

Forces of Development: Globalisation, Civil Societies, and NGOs in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Narratives

Nfon Rita Gola*

University of Yaounde 1/Cameroon

Corresponding Author: Nfon Rita Gola, E-mail: nforritagola@yahoo.com

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ABSTRACT

This paper looks at globalization, civil societies and their extensions, NGOs, as forces of development within the contemporary global era through the prism of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*, *The Thing Around Your Neck* and *Americanah*. In these texts, the above forces have eroded both ideological and geopolitical boundaries for the betterment of humanity. The centrality of the state, with regards to state development, has been questioned by civil society activism. Civil society agencies, especially, NGOs, the paper posits, have become players in governance—an activity generally reserved for the state. The paper views the flux in state and civil society borders as a part of the shifts in the borders of most of the once outstanding binary pairs—the west and the non-west, the whites and the blacks, as well as the rich and the poor. These are positive shifts that are integral to the present mix in which humanity now exists. The works I analyze market this blend in that Adichie's characters, no matter where they find themselves, move away from fixed ways of doing things and get connected with the supposed others for humanistic purposes. Globalization theory is used to underline the extent to which the 'self' and 'other' concepts disappear when it comes to development issues in the postcolony. The paper seeks to answer two basic questions, namely; is the proliferation of civil societies, especially NGOs, the result of the globalization phenomenon or the cause of the globalization process? How has globalization, civil societies and NGOs developed Nigeria, in particular, and Africa in general? It premises the civil society as a trajectory of the globalisation process with a positive outcome from the perspective that its various forms have encouraged and facilitated the spread of humanitarian considerations for the purpose of development.

INTRODUCTION

Most discourses in today's global world, especially in the global south, have remained wrapped around development issues. Writers have continued to decry the fact that the post-independent state has failed in its role of catering for the masses. The much talked about progress, that politicians enticed the masses with, has remained elusive. The masses have therefore started looking at other avenues for development. In heeding to the calls from western developers since the 1960s that the African nations liaise with NGOs to impact the lives of the masses, civil society activism has taken swell on the continent. Adichie's novels, drawing as they do from society, interrogate the extent to which these social organizations inform development projects on the African continent. A host of Adichie's critics including Eunice Ngongkum (2014), Elizabeth Jackson (2013), and Elizabeth Adesumbo Omotayo (2019) underline how Adichie's migrant figures project both local and global identities that revolve around migrants sending remittances to their countries of origin for humanitarian and educational purposes— a frame from where the critics delineate globalization as an agent of

development. This paper, as already hinted above, stresses the capacity of the civil society and its agent the NGO, as agents of development in the contemporary global society. The paper employs tenets of globalization theory to underscore the extent to which these forces contribute to development in Nigeria, and by extension, Africa. I find this theory useful in an analysis of civil societies as forces of development in Adichie's fiction because the individuals and groups that one encounters in the framework of civil societies in the novels, seem to abolish the 'self' and 'other' parameter for the 'us', in efforts to better humanity. This seems to indicate that individuals and NGOs are forces of development that have eroded both ideological and political boundaries in order to act as players in the development of the postcolony. How Adichie represents this in fiction, namely, *Half of a Yellow Sun*, *The Thing Around Your Neck* and *Americanah*, is the primary focus of my paper. However, before undertaking my analysis, it will be necessary to define what I consider to be civil society and NGOs in this paper.

The term "Civil Society" has undergone several considerations since the classical period. It has, however, come to cover the new class of actors that is different from the state

but acts within the state in its own capacity. It is different from the actions of the public sector and the market sector. Rajesh Tandon and K. Naidoo in "The Promise of Civil Society" consider it an area of association that is independent of both the state and the market and stands out as a space where its citizens "organize to pursue purposes that are important to them," not without stressing on the fact that initiatives are arrived at both "individually and collectively" (*Civil Society and the Millennium* 1-2). It is important to note, as these authors have observed, that civil societies at times aim at catering only for their members; an atmosphere that nevertheless echoes interconnectedness, globalism and undertones of development.

