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**Oyono's Vision Towards Colonialism**  
**Case study: Houseboy**  
**By Ferdinand Oyono (1956)**

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Requirements for the Degree of Master in Literature and Civilisation (LC)

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## Dedication

My deepest thankfulness goes to my parents: **Fatiha Bouchiba** and **Abdelkader**. To my hero, my father the one whom my heart and soul went with; may God have mercy on his soul. To my queen, my mother for her sacrifices, I can never thank you enough.

I would extend my appreciation to my twin brothers **Bachir** and **Cherif**, and to my family. To my friend **Riham** whose persistent help is truly appreciated.

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## Abstract

The aim of this research is to investigate Oyono's vision towards colonialism in his novel *Houseboy* (1956). To be first defining the periods of African literature then the main themes transferred by the author are highlighted and analyzed through the approach of Postcolonialism (postcolonial theory). Besides, this research characterizes the periods of colonial and postcolonial literature; postcolonial feminism is also discussed in the process. This paper examines the vision of the writer which is Anticolonialism through main postcolonial themes which are: colonial oppression, humiliation of Africans, feminine representations in the *Houseboy*, "Hypocrite Christianity", Trauma in the *Houseboy*, Mimicry and White Man's True Identity. The writer has totally succeeded in delivering this message using the satirical style in describing the colonizer.

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# **General Introduction**



## General Introduction

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Literature has always been a tool for African writers to be voiced and sound over the world, tackling colonialism subjects to express different issues about gender, race, slavery, and identity, at the time of colonialism or aftermaths. It helps many of writers; men and women, to be free and talk to uncover the truth of colonialism and its hidden goals related to the colonizer. Africa, since early centuries was vulnerable to invasion by many of European nations. For example, Cameroon country was colonized by three European powers, where a territory of Cameroon was ruled by French colony from 1916 to 1960. This rule is known for strictness. Cameroonian writers have found the only refuge to expose colonial violent deeds and to express the colonized sufferance and misery by their literary works; plays, short stories, and novels. One of the most Cameroonian writers at that time is Ferdinand Oyono completed his studies in France, and then reached an honor position, to later on publishing novels that have embodied the reality of his people within colonialism.

Cameroon country has lived its colonial and postcolonial literature as well as postcolonial feminism where writers such as Oyono writes with passion in describing those aspects, to deliver the main message. One of Oyono's novels is *Houseboy* (1956), which tackles the deep relation between the colonizer and the colonized, and the reality of transactions that the native people have been facing; from oppression, violence, brutality, savagery, and humiliation. It also deals with, the shame of assimilation of native people with the Europeans, dreaming to be 'somebody' as French colonization used to fool them with this dream. It also represents woman's situation and, in the society, whether the European

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or the Cameroonian in positions like, who has been a housewife or a worker, and their impact on men.

Oyono's novel has interesting details about colonialism that is what deduct wondering about his vision towards colonialism, whether it is positive or negative, since there have not been other researchers who have dealt with this subject, and this remains a mystery to decipher.

Thus, this research work requires the following research questions:

- 1- What are the most significant periods that shaped the identity of the African literature in Cameroon?
- 2- What are the paramount themes that oriented the author's vision towards colonialism?

This research aims to define the African literary concepts, and to express the main themes of the novel in showing the real image of colonialism but still Oyono's vision towards colonialism is hidden. This study also aims to discover the hidden Oyono's vision towards colonialism; following a postcolonial approach.

This study has been chosen under scientific motives; the interest in colonialism, and personal motives; since Algeria is a postcolonial population and especially was colonized by French colony. This dissertation has faced different issues in gathering data, for example, lack of documents, sources, and the problem of finding the same subject in different sources with different information, what makes confusing and difficulties for the researcher in collecting the necessary information.

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The research has two main chapters where the problematic in question is investigated. The first chapter sheds the light on defining African literature, Literature in Cameroon, colonial and postcolonial literature which includes postcolonial theory as well as postcolonial criticism and postcolonial feminism, to be finished with a brief history of Cameroon.

The second chapter deals with the summary of the novel, the identification of the author, and studies the main themes of the novel; Oppression, Humiliation, Feminine representations in the *Houseboy* (1956), Hypocrite Christianity, Trauma in the *Houseboy*, Mimicry, and finally White man's identity.

## **Chapter One**

# **A Theoretical Review About African Literature And Its Periods**

## Chapter One: Literature Review of Learner Agency

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### **1.1 Introduction**

African literature is that one dealing with all the issues of colonialism and post-colonialism in seeking freedom and self-value. Through this type of literature, many iconic writers showed up with their fantastic novels to describe to the world the extent of suffering and marginalization they were living in. Colonial and postcolonial literature was very famous in African literature as a significant concept; it deals with the period that is within and after the period of colonialism. Colonial and postcolonial literature includes postcolonial theory which looks at the issues of power, economics, politics, but especially culture, and postcolonial criticism which came to analyze the issues of postcolonial theory. However, postcolonial feminism deals with issues of gender, sexuality, race, and nation. This chapter examines first, a brief history of Cameroon history, African Literature, then, the Literature of Cameroon (during the French colonization). Colonial and postcolonial literature involves Postcolonial Theory, Postcolonial Criticism, and Postcolonial Feminism.

### **1.2 Cameroon History**

The Republic of Cameroon is situated in central and west Africa. Its capital city is Yaoundé. Its official languages are; English and French. Cameroon was conquered by three European powers before gaining its independence in 1960. It was a colony from 1884 to an independent state in 1961. Germany ruled Cameroon from 1884 to 1916 as a

colony then in 1916, Cameroon was divided between Britain and France after World War I and the defeat of Germany in 1916.

### **1.2.1 Cameroon as a German Colony (1884-1916)**

1884, was a period of imperialism, called "Scramble for Africa", most European countries were invading most of the continent. Many reasons made Germany invade Cameroon. The first reason is that trade between the Germans and the Africans was no longer useful for the Germans because of their greed for greater profits once they invaded the country. The second reason is fully economical, the German established large lands for plantation agriculture to have a rich variety of tropical products such as "(Bananas, Cocoa, Tea...) in the south of Kamerun (German Spelling). The traders, the plantation owners, and government officials competed for scarce labor, and force was necessary for the Germans to break the Africans away from their homes and farms (Delancey, Mbuh, Delancey, 2010). Many employees died while serving German interests because of the harsh and vicious labor system that had been developed.

### **1.2.2 Cameroon as a French and British Colony (1916\_1960)**

The events of the First World War caused the German rule over Cameroon to end. However, the country was divided into small western and northern portions ruled by British power and a larger portion of the territory ruled by the French power. These territories, "Mandates" under the League of Nations and "Trusts" under the United Nations, were usually referred to as French Cameroun and British Cameroons. (Delancey, Mbuh, Delancey, 2010).

