

Character archetypes in Literature, a picture of what exists elsewhere: A Study of Gabriel Okara's *The Voice*

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ABSTRACT: It has been found out that the appearance of characters in different literary works around the world, tend to look alike and sometimes readers confuse them by the fact that they play the same roles. This is because the writer paints his characters according to the shape and existing models so that his work may be taken in the depth of other existing works around the world. Thence, characters, due to this fact, in a literary work appear as intelligent, polite, courageous, coward, rich, poor, etc, and play roles of chief, thief, killer, ambassador, minister, crowd, messenger, elder, advisor, etc, by looking like other characters found in other literary works. The understanding of characters' roles in a literary work helps the reader attribute different archetypes to them, like hero, villain, mentor, scapegoat, outcast, good mother, femme fatale, young innocent, evil mother, etc. This has been done in this paper by the fact that all the characters acting directly with Okolo, the main character of the novel under study, look like other characters in other works around the world. So, different archetypal patterns are drawn from the roles Gabriel Okara attributed to his characters. Some of his characters fit more than one archetype like Okolo and Tuere who are called scapegoats, outcasts and young innocent thanks to different situations in which they are found. To carry out the present work, the library, documentary and internet were used as main methods while the close and repetitive readings and comparison were taken as major techniques.

KEYWORDS: Character archetype, archetypal criticism, literature, role playing, the voice.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Sometimes readers of literary works confuse stories they have read about and fail to relate them to the novels in which they are from, even their authors. This problem emanates from the fact of meeting characters who play the same roles in different novels, then, bring the likeness of the novels.

By so doing, the understanding a reader can have vis-à-vis this likeness is expressed by their confusing ideas while referring to different authors. As matter of fact, many readers support the idea that writers of literature copy one from another for their works look alike. They say that, writers simply change characters but leave the same sequences and story in their works.

In Gabriel Okara's *The Voice*, it has been noticed that Okolo, the main character, has different traits with other characters found in works produced by other writers. Okolo can have the same qualities as Waiyaki, main character of Ngugi's *The River Between*, and Njoroge, main character of *Weep Not Child*. It is may be because those two writer, though from different areas, share the same colonial system, then experience.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem this study investigates relates the fact that many readers sometimes confuse what they have read in different literary works. It is an opportunity to discover why are writers using the same characters? Why many readers are getting confused after having read different works? and explain how different characters found in the Okara's *The Voice* fit different archetypes.

1.3 HYPOTHESES

According to what many readers have in minds, writers use same characters in their works. The cause of doing so arises from the connection of the same experiences writers from different areas go through. Then, a literary work being the expression of human experience, writers express themselves through their writing. Due to this we find in literary works the same stories, characters and sometimes ideas.

Regarding the confusion many readers have after having read different literary works, it can be said that it is due to the use of archetypes, i.e. recurrent ideas, settings, conflicts, characters, etc. that they fail to distinguish them. These archetypes like authors no matter where they are from.

In *The Voice*, it is noticed that there are many archetypes as far as different actions, situations, and sequences of the novel are concerned. As the present study focuses only on character archetypes, archetypes like scapegoat, outcast, femme fatale, young innocent, villain, mentor, etc.

2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 A GLIMPSE ON ARCHETYPAL CRITICISM

An archetype is the most typical or perfect example of a particular kind of a person or a thing. In literature, an archetype is something that is recurrent, which can be a character, a symbol, a theme, a setting, a situation, and event, or an image. According to the reference [2], the word archetype was used by the first time by the Swiss psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung. He found out that human beings share a collective unconsciousness which is the source of archetypes. In his points of view archetypes are expressed in myths, religions, dreams, private fantasies, as well as in literature. For him, smile, cry or the ability of sucking in the newborn is archetypal by the fact that all these are repetitive behaviours and gestures that define us as humans (1999: 12).

An archetype does not belong to a particular society. Carl Gustav Jung, cited by the reference [3], however, said that archetypes have their roots in the collective unconscious of mankind which refers to experiences different cultures or races share which include things like love, religion, death, birth, life, struggle, and survival (Adamski, A. 2011: 564). Considering the fact that all these things are found in all the cultures, though have different conceptions, Jung asserts that they are recreated in literary works due to the fact that they are experiences found in the subconscious of every individual. They explain the heritage that humans got from their ancestors no matter where they are from.

It has been found out that as people share a collective unconscious, according to Carl Jung, literary works converge by the use of the same patterns, known as archetypal patterns. They permit a universal understanding when different readers come across the same literary work by identifying patterns which they have ever understood or read about somewhere else. By using the same archetypes, the author tries to connect his culture to other cultures when he expresses ideas that bring strong emotional responses from the readers. Though literary works arise from different areas, archetypal criticism allow readers to find resemblance and connection of those works leading people to say that all the cultures are the same as they share things, like religion, death, life, love, and so on.

According to reference [9], *stories grow out of other stories, poems out of other poems and they do not have to stick to genre* (2014: 19). The likeness of different literary works by the use of the same archetypes proves that literary works sound imitative. No one can pretend to have an original literary work since it presents patterns found in other previous works. Northrop Frye on his part states that literature and painting are pictures of what existed before. He considers that no writer can produce a literary work if he does not pay much attention to what other writers did and how they proceeded. So, the archetypal image, according to reference [10], is the realism or the art of verisimilitude (p135). He continues saying that when what a writer writes resembles what people already know there we can talk about art of extended or implied simile. Thus, writers of literary works have to bring in writing not only what they know but also what people are accustomed to and come across in their daily life.

The reference [3] finds that similarity of literary works is found in the way different authors develop themes, characters, settings, and the plot pattern. He says that all cultures have the same themes of archetypal images and they are common to people from different races, cultures, and of different ages, (2011: 564). The reference [10] understands that at this level a literary work, either a poem or a novel, is a representation of human civilizations. For him, as the nature is the container of man similarly a literary work is a container of fictional people and fictional societies (p145).

