

Family, Violence and
Gender in African
Anglophone Novels
and Contemporary
Terrorist Threats

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To those who fight against Wind and Tide

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PREFACE

Terror in the African Anglophone novels of Chinua Achebe, Doris Lessing, J.M. Coetzee and Laila Lalami originated as a consequence of a breakdown in the family structure. Traditionally, conventional patriarchy, in addition to securing the psychological and material needs of the family, has served as one of the building blocks of tribes and nations. Since the father figure within narrative is allegorized as a metonym of the state, the absence of patriarchal authority represents the disintegration of the link between individuals and national institutions. Consequently, characters may also turn to committing acts of terror as a rejection of the dominant national ideology. This book aims to demonstrate how the breakdown of the family and the conventional gendering of roles may give rise to terrorist violence in the African setting.

To recontextualize the persistence of the Conradian definition of terror as an Anglo-European phenomenon brought to Africa, this book contrasts the ways in which the breakdown of the family affects both indigenous and Anglo-European households in Africa across generations. Under the reinvention of older gender norms, the unfulfilling Anglo-European patriarchy exposes Anglo-European women to indigenous violence. Moreover, the absence of patriarchal authority leads indigenous families to seek substitutions in the form of alternative family institutions, such as religious and political organizations, that conflict with the national ideology. Furthermore, against the backdrop of globalized capitalism, commodity fetishism emerges as a substitute to compensate for the absent father figure. Therefore, there is an indisputable relationship between the breakdown of the family structure and individual acts of terror that aim at the fulfillment of capitalist fetish or individual desire, and at the expense of national security. Finally, the rhetorical dimension of terror against family and women in Africa will be proven to be the allegorized norm of globalized terror in the twenty-first century.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>HE</i>	Chinua Achebe's <i>Home and Exile</i>
<i>Civilization</i>	Sigmund Freud's <i>Civilization and its Discontents</i>
<i>Growing</i>	Najwa bin Laden , Omar bin Laden and Sean Sasson's <i>Growing up Bin Laden</i>
<i>HOD</i>	Joseph Conrad's <i>Heart of Darkness</i>
<i>Lenin</i>	Louis Althusser's "Lenin and Philosophy"
<i>Pleasure</i>	Sigmund Freud's <i>Beyond the Pleasure Principle and Other Writings</i>
<i>SA</i>	Joseph Conrad's <i>The Secret Agent</i>
<i>Sexuality</i>	Sigmund Freud's <i>Sexuality and the Psychology of Love</i>
<i>Totem</i>	Sigmund Freud's <i>Totem and Taboo</i>
<i>UWE</i>	Joseph Conrad's <i>Under Western Eyes</i>
<i>Wretched</i>	Franz Fanon's <i>The Wretched of the Earth</i>
<i>Writings</i>	Louis Althusser's <i>Writings on Psychoanalysis: Freud and Lacan</i>

INTRODUCTION

“We penetrated deeper and deeper into the heart of darkness,” wrote Joseph Conrad in *Heart of Darkness* (62). The defining legacy of Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1899) is its portrayal of the nineteenth century African terror triggered by imperialists’ desire. Being “[h]unters for gold or pursuers of fame” (*HOD* 17), Anglo-European imperialists impose violence upon African indigenous peoples so as to achieve their own selfish desires. To emphasize the way in which individual experience is linked to national ideology, Conrad formulates his creation of literary terror against the historical backdrops of his time—in particular Anglo-European imperialism and Russian despotism—to demonstrate how terror at the narrative level serves as a national allegory of political and historical discourse.

In *Heart of Darkness*, the narrator Marlow’s employment with the Belgians “to take charge of a twopenny-half-penny river-steamboat with a penny whistle” heading to Congo is a reflection of Conrad’s own African experience (*HOD* 28). Conrad had captained the Congo River steamer *Roi des Belges* for a Belgian company in the Congo Free State in 1890 (*UWE* x). In the introduction to the work, Conrad remarks that the narrative is, to a large extent, constructed on the basis of actual facts:

“Heart of Darkness” is experience, too; but it is experience pushed a little (and only very little) beyond the actual facts of the case for the perfectly legitimate, I believe, purpose of bringing it *home* to the minds and bosoms of the readers. (*HOD* 11, my emphasis)

Conrad’s later works, *The Secret Agent* (1907) and *Under Western Eyes* (1911), both similarly show Conrad’s ongoing determination to interweave his individual experience with a specific historical discourse. For instance, in his author’s note to *The Secret Agent*, Conrad explains that the “whole course [of the narrative] suggested and centered round the absurd cruelty of the Greenwich Park explosion” (xxxvi).¹ The plot of

¹ This refers to the incident in 1894 in which a group of activists attempted to blow up the Greenwich Observatory.

Under Western Eyes focuses on the unsuccessful Russian Revolution of 1905. Conrad later refers to the latter of these two narratives as an outdated “historical novel dealing with the past” (*UWE* 315).

Against the historical backdrop of Anglo-European imperialism, Conrad had suggested that individual desire was the key factor that turned people into diabolical subjects. More specifically, the European imperialists had traveled to Congo to exploit opportunities in the ivory trade. Those imperialists went on to legalize their exploitation of the African indigenous peoples through their subsequent colonization. Eventually, the imperialists also sought to replace indigenous modes of worship and rituals with their own Anglo-European, modernized modes of colonial exploitation.