The British rule was known as a period of neglect, and many migrants went to southern Cameroons. The only major activity was agriculture which was left behind by the Germans to reclaim and regain them back under German control till the Second World War. However, that was not the case with the French colony. On the contrary, agriculture flourished, the industrial and infrastructural also. There was also better education and health care. Within the expressed opposition toward colonialism and also the world opposition. This contributed to bring independence to Cameroon. Whereas the British colony demanded to reunify the French colony, later on, oppose the French power, and step by step the independence was granted.

On 1 January 1960, the independent Republic of Cameroon came into existence, on 10 October 1961, it joined with southern Cameroons to become the Federal Republic of Cameroon (Delancey, Mbuh, Delancey, 2010).

### **1.3 African Literature**

The history of African literature undoubtedly portrays the struggles against oppression and exploitation; fighting for freedom and self-determination is African literature's core aim. Unfortunately, this fight has yet to be won more than two centuries after it began with the rise of African writers in the second half of the 18th century (Tikumah, 2013).

The subject of African Literature is broad and diverse. Many Africans took up the pen in the 1950s and the 1960s, as states across the continent progressed more or less



steadily toward independence. Before this time, there were African creative authors, as well as essayists and polemicists who wrote in European Languages. However, the moment of acceleration of contemporary African Literature can be found in this massive, concentrated literary practice of the mid-century. African storytelling and poetry were born in protest against history and myths created in connection with the colonial effort in the years leading up to and following formal declarations of independence.

Writers struggled to correct incorrect images, of colonial Africans. The deliberation desire to question colonialism's principles was frequently fulfilled in autobiography or pseudo- autobiography, which described the writer's path, away from home, to other lands, and back to intellectuals from Africa and “The truth also depends on who is speaking” (Julien, 1955, p.297) as Birago phrased it, writers felt strongly. Chinua Achebe in his famous novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958), utilised a language full of proverbs and images of agrarian life. Achebe, like other African writers, during those years, wrote portrayals of Africans by the lenses of the British and European writers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, such as Joyce Cary, James Conrad, Jules Verne, and Pierre Loti who were chosen to demonstrate as Achebe puts it, that “Literature is not dead” (Julien, 1955, p.297). Before the successive conquests of European nations over Africa, this latter was not one unending night of barbarism. Many notions have emerged; those of inferiority and superiority.

However, the anti-colonial tradition in French-language literature frequently emphasized the cultural assimilation predicament or contrasted two essentially distinct worlds. For example, Julien expresses her pride of her African belongings in the following poem:

White flower cannot rise without the  
leaven Who else will teach rhythm to  
the world? Deadened by machines a  
nd cannons? Who will sound the shout  
of joy at daybreak to wake orphans  
and the dead? Tell me, who will  
bring back the memory of life To the m  
an of gutted hopes? They call  
us men of cotton, coffee, and oil T h e  
y call us men of death But  
we are men of dance, whose feet get  
stronger As we pound upon firm ground  
(1995, p.298).

In this quote, Julien feels proud of her African traditions that without the natives there would not be any sense of life, Africa is the mother of dance and fun; a rich continent with its unique culture and privileges from cotton, coffee and oil.

### **1.4 Cameroon Literature in French Colonial Period**

Cameroon's Literature at the time France occupied the land was a consolatory to multiple of writers. France had a project called 'Civilizing mission'; this latter was applied in French schools in Cameroon to popularize the French language and culture aiming at eliminating the local tradition, language, culture, and identity as means of modernising and civilising the uncivilised. One of the famous Cameroonian writers is Ferdinand Oyono whose works were based on depicting the African workers who fell into the trap of colonialists. The French novel *Une Vie de Boy* (1956) which was

translated later on to *Houseboy* in English, is a story about an innocent boy who was condemned to death after discovering the inner workings of French culture. This novel embodied the reality of Cameroonians' daily life. Writers such as Mongo Beti, Ferdinand Oyono, and François Sanga Kuo who wrote anticolonial works, were highly talented and passionate to deliver their message. On the other side, we have women who paved the way for women's freedom and literary expression. Marie Claire Matip was the first African woman to attempt prose writing. Nagonda's (1956) autobiographical novella describes the difficulties the author faced to attend school and get decent learning, the intricate adjustment to the French colonial school, and the inevitable clashes that factually dominated her mother and grandmothers' lives before her. Many other women writers like Nagonda took off their chains and voiced their opinions.

Whether it is through 'Negritude' or French influence, Cameroonian writers expertly questioned values, whether western or Cameroonian, old or new, to debunk the barriers to growth and autonomy. The novels of 1950 replaced older collections of folk tales and pro-French poetry, unveiling the colonial world of Cameroon for the first time. (Briere, 2016).

### 1.5 Colonial Literature

It is recognized that colonial interests have had a tremendous impact on world history over the last few centuries, and then much of the literature created during that time can be classified as colonial or postcolonial. Theories on the superiority of European culture and the rightness of their 'empires' shaped colonialist literature a great deal; its stereotyped language was designed to mediate the white man'

connection with the colonized. (Boehmer, 2005).

This decade witnessed plays and dramas by African writers in various African nations, it tackled themes of liberation, political independence, and cultural emancipation that were prevalent in these literary works. But on the other side, there were stratagems of the colonialist toward the colonized. Provided that the colonizer came to act 'civilisation' on the supposedly 'primitives', it only added to its sharpness. However, while African writers were striving hard in their anti-colonial literature, the colonial resistance was also trying to defend their literature and fight the African writers. This ideological battle was outlined by Sule Bello as the following:

In this respect the various prejudicial, pejorative, condescending and Dehumanizing references to the African person and his indigenous traditions, or the outright tendency to deny him any history were all but attempts at reducing Him, as a human being, by way of isolating him from his past as well as "Convincing" him of his inherent cultural, and creative, or developmental, Incapabilities as a justification for his domination of foreign powers.

(Tihumah, 2013, p.13)

Nevertheless, African writers defended and fought any kind of compromising culture and language. (Tihumah, 2013).

### 1.6 Postcolonial Literature

The subject of postcolonial literature is vast and envelops postcolonial theory, postcolonial criticism and postcolonial feminism. Before tackling the analysis, a brief definition must be stated.

#### 1.6.1 Definition of Postcolonial Literature

The term postcolonial literature symbolizes written works produced on both sides during and after the period of colonization. However, it is the literature written by people in formerly colonized countries, some of it authored by the colonizer and their descendants.