The civil society, then, has the advantage of being either constitutive of the masses, or of being closer to the masses than the public sector. According to Jurgen Habermas in "The Structure of the Public Sphere", the public sphere is that arena where, under authority, "private people come together as a public," with the intention of constructing rules that will govern relations in the "basically privatised but publicly relevant sphere" (*Globalization on Trial*, 81). This, as he holds, is done with the aim of safeguarding the varied interests of the people. Both sectors, no doubt, operate with the spirit of impacting quality relations to the underprivileged, whether at the local or at the international levels. But the civil society, from the perspective of it being closer to the masses, has the privilege of understanding the masses better than the public sector. This 'third sector' (the civil society), finds space where and when individuals or groups begin to question the boundaries of permissive behaviour. Actors of these societies, unlike the government, give meaning either to their own lives or the lives of non-members (depending on tenets of their constitutions) through voluntary actions. Again, contrary to the motive of the market sector, which is out basically to maximise profit, the civil society's main objective is to cater for the interest of the masses. Thus a majority of their beneficiaries are the underprivileged sections of societies. The *World Bank's* (2011) research into this sector reveals that civil societies are out to promote the following initiatives: better standards of living, good governance, freedom of associations and information for the good of the common man. It also acts as a check on government's performance and the facilitation of participation in governance. Civil societies, without doubt, stand tall as agents of globalisation despite the fact that some limit their humanitarian activities by an inward gaze. They are projected as both processes of globalisation and outcomes of globalisation. Adichie presents them as the force behind the growth and spread of civil society activism. These activities are considered important from the point that they have created an enabling human environment and consequently, development. Though, in Adichie's textual societies, countries, as well as organisations, vary in the way civil society organisations are active in national life, civil society agencies; the novelist posits, remain indispensable tools for impacting development.

Within this framework of civil society activism, agencies such as civic groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have cropped up in response to the varied concerns

of the masses. Civic groups, though much smaller in size than NGOs, like NGOs, represent the ordinary citizen contributing towards the well-being of the community, like the later. The United Nations Organization, however, virtually recognizes all types of private bodies, with the fundamental features of addressing "poverty, localized oppression, culture specific dissatisfaction, the operation of corporations/states on specific ecosystems" (Gupta 18) as NGOs. This paper, in line with the United Nations Organization's consideration of NGOs, considers many diverse types of bodies within the frame of NGOs. The pertinent features of these groups include their being non-government operated and providing assistance to the masses for little or no fee while relying on donations, and of them comprised chiefly of volunteers. In my paper, the civil society will be read from the background of voluntary individuals, of no group background, actively contributing to the wellbeing of humanity.

Adichie's works demonstrate how varied faces of the civil society have, since the close of the century, advanced development within the African continent. Through voluntary individual and voluntary group initiatives, her textual societies are fast becoming the dream of pro-development activists. One begins to read globalization, from the above scenario, from the perspective that consciousness guides individuals as well as groups into taking excellent initiatives for the good of humanity. The high rate at which civil society agencies relate to humanity, in the context of Adichie's texts, invites the use of globalization theory as tool of analysis.

Globalisation theory has metamorphosed from the globalisation concept which defines a world that has been made smaller by entwined networks of interrelated processes. The term is often used in relation to the increasing global relationships of people, cultural and economic activities. To Keohne and Nye in *Governance in a Globalizing World*, globalization is that "thickening of the networks of interdependence" that spans international boundaries and "accompanies increasing rapid and inexpensive movements of information, ideas, money, goods and people across those boundaries" (272). Globalisation, then, stands for the global outreach of resources in the human community and, thus ushers in thoughts of togetherness. It is within this frame of thought that globalisation theorists declare the global as that which can no more fit under the modernist concept of binaries. To one of its theorists, Edward Said, as outlined in his two works, namely; *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*, the concepts of 'self' and 'other' cannot define the global. Understanding the other now entails combining notions of the 'local' and the 'universal' since both depend on each other. Thus, globalisation theory works at replacing the 'self' and 'other' concepts with an 'us', owing to the fact that it is impossible to have a 'me' without a 'you'. According to these theorists only tolerance, understanding and negotiations can render human existence meaningful in this age of interconnectivity. The theory becomes relevant in analyzing civil society activism in my selection of Adichie's narratives. In the works, civil society organizations are all about fighting difference and consequently, fighting underdevelopment, either collectively or individually. The next

section of my paper will examine NGOs as collective civil society frameworks.