2.2 UNDERSTANDING CHARACTERS' ANALYSIS AND ROLE PLAYING IN LITERATURE

2.2.1 CHARACTERS' ANALYSIS IN LITERATURE

The appearance of characters in literary works is what gives gust to read them from the beginning up to the end. Generally, in a work of literature, readers find much pleasure in the way a character is described, either physically, psychologically, intellectually or socially. All these descriptions contribute to the personality of a character in his fictional society. It is a description of characters which draws much attention to what the author decides concerning the appearance of his characters for the embellishment of the work. Thus, the size, the eye colour, the intelligence, the body looking (beautiful/handsome, attractiveness, ugliness...), the strength, and other traits work in order to distinguish a character from the other. A character can be strong in a society than others or weak than others. This is a qualifying point that will distinguish him from other characters, either strong or weak, from the beginning up to the end of the story.

The reference [9], argues that the writer is responsible of the situation, bad or good, that characters go through in the literary work. He continues saying that no character can decide on his appearance in a literary work, but everything derives from the artistic craft of the author. The author brings in his work situations that the real world experience so that the work may have or carry known situations capable to touch the emotions and the feelings of a reader. Situations like death, joy, discrimination, persecution, punishment, hunger, disease, catastrophe, accident, killings, wars, weddings, births, fights, love and so on, can bring a reader to participate negatively or positively to the emotions of a character, (2014: 7). A character who appears doing good things but persecuted by evil characters usually brings compassion and sympathy in the heart of the reader. Some of the situations cited above are bad, harms the character or brings pains. They are what Foster called suffering. He says that the author decides who has to suffer among his characters or who has to make other suffer in the story (2014: 7).

Likely, the reference [10], says that there are situations that push characters to feel pity and sympathize with others especially when there is death, accident and/ or when there is a poisoning in a given family. Abounding in the same point of view, the reference [9], classified them among social violences due to the fact that they bring people together and show their emotions, sympathies, solidarities, harmonies, hospitalities but also they can show characters' hypocrisies, (2014: 60). So, the appearance of characters is shown much in different situations that characters are found in.

In talking about the appearance of a character in a literary work, there are different terms that we have to look at so that we may understand what a character is exactly. These terms touch the personality of the characters and help to distinguish characters in the fictional society. Among them we can pay much attention to physical appearance (handsome, attractive, beautiful, ugly, pretty, unattractive, height, weight, hair, eyes, strong, weak, etc...), the social appearance (friendly, kind, polite, evil, patient, humorous, good, bad, selfish, generous, cruel, sympathetic, stubborn, modest, humble, impulsive, quarrelsome, critical, greedy, prodigal, disobedient, noisy, troublesome, docile, nervous, emotional, simple, serious, lovely, etc...), intellectual appearance (economical, intelligent, creativity, independent, inquisitive, critical, exacting, argumentative, dutiful, secretive, optimistic, confident, clever, open and broad-minded, small-minded, narrow-minded, stupid, silly, foolish, crazy, mad, wise, bright, agile, quick, absent-minded, ect...). **The physical appearance** takes into account all the external presentation of the character's body. It means how the character is designed with all distinctive treats that make him unique in the literary work. **The social appearance** includes some psychological effects which are the expression of individual's personality. Saying that someone is sympathetic, first we have to consider that he feels also internal pains like his companion in suffering without telling them, and second he expresses them now by actions showing sympathy. **The intellectual appearance** takes into account the mind of a character. It shows how the character reacts differently from other people. There are actions a character can do that prove the high rate of his intelligence. The three types of appearance cited above, work together to determine the personality of characters in a literary work.

2.2.2 ROLE PLAYING IN LITERATURE

Apart from the appearance of characters in literature, there is also the role plaid by characters. A work of literature to be called a good work, each character, named or nameless, has to play a well determined or specific role. If a character is given a role of president, he cannot appear teacher at the same moment. It is to say that no character can be protagonist and antagonist at once in a literary work. Either he is protagonist or antagonist but not the two.

Role playing is what distinguishes characters by giving them a societal and intellectual acceptance in their society. Also, role playing puts order in the work by the fact that everything is prioritized and each character is placed at a given position. This fact gives the work a vivid world similar to the world of reality through the presence of characters representing somehow real people.

The reference [9], supports that those characters are not real people though they seem to represent them. It is because characters are made of textual words and cannot exist elsewhere out of the work. These characters though standing for people

in their fictional world, they have no flesh, they cannot breathe, they have no blood, they cannot eat, and they cannot love. He demonstrates that these characters seem only to do these things in the work by the will of the writer but they cannot themselves perform them (2014: 53). Talking about characters, the reference [16], says that *characters often represent the general traits of a group of persons or abstract ideas*. So, when a character suffers or dies in a literary work, no one can say that the death is real and learn about the mourning of the deceased character out of the literary work (1999: 16).

By the fact that characters are identified according to the roles they play in the work, the writer takes a model from some existing forms or shapes so as he can reach the mind of the reader. So, we can say that apart from the imagination of the writer while creating the story, the reader/ audience has a greatest part in giving the character existence through images he has in his mind while reading the novel. This is because the reader has already got experienced in or heard about what he is reading. Through role playing then, a reader can imagine of the position a character is taking when he challenges or insults another. The reference [2], says that a character is a person represented in any form of literary production and who interpreted by the reader as possessing moral, intellectual or emotional qualities. It means that for the existence of a character, then, the reader has to create how it is reacting, speaking, feeling, suffering and so on, for the reader is expected to *project lifelikeness upon codified literary representations by assimilating them to their own prior stereotypes of individuals in real life* (1999: 34).

Considering the fact that the writer and the reader have both a kind of connection in giving life to the character in a literary work, one can easily say that they both have a common agreement on a character. This response that the reader expresses, according to *the reception theory*, shows that the work cannot exist without the participation of the audience. So, we find out that the writer and the reader are somehow connected though they can be from different cultures. However, the reader happens to enter the mind of the writer through the roles characters play. These roles lead the reader to interpret characters referring to what exists already in his mind or what he read about somewhere else. But also, the author creates his characters with much respect to what he also experienced, heard, read about, or simply to what he found already in his society. He simply submits to the existing things, putting them into writing and which immediately meet the insight of the reader. These are what we call archetypes or prototypes.