The goal of postcolonial literature is giving voice to the oppressed people (by the colonial power). Postcolonial Literature came to narrate, describe, and inevitably contribute to the awareness of the colonised. Issues of language, hegemony, and identity are mainly discussed and analysed in the process. Postcolonial literature contributes, indeed, in transmitting the pride as well as the pain of colonised communities. In addition, it is thanks to Postcolonial literature that people's traditions, identities, cultures, and beliefs were finally heard and seen through fictitious works. After all, African writers' ultimate goal is to regain the purity of their identity and to tell their stories in their own ways. To put it differently, writers came to reveal the notions of imperialism and marginality.

Postcolonial Literature appeared to help the issues that are concerned with the colonized people like: Race, Identity, politics, Language, and Culture. Since postcolonial literature has always been linked with imperialism, this latter appeared to control and dominion in the name of civilizing the ignorant people and stripping them from the identity and their mother tongue. Thus, many critical thinkers and theorists were discussing and

defending the use of literature to convey their messages straightforwardly.

In 1950, there were inspiring works under the term Post-colonialism like; 'Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*. In 1958, Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. This period witnessed a huge turnout of writers to express and dramatize their stories from their perspectives.

### 1.6.2 Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial Theory is a theoretical approach that seeks to challenge the dominant discourse of colonial power. However, postcolonial theory is concerned with colonialism, emphasizing the effect of colonialism on both the colonizer and the colonized. Postcolonial theory is not only concerned with providing the colonized point of view but with how his experience with colonialism did affect him and change his way of thinking and touched different aspects in the important themes of identity culture, language, etc... Thus, it is the literature that deals with the colonized and colonization.

In other words, "The postcolonial Literature and theory investigate what happens when two cultures clash and one of them with accompanying ideology empowers and deems itself superior to the other". (B. Sawant, 2012, p.120). He adds "It seems that Postcolonial theory emerged from the colonized people's frustrations, their direct and personal cultural clashes with the conquering culture, and their fears, hopes, and dreams about their future and their own identities (B. Sawant, 2012, p.121). To summarize, postcolonial theory is concerned with cultural contradictions, ambiguities, and potentially ambivalences, it is an anti-colonial nationalist or reacts against any act of binary.

### 1.6.3 Postcolonial Criticism

Postcolonial Criticism first emerged in the early 1990s to become a dominant force in literary studies. As a subject matter, postcolonial criticism analyzes literature produced by cultures that developed in response to colonial domination, from the first point of colonial contact to the present. (Tyson, 2006). She also continued" Postcolonial criticism seeks to understand the operations-politically, socially, culturally and psychologically of the colonialist and anti-colonialist ideologies. (Tyson, 2006, p.418

When the native colonized see themselves as inferior in front of the colonizer who tried to devalue their culture, they would, hence, renounces their own culture and imitates the colonizer who some of them deem to be the 'superior'. Those thoughts cause what is called as 'Mimicry' which is a serious menace that means imitating the colonized in his language, behavior, traditions, and dress and that is what led to erase the identity or marginalize it, instead of resisting the colonized and his camouflage attempts. Therefore, native people and any different human are supposed to be inferior considered as the other whereas the superior people who are supposed to be fully human were considered the "us". People were divided into two "the civilized" which is the "Us" and the "Savage" which is "The other". This process is called "Eurocentrism". (Tyson, 2006). To bring the light to the importance of postcolonial criticism Tyson emphasized that "a work doesn't have to be categorized as postcolonial for us to be able to use postcolonial criticism to analyze it". (Tyson, 2012, p418). This means that each postcolonial work has to be criticized first and then to be classified.

Post-colonialism is a critical practice that requires bearing witness to the cultural representations involved in the context of aftermaths the independence. In essence, the label of post-colonialism consists of seeking and reassessing the scope of history from a distinct perspective, enveloping all domains. To this end, Postcolonial legacies like culture and language are said to be benign and inevitable outcomes of colonization. While others deem they violate the native's identity, and, thus, must be fought. However, between good and bad, benign and evil lay a myriad of views, theories, and studies. Albeit, what is definite is that Postcolonial theories assess another shaping of formally colonized nations, be it in sociology, literature, or other domains

### **1.7 Main Postcolonial Theorists**

#### **1- Homi Bhabha**

He is widely regarded as a key architect of India's post-independence science and technology development. He is considered a major theorist due to his successful works and the new themes and concepts. According to Bhabha, the deep colonization of the individuals' double consciousness and the loss of the former identity leads to the imitation of the colonizer's culture, where he coins the new concept of 'Mimicry'; which means copying the colonizer's style of life, for example; in the novel of *Twilight in Delhi* by Ahmed Ali where the character of this novel imitates the style, language...etc. of the colonizer. 'Ambivalence', means both resistance and complicity gathered in the colonial subject. 'Hybridity' is the most important notion; it is used to describe the phenomenon of two different cultures merging together and creating an in-between culture. This is where Bhabha argues that the colonizer and the colonized are mutually dependent in constructing



a shared culture. Finally, Binarism means oppositeness; for example, the contrast between the civilized and uncivilized. For Bhabha, Hybridity is the result of Mimicry. Hybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces, and fixities; it is the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal. (Ashcroft, Griffith, Tiffin, 2000).

### 2- Frantz Fanon

He is one of the most influential theorists on race in the twentieth century. Fanon gave the three phases of the formation of national culture. First, «Unqualified Assimilation». 'The colonized intellectual proves he has assimilated the colonizer's culture'. (Morrison, 2014). It means that the colonized has to show his devotion to the colonizer to prove his assimilation to him. The second phase is 'Resistance'; "The colonized writer has his convictions shaken and decides to cast his mind back [...] Old childhood memories will surface, old legends are reinterpreted based on a borrowed aesthetic, and a concept of the world discovered under other skies". (Morrison, 2014, p.48). It means that the colonized are waken from being controlled by the colonizer and he tried to resist. In the third phase, we have "Turns back", where Fanon explains "The colonized intellectual realizes that the existence of a nation is not proved by culture but in the people's struggle against the forces of occupation". (Morrison, 2014, p48). It means that the colonized is no more unaware, besides he started to struggle against the colonizer.

### 1.8 Postcolonial Feminism

As a start, Postcolonial feminism came as a response to mainstream western feminism. Undoubtedly, postcolonial feminism is one of the most important works in postcolonial theory and criticism, which has considered issues of gender, sexuality as well as that of race, nation, and empire. As opposed to western

feminism which believes in the universalization of women, postcolonial feminism makes the distinctive features and issues third world women have, to the front, Essentially, the menaces and ambiguities of different cultural backgrounds, along with the impact of colonialism, are shed light on in a postcolonial feminist study. Above all, this theory claims that women's movements speak in different voices since they differ in socio-cultural, political, and economic situations affecting them.