NGOS AS COLLECTIVE SOCIETY FRAMEWORKS IN ADICHIE'S NARRATIVES

As noted above, NGOs are groups whose actions are geared towards enhancing welfare. Their targets, be they individuals or groups, are often in need of one thing or the other. Nigeria, the principal setting of Adichie's narratives has witnessed the proliferation of these development related social organisations, since the 1960s. Their increasing numbers has been generated by two factors, namely, the government's inability to deliver goods and services to its citizens and secondly, the increasing flow of foreign aid into the country. In Adichie's textual societies the organisations set out to alleviate poverty, market information at relatively no price, ensure government accountability and promote democracy.

One succinct example of such an organisation in *Half of a Yellow Sun*—a text that exposes how ethnicity became political instability and escalated into the 1967–1970 Nigerian civil war—is the gathering in Professor Odenigbo's (the Nsukka University lecturer) house. This gathering stands as a melting pot of all the ideologies governing the reflective ethos of the Nsukka university lecturers. To Olanna, a sociology lecturer, who doubles as Odenigbo's wife, this house functions as a "political club" (36) as lecturers meet there in the evenings with their bags and baggage of knowledge for proliferation. During the discussion sessions, the best of the ideas as well as manners are marketed above the others. Although Odenigbo's house becomes a meeting place for all lecturers, indiscriminate of origins, Odenigbo, a Nigerian of Igbo origin, had intended it to be a socialising forum for only lecturers of African origin—obviously with the spirit of Pan-Africanism in mind. This is an inclusive and exclusive concept that though not better than Eurocentricism sets out to check it. At the initial stage of this social forum, the lecturers contribute only ideas but with time they begin contributing towards the evening refreshments. One may be tempted to read that in letting Odenigbo fail in his Afrocentric focus for the group, Adichie seems to express how separatist ideologies are out of place in a global age. Nsukka University, we are told, is already "so full of foreigners" (123). This is an indication that it would be impossible for the strangers not to influence the lives of their African colleagues. During meetings, the lecturers demonstrate how interdisciplinary knowledge has become culture. Whether consciously or unconsciously, they portray lots of cultural and individual standpoints while at the meetings. Adichie here, like Martin Albrow (1996), seems to challenge globalisation for conveying a false "widespread sense of transforming the world" (86). This is an indication that sectarian frameworks are still alive within globalisation. The reader senses this fragmentary atmosphere in each of the lecturer's attempts to market individual views in the process of struggling to coexist with the others.

No matter their research disciplines, the lecturers demonstrate expertise in history as they focus on and analyse significant past events. Odenigbo reads, in Europe's perpetuating

of the Jewish Holocaust, not only the idea that Europe masterminded the Second World War but also the fact that Europe undervalues Africa. It is interesting to note how the arguments of this mathematics lecturer centre on Afrocentric values. According to him, Africa and the Africans are great. He justifies it with the fact that the continent was to the philosopher Hegel "a land of childhood" (50). To Odenigbo "Greatness depends on where you are coming from" (50). This is a challenge to Hegel's denigrating views about Africa that have sustained Eurocentric thoughts about the continent. Odenigbo's view above can, however, be taken for a subjective stand point that is racially inclined; one that can be dangerous in today's age of open borders. Professor Okeoma, the Ghanaian, in open-mindedness accepts that the world war was something not to be, but at the same time rejoices at the lesson about the white man's mortality that it exposed His uncle, he says, fought in Burma and returned with this question: "How come nobody told me before that the white man was not immortal?" (50). This becomes an indication that the Africans, like the west, benefited from the war. Richard Churchill, the British researcher on his part, begins to put down all he has learnt about Nigeria in book. He soon becomes disturbed by the fact that all the information he has gathered could not fit within the western norms of writing in which he was properly grounded. This seems a clear indication that he has been caught up in the reflexivity and complexity that defines the global age. This reflexivity surrounding truth is again seen when Odenigbo, in ethnic sentiments, previews the place of the tribe above that of the nation. He thinks the subordination of the Igbos should rightfully be stopped with them seceding from Nigeria. This is an idea Miss Adebayo, the Yoruba native, does not buy for she believes there are milder ways of restoring peace in Nigeria than secession. Odenigbo, like Adebayo here, speaks from a traditional and a cultural context that he is out to project.