An author being responsible of all the appearance of his characters, according reference [9], (2014: 7), he also attributes roles to them so as they can fit a given archetype or represent a model that existed already (Abrams 1999). It can be noticed that appearance and role of a character in a novel are the two elements that help a reader to understand and identify the archetype a character fits. Thus, a reader cannot pretend to understand the presence of archetypes in a given novel without reading and understanding it thoroughly.

It may happen that due to the presence of archetypes in different literary works, a reader gets confused and fails to make a difference between them. This is normal since different literary works seem to present likeness in terms of characters, settings, events, themes and so on. For example, Elechi Ahmadi's *The Concubine* presents a woman called Ihuoma who is described as an extremely and attractive woman but carrying a sea god so she cannot marry any man due to that and anyone who marries her is doomed to death. The same situation is found in Flora Nwapa's *Efuru* with Efuru as main character, who is described the same way as Ihuoma. But also, in reading Okara's *The Voice*, another woman called Tuere presents some traits similar to the ones Efuru and Ihuoma have. She is described as having a hung killing beauty but any man who proposed to marry her died.

Thus, when a reader comes across such novels, he may not be able to understand the recurrence of these female characters. If he does not know or has never heard about archetypes, though carrying different names but playing somehow the same role, this can lead him to confirm that one of these writers copied from or imitated the other. At such a situation, it can be remarked that a thing such a reader misses is the recognition of the existence of the same archetype which can be attributed to these three female characters. They can fit the femme fatale archetype due to the fact that they bring catastrophe in the society. They are dangerous and no one can approach them fearing to lose his life. In so doing, they are comparable to Pandora in Greek mythology who was also accused for being responsible of all the problems and evils in the world by having opened the box in which they were kept.

Talking about archetypes in literature one has to bear in mind different patterns that make up a literary work such as, characters, settings, conflicts, situations, events, symbols, images, plot, etc., that contribute to give meaning to the work. Furthermore, all these patterns are tackled and appear in literary works no matter where they are from.

3 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

3.1 ANALYSIS OF CHARACTERS IN THE VOICE

It has been found out that in literary works characters are identified through two categories. There is a category of "protagonists" and that of "antagonists". These two categories work in an opposing way so that the story may follow the seven

steps of a story in literature as put forward by many thinkers. So, let us look at characters following the above mentioned categorisation.

3.1.1 PROTAGONISTS

As it has been shown in the literature review, characters' appearance coincides with the personality of characters in their fictional society. For this, we distinguished three groups of appearances that work together to differentiate characters from one another.

To describe characters as belonging to the category of protagonists two sub categories have been identified in the novel, namely *the main protagonist* and *the sub protagonists*.

3.1.1.1 THE MAIN PROTAGONIST

Gabriel Okara's *The Voice*, being among the well known and read novels in African literature, describes the appearance of different characters and the way they consider one another in their society through their relationships. Okolo, the main character, is described as an intellectual young man coming straight from school and finding that everything has changed in the town of Amatu, p23. This pushes him to start his search for the undefined *it* because he failed to integrate the distorted society, Amatu, his homeland. It can be said that Okolo is the incarnation of respect to cultural purity with unquestioned moral values though Chief Izongo does not want people to accept it. This first appearance of Okolo decorates his personality since he wants to show integrity and truth as determinants of normal and strong people. He does not understand how a man can accept to do things that his inside judges to be bad. Through this conviction he says: "*If you put a black paint over a white paint, it does not mean that there is no white paint because when the black paint is rubbed off, the white paint will show again*", p50. For him it is not good to endure in doing bad things because one day the evils a person was doing will be rubbed off and everyone will see that the person was not good. That is why he wants his people understand that they have left the good ways of living, the ways of their ancestors that he symbolizes as "white paint". The white color is taken as a symbol of purity.

The fact of symbolizing Nigerian culture by "*white paint*" by Okara and sometimes by others African writers has a meaning. First, Okara wants to show that Nigerian culture was good in sharpening the personality of the individual through different initiations which had no harm. Second, it is because the African culture cannot be compared to other cultures that he, like Achebe, called *distorted cultures*. Third, it is because Nigerians were living in harmony before the arrival of British colonizers. So, Okara used Okolo as a symbol of purity. A symbol that shows people what they are likely to do. Okolo being a unique in Amatu in following their ancestors' ways of living has the conviction that people in Amatu can restore these moral values only if they open their eyes wide. He says through the novel: "*we can still sweep the dirt out of our houses every morning*" p50. The fact of sweeping one's house is a continuous and repetitive action that people should do so that they may keep their houses clean. Then, Okolo thinks that if people can continue accepting that they have badly behaved against their forefathers' laws, they can confess and ask for forgiveness.

The presentation of Okolo in such a way refers to the attitude of some Africans who rebelled/ opposed the destructive modernism brought by Europeans in Africa. Okolo here can be considered as a model of conservatism. He does not want to wade in the mud of modernism like other citizens of Amatu. The novel says: "*But Okolo did not join them in their joy because what was there was no longer there and things had no more roots*" p23. This passage shows the reasons that push Okolo to fail to integrate his society. All the people have already embarked in luxurious things like money finding, good houses and cars. This was the propulsion of corruption, injustice, materialism and capitalism in Amatu.

Okara, like other Nigerian writers in African literature, decorates his characters by respecting the uniqueness and purity of African culture. He shows that the encounter of Africa and Europe did not leave the African culture safe. Everything changed to the extent that evil took power over good, injustice over justice, immorality over morality, etc. This blinded people until working for meaningless incomes provide that they are seen also as being modern or civilized like others. Through Okolo, Okara shows how much he is touched by the situation Nigerians have been plunged in soon after the independence. Someone can say that Okolo stands for Okara in the novel. Okolo as a representation of purity is socially living in conflict with people like Chief Izongo, Abadi, elders, the Big one, etc, who left willingly the tradition to follow the whiteman's ways of living. All these people seem to be found of money, cars and better houses. They do not care about traditional laws or values as it was for their forefathers. For Okolo, money does not have any importance than teaching words people have in their insides for they cannot be lost like money. He expresses it through these lines from the novel: "*Money may be lost forever, but words, teaching words, are the same in any age. Some of these teaching words are as true today as they were centuries ago. They may be given different meanings to suit the new times, but the root is the same*" pp. 51-52.