Other key points in discussing postcolonial feminism are the tenets, this theory in holds. Postcolonial feminism aims to understand and undo the legacies of colonialism within feminist activism. In other words, this theory wants to decolonize feminist activism. This study relies on a set of tenets. First, indigenous cultural criticism, is crucial in postcolonial feminism, as it levels against the first and second-wave feminism. Provided that, western feminism neglected the cultural backgrounds of third-world women, postcolonial feminism bridged that gap. Second, while western feminists apply generalized homogeneous values concerning all women, based on unity, postcolonial feminists argue by attributing special characteristics to culturally different women. This theory was criticized, claiming that it disturbs the unity and universality of females. To continue, the double colonization of women, is of paramount importance for postcolonial feminists, as it denounces the two forms of dominance, patriarchy, and imperialism. As an example, the

novel *A Passage to India* studies the issue of double colonization that Indian women were facing. Furthermore, scholars in the postcolonial feminist lens, study not only feminism of the third world but also other marginalized people in the world. They emphasize on the interconnections between gender, ethnicity, race, and postcolonial history, in order to draw attention to the issues of the marginalized women. All in all,

postcolonial feminism's most crucial emphasis is on the patriarchy and colonialism which western feminism neglects.

### **1.9 Conclusion**

This chapter has been concerned with the examination of African Literature and how it was used by African writers to deliver the message of their people, the message of their way of living during and after colonialism. It has also been dealt with colonial and postcolonial literature which is the result of colonized people's issues and how would they be voiced to the world and to show the complete reality of colonialism. For a better understanding of colonialism, Postcolonial theory has been stated and noted, Postcolonial criticism, and postcolonial feminism which are notions that came to define more post- colonialism and prevent any foreign literary interference. Then, Cameroonian Literature has been mentioned and highlighted as a means through which the issues of colonialism are stated. To finish, Cameroon's history has been briefly defined. To this end, thanks to Literature, was the reason for the writers' brilliance in delivering the message and uncovering the real truth about Colonialism and its hidden goals expressed in oppression and insulting the identity and cultur

**Chapter Two**  
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## Chapter Two: Literary analysis of the *houseboy*

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### 2.1 Introduction

Oyono's novel *Houseboy* (1956), deals with colonial mistreatments towards 'black' Cameroonian natives, who were suffering under pressure. It also deals with the easily deceiving of the natives by Colonialism. Oyono expresses how people were treated like mere 'animals' with no mercy and a lack of dignity because the natives believe in their minds that they are inferior and must obey. Toundi is the protagonist, whose dream is to be one of the whites or at least be close to them, but he faced the opposite.

This novel also described different types of women during colonization, both the European and the Cameroonian. Some women were abused and who controls, who were satisfied and who were complaining. Oyono touched on different aspects in this novel. From the beginning of the novel, he did not show a negative view of colonialism for some reason. This chapter deals with different themes of the novel; Oppression, Humiliation, Feminine representations, Hypocrite Christianity, Trauma in *Houseboy*, Mimicry and White man's identity.

### 2.2 Identification of the author

Ferdinand Léopold Oyono was born on 14 September 1929 in N'Goul' emakong, in south Yaoundé, the capital city of Cameroon. He began his education when he was ten years old in Yaoundé then to be sent to France to continue his studies in 1950. When he received his Baccalaureate, he studied law and economics at the Sorbonne, then he gets a degree at the Ecole of National Administration in Paris. As a student, he was so active and

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patient, that he performed on stage and television. As a beginning in the world of African literature, he published his first two novels, *Une vie de boy* in 1956 and translated as *Houseboy* in 1966, and *Le Vieux négre et la médaille* in 1956 to be translated as *The old man and the Medal* in 1967. When he went back to Cameroon in 1959, Oyono joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was a member in the Cameroonian delegation to the United Nations, when the country was admitted to the organization in 1960. (Kapanga, 2011).

He published his third novel in 1960, to be translated as *Road to Europe* in 1989. He served as a special messenger to; Mali, Morocco, Guinea, and Senegal from 1961-to 1962. Then to be an ambassador to Liberia, the Benelux countries, the European Common Market; France, Italy, and Tunisia. (Kapanga, 2011)

Oyono was so strict in taking serious positions to fight against "The apartheid regime in South Africa". Oyono's novels focus on the issues of the 'Assimilation' of the colonizer's culture in the hope of being one of them one day. Oyono strived to achieve 'Human dignity' and 'mutual respect'. "Focus upon the Dilemma encountered by Africans who choose to pursue assimilationist dreams of 'becoming somebody' in the colonial context". (Kapanga, 2011, p233).

The Francophone postcolonial writer 'Oyono', like any other writer, would defend his country and fight through his writings about the colonizer and his effects trying to show

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his people the reality of things. “Oyono and Mongo Beti are known as the four fathers of modern African identity for their anti-colonial novels”. (Kapanga, 2011, p.232).

Oyono was specialized in using a technique in his novels which is ‘the use of Satire’, and especially in the *Houseboy* (1956), where this use is against the French assimilation policy and the possibility of the African’s becoming one the whites. Those anti-colonial literature works satirized the colonial period. To this end, Ferdinand Léopold Oyono died at the age of 80, on 10 July 2010.

### 2.3 Summary of the Novel’s Story

This novel is about Toundi Ondua, a Cameroonian boy who was suffering under the harshness and violence of his father against him during the period of French colonization. One day, Toundi's father is trying to discipline him by beating, threatening, and insulting him, Toundi gets enough of this treatment and decided to leave his home. He went to father Gilbert's house where he found his rest and welcome. Toundi was being under the protection of father Gilbert who baptized him to be his new name, Joseph. Toundi was very happy after being Father Gilbert's houseboy, in hope of being one of them, one of the whites in his saying that he was going to learn and live like them. He was very impressed with the colonizer culture. Father Gilbert taught him reading and writing in Saint Peter's Catholic Mission in Dangan. Toundi is a greedy person, whom his mother used to warn him of the greed leading him to trouble; like the trouble of trying to hold the largest number possible of lumps of sugar which were distributed by the white man, it was like a



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battle between the boys about who gets the most, where a quarrel broke out and this whatcaused Toundi's father to beat him and the decision of Toundi to leave.

Father Gilbert died in a motorcycle accident, and Toundi was very hopeless and sad about the separation from his benefactor, who is the only one who cares for him and Toundi, and he has no one except him. Father Vander Mayer who is father Gilbert's assistant took his position. Toundi is now the boy of the new Commandant, who was very strict with Toundi. Toundi's life turned upside down with the arrival of the Commandant's wife who was pretty and nice. Commandant's Madame was having an affair with the prison director Mr. Moreau. These two lovers were highly emotional, the two were in need to Toundi to cover them up despite that they have no trust in him. The other workers at the residence were warning Toundi not to do so because he would be in a real predicament. But he did not listen to them and he started raising questions that are forbidden for a native African houseboy to ask about the European whites.