In his essay entitled “An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*” (1975), Chinua Achebe defends his African ancestors against the imperialists’ bias and racial criticisms. Achebe argues that Conrad’s novel has permanently made Africa “the other world” being subjected to Western desire (qtd. in Leitch 1783). To defend his African ancestors against the imperialists’ bias and racial criticisms, Achebe reveals the need for African indigenous peoples to produce their own narratives. He comments that “[u]ntil the lions produce their own historian, the story of the hunt will glorify only the hunter” (*HE* 73). By likening the relationship between African indigenous peoples and European imperialism to the contest between lions and hunter, Achebe implies that, so long as the hunter is the narrator of the process, the colonialist’s bias will be imposed to beautify the terror of colonization. This quandary formed the basis of Achebe’s decision to become a novelist, out of his desire to write a genuine African novel narrated through African eyes.

From Achebe’s perspective the problem of misrepresentation occurs when descriptions and stories of Africa are narrated through the eyes of Western travelers and imperial powers. For Achebe, if Africa is to be represented thoroughly and fairly, then it should be represented by its indigenous inhabitants, who are familiar with the broader cultural milieu, and are able to view their respective countries from distinctly African perspectives. In this book, I have attempted to avoid the stereotypical representation of Africa from a Western perspective. In so doing, I analyze narratives written by Africans of different ethnic groups and of both genders. This choice makes it possible to show the legacy of the Conradian engagement against its historical backdrop and also serves as a response to Achebe’s accusation of Conrad’s racial bias. Furthermore, the ethnic hybridity of the selected African authors reflects the diversity of

ways in which colonization continues to act upon modern Africa.

Achebe and Laila Lalami are African writers from Nigeria and Morocco respectively who have benefited from colonial or Western styles of education and now present their home countries to the world through Anglophone writings. In contrast, J.M. Coetzee presents the legacy of Afrikaners in South Africa, descendants of the Anglo-European colonizers who aim to preserve, through their writings, some aspects of Western civilization in the post-colonial era. Doris Lessing's case represents a different kind of Anglo-European hybridity. Lessing received the Nobel Prize for Literature as a British writer, yet her work chosen for this book, *The Grass is Singing* (1950), is based on her own experiences as a Briton settled in Southern Rhodesia. I suggest that through considering the individual viewpoints of a variety of modern African narratives, a truer picture of Africa may emerge. Through analysis of novels by the aforementioned four authors, this book investigates the formation of African terror beginning in the pre-colonial era.

Taking the cue from Conrad, the six contemporary African narratives chosen for discussion signal the way in which history determines individual behavior and reflects the legacy of Conradian terror upon the Anglo-European colonizers as well as on the colonized indigenous peoples in Africa across successive generations. This book will demonstrate how the legacy of historical transitions and the persistence of Conradian terror as a theme have been carried into the present era in the selected African Anglophone narratives. I shall conclude this book with speculation on the ubiquity of terror and how the legacy of Conradian terror can be interpreted in different contemporary contexts through an analysis of the biographical case studies of Osama bin Laden and Malala Yousafzai.

The Legacy of Conradian Terror

As a writer of numerous publications on terrorism, Jonathan R. White has commented discouragingly on the difficulty of defining terrorism, since the scope of analysis is so broad.² In defining terror, I frame my argument on the basis of Conrad's portrayal of the way in which European exploitation triggers African terror. In *Heart of Darkness*, Marlow suggests the danger of Africa lies in its "[u]nexpected, wild, and violent" nature (73). Kurtz's final whisper "[t]he horror! The horror!"

² See White, Jonathan R. *Terrorism: An Introduction*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Wadsworth, 1997. 9. Print.

demonstrates how Conrad defines the horrors of Africa as an existential psychological experience (112).³ In the novel, European exploitation represents the transformation of individual thoughts of desire into physical force with an “immediate hostile intention” (73).

In “The Task of the Translator”, Walter Benjamin suggests that “since the important works of world literature never find their chosen translators at the time of their origin, their translation marks their stage of continued life” (71). In giving a “continued life” to Kurtz’s “horror”, after completing *Heart of Darkness*, Conrad dispensed with exotic locals and chose instead to focus on settings closer to home: the European continent and his new home, Britain. Back in Anglo-European settings, Conrad continued to explore the possibilities of various forms of terroristic exploitation. Following the portrayal of Kurtz as a representation of the corrupted white patriarch, Conrad’s writings suggest that terror likewise originates from a breakdown in the family structure. Conrad shows in *The Secret Agent* and *Under Western Eyes* how the corruption of the patriarch affects both children and women in families.

In *The Secret Agent*, Conrad emphasizes the way that families link individuals to national institutions, by suggesting that the father acts as a metonym of the state. For Conrad, the importance of symbolic patriarchs, rather than biological fathers, is an indication of how the disintegration of families results in the absence of the patriarch, which creates a vacuum that will then be filled by ideological alternatives such as religion or nationalism. The absence of the natural patriarch in the novel empowers Verloc to act as a surrogate father to his brother-in-law, Stevie. Winnie Verloc endorses their relationship and comments that they “[m]ight have been father and son” (244). However, as a secret agent, Verloc’s selfish action of sacrificing Stevie so as to secure his livelihood collides with Verloc’s principle of safeguarding social order:⁴

All these people had to be protected. Protection is the first necessity of opulence and luxury. They had to be protected; and their horses, carriages, houses, servants had to be protected; and the source of their wealth had to be protected in the heart of the city and the heart of the country; (12)

Conrad demonstrates here how Verloc, as a symbolic patriarch, by making

³ See Marlow’s comment on Kurtz’s terrifying experience in Africa that “his soul was mad. Being alone in the wilderness” (*HOD* 107).

