional culture that were diminished or suppressed.*” (Bodley, 1994, p. 317). Hope blooms from this positive resolution that no matter how hard things go, always stand up to safeguard your indigenous identity and culture.

The whole narrative logic is summarized as:

	Bremond's Narrative Logic	Espied in <i>The Headstrong Historian</i>
1	Semiology of narrative	Oral storytelling and modern narrative is blended, along with Third-person omniscient point of view
2	Narrative cycle	Amelioration: Amelioration to obtain: Nwamgba wanted to preserve her husband's legacy, son's good education, native identity from colonizers Amelioration process: Reclaims her husband's legacy by shaming those who seized, established Women's Council, sent her son to missionary school Amelioration obtained: partially because she could reclaim her husband's legacy but her only son became Christian, attained completely through her granddaughter Degradation Degradation possible: death of Nwamgba's husband, son reverting, colonial hegemony Degradation process: betrayal of Nwamgba's in-laws, baptized son, colonialism Degradation produced: Nwamgba's isolation, colonial devastations Structure type: coupling
3	Amelioration	Obstacle: Patriarchal society, betrayal of in-laws, colonial hegemony Elimination: women empowerment through the Women's Council, protests, legacy reclamation, education used for empowerment Elimination obtained: partially by Nwamgba, mainly by her granddaughter, Afamefuna, who rewrote the history
4	Completion of the task	Actively: Nwamgba reclaimed legacy by sending her son to missionary school, reclaimed identity through her granddaughter, Afamefuna Passively: by fate that her granddaughter was spiritually connected to Nwamgba, not her father
5	Intervention of the ally	Three allies, all three are mutual associates; Ayaju (friend), Father Shanahan (teacher), Nwamgba (grandmother)
6	Elimination of the adversary	Started in Nwamgba's life but complete elimination was after her death, through the book by her granddaughter, Afamefuna
7	Negotiation	Pragmatic adaptation i.e. strategic entry into colonizer's education to learn their language, and legal system to reclaim legacy and indigenous Nigerian identity. The same strategy firstly by Nwamgba and then adopted by Afamefuna.

8	Aggression	Not directly used but Bremond's mentioned deception was used which is further broken down into simulation and dissimulation. Simulation: feigning the intention, used by Nwamgba to slowly get back her son Dissimulation: hiding the true intentions, used by Afamefuna to silently observe her father's imposed way and then rebellion against it and reclaimed her identity after becoming a historian.
9	Retributions; recompense, vengeance	Recompense: reclamation of Obierika's legacy and reclamation of identity by Afamefuna Vengeance: Obierika's cousins were punished, protested against and defamed. The vengeance of Afamefuna is silent but subtle.
10	Punishment	By punishment, Bremond means resolution. Here is the positive resolution in which the legacy and identity both are reclaimed. Afamefuna's book, <i>Pacifying with Bullets; A Reclaimed History of Southern Nigeria</i> , is the gaze back to the colonizers.

Conclusion

The study has employed the theoretical lens of *The Logic of Narrative Possibilities* by Claude Bremond to analyze Adichie's *The Headstrong Historian* (2008) to structurally attenuate the narrative choices in the story. All the segments of the theory have been ascertained in the story to reiterate the narrative style of Adichie. The adversaries and the allies of the protagonist, Afamefuna and her unwavering struggles and wrangles have been attenuated in the study. She reclaims her indigenous Nigerian identity using the peaceful way of negotiation and showing the reality to the dumb world that considered Nigerians as primitive. The tussle of various narrative choices in the story has been unraveled with the lens of Bremond to connect the story to the broader spectrum of its themes, colonial hegemony, freedom, and reclamation of the deliberately concealed identity of the colonized. The study has remarkably probed diversified facets of the story to highlight the proceeding of the narrative in a smooth, integrated, coherent and cohesive way using the narrative logics which is tabularized too.

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