As soon as the Commandant knew about the secret of this affair, his anger towards his wife blinded him and he was not aware. Toundi was the whipping boy of this affair, and was beaten hard with no pity. Once Toundi realises that he was not and never be one of them, and that is forbidden for the native African houseboys to be familiar with white's secrets and affairs, he fled to Spanish Guinea, but he did not stand long and died this poor Toundi.

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The whole story, in fact, forms only events Toundi has written on his diary; to be later on found by a man; then to be translated from “Ewoudo” which is one of the Cameroonian languages, with a trial of keeping the richness and beauty of the original language

### 2.4 Colonial Oppression

Since the early centuries, colonized people were suffering from oppression which includes all kinds of injustice, tyranny, extortion, and abuse practiced by the colonizer to strip them off their identities and personalities and to keep them under control with no further regard to their cultural identities. In the following passage, different situations and events that happened between the colonized and the colonizer are going to be analysed from the novel in hands.

In projection of abuse, “They pushed me back, one with the whip he always carried, and the other feinted a kick” (Oyono, 1956, p.17). This example clarifies that the whites treated the blacks as animals with no respect, with no dignity which seemed that Toundi himself the protagonist lacks, since he is happy with them and accepts this way of living. When the commandant demanded a beer from Toundi and then picked up his cap which was just next to him, lays another example: “I was turning to go to the refrigerator when he pointed to the cap at his foot. I was nearly dead with fear” (Oyono, 1956, p.23), it can be seen that the commandant was very harsh and merciless with his workers, that is only for small mistakes, they will get punished, this is the reason behind the fear of Toundi.

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Another image of oppression in "The commandant grabbed me by the hair, swung me round and peered into my eyes... 'I'm not a monster... but I wouldn't like to disappoint you'... with that he shot out a kick to my shins that sent me sprawling under the table" (Oyono, 1956, p.23), one can imagine how hard it was this kick that makes him sprawling, well the commandant is a real monster no need to become one. This inhuman treatment towards Toundi and the other native workers by the commandant did not make him awake from this brutality.

Toundi mentioned that the kick of the commandant is more painful than Father Gilbert's one, which means that the person who is called his protector also treated him badly. It seemed that Toundi has no problem with this mistreatment. Toundi was treated just like an animal, and the commandant did not pay any attention to him every time they were together, the commandant was torturing him mentally and physically for example in "The commandant trod on my fingers as he went out" (Oyono, 1956, p.29), with no pity.

Another portrait of oppression, is to keep the Cameroonian natives under control and service, useless and without value, having no right to speak up or protest, they must be nobody. For instance, when Mr. Ferdinand was addressing to Mr. Salvain "you're a traitor Mr. Salvain", he said, a traitor. Ever since you came to this country you have behaved in a way unworthy of a French man. You're stirring the natives up against us. "You keep telling them that they are as good as we are-as if they hadn't got a high enough opinion of themselves already" (Oyono, 1956, p.51), this example also represents the fear of the whites from the natives if they protest and call for their rights and if that happened, it will create a dilemma.

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Another form of oppression, is the highest degree of injustice, violence, and abuse, where many prisoners were tortured by Mr. Moreau who is a real stolid, for instance in "Confess, you thieves, shouted Mr. Moreau, give them the butt of your rifle, Ndjangoula" (Oyono, 1956, p.76), and in the height of rudeness and unscrupulousness when he said "Not on the head, Ndjangoula, they've hard heads. In the kidneys" (Oyono, 1956, p.76), and in contemptuously "Janopoulos was laughing. Mr. Moreau parted for breath. The prisoners had lost consciousness" (Oyono, 1956, p.76). Toundi was amazed at the horrific sight in "I could not hold myself from shaking as I watched. It was terrible" (Oyono, 1956, p.76). Then "Mr. Moreau's suspects will be sent to the "Blackman's Grave where they will spend a few days painfully dying. Then they will be buried naked in the prisoner's cemetery" (Oyono, 1956, p.76).

A real image of unfairness is when the whites did not pay the workers even if so they would search for different ways to gain back this money, for example in "All the money goes to the whites. They are always thinking up new ways to get back what little money they pay us" (Oyono, 1956, p.76). The cook was always warning Toundi to stay away from the whites and from their business, because for them the natives are just robots to meet their needs no more, no less, for instance, "One of these days you'll be the cause of real trouble. When will you grasp that for the whites, you are only alive to do their work and for no other reason I am the cook. The white man does not see me except with his stomach" (Oyono, 1956, p.87). Other examples of violent treatment in "The commandant trod on my left hand (Oyono, 1956, p.102). These whites feel pleasure when they tortured the African natives. When the commandant knew that Toundi was knowing about all of their secrets and business, they fabricated a theft charge to get rid of him and

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to be denied, these white tricks full of oppression and injustice were used to kill or jail those natives who would be a source of threat, for instance in " I was arrested this morning" (Oyono,1956,p.104), and in " Gullet held on to my belt and from time to time he trod my big toe with his boots" (Oyono,1956,p.106), and "Gullet drew me tighter and placed his hobnailed sole on my foot" and "He grabbed me by the neck of my jersey and stared into my eyes" (Oyono,1956,107), and ".....said Gullet giving me a kick in the kidneys.....I vomited blood.....there is a shooting pin through my chest like a hook caught in my lungs", and "There are two places that terrify the natives in Dangan. One is the prison and the other is the hospital" (Oyono, 1956, p.117).

The author Oyono tried to show to his audience different types of torturing, violence, and mistreatment of the European whites towards the black Africans. They were treating them just like animals with no respect, and inhuman behavior, using specific tools of oppression and injustice to represent colonial brutality.

### **2.5 Humiliation of Africans**

Oyono's novel shows the amount of humiliation that Cameroonian natives were in, and their greediness to be like the white European which is impossible for the whites to accept a black African between them. In this novel, there are many examples of humiliation whether practiced towards the natives or the natives putting themselves in situations where they were humiliated stranger who is seeking to establish in your country and strip your identity and personality in order to make you nobody; a zero if it can be said.

. Well, it is intricate to be humiliated in your country by a colonial

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In providing this saying, we have these examples represented in how these black natives were easily humiliated and their lack of dignity, the dignity of their lands, country, and as a human beings. For instance, "You Toundi...your greediness will be the ruin of us... you have to cross a stream to go begging lumps of sugar from some white man- woman who is a complete strange to you" (Oyono,1956, p.10), and in "I was happy... I was going to learn about the city and white men and live like them" (Oyono, 1956, p.13).

Toundi was blind by his greediness, this was absolutely a false idea, no African native was allowed to be like white men or lived with them, this never happened. The fact that the black natives were easily being deceived by colonialism is that the colonizer succeeded in planting the wrong things in the minds of the natives, for example, the fact that they are inferior and the whites are superior, for this reason, the reason of being inferior with no personality, they tried to imitate the European whites or at least keep themselves close to them. For instance, in "The dog of the king" (Oyono, 1956, p.20), he made a metaphor of himself as a dog of his master, doing nothing except obeying in "I am not a storm. I am the thing that obeys" (Oyono, 1956, p.22).