⁴ See Mr. Vladimir’s condemnation to Verloc that “you have done nothing to earn your money for the last three years” (*SA* 25).

Stevie a scapegoat of family violence and terroristic exploitation, is the vehicle for the disintegration of the cohesion of the family. Upon realizing Verloc as both “the master of [the] house” and “the murderer of her Stevie” (266), Winnie’s “impossibility of imagining the details of such quiet execution added something maddening to her abstract terror” (268). While suffering from the emotional anguish of the loss of Stevie, Winnie takes revenge by killing her “murderer” husband (262-3). Hence, Conrad suggests the possibility that women may engage in acts of terror resisting patriarchal violence. The retributive punishment exacted on Mr. Verloc thus represents the price paid by the patriarch for causing the disintegration of the family structure. The case also reveals the way in which the corruption of the symbolic patriarch mirrors the threat posed to national security.

In *Under Western Eyes*, Conrad further elaborates terror as the consequence of domestic crisis, that is, of the failure of group cohesion, which impacts upon the pitfalls of national and cultural identifications (“Western” as opposed to Russian). The characterization of Razumov presents a case study linking the failure of family and group identification at a personal and psychological level to political betrayal at the national level which, in turn, produces even greater levels of state coercion (and individual responses to it) in a vicious circle. Specifically, Conrad suggests that the absence of the natural father may drive terrorist-protagonists towards alternative forms of affiliation both within and beyond the family circle for identity confirmation. He shows how Haldin, having “inherited a revolutionary inspiration together with a resemblance from an uncle”, engages in political organizations that commit revolutionary acts against the despotic Russian regime (*UWE* 52).⁵ Alex Houen, commenting on *Under Western Eyes*, has suggested that “[t]errorism was seen both as a natural response to this crisis [of autocracy] and as an attempt to rectify it” (67). In the novel, Victor draws a distinction between his act of assassinating Mr. de P and autocratic destruction:

You suppose that I am a terrorist, now—a destructor of what is. But consider that the true destroyers are they who destroy the spirit of progress and truth, not the avengers who merely kill the bodies of the persecutors of human dignity. (19)

⁵ As with Verloc and Stevie, the uncle is a surrogate father who inflicts ideology upon Haldin when the biological father is absent.

As an ardent believer in terroristic violence, Haldin has an idealist vision that his revolutionary spirit should pass on after his death, and will be everlasting until Russia enters a new era. As Conrad punctuates his treatment of terror through his accounts of individual corruption and domestic crises, Kurtz's "horror" is changed from an existential psychological experience while living "in the midst of the incomprehensible" to "terror" in the social and ideological contexts (*HOD* 20).

As I intend to analyze the discourse of terror from a literary perspective, I have adopted the Conradian experience of terror in theorizing about terroristic violence. By *terror*, I refer to the rhetorical dimension of terror against family and women. I define *terror* in African Anglophone narratives as a consequence of a breakdown in family structure, arising from the absence of patriarchal protection. By employing this definition, I give a "continued life" to the Conradian legacy of terror as an Anglo-European import evolves in Africa and highlight how individual acts of terror constitute a challenge to the narratives of the nation and national ideologies. Conradian terrorist-protagonists, such as Kurtz, Verloc and Razumov, attempt to use terror to restore their power. Their varying acts demonstrate their diabolical desire to protect their own self-interest at the expense of family and social ideologies. These characters exhibit the ongoing Conradian process of aligning individual desire with terroristic violence, both at home and abroad.

Terror in African Anglophone Novels: An Overview

John Parker and Richard Rathbone have suggested that the passive representation of Africa is a legacy of the transatlantic slave trade. They state that "the modern idea of Africa emerged, in many ways, from the dehumanizing crucible of Atlantic slavery" (7). In *Heart of Darkness*, Conrad demonstrates how terror emerges in Africa as Anglo-European imperialists exploit African indigenous peoples in the name of bringing civilization to them. He reveals to us the truth behind the imperialist mission of brightening the "prehistoric man" in Africa (62):

It was just robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a great scale, and men going at it blind—as is very *proper* for those who tackle a darkness. The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is *not* a pretty thing when you look into it too much. (20, my emphasis)

In this instance, the overwhelming desire to exploit the Africans represents the way in which the Europeans invert the discourse of civilization by turning themselves into robbers, brutes and murderers. Consequently, the depiction of conflict between Anglo-Europeans and African indigenous peoples sets the framework for terror in Africa across the succeeding generations.

Despite the fact that Conradian terror originates as a distinctly Anglo-European phenomenon, I challenge the passive representation of Africa as lacking an indigenous politics or the potential for anticolonial resistance. To negate the stereotyping of Africa as the object of Western desire, I show how the rhetorical dimension of terror against family and women evolves from the irreconcilable combat between established traditions and widely advocated modernity.

Things Fall Apart (1958) represents Chinua Achebe's response to the Conradian depiction of imperialists' desire in Africa "[t]o tear treasure out of the bowels of the land" (*HOD* 55). In the novel, Achebe shows that, when the imperialist capitalist engine threatens the indigenous family institution, the use of violence to preserve one's culture is ironically seen as an uncivilized reaction. The protagonist of the novel, Okonkwo, ultimately chooses the most extreme form of violence, self-destruction, in his attempt to resist the modernizing values imposed by the imperialists. His death implies the inexorable overthrow of ritualistic tradition by modernity. A contrast to this can be seen in the work of Coetzee. In seeking to present the impacts of modernity upon Africa, Coetzee demonstrates the influence of imperialist colonialism over indigenous tradition. Yet, at the same time, he suggests in *Disgrace* (1999) that colonization fails to completely root out opposition to Anglo-European institutions. Thus, as South Africa decolonizes, African indigenous peoples seek vengeance upon their ex-colonizers through violent acts that directly challenge Anglo-European patriarchy.