Okolo is also an image of conservatism by the fact that he continues keeping in mind that people are not living the way their forefathers lived. This is the result of modernism which poses traditional values and norms. In Amatu, people do not care about doing straight things. They have accepted blindly the situations in which they are put though they recognize the badness of what they are doing. To attack people for what they are doing which is contrary to what their forefathers did, Okolo says: *"Our fathers' insides always contained things straight. They did straight things. Our insides were also clean and we did the straight things until the new time came"*, p50.

The use of "new time" means modernism. Okolo does not accept to share the cultural destruction that modernism brought in Amatu. We can also understand here the satirical aspect of Okara regarding the British arrival in Nigeria and the weaknesses of the ruling class that took power after independence. So, Okara substituted himself in Okolo opposing modern ways of living that contribute much to the disappearance of traditional laws and values.

Another aspect showing that Okolo is a conservatist is the fact that he does not only forget the ways of his ancestors but also he still remembers the teaching words his father gave him before his death. Okolo wants to do good things as his father recommended him. He was sent to school not to take the ways of white people but to help him open eyes and see how destructive and worse whites' culture is vis-à-vis Nigerian's. From this belief, Okolo had time of meditation and discovering how his kinsmen are bringing their culture to collapse due to their new ways of living. Okolo's father said the following: *"The world is changing and engine canoes and whiteman's house have everybody's inside filled. But then open your ears and listen, son, let the words I am going to speak remain in your inside. I wanted you to know book because of the changing world. but whiteman's book is not everything"*, p105.

He got confident in himself and could not be shaken by all the solicitations from Chief Izongo and his acolytes to join them. Thus, self-confidence expresses Okolo's optimism and courage. The motivation Okolo has, comes from the self-reliance that his father sew in him before his death. There is a greatest belief and trust that Okolo puts in his father's words when he is taking them as his guideline that he has to follow. He still remembers that his father told him: *"Now, listen son, believe in your inside. Argue with no one about whiteman's god and Woyengi, our goddess"*, p106.

Tebeowei talking to Okolo, seems to share the same conviction. He also warns Okolo, apart from believing in his inside, to keep himself from listening to everybody's talk. He asks him to do straight things that his inside accepts. He says the following: *"To every person said thing, listen not. If you listen to every said thing in this world, you cannot achieve anything or you the wrong thing will do. If your inside says this is a straight thing do it"*, p70. So, though Tebeowei, one of Chief Izongo's wise men, submits to Chief Izongo's dictatorship, he accepts that the world has changed and the conviction Okolo has is true. He cannot leave because he fears Chief Izongo. Okolo shows his fearlessness in front of Izongo when he addressed to Tebeowei: *"why do you fear Chief Izongo? He is a man like you and me"*, p41. From this passage we can say that Okolo is not weak as Chief Izongo wants people to believe. We can also say that this is motivated by his courage, determination and personal decision to carry out his search until he gets the expected results of it.

Okolo can be said to appear as a preacher by the fact that his mission is to spread teaching words among his people to unlock their insides and bring high the light of cultural values which seems to be crashed by wicked leaders. These teaching words are useful for reminding people that they are no longer looking at their ancestors' ways of living. Okolo says: *"I cannot stop this thing. I must find it. It is here. I am the voice from the locked up insides which the elders, not wanting the people to hear, want to stop me"*, p34.

Okolo appears weak according to Chief Izongo and his acolytes. They tell him that he has no "chest" and "shadow" which means that he is "weak" that they cannot fear him, p23. The chest and shadow they are referring to show or express the physical appearance in terms of strength. They consider that Okolo has nothing to say because he is like a drop of water in a sea. He cannot be able to face Chief Izongo and all his council of elders who seem to be strong because they are not working individually. They all fight against a common enemy, Okolo, who they want to ostracise due to his inquisitiveness and search for *it*. Izongo showing that he is strong and surrounded by strong men, he decides to send Okolo away so that he may cease to trouble them. He says: *"You must leave this town. It may pain our insides too much to see you suffer. We are a soft people and even now if you agree to join us, we untie your hands and you will have no need to knock your head against a stone as you are doing now"*, p48. Chief Izongo uses "we" or "us" to show that he is not alone. He is with strong people who do not fear and who can protect him against any harm. He considers that they are "stones" to mean that no one can face them. The use of "we" or "us" is the behaviour of British colonizers in creating artificial barriers between them and their subjects. Then they use Us and Other system to show that they are different, according to Edward Said (1978) in his book entitled *Orientalism*. Okara used also Izongo as an image of British colonizers' heir who carries all the traits of traditional destruction. During colonization, no one could fight against colonizers fearing that he may be killed like a louse. That is why Okara considers them as stones.

Though chief Izongo considers that Okolo is weak, he also knows that he is instructed and can turn even other people against him in Amatu. It is found that Okolo is not only educated but also initiated. Okara's use of this man of two worlds can be a representation of African elites who have studied much but still they defend their kinsmen. Through this use, it can be noticed that Okara wanted to preach the superiority of cultural values over destructive modern instructions. Chief Izongo fearing to stay with Okolo it is because he noticed that Okolo is powerful and if other people hear his words, many can search for "it" along with him. The novel says: "*The people heard of your activities and all raised their hands for you. But chief Izongo saw in this a personal danger to himself*", p55. At this level Okolo is no longer weak but strong because he destabilises Chief Izongo and his people. So Okolo becomes an obstacle to chief Izongo and all the elders. He is blocking them from living in peace, imposing their powers through their dictatorship governing. It is said that: "*Okolo started his search for it and this stopped the elders from slapping their thighs in joy because of the coming thing*", p23.