Toundi was facing different types of prostrations by his master, for example, "He watched me for a minute through the wrestles of smoke he was puffing into my face" (Oyono, 1956, p.21), this is for sure a disrespectful behavior that shows how much these poor workers were means nothing to the whites except humiliated as animals who were seeking for their mercy. We have Sophie who was complaining about the humiliating

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situations that were always in, and the realization of the fact that the natives means nothing to the whites, for instance in "Sophie, you can come, the Europeans have gone, Sophie, when you see me with a white lady don't look at me, don't greet me" (Oyono, 1956, p. 27), for the whites they were just as rubbish.

Another fact that the Europeans did not recognize the natives one by one, they seemed all the same to them in "How could he recognize me? All the Africans look the same to them" (Oyono, 1956, p.28). It does not make any difference for the whites whether they knew them or not, because it does not matter to them, for them they are just slaves who must obey their orders. The mistreatment of the Europeans led them also to call the natives with offensive words just to humiliate them. For example, "have you turned into a complete nincompoop?" (Oyono, 1956, p.28), and " Son of dog; he said to me" (Oyono, 1956, p.35), and " It's the servants, said the engineer with disgust" (Oyono,1956, p.45), and " There are no morals at all in this country" (Oyono,1956, p.50).

In another form of irony, we read: "Poor France, said Gullet again. Natives are now ministers in Paris!" (Oyono, 1956, p.52), in full sarcasm. In other portraits of verbal abuse, when the European Madam was addressing the native: "Idle creature!" (Oyono, 1956, p.73). The Europeans were always grumbling at the natives who had to be as robots, with no rest, leftovers, just must be in service whenever they called you, and "She called the cook an old baboon" (Oyono,1956, p.74). In "How wretched we are" (Oyono, 1956, p.76), Toundi started to realize the fact that they are humiliated.

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In a direct insult, in the presence of Toundi, a dialogue was hanging between Madam Suzy and her lover about Toundi in "You see, he can't look in the eye. His eyes are shifty like a pygmy's. He's dangerous. Natives are like that. When they can't look you in the eye it's a sure sign, they've got some idea fixed in their wooden heads" (Oyono, 1956, p.79), with no respect to the presence of the native. In a realization of being humiliated and having no dignity for instance in "What would our ancestors say if they saw us washing things like that for the whites? There are two worlds", said Baklu, "ours is a world of respect and mystery and magic". Their world brings everything into the daylight, even the things that weren't meant to be.....what are we to these whites?" (Oyono, 1956, p.81). Indeed, what are the natives for the whites? Everything is on the shoulders of the natives, they are slaves, robots. They are depicted as awkward and indiscreet.

Another clear image of humiliation is in: "Nothing today, except steadily mounting hostility from the commandant. He is becoming completely wild. Kicks and insults have started again. He thinks this humiliates me and he can't find any other way" (Oyono, 1956, p.101).

Oyono shows how much were the natives easily colonized and were under the mercy of the whites although all kinds of humiliation, abuse, and insulting they were facing. This is all because of the feeling of inferiority, they were blind to the fact that this is their land, their country, and their place. They have the right to live, work, learn, living with dignity, but what is the reason they were not negative to what is called colonialism, and the reason behind accepting the fact of being colonized, controlled, and enslaved.



### 2.6 Feminine Representations in the Houseboy

During the colonial era, women were suffering, but were trying as much as they could to be responsible for the head of their houses, husbands, and children, because their husbands were occupied with their works. Though women sacrificed, they were always marginalized by society. They tried to be far away and alone during colonialism to protect herself and her family from colonial abuse and brutality. In this novel, the author represents the woman in a different manner and position, where he portrayed her as a housekeeper who was kind, and harsh at the same time. So, women in this novel had a huge impact on events. Some were loyal and with dignity but others were unfaithful and prostitutes.

#### 2.6.1 Women Characters Analysis

##### 1- **Toundi's Mother**

She is the mother of the protagonist; she was living a miserable life with her husband who used to insult her. She was being beaten by her husband, for instance in: “My father however was not a stranger and I was well acquainted with what he could do with a stick. Whenever he went for either my mother or me” (Oyono, 1956, p.10). She endured too much melancholy from the harshness of her husband, just like any other housekeepers whose duty is just to cook, clean, and obey their husbands. No matter if they were abused or suffering, because they had no right to talk, they could not dare because they knew the consequences

##### 2- **Sophie**

The agriculture engineer's house girl was her boss's girlfriend and also Toundi's one. Sophie was always complaining and upset about her way of living and the humiliation that was getting from her European masters for example in " Only I

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am sick and tired of hearing ' Sophie, don't come today. I've got a European coming to see me at the house', 'Sophie, you can come, The European has gone, 'Sophie, when you see me with a white lady don't look at me, don't greet me,'" (Oyono, 1956, p.27). She is the only one who realizes the truth of the Europeans from the beginning, the truth of "We don't mean anything to them either" (Oyono, 1956, p.27). Sophie was getting jealous of the European women, she was complaining and crying "What have they got that I haven't? What lovely manners they've got, these whites .... even if it's only among themselves....my arse is just as delicate as the arses of the ladies they have up in the driver's cabin..." (Oyono, 1956, p.38). She wanted to be a woman with value as a white woman. Sophie cannot handle it anymore; she stole her boss's cashbox and feels to Spanish Guinea.

### 3- **Mme Salvain**

She is the wife of the head teacher. However, she was all the time flirting with the commandant. She seemed to like the natives especially the children in "Young African children are just as intelligent as ours" (Oyono, 1956, p.32). She praised them. Mr. Salvain and her husband seemed to defend the natives and treat them well.

### 4- **The Commandant Wife 'Suzy'**

She is a pretty and nice, considered the most beautiful woman at the residence, in describing her beauty "The brightness of Madame's beauty showed up everything which the Good Lord" (Oyono, 1956, p.48). She was having a secret affair with the Prison Director Mr. Moreau in "It is all over. Poor Commandant ... Eleven o'clock Madame was still sleeping. I knew something was wrong...Mr. Moreau came back at four o'clock. Madame was full of happiness" (Oyono, 1956, p.64). She seemed at first to be lovely, and like all the workers in the residence but as soon as she begins to change her

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attitude and started to be harsh with them, especially with Toundi. She was treating him badly for example addressing the workers as "Idle creature" (Oyono, 1956, p.73) and "She called the cook an old baboon" (Oyono, 1956, p.74). Their affair did not last too long, and the Commandant knew of this secret affair and start repeating 'I was ngovina ya ngal a ves zut bisalak a be metua'(Oyono, 1956, p.98), which means "I am now the Commandant whose wife opens her legs in ditches and in cars" (Oyono, 1956, 98), which seemed that it was not the first time that his wife betrayed him.