While Conrad's work had earlier shown the blatant manner in which the imperialists sought to benefit from the ivory trade, Achebe and Coetzee have both suggested ways in which economic power sublimates terror. In *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe depicts the way in which material factor paves the way for colonization. More specifically, the economic benefits that the imperialists have gained from indigenous resources become a force which facilitates their attempts at colonization:

There were many men and women in Umuofia who did not feel as strongly as Okonkwo about the new dispensation. The white man had

indeed brought a lunatic religion, but he had also built a trading store and for the first time palm-oil and kernel became things of great price, and much money flowed into Umuofia. (130)

The eventual acceptance of Christianity in Umuofia shows the way in which economic determinism leads to the overthrowing of the ritualistic traditions by modernity via Christianity. In Coetzee's *Disgrace*, in contrast, the character of Lucy Lurie, an Afrikaner, is able to secure indigenous protection by giving up her land. These two situations mirror each other, yet they are manifestations of the same phenomenon. From the failure of Okonkwo to resist the inexorable modernity and the inability of David Lurie to protect his daughter from sexual assault, I argue that when family as an internal factor fails in its combat against the external menace of violence, capital becomes a surrogate instrument that offers protection to individuals and stabilizes conflicts. Coetzee's observations on the defining role played by the fetishization of capital in postponing acts of terror forms a corollary to Conrad's earlier observation. Conrad had pointed out how terror imposed upon the African indigenous peoples by the Anglo-European originates from the latter's capitalist desire. Ironically, Achebe and Coetzee in turn show how capital serves to postpone acts of terror imposed by the indigenous peoples upon the colonizers.⁶

To discuss how patriarchal structures in the selected novels produce gendered behaviors that, ultimately, victimize both men and women, I have deliberately balanced the gender coverage of my analysis. This decision makes it possible not only to evaluate the effects of terror on patriarchal figures, but also to evaluate how the failure of the family institution terrorizes women in inter-racial conflicts between the colonizer and the colonized.

To explore the experience of Anglo-European women in Africa, I draw from Lessing's and Coetzee's novels to show how these women are subjected to the paired forces of patriarchy and colonialism. I affirm the Conradian suggestion that, in the contemporary context, women's exposure to terror is a result of their subordinate experiences in the domestic sphere. In order to fully explore how Anglo-European women react to their subaltern experience in the context of colonized South Africa, I will first investigate the way in which the colonial institution of the family, as portrayed in these novels, subjugates these women to the white

⁶ See Marlow's comment on the European imperialists as "no colonists; their administration was merely a squeeze, and nothing more" (*HOD* 20).

patriarch in exchange for protection. In both *The Grass is Singing* (1950) and *In the Heart of the Country* (1977), the family roles of Mary and Magda respectively eventually enslave them as the “alluring mistresses” of their indigenous servants once the Anglo-European patriarchy is unable to protect them.

By demonstrating how terror evolves in Africa under the conditions of globalized capitalism, the narratives of Laila Lalami challenge the Conradian equivalence of terror with national allegory. In *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits* (2005) and *Secret Son* (2009), she reveals the alarmingly congruous relations between the breakdown in family structure and the motivations for terror produced apart from or beyond the nation. Based on Lalami’s observations, in this book I show how terror is allegorized as a ubiquitous phenomenon in the twenty-first century under globalized capitalism. I show how commodity fetishism transcends the emptiness at the loss of the patriarch into materialism, which eventually leads to the disintegration of the family. While living in a society where individuals are defined by material possessions, Lalami’s protagonists discover how marriage, family and kinship have come to be commodified under conditions whereby material goods and commodities determine both the quality of one’s being and one’s life opportunities. The materialist framework of living their lives proves unsatisfactory for the characters Faten and Youssef, who come to embrace political or religious ideologies offering surrogate outlets beyond materialism. Since I argue that patriarchal authority serves as a metonym of the state, the commodified parent-child relationships thus signify the alienation of individuals from the state.

As reactions to the commodified domestic experience, the acts of terror in Lalami’s narratives represent the erosion of national ideology. I differentiate Lalami’s works from Achebe and Coetzee’s novels by calling them *post*-national African Anglophone narratives. I have adopted the historical terms “pre-colonial” and “post-colonial” in referring to Achebe and Coetzee’s novels respectively, as these terms reveal the ways in which modern Africa is an ideological formation in transition.