There are two key words used in this passage. First, "to slap one's thigh in joy" means to enjoy life or to live in a rejoicing way without harm or disturbance. Second, the use of "the coming thing" which is different from what was put above which referred to "modernism". The coming thing here refers to the search of Okolo. It is a new thing because the elders could not imagine that a young man like Okolo, an educated man, could bring such an annoying thing in Amatu.

Being considered an obstacle, Tuere qualified him as a big tree that falls in the way and which does not allow Chief Izongo and his acolytes to go to an opposite side. He seems to impose them another way of living trying to bring them back to what their ancestors lived. She says: "*so, you were a big tree fallen across their path. They did not move it or cut it as they did me because you have been to school*", p55.

3.1.1.2 SUB PROTAGONISTS

Tuere is the second character who is opposing Chief Izongo's ruling system. She is described as a very beautiful girl living in Amatu with a strange behaviour that does not match with her beauty. She does not accept to make sex with men like other girls of her age despite her hunger-killing beauty as she is described. Thus, many people thought that she does not have some female organs because of this behaviour. The novel describes her in this way: "*she had been a girl of unusual habits, keeping to herself and speaking to herself. She did not flirt with boys though she had a hunger-killing beauty. So, it was in the insides of everyone that perhaps she had not the parts of a woman*", p31.

It can be understood from this passage that Tuere is the image of African girls before the arrival of British and other colonial systems. In African novels, especially when describing African women, the fact of remaining virgin was a sign of respect and honour that the girl brought not only to her family, but also to herself esteem in the society. Okara taking Tuere in such a way, he shows that virginity was an expression of dignity and purity that modernism came to take away from African women. Today it is an issue of no discussion because no one is still giving it a high or considerable importance it had some years ago. For this, Tuere also can appear as a conservatist by the fact that she remained keeping herself from sexual promiscuity.

Tuere appears, due to her strange behaviour, as witch. The fact of calling her witch is because her parents died one after the other within few weeks. But also because everyman who proposed to marry her died before he accomplishes. This caused Tuere to be ostracized and people avoided to live with her fearing that she may bewitch them as she did for her parents. In Amatu, people seem to have proofs of her witchcraft when it is said in the novel that: "*they openly called her a witch when her mother and father died one after the other within a few weeks and after every young man who proposed to her died one after the other*", p41.

Though this brings exclusion and isolation, Tuere is described as being strengthened by the fear people started to exhibit in her presence. They all feared her and no one could approach her. So, as she is strong through these accusations, Tuere does not fear to face Chief Izongo and the crowd coming to take Okolo. Then, we can say that Tuere is pessimist and brave in challenging the messengers first, then Chief Izongo saying aggressively: "*If you are a male be with a strong chest, come and take him. She challenged standing straighter than straightness*", p36. Tuere is not shaken with the prestigious presence and power of Chief Izongo as other people in Amatu presume. She does not only consider that even Chief Izongo fears her when she tells him: "*leave me alone. Go your ways*", p29, but she also shows her arrogance and brutality as resultant of all the harm Chief Izongo and his people did to her.

Tuere is called a "standing shadow" that cannot be moved by any light. She shows her strength and self-confidence in Okolo. At the end of the novel, though Tuere forbids Okolo to face Chief Izongo in public when he comes back from Sologa, Tuere is the first again to appear by attacking Chief Izongo, the elders and the crowd aggressively. As she is considered as Okolo's defender, she attacks: "*Listen, she shouted as the elders came to a stop. What is this big thing you want to put on your heads, and know nothing people! Your insides are sick like sick eyes that cannot face light*", p120. She considers that people are blinded by the words of Chief Izongo and cannot understand truth. They are not able to discover that what Okolo is saying is true than Chief

Izongo's words. Tuere wants people understand the usefulness of the search of Okolo. She can also be said to appear as Okolo's helper by the fact that since their encounter, before Okolo going to Sologa, she does not leave him act alone. This can even be seen when Okolo is sheltered in her hut after being hunted by Chief Izongo's messengers and the crowd. She also pays him a visit fearlessly and brings food to him in a room where Chief Izongo confines Okolo. This is said through these lines: "*Tuere put the bucket of water down, took a dish near the pot and poured water. she held the dish of water out for Okolo and he washed his hands*", p53.

Another character working with and who accepts the words of Okolo is Ukule. He is described as a cripple and has difficulties to walk due to his physical state. This was the reason of his exclusion from the society and no one could let him participate in different social meetings or activities. He appears as a hopeless and desperate person like Tuere. He does not know if there is someone who can either change or bring to a standstill the materialism that has got residence in the town. The fact of walking slowly and tiptoeing is a kind of wisdom. So, it can be said that Ukule is the symbol of wisdom by the fact that he has got time to advice Okolo and bring news to them in Tuere's hut. Thus, he appears as an informant going outside to bring information so that Okolo and Tuere may learn about the situation in the town. He says: "*Yes, They are singing with voices like piece of earth, and drinking with throats that pick nothing and shaking the world with their looking-at-nothing feet*", p73. In this passage different words of wisdom can be understood as well as the information that he brings to Okolo and Tuere. He uses metaphor and hyperbole when he puts: "*voices like piece of earth*", "*drinking with throats that pick nothing*" and "*shaking the world with their looking-at-nothing feet*". At the end of the novel Ukule is taken as a cultural representative who will spread the teaching words even after the death of Okolo and Tuere. These lines show it: "*Ukule moved and when he reached the door turned and said: your spoken words will not die. With this he moved into the outside darkness*", p127.

3.1.2 ANTAGONISTS

The second kind of characters in *The Voice* is that of antagonists. They are split into two sub-kinds as the previous kind; the main and the sub antagonists. These are the one who fight against the advancement of Okolo's search for *it*. I am going to cite them following the sub-category to which they belong.

3.1.2.1 MAIN ANTAGONISTS

There are three main antagonists. They are called main antagonists by the fact that they were directly implicated in the ostracism of Okolo.