The club, thus, reveals a cross section of ideologies through speech and table manners. The reader deduces from the interactions of its members that truth is relative as strands of it are buried in each speaker's background. This becomes an indication that the various ideological standpoints that are part of today's global village need to be treated on equal footing for existence to be meaningful. Ugwu, the house boy, like a psychiatrist, reads the complex atmosphere very well. He notes that Miss Adebayo, like Odenigbo, drinks brandy. He sees this as reason enough for both of them agreeing on many intellectual issues, as they do. Dr. Patel, the Indian, drinks Golden Guinea and seems not to eat kola nuts. Certainly kola nuts that are culturally significant in Africa are not that valuable in his birth place, India. Richard Churchill, on his part, is noted to be as selective at table as his colonial ancestors. He never eats the skin of a chicken and does not like pepper. Okeoma, the western educated Ghanaian poet, eats everything with a spoon. Okeoma, from Ugwu's perspective, is obviously suffering from assimilation since Africans mostly eat with their hands. Ugwu equally observes that Odenigbo will "always scatter food all around" (123). This can be read as a sure sign that he, too, belongs nowhere in particular, an assertion that can be deduced from the fact

that he claims to belong to the tribe but knows very little about it. He does not even want to celebrate the little he knows about the tribe. The “stuffed garden eggs” (108) that Richard’s cook prepares for the club can be taken for a symbol of what the group stands for; a hybrid group composed of hybrid people. From Odenigbo’s own perspective, Richard is nothing more than a representative of his race; “You stuff food, you stuff people. If you don’t like what is inside a particular food, then leave it alone” he cries out (108). One can read from the quote the often critiqued colonial mentality of replacing the values of the colonised. But this same Richard is in love with Kainene, an Igbo girl, and has studied the Igbo ways to the point of writing a book on it. This is an indication that he loves Africa and might be more informed in Igbo ways than the likes of Odenigbo who know very little about Igbo which is their origin. This intellectual group, no doubt, is set above the dictates of a tribe. It silences the voice of the nation, transcends that of the continent and becomes reflective of the globe. It stands for unity in diversity, a symbol of tolerance for the sake of peaceful coexistence. This concocting of parts for the sake of amelioration appears as Adichie’s precept for life in the contemporary global world and highlights the presence of varying civil society organisations in her work.

From every indication, the lecturers disseminate knowledge beyond the confines of their group. They expose pertinent information about the Nigerian nation to the less informed Nigerians. They reveal that the enmity between the Igbos and the Hausas has been in effect since the year 1912 and that on several occasions, the Igbos have been massively murdered by their enemies, the Hausa/Fulani. Thus, when these intellectuals, in a plea for the Igbos to be separated from Nigeria, write a letter to the State house at Enugu entitled, “WE UNIVERSITY STAFF, DEMAND SECESSION AS A MEANS OF SECURITY” (161), it sounds like their genuine effort to build peace for a people who have been oppressed for decades. According to the *World Bank’s* (2011) consideration, this group of university lecturers cannot be distanced from the civil society framework since they promote freedom of association and information for the good of the common person, even if this is from a tribal perspective.