With the focus on the narrative construction of Africa, I understand this book does not historicize African countries individually. Kwame Anthony Appiah warns the danger of perceiving Africa as a monolithic unit:

The reason that Africa cannot take an African cultural or political or intellectual life for granted is that there is no such thing: there are only so

many traditions with their complex relationships—and, as often, their lack of any relationship—to each other. (107)

However, Ohadike's findings on the changing perception towards the Igbo people complement my claim that Africa is an ideological construction in formation. Ohadike observes that “[b]efore the twentieth century, it would have been incorrect to speak of the Igbo as a single people” as the Igbo consisted of two hundred or more distinct separate groups (236). As a result of frequent ventures between these separate groups during the colonial period, the established perception undergoes changes:

Many realized that what they thought were distinct languages were different dialects of the same language and that all Igbo-speaking people had the same basic culture and sociopolitical organization. In that sense, the concept of a common Igbo identity is a product of the twentieth century. (236)

Instead of collapsing Africa as a monolithic unit, my choice actually serves as a refutation to the passive formation of modern Africa solely by imperialist and colonial experience. In excluding how British colonialism in Nigeria or Southern Rhodesia differs from Dutch administration in South Africa or the French conquest of Morocco, this book aims to show that the commodified domestic experience imposes pressure on the history of Africa. This affirms Aijaz Ahmad's suggestion that “[w]hat gives the world its unity, then, is not a humanist ideology but the ferocious struggle between capital and labour which is now strictly and fundamentally global in character” (104). Similarly, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak initiates her famous notion on “strategic essentialism” through defining it as “peoples stand in the same relation to global capitalism and should respond to it in the same way” (qtd. in Leitch 2194). Globalization is the force that facilitates collective terroristic response and de-historicizes Africa.

Besides, to bring Conradian terror forward as an ideological construction, this book demonstrates how terroristic violence imposed upon African families alienates local history. Ernest Renan comments on the force that stimulates national cohesion and proposes “[u]nity is always affected by brutality” (11). Fredric Jameson's approach on positive hermeneutic that “the reinvention of the collective and the associative, can concretely achieve the ‘decentering’ of the individual subject” likewise helps to explain how individual acts of terror filters out historical difference (125).

The Interplay of Family, Violence and Gender

To re-frame Conradian terror in the context of contemporary terroristic violence, I suggest that the materialism of globalization arises at the expense of family, traditions and national ideology. To demonstrate how a breakdown of family structure, the reinvention of older gender norms and globalized capitalism act as constituents of terror in African Anglophone narratives, this book charts the role played by each of these in relation to terror at the narrative level.

Specifically, I analyze the role played by pre-colonial African families in inflicting indigenous ideology upon individuals and the way in which that indigenous ideology comes to be replaced by the ideology of the state under colonialism. Clayton G. MacKenzie analyses how “[t]he shifts of belief in *Things Fall Apart* are marked by the pragmatic transference of old pieties for new, a metamorphosis demanded by the realities of a revised socioeconomic hierarchy” (147). Anglo-European colonizers brought the idea of the state to colonized Africa, which Althusser refers to as having been “explicitly conceived as a repressive apparatus.” (*Lenin* 92).

To evaluate whether the indigenous culture in pre-colonial Africa is replaced by colonial state institutions, I juxtapose MacKenzie’s idea on the metamorphosis of traditional mores with the Althusserian notions on the difference between the state and Ideological State Apparatus (ISA). MacKenzie observes when “a new world order” arrives in Umuofia as imperialism pervades, the new relationship between the Igbo and the imperialists “is not founded on mystical ordination or divine machination. It is a relationship of pragmatism and commodity” (159). Althusser differentiates family, as an ISA, from the repressive apparatus. He suggests that ISAs “function massively and predominantly by *ideology*, but they also function secondarily by repression” (*Lenin* 98, original emphasis).⁷ Althusser then defines ideology as “the system of the ideas and representations which dominate the mind of a man or a social group” (*Lenin* 107). He concludes that family, as an ISA, differs from the (Repressive) State Apparatus as “the Repressive State Apparatus functions ‘by violence’, whereas the Ideological State Apparatuses *function* ‘by ideology’” (*Lenin* 97, original emphasis). Still, Althusser highlights the

⁷ See Althusser’s footnote that the family “‘has other ‘functions’ than that of an ISA. It intervenes in the reproduction of labor power. In different modes of production it is the unit of production and/or the unit of consumption” (*Lenin* 96).

way in which all ISAs serve to support the state and to maintain its ruling ideology. Thus, the family ISA as part of the colonial building project in Africa functions to safeguard national ideology.

In examining the broader questions of how a breakdown in family structure may result in the characters' resorting to violence which violates the national ideology, I will analyze both psychological and social factors by suggesting the ways in which patriarchal authority supersedes family contexts and attaches to state institutions. Althusser suggests that, in the Lacanian mode, phallic power, as the pillar of the family under conventional patriarchy, represents "the Order of the human signifier, that is, of the Law of Culture" (*Writings* 27). We can see an example of this in *Things Fall Apart*, in which phallic power, as identified with Okonkwo's decisions as the patriarchal authority, exerts an influence upon the pre-colonial indigenous family and even upon tribal decision-making. Though this example seemingly reflects the way that pre-colonial patriarchy inflicts ideology upon individuals and members of the society, Okonkwo's patriarchal role in the family actually supplies him with a false ideology with regard to his importance in the world.

In almost the same way, Althusser proposes that ideology "represents [the] imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (*Lenin* 109). Based upon the example of Mr. Verloc, who inflicts the patriarchal ideology upon Stevie while simultaneously using family as the construction site of terroristic violence, I seek to investigate in this book how the family institutions in African Anglophone narratives may demonstrate features that are different from the Althusserian framework of the family ISA. In particular, I integrate an Althusserian approach with a Lacanian model to show how family ideologies change as a response to the absence of phallic power.⁸ I use the term "family ISA" while noting, of course, that the application of this term to pre-colonial contexts is anachronistic on its face. Nevertheless, ISAs were introduced as part of the colonial nation-building project following the arrival of the Anglo-European imperialists in Africa.⁹

By linking the Althusserian ideological critique to the colonizing institutional processes, it is possible to read African Anglophone

⁸ Though the psychological approach and the institutional mode may sound distinct, for my forthcoming argument I will make use of Fanon's ideas on violence in the process of decolonization in proving how such coordination is necessary.