### 5- **The Doctor's Wife**

She is so talkative and liked subjects of colonialism, and discusses the natives and their attitudes for example in "The doctor's wife, like most old colonials, loved exaggerating" (Oyono, 1956, p.83). She described the natives as "They are like that, said the doctor's wife, Awkward and indiscreet. They are everywhere except where you want them" (Oyono, 1956, 84).

### 6- **Kalisia**

Kalisia used to be a prostitute for instance "Kalisia had had enough of whites ... She lived with other white men, other blacks, and other men who were not quite black and not quite white" (Oyono, 1956, 91). And now she is the new chambermaid of the Commandant's wife. She used to advise Toundi to escape from the Commandant because he would be killed.

### 2.7 **“Hypocrite Christianity”**

“When we fetched a priest to save his soul, he told him to fuck off” (Oyono, 1956, p.3). This quotation reflects the priests' satirical position toward the indigenous. The job of a priest at a church is to guide citizens in becoming better Christians, but their use of vulgar language reveals their true "goal," which is to exploit the natives. Another example is:

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“I could never stand what he does to people who have misbehaved. He loves to beat the Christians who have committed adultery-native Christians of course...He make them undress in his office while he repeats in bad Ndjem, ‘when you were kissing, weren’t you ashamed before God?’”

(Oyono, 1956, p.15).

The priests' actions are in direct opposition to their ideal goals. Priests beat residents who commit adultery, yet in an ideal church, the priest's role is to help citizens become better Christians and forgive them for their sins, not to beat them. These examples are used by Oyono to criticize the priests' roles. He employs these obscenities to demonstrate to the audience that the Europeans were not as pure or innocent as they appeared.

Toundi was also shocked with the priest's hypocrite religion, in which if the natives make mistakes, they have to be punished but it is not the same case with the Europeans, for example, “The Europeans get up and go out through the sacristy. In the nave, the catechists close the door so that the Africans have to stay for the sermon” (Oyono, 1956, p.35), which means that the Europeans can leave the church before the sermon while the Africans are forced to listen to the priest's preaching. Many of things are forbidden for the natives but allowed for the Europeans. The priests used to teach the natives to always go back to the church and used to tell them that they are full of sins, and this what makes a shock for

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Toundi how a religion can be like that, they deal with the way they want and like, for their own sake. Those hypocrites' whites, they make rules and basics just the way it can serve them and serve their interests, without any care for the poor African natives who will never be considered as one of the Europeans.

### 2.8 Trauma in the Houseboy

Toundi escaped his violent father and the insult he was getting, he decided to leave his home and his poor mother, even though he knew that she is also a victim of this abuse father but he did not care and left her running behind the dream of being one of the Europeans. Toundi was very obsessed with the whites that he was blind from seeing the truth, that he is just being exploited by them. Toundi was living his dream and being very happy until the death of Father Gilbert, the one who was his benefactor and protector, in spite of the mistreatment he was getting from Father Gilbert, he never saw it as a violent act. After the death of Father Gilbert, Toundi moved out to the Resident Commissioner where he was shocked from what he found a completely different image from what he was imagining, a resident ruled by Christianity and Military. Toundi sought refuge from his father's abuse trusting the whites in the hope of being civilized and denying his biological family.

Toundi's first shock is the inappropriate and immoral relationships of married people, for example the betrayal of the commandant's wife with Mr. Moreau in front of all the houseboys with no fear, and also the dare of doing such a thing inside the Resident made him always think and question the thing which brings him troubles and led to his death at the end. Bearing in mind it was forbidden for a native houseboy to be aware of the inner secrets of the whites. In addition, the different images of flirting. For example, when "Mme Salvain had concealed her spindly legs inside linen trousers which gave even greater prominence to her huge behind. Again, she came towards the

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Commandant with arms outstretched and again was startled by the performance about kisses on her wrists” (Oyono, 1956, p.33).

Another shock is when Toundi realized the reality of treatment of the Europeans towards the natives, and the amount of torture and violence the natives were facing everyday by the Europeans. The reaction of Toundi to the scene of torturing the two Africans by Janopoulos under the control of the prison director M. Moreau in:

“I can’t remember what I did when I got back to the Residence, I was so upset by what I had seen. There are some things it is better never to see. Once you have seen them over and over again. I don’t think I shall ever forget what I have seen. I shall never forget that guttural, inhuman cry from the smaller of the two suspects when Ndjangoula brought the butt down on him with such force that even M. Moreau swore under his breath and M. Janopoulos dropped his cigar”

(Oyono, 1956, p.77)

Toundi’s reaction represents the trauma and the realization that he is already a victim and in a situation of violence that one day they will face the same destiny. There is also a disappointment from Toundi towards the whites after thinking that they are civilized and cultured, they do not use any kind of violence, to be shocked by the contrary.

### 2.9 Mimicry

The protagonist of this novel whose dream is to be like the whites; to live, act, talk like them, tries as hard as he can to assimilate to the European manners. Toundi feels that he is superior in comparison with other African natives as he is assimilated by the Europeans, but still he is not being accepted in European society and he is being exploited and treated inhumanly. Toundi represents any other African who wanted to improve himself but only with assimilating to the European culture. Oyono used Toundi to portray many of Africans boys who were blind by the truth of the colonial Europeans and seeking to be one of the them without being aware from the truth that this dream is impossible and the fact that these boys are just being exploited and used by the Europeans to do their simple works; to clean, cook, and serve them to be later on tortured and insulted.

Toundi did not accept the fact of being inferior than the whites, that is why he tried any way to fit in, and this is the reason why the natives were being easily deceived because they felt that the whites were superior, so in the first chance they forgot about their culture and run to learn the new culture of the whites dreaming to be civilized and in the same position with them.

At first, Toundi believed himself as a Black Frenchman, but as he observed the harsh truth of the Europeans, he realized that he was just like any other native African, and that he was not truly superior to others as he formerly believed. Toundi first believed he was superior to unassimilated black people, but he understood he was still inferior to whites. He believed he was the “King of the Dogs”

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(Oyono, 1956, p.20), meaning he was an African native but a superior form of his people just because he had been absorbed. However, as the novel progresses, Toundi finds that the whites treat everyone the same, that they do not treat the assimilated any differently, and that they are only interested in exploiting them and changing their culture.

### **2.10 White man's identity**

Oyono in this novel, used the satirical style in describing the European whites and their way of living in relation with the African natives, in order to show their true reality and the bad morals they have towards the Africans, including the inhuman treatment, and the most important issue is racism. The white men see no difference between 'blacks', which represents their savage race because all blacks are viewed to be the same. This fact was realized by Toundi in "How can he recognize me? All Africans look the same to them" (Oyono, 1956, p.32). The relationship between the whites and the Africans lies in the Whites' exploitation of Africans in order to fulfil their needs.