Still in *Half of a Yellow Sun*, with its civil war atmosphere that has generated economic strife, Adichie presents a group of active, diverse and dynamic women under the umbrella of the Association of University Women, actively involved in war efforts. They undertake assorted engagements as relief efforts, for the good of the community. They organise food donations to refugee camps and talk women into understanding that they are all involved in the war and must, therefore, do their best to care for war victims. In one of their seminars, “In case of war” (172), they educate the population on certificates as the most valuable belongings in war times and on how to safeguard them. The women tell them, “Wrap your certificates in waterproof bags and make sure those are the first things you take if you have to evacuate.” (172). Olanna, one of the protagonists and university lecturer of the novel, takes to teaching in the primary school. She sees this as her own effort at guaranteeing the success of the Biafran

State. She deems it necessary for this young generation of Nigerians to know the history of their nation which includes the causes and the consequences of the civil war. She does this by drilling the youngsters into imagining the advantages that will accrue from the creation of the Biafran state. Her actions as well as those of her colleagues are voluntary. No strings are attached to their acts which are motivated by the love to save a people in need of salvation and therefore fall under the consideration of civil society activism.

In the above mentioned text still, the novelist reads the Igbo Union in Kano as a social group with undertones of development. Having transcended physical borders from the East to the North of the country, the Igbos, unexpectedly, meet discrimination from the Hausa/Fulani, the original inhabitants of the northern part of Nigeria. These Igbos choose, as their meeting point, Uncle Mbaezi’s (Olanna’s uncle) house. To fight against the backwardness of their children instituted by their non-admission into the northern schools, they build an Igbo Grammar School in Kano for their offspring. Their collective action is based on the view that education is the best form of development. With education, they believe, their offspring will recognise and right the wrongs of the Nigerian society for the good of humanity. This resonates with Professor Odenigbo’s point of view that education is priority in Africa. This assertion is made on the grounds that with education, Africans will “resist exploitation” and “understand exploitation” (11). The absence of education is the highest cause of underdevelopment in Nigeria as Odenigbo laments: “majority have not been given the tool to negotiate this new world” (104). This situation equally exposes the intensity of ethnic violence in Nigeria. This is a counter developmental stand which works contrary to globalizations’s efforts at tolerating and negotiating difference for the sake of peaceful coexistence in the entire human society. Perhaps, this is why Adichie does not seem to see divisionist tendencies like the Pan-Igbo idea or the Pan-Hausa idea as the way forward in this age. Such individualistic frames may have had their place in the pre-colonial days. Tribal loyalty is a social fabric Odenigbo values over Pan-Africanism. Pan-Africanism, to him, is nothing but a western creation aimed at disorganising and destabilising the power of the tribe for the benefit of the west. The novelist presents Africa as a place with a crisis of identity, a borderless macrocosm where the various microcosms are bound to tolerate and accept each other for peace to reign. In taking over the education of these young Nigerians from the government, parents have voluntarily taken over the duties of the state, thus acting as NGOs from a collective standpoint, which is the case in this portion of my essay. The education of these young easterners, based in the northern part of the country, will guide them into addressing, with the pen, all the conflicting issues with regard to veritable nationhood in Nigeria, for the benefit of all Nigerians.

Adichie’s *Americanah*, with its typical transnational setting spanning Africa, Europe and America, presents the African Students Association (ASA) as working for the good of humanity. This is a group created by African students both in their interest and that of motherland Africa. It

functions within the spirit of pan- Africanism, the unity of Africa's people. Africa is poor, they all agree, as Africans live on less than a dollar a day. They discuss Africa's diverse cultures and problems from the perspective of the countries they each represent. They talk about the necessity of integrating themselves into the American society, but, without forgetting where they come from. They help each other get settled in America. For instance, it is thanks to Dorothy, of Ugandan nationality, that the novel's protagonist, Ifemelu, of Nigerian origin learns of the first job vacancy in America, namely; "a vacant waitress position" (142) even though the interview results declare her unqualified for it. The students talk each other into trusting "internationals" and not "Americans" (141) within the spirit of unity in crisis. This is because they believe that all the internationals, a group to which the ASA is subset, "understand the trauma of trying to get an American visa." This reveals that the beginning point of the American immigrant's psychological torture begins when he or she is struggling to leave his/her original base for America. The ASA believes its members naturally belong to the Black Students Union (BSU)—a group of dark-skinned students. The ASA then views each member as part of the united league for the oppressed since the dark colour announces inferior status and crowns one a second class citizen in America. This becomes a position from where they can deconstruct the myth of inferiority propagated by white racists. The NGO spirit in the group is visible both in its voluntary initiatives at helping members find home in America and in its voluntarily educating members on surviving in America.