⁹ See Leitch's comment that "Nigeria was a construction of European colonial powers" (1781).

narratives of the family as allegories of indigenous belonging under threat. In seeking to comprehend how the breakdown of the family structure, as it relates to the emergence of terror, is narrated on two parallel levels, this book focuses on questions of genre and form; namely, I read the works chosen as allegory. Specifically, the three Conradian novels chosen to represent the rhetorical dimension of terror were either inspired by or based on Conrad's real historical encounters of terroristic violence. The prominence of this feature affirms Fredric Jameson's observation on "the social origins of the narrative material" and Paul de Man's claim that the allegorical aspect of poetic language seeks to transform "all individual experience directly into general truth" (Jameson 124; de Man 200). Jameson, in commenting on "third-world literature", has suggested that allegorization acts as the "political interpretation of literary texts" (17). However, the question of whether works from authors of the so-called "third-world" are to be read as national allegory is a contentious one. For example, the theorist Aijaz Ahmad has attacked Jameson's assumption that "all third-world texts are necessarily ... to be read as ... national allegories" (98). According to Ahmad, Jameson's main argument falters under the binary opposition between "first" and "third" worlds. Ahmad further argues against the "third world" as being "defined purely in terms of an 'experience' of externally inserted phenomena" (100). Furthermore, he suggests that "there is no such thing as a 'Third World Literature'" (96).

Despite the problematic nature of this approach, as I aim at relating the allegorical aspect of African literature with global economic advents, I have chosen to adopt Ahmad's viewpoint that the "illusion of Third-Worldist cultural nationalism finally had to be abandoned" (34). Still, I follow Jameson's approach to explore how narratives are broadly aligned with national ideology. In so doing, I have been inspired by literary scholar Doris Sommer, who had earlier applied Jameson's notion of "national allegory" to narratives of romance in Latin America. Inspired by her rhetorically asking "[i]s it possible, for example, that outside of Latin America, too, political passion was being grounded in erotics?" (32), I seek to evaluate whether the family ISA transforms individuals into instruments that secure national ideology through marriage. Building on Sommer's work, I apply her notion of the "metonymic association between romantic love that needs the state's blessing and political legitimacy that needs to be founded on love" (41). Based on this observation, I further suggest a connection between illegitimate marriage, as an extension of romantic love without the "state's blessing", and

political illegitimacy as founded upon, in Foucault words, “the banished casual pleasure of sexuality” (qtd. in Sommer 38). As the family disintegrates due to the corruption of the patriarch, it becomes the site of, and instrument of, terroristic violence by acting against national or colonial ideology in the interests of a wider cultural preservation project.

To determine how family, or its breakdown, influences individual acts of terror, I differentiate the conventional gendering of male and female family roles in affecting their behaviors as agents and objects respectively of terrorist violence. Conrad had earlier foreshadowed the appearance of terror against women in *Heart of Darkness*, in which Marlow’s decision to prevent Kurtz’s fiancée from learning the truth of Kurtz’s final words seemingly indicates the effort made by the white patriarch to protect white women:

“The heavens do not fall for such a trifle. Would they have fallen, I wonder, if I had rendered Kurtz that justice which was his due? Hadn’t he said he wanted only justice? But I couldn’t. I could not tell her. It would have been too dark—too dark altogether....” (123)

Marlow’s affirmation of the decision that he has made makes it clear that he views women as vulnerable objects who would find the darkness of African terror unbearable. This exclusion of Anglo-European women from the truth of the African colonial project reflects the conventional gendering of family roles that restrict women to the domestic sphere:

“They—the women I mean—are out of it—should be out of it. We must help them to stay in that beautiful world of their own, lest ours gets worse. Oh, she had to be out of it. You should have heard the disinterred body of Mr Kurtz saying, ‘My intended.’ You should have perceived directly then how completely she was out of it.” (80-1)

That Marlow neglects the rights of Kurtz’s fiancée in knowing the truth and regards the lie he has told as a mere trifle show how the voice of the story itself disempowers women. Marlow’s “white lie” thus implies that Anglo-European women should forever be kept ignorant of the corruption of the patriarch, and therefore represents the efforts of the Anglo-European patriarchy to make its women place their trust in their husbands. Kurtz’s fiancée thus remains ignorant of the truth that Kurtz has actually been corrupted by his involvement in colonial exploitation.¹⁰

In contrast to their status back in the European Continent,

¹⁰ She regards Kurtz as a man whose “goodness shone in every act” (*HOD* 122).

Anglo-European women living under the different historical and political discourse in colonized Africa are exposed to indigenous violence following the reinvention of older gender norms, as these women become the subordinate other within this milieu. To investigate how family, gender and race interact with individual acts of terror, I make use of Spivak's suggestion that in the subaltern context of ethnicity, class and gender, "[t]he question of 'woman' seems most problematic in this context. Clearly, if you are poor, black and female you get it in three ways" (90). Similarly, Ella Shohat has theorized the "contradictory subject positioning" when colonial and gender discourses intersect (40):

Western woman can simultaneously constitute "center" and "periphery", identity and alterity. Western woman, in these narratives, exists in a relation of subordination to Western man and in a relation of domination toward "non-Western" men and women. (40)

That Shohat defines ethnicity as a crucial factor in theorizing gender relations sharpens the hierarchy of race over gender. Living under the unfulfilling conditions of patriarchy, women are driven to become women-masters of their indigenous servants. However, as the milieu in which they operate is characterized by male domination, these women-masters themselves eventually become targets of indigenous sexual violence. The situation affirms Peter Stallybrass's observation that "[w]hen women were themselves the objects to be mapped out, virginity and marital 'chastity' were pictured as fragile states to be maintained by the surveillance of wives and daughters" (129).