#### **2.10.1. Father Gilbert**

The priest, the benefactor and protector of Toundi, is portrayed as oppressor and hypocrite, he humiliated the natives and treated them badly. He has a hypocrite religion; preaching and punishing the natives while allowing everything for the Whites. He died

#### **2.10.2. Father Vandermayer**

Father Gilbert's assistant took his position after his death. He is portrayed as racist, oppressor, and hypocrite. Father Vandermayer treatments were worse than Father Gilbert's towards Toundi. Those priests were hypocrites, because they were very strict with the natives but rather forgiving with the Europeans in a motorcycle accident



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### 2.10.3. The Commandant

The boss of Toundi was humiliating his houseboys, and was giving them low salaries. Specifically, he was oppressive with Toundi, once he was aware with the betrayal of his wife, he directly sent Toundi to jail as if he was the one to share the commandant's wife affaire.

### 2.10.4. Mr. Moreau

He is the prison director, and is portrayed as harsh, oppressive, cruel, and promiscuous. He had bad morals; he was having a secret affair with the commandant's wife. He had feelings of hate towards Toundi, because he thinks that he is the one who spreads the information of M. Moreau's betrayal with the commandant's wife.

### 2.10.5. Gullet

The chief of the police, is portrayed as harsh and very brutal with the native Africans. He allows to his police to torture the innocent Africans and kill them in a savage way. He also ordered to beat Toundi harshly without mercy.

## 2.11 Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter dealt with the most important themes which are represented in the novel as follows: humiliation and oppression. Oyono did focus on these to show and emphasize the truth of Colonialism, in the character of the protagonist Toundi and other houseboys who were abused and tortured. The writer also showed women in different positions whether European or Cameroonian

With his satirical style in narrating the novel's events, Oyono did not show colonialism in a negative view at first but it is concluded at the end. His main message is to confirm the reason behind why Africans were easily deceived which is mainly because they have a fixed idea of being inferior compared to the

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whites, and their only request is to stay close to them if they could not live like them.

**General**

**Conclusion**

## General Conclusion

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As a conclusion, Oyono has embodied the realistic pictures of Africans during the French colonial period in Cameroon in the novel *'Houseboy'* (1956), which was written in a form of diary. The book depicted the true relationship between the African natives and the Europeans, using his satirical style to show how the Africans were deceived. In the beginning of the novel Oyono represents that Toundi, the protagonist of the story has a positive view in describing the Europeans, the reason behind the Africans being easily deceived are discovered till the end of the novel. Oyono also dealt with the issue of assimilation, depicted in Toundi's desire is to be one of the whites or at least being close to them, he was obsessed with their culture.

This research also clarified the themes that oriented Oyono's point of view towards colonialism. Themes including colonial oppression, humiliation, practiced on the natives, and all kinds of torture and brutality that Toundi noticed, to finally realize the truth of the Europeans related to the truth of natives being influenced by the foreign cultures.

This paper attempts to pictures the periods that shaped the identity of African literature including colonial and postcolonial literature; postcolonial theory and criticism as well as postcolonial feminism. In addition, depicting the main themes that helped inresulting the vision of Oyono towards colonialism.

It can be concluded that, Oyono, through his novel, tried to understand the behavior of the Africans behind being easily deceived and imitate the white men, changing their culture to another strange culture, dreaming about better living conditions, achieving equality. The thing that Oyono tried to explain is his anticolonialist attitude, he used the

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positive view of colonialism in the character of Toundi to explain the reason behind being assimilated is that feeling of inferiority and that the Europeans are superior. These thoughts were instilled by the whites, resulting in traumas at the end by Toundi and to realize their true fact.

Another iconic novel by Ferdinand Oyono *Le vieux négre et la médaille* (1956); *The old man and the medal*, deals nearly with the same aspects of *Houseboy* novel to be recommended for further studies.

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## Abstract

The aim of this research is to investigate Oyono's vision towards colonialism in his novel *Houseboy* (1956). To be first defining the periods of African literature then the main themes transferred by the author are highlighted and analyzed through the approach of Postcolonialism (postcolonial theory). Besides, this research characterizes the periods of colonial and postcolonial literature; postcolonial feminism is also discussed in the process. This paper examines the vision of the writer which is Anticolonialism through main postcolonial themes which are: colonial oppression, humiliation of Africans, feminine representations in the *Houseboy*, "Hypocrite Christianity", trauma in the houseboy, mimicry and white man's true identity. The writer has totally succeeded in delivering this message using the satirical style in describing the colonizer.

## Résumé

Le but de cette recherche est d'étudier la vision d'Oyono envers le colonialisme dans son roman *Houseboy* (1956). Pour définir d'abord les périodes de la littérature africaine puis les principaux thèmes transférés par l'auteur sont mis en évidence et analysés à travers l'approche du Postcolonialisme (théorie postcoloniale). Par ailleurs, cette recherche caractérise les périodes de la littérature coloniale et postcoloniale ; le féminisme postcolonial est également abordé dans le processus. Cet article examine la vision de l'écrivain qu'est l'Anticolonialisme à travers les principaux thèmes postcoloniaux que sont : l'oppression coloniale, l'humiliation des Africains, les représentations féminines chez le *Houseboy*, le « christianisme hypocrite », le traumatisme chez le houseboy, le mimétisme et la véritable identité de l'homme blanc. L'écrivain a parfaitement réussi à délivrer ce message en utilisant le style satirique pour décrire le colonisateur.

## ملخص

الهدف من هذا البحث هو التحقيق في رؤية Oyono تجاه الاستعمار في روايته *Houseboy* (1956). لكي يتم تحديد فترات الأدب الأفريقي أولاً، يتم تسليط الضوء على الموضوعات الرئيسية التي نقلها المؤلف وتحليلها من خلال نهج ما بعد الاستعمار (نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار). إلى جانب ذلك، يميز هذا البحث فترات الأدب الاستعماري وما بعد الاستعمار. كما تمت مناقشة النسوية ما بعد الاستعمار في هذه العملية تبحث هذه الورقة في رؤية الكاتب التي هي مناهضة الاستعمار من خلال موضوعات ما بعد الاستعمار الرئيسية وهي: الاضطهاد. الاستعماري، وإهانة الأفارقة، والتمثيلات الأنثوية في البيت، و "المنافق المسيحي"، والصدمة في بيت البيت، والتقليد، والهوية الحقيقية للرجل الأبيض. نجح الكاتب تماماً في إيصال هذه الرسالة بأسلوب ساخر في وصف المستعمر.