Chief Izongo is the leader of Amatu. He is described as a dictator, arrogant and corrupt leader. Economically, Chief Izongo is convinced that he can attain the summit of prosperity only through materialism. This is explained by his eagerness for money, power, prestige and other worldly values. He is a proud leader and no one can go against his power. Chief Izongo appears as a powerful and strong leader in Amatu. He is unshakable by saying that he is the one who orders to drive Tuere away and that Okolo is nothing, so he must also leave Amatu. The pride of Chief Izongo is shown here; "*On seeing Okolo standing in his front, Chief Izongo with a jug of palm wine in his hand, laughed loud and long and then suddenly stopped*", p41. He was proud because his enemy is under his control. Through this passage it is understood that Chief Izongo is happy and must rejoice for this victory.

Chief Izongo being a bad leader is a symbol of injustice. He carries all the treats of colonizers by the fact that he totally rejected the tradition and does not want to hear that there is a person in Amatu who is talking about traditional matters again. For this, Chief Izongo can also appear as the symbol of cultural destruction. Having copied everything from white people Chief Izongo does his best to stop Okolo from continuing bothering him so that he may not intoxicate other people to go back to tradition. That is why he presented Okolo as a common danger who does not want people from Amatu live in peace. He puts it: "*That thing there (pointing at Okolo), we've heard nothing but of him since a year ago when he returned*", p43. Okolo is taken as a useless person when Izongo called him "that thing". Chief Izongo uses "we" to include all the people from Amatu so that they may see a danger in Okolo's search for *it*. He continues showing it through these lines: "*I am not given to blowing my own trumpet*", p43, in order to push people believe that what chief Izongo is doing is good than what people say. Elsewhere, chief Izongo can be presented as a wicked leader who took power soon after independence. After independence of many African countries, leaders who took power were seen as substitutes of colonizers by the fact that they continued applying what white people were doing. Then Chief Izongo being a model of such leaders is turning his people to silence to the extent that even elders start doing things against their own will fearing death. It can clearly be noticed that chief Izongo is a symbol of modernism as he rejected his forefathers' ways of living.

The other antagonist is Abadi who fights against Okolo along with Chief Izongo. He is described as intellectual with higher education and has travelled much around the world. He has a PhD and is more experienced, that is why Chief Izongo considers him as his private secretary, main counsellor and his representative in meetings or whenever he is absent in the town. Like chief

Izongo, Abadi appears a corrupt man and a demagogue leader although he is literate. This can be heard through this passage: *“Yes, Abadi who has finished going to all big schools in this world did the same thing and had the same shallow inside that has room for nothing else but money and women”*, p54. Okolo does not see anything good in Abadi as an intellectual. He attacks him saying: *“you’ve got your MA, PhD, but you have not got it”*, p45. Being chief Izongo’s best disciple, Abadi is respectful to his decisions. He does all what chief Izongo asks him to do. That is why he considers himself as being strong and powerful in the town that no one can stand before him. He also appears as chief Izongo’s defender by the fact that he does not accept someone to criticize chief Izongo’s manner of ruling. During a meeting in Amatu, Abadi tells to people: *“so, let us with one voice answer the question that our leader has put before us a short while ago”*, p45. This is to show that Abadi is ready to do anything provide that Chief Izongo is respected by everybody in Amatu and no one opposes his power and norms.

Seitu is among the main protagonists because he participated on the hunting of Okolo. He is also corrupt, arrogant and materialist like his predecessors. Seitu is considered as the voice of the people in Amatu and this is shown when they are hunting Okolo. He is fearful and unable to face Tuere. This is said in the following passage: *“As she said thus and moved slowly towards the crowd, the crowd moved back and the people turned their backs, including Seitu, the voice of the people and ran”*, p32. It can be said that Seitu is coward because he could not stand in front of Tuere whereas he was the one talking much and showing that he does not fear her.

3.1.2.2 SUB ANTAGONISTS

These characters are not directly showing that they are against Okolo like the main antagonists. They start showing generosity to Okolo but end by attacking him by showing that they are with Chief Izongo. Some of them are neutral but also betrayers.

Tebeowei is one of these characters and one of the elders of Amatu. He is described as an intellectual but characterized by impurity because he lives like all other bad leaders in Amatu despite his conscious. He is also corrupt like his followers. Tebeowei appears as an advisor and is the one who decides to talk to Okolo so that he may stop his search that is dangerous for his life. He wants to get a civilized life as others and does not want to be neglected by people. During their talk with Okolo he says: *“...money is being scattered all around. If any falls at my feet, I stoop and pick it up. If I don’t and kick it away, I will be called a know-nothing man and I will be kicked away”*, p50. Tebeowei is also a coward. He knows that what he is doing is bad but he continuous doing it. He does not have time to guide or correct others as he knows that things have changed and no one can stop them from that change. Okara symbolizes them by “puppets” by the fact that they are manoeuvred by Chief Izongo the way he wants. Tebeowei follows all what Chief Izongo says, good or bad provide that he gets money. For him money is good and that comes to show how materialistic and corrupt he is. He tells to Okolo: *“so, I just sit down and look. If they say anything, I agree. If they do anything I agree, since they do not take yam out of my mouth”*, p49. There is hypocrisy in Tebeowei’s speech. He wants to show that he wishes things might change while he started by persuading Okolo so that he may join them in order to secure himself when he says: *“I know, Okolo but you must see the fact of the new time”*, p50. Here he sustains the argument that things have changed. How could he carryout that change then?

The Elders being among sub antagonists are described like Tebeowei, as dependent. They are defending and supporting chief Izongo in order to enrich themselves. This is because before joining Chief Izongo’s group many of them were poor. So, they must pay much respect to the one who made them Elders. This shows that they are materialists like all the others. They are only looking for fortunes. Abadi tells them in a meeting: *“what could you have been without our leaders? Some of you were fishermen, palm outters and some of you were nothing in the days of the imperialists. But now all of you are Elders and we are managing our own affairs and destinies”*, p43. They have to submit to Chief Izongo’s decisions without any discussion. They are all naive, weak and coward by the fact that they cannot express themselves in opposition to what Chief Izongo says, good or bad. This is shown in the following passage: *“did I say by deep? He asked and some of the Elders shook their heads others nodded in agreement and yet others tried to do both, resulting in a confusion of heads bobbing and swaying from side to side like the head of puppets”*, p42. Okara continues calling them puppets due to their fear to oppose Izongo’s ideas.