Purple Hibiscus, which x-rays a Nigeria wrecked by socio-economic and political crisis, is home to the Nsukka university students. This student body courageously stands up and says 'no' to the state's violation of fundamental human rights. As a body, they undertake street demonstrations against the government's decision to centralise the University's administration under an appointed Vice Chancellor. The head of this institution had formally been voted in by a university governing council. They see, in this state appointed Vice Chancellor, the centralisation of power and consequently dictatorship together with all the ills that come with it. The expression, "Sole administrator must go!" (227), together with other expressions that point out the state government's non commitment towards its people, is carried by students on placards as they march through the streets of Nsukka. By so doing the students struggle to reduce the powers of the state for the good of the common man. This is a somewhat unattainable situation in Africa for, each time citizens carry out street demonstrations to protect their rights, the government sends the military to harass and torture them. In braving this condition, the students display their determination to put things right. This student body's action, organised within the spirit of NGO activism, puts a check on government's performance, and facilitates participation in governance for the benefit of all.

Half of a Yellow Sun equally presents assorted relief agencies, catering for the displaced and the hungry in Nigeria, during the civil war. St. Vincent de Paul's Society just like

the Red Cross Movement engages in donating food to villages throughout the period. The Red Cross Movement donates protein tablets to children. Foreign Organisations, too, organise Relief centres where nationals queue up to receive basic necessities. From a table set up at a road side, the reader meets one of the foreign groups distributing boiled eggs and bottles of refrigerated water to passers-by. It is interesting to note how CARRITAS, one of the Charity Organisations on its part, becomes discriminatory as it favours Roman Catholics over others. Within this segregatory frame of action, it falls short of the roles of civil society as it has become denominational in the face of a global crisis.

Half of a Yellow Sun also presents the Media actively involved in the Nigerian crisis. The BBC is the first media body to report on the mass killings of the Igbos during the country's second coup. This initiative encourages the local media who, all along, had remained silent for fear of government harassment, to update the masses on the realities of the war. According to reports from the local radio station, ENBC Enugu, five hundred Igbos are killed in Maiduguri during a coup. The Hausas are described as being so barbaric that they split open a pregnant woman in Kano and set on fire a catholic church full of refugees. Richard Churchill's article in the *Herald*, posits that the coup is a result of ancient tribal conflict. His findings reveal that as far back as 1945 the British colonial government caused the northerners into grossly killing the Igbos when it accused the Igbos of masterminding a national strike. Over the radio, the military, through Major Nzeogwu, announces the suspension of the Nigerian democratic constitution under the guise that it encouraged corruption and internal disorder. As internal strife intensifies in the country, BBC Radio broadcasts the various personalities that have flown into Nigeria to redress the turbulent atmosphere. These include the British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, the Pope's representatives as well as those of the OAU and the Commonwealth. Though these are individuals, their actions speak for the entire groups they are representing. The Nigerian civil war, in what one would view a positive dimension especially from the point of view of civil society activism, which is the focus in my essay, exposes the richness and beauty of civic life as people of various ethnic groups, religions and works of life have come together to resolve civil conflict.

The above picture foregrounds solidarity—an ideological position propagated by globalisation. Like the globalisation theorists, Anthony Giddens and Jean Baudrillard, Adichie, in the texts under study, hails modern technology for intensifying "world-wide social relations which link distant localities" (Giddens 64). As the novelist seems to postulate, modern transportation has reduced distance between geographical locations while electronic communication seems to have brought time to a standstill to the benefit of the world's people. The media thus feeds the society with viable information for its soul even though individual government's check on the media, in Africa, hampers its effective dissemination of information.