I contend that the Anglo-European patriarchy is responsible for subordinating Anglo-European women to the domestic domain while they simultaneously lack the knowledge of how the backdrop of African colonialism affects gender performance. The opening of Lessing's novel demonstrates how the whites associate the indigenous peoples with violence:

[The whites] felt a little spurt of anger mingled with what was almost satisfaction, as if some belief had been confirmed, as if something had happened which could only have been expected. When natives steal, murder or rape, that is the feeling white people have. (1)

On one hand, anger occurs among the whites as the crimes committed by the indigenous peoples challenge the colonial institutions. On the other hand, the whites feel "satisfaction" as the incidents confirm their belief in

the brutality of the indigenous peoples. I demonstrate in this book how the whites' suspicion towards the indigenous peoples lays the groundwork for the subsequent development of intimate relations between white women-masters and their indigenous servants.

Fanon has suggested that these erotic relations between Anglo-European women and indigenous men represent the latter's attempt "to elevate himself to the white man's level" (*Black Skin, White Masks* 81). The erotic relations between white women masters and their indigenous servants thus imply the alteration of colonial power relations, which results in "a restructuring of the world" (*Black Skin, White Masks* 82). For this reason, I challenge Shohat's idea as stated above and suggest the subordination of gender to race.

As this book aims at assessing how material factors exert symbolic and ideological authority over the bodies and life opportunities of various women characters, I further apply Spivak's usage of Althusser's notion of the linkage between labor power and ruling ideology to account for the patriarchal desire to maintain dominance over women:

The reproduction of labour power requires not only a reproduction of its skills, but also at the same time, a reproduction of its submission to the ruling ideology for the workers, and a reproduction of the ability to manipulate the ruling ideology correctly for the agents of exploitation and repression ... (qtd. in Spivak 68)

Under conventional patriarchy, biological reproduction is aligned with the reproduction of labor power that helps to sustain the patriarchal ideology of a male-dominated world. Women are subordinated as instruments for reproducing labor power, whose role is limited to reproducing either male heirs, as future patriarchal figures, or female heirs, whose subordinate state reinforces patriarchal dominance. To elucidate the interplay between women's bodies and commodity exchanges in patriarchal societies, Luce Irigaray points out that "[t]he exchange of women as goods accompanies and stimulates exchanges of other 'wealth' among groups of men" (172). Elizabeth Swanson Goldberg makes a similar claim that "social contract is preceded by and based upon the sexual contract" (126). When this gendered capitalist ideology is spread through globalization, individual acts of violence become a ubiquitous global phenomenon.

Under the pressures of globalized capitalism, the commodification of experience motivates first despair, and then destructive outlets in individual acts of terror. In *Totem and Taboo*, Freud departed from pure psychoanalytic tradition and began an analysis of the ways that desire

transforms culture. In explaining how the obsessive prohibitions of taboo become social products “persisting from generation to generation, perhaps merely as a result of tradition transmitted through parental and social authority”, Freud suggests that the cultural drive “organiz[es taboo] as an inherited psychical endowment” (*Totem* 31). Inspired by Freud’s shifting stance, this book accordingly focuses primarily on both the cultural and economic forces that drive the human subject’s desires toward objects apart from the self and which subsequently, may result in acts of terror.

This shift toward the cultural context for desires is important, because it links individual choices to cultural determinism. Here I integrate Freud’s ideas on cultural drives with Marx’s ideas on commodity fetishism in showing how characters change as a response to the absence of the father. In his clinical studies, Freud had observed cases of “men whose object choice was ruled by a fetish” (*Sexuality* 204). Marx, in contrast to Freud, does not view fetishism at the level of individuals. Rather, Marx theorizes that fetishism is a social occurrence; making it inseparable from production. He further defines fetishism as follows:

There the products of the human brain appear as autonomous figures endowed with a life of their own, which enter into relations both with each other and with the human race ... I call this the fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labour as soon as they are produced as commodities, and is therefore inseparable from the production of commodities. (165)

I make use of Marx’s notion of the relationship between products of labor and commodities to analyze how the unfulfilled fetish for paternal protection eventually results in the objectification of the parent-child relationship, which in turn results in an experience of alienation:

[T]he commodity form, and the value-relation of the products of labour within which it appears, have absolutely no connection with the physical nature of the commodity and the material relations arising out of this. (165)

In verifying my argument that the originating psychological drive is followed by materialist determination, I apply Raymond Williams’s notion that “[i]t is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness” (75). Formulating the notion of ISAs during the 1970s, Althusser could not possibly have predicted the impact of globalized capitalism upon the

family and other ISAs. I adopt a contemporary approach to re-frame Althusser's formulation and to investigate the social role of globalized capitalism on the family ISA in contemporary African Anglophone narratives.