The mother-in-law is among sub antagonists though she is not working with Chief Izongo. She attacks Okolo due to the fact that he covered her daughter-in-law with his raincoat when the rain starts. She is an image of divine power due to the fact that she exchanges with her gods to stop the storm so that they may not drown. But she is also aggressive and did not want Okolo to explain himself. She says: *“and you this man between you and me a big thing has fallen”*, p65. A big thing here means “a great problem has started”. Because in the novel the woman says that the problem won’t end there. And truly speaking the problem continues in Sologa when Okolo is forced to swear if he did not touch Ebiere.

After the mother-in-law we have the crowd as another kind of antagonist working with Chief Izongo and the Elders to stop Okolo in his search. They have no position and nothing they are gaining like the elders in attacking Okolo. They do so because Chief Izongo told them that Okolo is a common danger and enemy of everybody in Amatu.

They followed the three messengers sent by Izongo to Okolo's place to collect him. It is said that: "*Okolo saw the crowd, a crowd of men, women, children talking, whispering, and three men talking and gesticulating in front*", p27. This shows how the crowd was following the messengers to hunt Okolo. They appear like and/or represent the population of Amatu. Okara uses metaphor to talk about this crowd when they catch Okolo. He says: "*The people snapped at him like hungry dogs snapping at bones. They carried him in silence like the silence of ants carrying a crumb of yam or fish bones*", p38. This crowd is acting not because they are convinced of what they are doing but because they have to side with powerful men so that they may not be crashed off. Tuere said that they have sick eyes which cannot face light. This is because they have failed to understand that Chief Izongo is misleading them.

Though some people have conviction that they are living in a distorted world, the Constable being a lawman fails to face the Big one due to his fear of death. So, it can be seen that the Constable is not only coward and weak but also he is a fearful and corrupt man in Sologa. When Okolo explains to the Constable that he was drugged by people he does not know in a dark house hopes that he may be helped as the man knows law. Surprisingly the Constable shows to Okolo that that house belongs to the Big one and no one even law can face him. This fact shows how fearful and weak the Constable was. He shows it through these lines: "*But the owner of the house you mention is also a big man in Sologa*", p78. Through this passage, the constable can be understood as showing the strength of big men for they cannot be shaken by anything. The exaggeration is when the constable proves that even the law does not look at the face of the big one. Such people in the society are dangerous. They cannot be ready to raise their voices in order to save others or denounce what is unfair in the community. He says: "*the law looks at this big man's face*", p79. This is to mean that as everything has changed only powerful men can impose themselves and no one else can speak up to express himself. That is why the constable thinks that Okolo does not understand what the Big man is because he is a stranger in Sologa.

The owner of the Restaurant is another character appearing in opposition to Okolo's search. He first shows generosity, pity and sympathy towards Okolo but ends by showing his real position. He is also subscribed on the list of corrupt characters and still has the same belief, like others, that things have changed and no one can pretend to save the situation. Due to this position of the owner of the restaurant, Okolo decides to leave for he does not understand why everybody is against his search. Okolo finds that the man is only looking pleasure in eating and drinking despite the spoil of the world they are in. Okolo's decision is motivated by the words he reads on the wall of the restaurant: "*so, let the spoilt world spoil. Then below this written in bolder letters was: 'Eat and drink o, die one day we go'*", p82. Due to this message Okolo failed to cohabitate with the owner of the restaurant that he is opposed to his insights.

Also, the owner of the restaurant wrote on another wall that: "*even the whiteman's Jesus failed to make the world fine*", p82. The owner of the restaurant appears to be weak and coward by the fact that he submits to the worse living conditions they are imposed to by the distorted colonial legacy.

The whiteman officer is another character against Okolo's search, who appears as corrupt, destructor and dictator like all the other characters fighting against Okolo's search. He is proud by the fact that people in Amatu and Sologa have followed what they presume to be right, which is the ways of white men. He confined Okolo in a room because he does not behave like other people in the town. The whiteman officer says: "*you have to be confined here in a room until you are taken to the asylum*", p87. Fearing the disturbance of Okolo, the whiteman officer appears weak for he is unable to face Okolo. Also, he can be seen as being coward by the fact that he understands that what Okolo is searching is right but still he does not want him to continue considering him to be a danger. Then he tells him: "*these things simply don't exist in real life, if you want to get anywhere*", p88. So, for him doing or making food things in the world no one can pretend to find true or honest people. That wrong things have to be considered so that a person or an area can get developed according to the whiteman officer.

3.2 CHARACTER ARCHETYPES THROUGH ROLE PLAYING IN THE VOICE

The present section examines some characters as archetypes through different roles they play. Role playing is an important means that helps us determine the archetype a character fits and how it is explained or shown. That is why it is impossible to find a character named "hero" in a given literary work. The reader discovers him or can call him hero by identifying the role he plays which can reveal the qualities he has comparatively to those of a hero. These qualities or features are the ones determining the archetype a character can fit. So, these characters in literature include: the hero, the outcast, the scapegoat, young innocent, femme fatale, good mother, the villain, the terrible mother, etc. The allocation of these archetypes in this section is done following the roles plaid by characters.