The *World Bank* (2010) for one, regrets this state control of the media in Africa. The bank posits that such a

mechanism handicaps the media's most significant function, which is the "disseminating of information for public education" (25). Adichie vividly portrays as true the above assertion from *The World Bank* when in *Purple Hibiscus*, soldiers invade the publishing house of a newspaper, "Standard" for the reason that "Standard" had published a story that exposed 'Big Oga' (synonym for head of state) and his men as the killers of a human right activist. Adichie, here, positions the African state above the law—a situation worth rethinking since the state has become a violator of human rights. The gravity of the state's unlawful acts resonates with the novelist's position in the story "At The American Embassy" in the collection, *The Thing Around Your Neck*. Here, another newspaper editor is fleeing the country after receiving anonymous calls threatening his life. This is a man whose only fault, as BBC Radio reports, is that he is the voice of the voiceless in Nigeria. Richard Churchill, the English researcher we have met earlier, however, lets the reader into believing that western media forums, too, can hamper the effective dissemination of information. It puzzles Richard that during the Nigerian civil war an International Press is so prejudicial about Africa that all it wants to know is if Africans have eaten some body parts or made tribal incantations. These demonstrate the spirit of the uncivil, the spirit of those who have remained individuals despite the spirit of change and collectivism that has been brought about by globalisation. Adichie here, like the globalisation theorist Zygmunt Bauman (1998), cautions the reader against taking globalisation for a password that can "unlock the gates of all present and future mysteries" (1). Some people have refused to be controlled by the spirit of the group, as portrayed by CARRITAS, above. While globalisation talks about intertwining relations in all fields, otherness is still very much at play. But a majority of social organisations, as portrayed in Adichie's textual societies set out to positively impact welfare. This section of my paper has discussed NGOs, as earlier stated, within the framework of social organisations with humanitarian considerations. In the next section, as earlier underscored, I will demonstrate how some individuals take it upon themselves to impact positive changes in the human community and in this way, may be considered in the category of civil society activism.

INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVES AS CIVIL SOCIETY FRAMEWORKS IN ADICHIE'S NARRATIVES

As noted above, Adichie also presents individual initiatives as keys to development in the globe. Like the group initiatives outlined above, individuals voluntarily provide a wide range of goods and services with the aim of attending to human wellbeing and social welfare. The reader of *Half of a Yellow a Sun* cannot be blind to the development efforts of Professor Odenigbo envisaged in his creating and ensuring the growth of the 'political club' in his house, and equally, towards the upbringing of Ugwu. As already underscored, he intended the gathering in his house to be Pan-African, but it unexpectedly takes on an international character, to the advantage its members. Discourses criss-cross borders and intersect each other. Professor Odenigbo markets his doctrine

on the importance of the tribe. Miss Adebayo's discourses place the nation above the tribe and Richard puts both the tribe and the nation as only parts of the globe and consequently sells his doctrine of the importance of the whole "stuffed garden eggs." (108). The interrelatedness serves as an eye opener to many of the intellectuals who had previously felt fulfilled with their limited knowledge. This same Odenigbo transforms his village oriented, thirteen-year-old primary school dropout houseboy, Ugwu, to a gentleman. The former does not understand why Ugwu's father could stop educating his only son with the excuse that his farm yields turned out to be poor that season, but marries a second wife in the same frame. Odenigbo, a man of his words, respects his "I will enrol you in the staff primary school" (8), statement to Ugwu, on Ugwu's arrival in his house. This is a small beginning that gradually sees Ugwu interpreting the discourses of the club's brain-boxes, and finally, as the finisher of Richard Churchill's novel, *The World was Silent when we Died*" (433). Ugwu's education, from every indication, brought him face to face with books, especially those that kicked against evil and advocated truths. Like their writers, especially, he came to disclose the truth about Nigeria in a book; all thanks to Professor Odenigbo for educating him. Adiche equally presents individuals undertaking a lot of individual initiatives in *Half of a Yellow Sun* for the sustenance of the underprivileged. It is wonderful that Ugwu takes bread and tea to returning Igbos at the train station. How brilliant, still, that during the civil war. Odenigbo does not only volunteer to work at the Directorate during the civil war but forms a group, an Agitation Corps, where he talks people into the advantages of the would-be Biafran State.