Specifically, I demonstrate how the absence of the father under globalized economy disrupts the link between individuals and state ideology. To do so, I relate globalized capitalism with Wallerstein's idea on world-system:

It is an economic but not a political entity, unlike empires, city-states and nation-states. In fact, it precisely encompasses within its bounds (it is hard to speak of boundaries) empires, city-states, and the emerging "nation-states". It is a "world" system, not because it encompasses the whole world, but because it is larger than any juridically-defined political unit. (15)

The modern world-system has to be differentiated from the nation as it exerts beyond the national level. Eric Hayot comments on this distinctive feature and explains "[w]orld-systems *are* worlds, in the sense that they constitute a self-organizing, self-enclosed, and self-referential totality; but they are not to be confused with *the* actual world" (32, original emphasis). As I initiate father as a metonym of the state that links individual to national ideology, commodified parent-child relationship under globalized economy may result in the identification of material fulfillment with national ideology for both the father and the child. Such identification is thus a form of resistance against the actual national ideology. Subsequently, disillusionment towards the actual world occurs when the family ISA fails to fulfill the material needs of its members.

To reinforce my choice of discussing African Anglophone narratives, I also illustrate the role of language in indicating power relations. In *Heart of Darkness*, the manager's boy pronounces "Mistah Kurtz—he dead" (112). In mimicking the indigenous pidgin, Conrad differentiates the Anglo-Saxon users of English from the language's African acquirers. Though the indigenous peoples are incapable of speaking the imperialist's language perfectly, English has undeniably become an experience shared by the two parties. David Murray suggests that "[t]he 'embrace' of the West which creates a 'shared' experience sounds like an equitable enough affair, but it obscures the relative imbalances of power and knowledge ..." (12). As the English tongue is no longer an exclusive privilege of the Anglo-Saxons, the indigenous experience of the English language alters their power relationship with the imperialists. Thus, the indigenous parody

of the English language is perceived by the Anglo-Europeans as an injurious speech act that threatens their domination. Judith Butler has suggested of this that “[t]o be injured by speech is to suffer a loss of context, that is, not to know where you are” (4). The indigenous role-playing mastery of the English language is allegorized as a challenge to the colonial mastery of the white race in Africa.

In addition to serving as an indicator of power relations within colonial discourses, language is likewise an instrument used by the patriarch to reinforce his domineering position. Conventional patriarchy monopolizes both the written and verbal domains of language. Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar have related the dominance of male voices with the patriarchal control of the pen and the press. They suggest that “[t]he poet’s pen is in some sense (even more than figuratively) a penis” (4). Their observation indicates how patriarchal control of the written domain subordinates women’s voices. In analyzing how the rise of women writers alters power relations between the two genders, Elaine Showalter has proposed the subordination of gender to capital:

Married women writers (such as Margaret Gatty, Emma Marshall, Isabella Banks, and Lucy Clifford) were frequently motivated to publish by their husbands’ financial failure, illness, or death, and thus took the double burdens of support. (47)

Coetzee’s *In the Heart of the Country* and Lessing’s *The Grass is Singing* have likewise shown the burdens of Anglo-European women-masters during their patriarch’s absence. The depictions of patriarchs, who are either defeated by poor health or incompetent at financial management, is an indication that, when the reinvention of older gender norms fails to create an equilibrium within the household, women are driven to take up roles as women-masters. Thus, globalized capitalism affects the reinvention of older gender norms.

Chapter Outlines

In Chapter I, I theorize how the struggle between modernity and tradition gives rise to terroristic violence. In *Things Fall Apart*, family relations and indigenous traditions are threatened by the inexorability of modernity. Under such circumstances, Okonkwo engages in ritual violence as a symbol of resistance against an external menace. His self-destruction implies even as it critiques the inexorability and

inevitability of modern triumph over African traditions. To account for the overcoming of ritualistic traditions by modernity, I apply MacKenzie's idea on the "cosmology of deities" in Achebe's work to show how Umuofia is transformed from a religious tribe to a humanitarian society (150). This is in keeping with Freud's suggestion that the sacrifice of individualistic desire for greater social benefits is the ultimate realm of modern civilization:

The ultimate outcome should be a system of law to which all—or at least all those who qualify as members of the community—have contributed by partly forgoing the satisfaction of their drives, and which allows no one again subject to the same qualification—to become a victim of brute force. (*Civilization* 41)

I argue that colonization ultimately fails to root out the indigenous desire to restore ritualistic traditions. I make use of Fanon's theory on the impact of colonization over indigenous rituals and psychology in illustrating how pre-colonial power relations are altered in post-colonial Africa:

The arrival of the colonist signified syncretically the death of indigenous society, cultural lethargy, and petrification of the individual. For the colonized, life can only materialize from the rotting cadaver of the colonist. (*Wretched* 50)

The chapter will explore the way in which the process of decolonization, as depicted in the post-colonial South African setting of Coetzee's *Disgrace*, leaves people unprotected by either family or any form of institution. In asserting the bygone racial supremacy of his Anglo-European ancestors, David Lurie commits an act of sexual violence upon his indigenous student Melanie. I theorize that the teacher-student relationship between David and Melanie is an extension of the parent-child relationship. The father thereby becomes a domestic threat that subverts the moral code of both the family and the school ISAs. I employ this assumption in analyzing how unfulfilled patriarchal authority undermines national identification and identities, and may trigger individual acts of terror. One example of this is that David is ironically and indirectly punished when an act of sexual violence is committed against his daughter in the same post-colonial milieu. Consequently, I evaluate the effectiveness of the Althusserian mode in offering protection to individuals against terroristic violence. The return of indigenous violence upon the once-privileged Anglo-Europeans represents an