"The Shivering", in the collection *The Thing Around Your Neck*, presents African students in America acquiring knowledge that will positively transform the African continent. To Udenna and Ukamaka, the major characters in the story, only western oriented knowledge can develop the continent. Udenna's preoccupation as a student in America is to be informed in political sciences- that discipline of study that will liberate his country from the shackles of political instability it has experienced since independence. Ukamaka's own concern is guided by her desire to return to Nigeria and work in an NGO. Udenna and Ukamaka are patriots whose love for country exceeds the, love for money; the same spirit demonstrated by a Nigerian church in "On Monday of Last Week" in displacing the poor university graduate, Tobeche, from Nigeria to America by the offer of a free plane ticket. Adichie x-rays how the world has become interconnected through globalisation, civil societies and NGOs; forces all aimed at advancing the society for the betterment of all. Here, as my analysis shows, individuals function in the same capacity.

Ifemelu, Adichie's protagonist in *Americanah*, while in America, discovers that many American upper class members are engaged in charity schemes in the African continent. For instance, a couple during their "African safari tour" identified with their "guide" and has since been responsible for the education of his child. This child's education is a great investment for Africa. A lot has been penned down

propounding education as the key to higher standards of living and consequently a source of income productivity and growth for Africa. But primary school enrolment is still a problem in the continent, not to talk of secondary education; all these owing to the fact that only parents, most of them financially down and literately empty are responsible for their children's education. This single act of charity therefore goes a long way in developing the continent and fit into what I consider civil society engagement with development.

Two other American women, in the above text, say they donate to varied civil society agencies in Africa; to a charity group in Malawi that builds wells, to "an orphanage in Botswana" and to "micro-finance cooperation in Kenya" (169). These demonstrate individuals voluntarily affecting the lives of entire communities. It denotes complex chains of interdependence for the good of the possessed and signals in progress and development. Globalisation, Adichie insinuates, has altered time and space to the benefit of the world's citizens. Well-to-do Americans come to Africa on pleasure trips and after their return, demonstrate their goodwill by becoming vehicles of aid to the African poor. This alliance with the African poor provides basic necessities for the latter and gradually releases the continent from the shackles of underdevelopment. With globalisation, thus, the wealthy extend charity to those to whom they are not biologically related; even to those they have never met physically. This is a virtue that improves upon the recipients' standards of living and enhances social development. Another lady tells Ifemelu that she is the head of a local NGO in Ghana. Its objective, she holds, is to empower local women. The NGO obviously gives the women concerned a sense of direction and improves their standards of living. It even employs workers as this woman is already offering Ifemelu a job in the organisation after her studies (169). Within the African context, then as Adichie's works underline, globalisation, civil societies and NGOs have reversed years of social and economic backwardness within an increasingly dynamic and competitive world.

CONCLUSION

Globalisation, as my analyses has portrayed, has rendered the earth a small place interlaced with networks of personal, economic and cultural relationships. The privileged humans continuously take excellent initiatives to the benefit of the less privileged—a humanitarian stand point that enhances the process of globalisation and the positive outcomes of globalisation. It has raised mankind's morality to a level where humanity's actions are expected to respect the principles of universal validity. Civil society actors cater for human beings beyond ideological and geographical set-ups. Civil society actors have increased in numbers and types; serving not only the disadvantaged groups and individuals but equally assisting and redirecting governments in the process of governance. The civil society now poses as that new class of political, economic and social actors whose goal is the development of the entire human society. This is a new world vision that is gradually pulling Africa out of the dungeon of underdevelopment. Nevertheless, not all NGOs function

in such a positive light as Adichie seems to have presented in the texts under study. Some other writers have portrayed them questionably and, consequently, as agents of the continuous underdevelopment of the continent. The point Adichie seems to be making here is that globalisation has developed the mind into recognising and understanding the basic problems of humanity. As her texts postulate, her geographical origin, the African continent, that entered the 20th century as a poor and mostly colonised world region seems to be gradually experiencing both political and socio-economic stability and growth, thanks, in part, to the various categories of development aid and good governance talks from varied social society frameworks as my analysis has shown.

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