In *The Voice*, few characters are examined as archetypes following their actions and reactions toward the main character who is the central or focal point in the novel. I will explain what makes a character archetypal and how that archetype is appearing in the novel understudy. Here bellow is the description of those characters:

3.2.1 OKOLO AS AN ARCHETYPE

Okolo as main character and central protagonist in *The Voice* fits different character archetypes. Firstly, he is a hero fighting against Chief Izongo and the Elders of Amatu. His mission is to look for better life for his people in Amatu. This being among missions hero have to accomplish, Okolo stands up to denounce the bad ways of ruling that they are obliged to live in by chief Izongo. Sometimes one can consider this fight as being intellectual and psychological by the fact that only words are being addressed instead of guns or weapons. This can be understood as a counterpart of modernization. When Okolo says "*Whom are you fighting against? Are you not simply making a lot of noise because it is the fashion in order to share in the spoils. You are merely making a show of straining to open a door that is already open*" (p44) he presents this conflict. Like all heroes during their missions, Okolo undergoes many challenges and trials along his search for it. This gives words to confirm that he is a hero by the fact that he presents the same qualities a hero presents. He does not surrender or abandon the battle before finishing it by showing bravery, intelligence, endurance, determination, decision, courage and optimism like other heroes in literature. When he is hunted by Chief Izongo's messengers and other people, one can understand that he is facing challenges. He accepts to undertake his quest though he knows that their leaders are not good. His mission is to let people understand that what they are facing is not fair. They have to understand what he means by "it".

Through the actions and the situations in which Okolo is found, he does not fit the hero archetype only. There are other kinds of character archetypes he fits due to the roles he plays in different situations. Okolo is considered as an outcast, a young innocent, a scapegoat, Christ figure etc. Okolo is an outcast because Chief Izongo and the Elders impose him to leave the town of Amatu his homeland. By definition, an outcast is a person who is imposed to leave his family members and friend due to his unbearable behaviour. So, Okolo is attributed this archetype because he is living differently from other people in Amatu, which does not please Chief Izongo and his council of Elders. This is understood when Chief Izongo says: "*You must leave this town. It will pain our insides too much to see you suffer*", p48. This is the first element showing the ostracism of Okolo as he is banished and excluded from the society. The same situation is repeated in Sologa due to his bothering questions concerning the Big One.

Okolo not being a bad man in the society, his personality is witnessed by other people from Amatu. They know that though Chief Izongo is fighting against Okolo, Okolo has a clean inside and does straight thing. Thus, Okolo fits the young innocent archetype. While reading African literary works one can understand that the young innocent archetype is recurrent. This is understood by the opposition of young versus old in the society. Okolo is innocent because he does nothing wrong in his town. The only conflict he has with Chief Izongo is the search for someone who has got "it" in Amatu. The interpretation of this conflict can give the image of the political situation of the country. Chief Izongo, as a leader, does not want his people to discover that he is bad though Okolo has already discovered it. Referring to this consideration, it can be mentioned that Okolo is given the role of scapegoat. He is blamed of bad things happening in Amatu and he is said to be responsible for all the troubles in Sologa. Okolo is a Christ figure by the fact that he is taken as a saviour. He wants to save his people from the bad ruling of chief Izongo but rejected by all his people. This was the case for Jesus Christ. ASHAOLU puts that Okolo emerges as a Christ like figure because his mission is to redeem his people (p111) and the circumstances in which Okolo died are similar to those of Christ (116). These circumstances are taken through the way his people receive the message he brought and the way leaders from Amatu and Sologa react against the powerfulness of that message.

3.2.2 CHIEF IZONGO AND ABADI AS AN ARCHETYPE

It can be noticed that characters like Abadi and chief Izongo play roles of preventing Okolo to achieve his quest. They are leaders of Amatu. Considering the fact that they are against Okolo, they have the attribute of villain archetype. They do not want to see Okolo excelling in his quest even to talk to other people in the town. This brings in different conflicts and oppositions since they have got different points of view and understand differently the world they are living in. To understand this, the passage from the novel says: "*They turned over the spoken words and sent messengers to Okolo to ask him to cease forthwith his search for it*", p24. These characters can never understand or accept that Okolo is right in what he intends to look for. They only want to continue living with people wading in the blindness they have put them. At this range all the other Elders can be added by the fact that they also do whatever they can so that Okolo may not achieve his quest.

3.2.3 TUERE AS AN ARCHETYPE

Tuere has different attributes in terms of archetypes. This derives from the roles she plays in the novel. By the fact that Okolo is not fighting alone, Tuere is considered to be a good mother because of her affection towards Okolo. She is affected to Okolo, first when she rescues him while Okolo is being hunted by Izongo's messengers. "*Okolo ran and as he ran past, a voice held him. 'Come in, ' it said. Come in quickly*", p28. Second, it is when Okolo is put in a room with bound hands waiting for his journey. The novel says: "*In spite of himself his body became stiff but when he heard his name called in a loud whisper his breath reached the*

floor. It was Tuere", p52. The fact of helping Okolo is one element showing that Tuere is a good mother. She is doing all her best so that Okolo may not be harmed by his enemies. She is taking care of him and is ready to fight along with him because she considers Okolo as her saviour. In addition, Okolo seemed to be rejected. He thought that he is alone and he could not even hope of a given help from outside. The fact that Tuere understands what Okolo is searching for pushes her to take care of him by bringing food to him. She does not fear to face anyone among the Elders and Chief Izongo. To show her bravery, it is said that: "Tuere put the bucket of water down, took a dish near the pot and poured in water. She held the dish of water out for Okolo and he washed his hands", p53. All this was a kind of showing her goodness towards Okolo that shows her image of good mother archetype as she is feeding Okolo like his son. She only cares about him because both of them are in the same situation and thus they have to help each other.

Nevertheless, Tuere has got other attributes as far as archetypes are concerned apart from that of good mother. Thus, she is considered to be a femme fatale. A femme fatale, as it was said earlier, is a woman who brings catastrophe in the society. It is obvious noting that Tuere is not taken in that situation. She is only a girl of unusual behaviour in the town that people cannot understand what she is exactly. The novel shows that "Tuere did not flirt with boys though she had a hunger-killing beauty. So it was in the insides of everyone that perhaps she had not the parts of a woman. They did not, because of these her strange behaviours, call her a witch" p31. People in Amatu consider that as her parents died one after the other within few weeks, she must have contributed to their deaths. They also do not understand how every man who proposed to marry her died. These two elements are the cause of Tuere's accusations and ostracism. To show it the novel says: "They openly called her a witch when her mother and father died one after the other within a few weeks and after every young man who proposed to her died one after the other", p31.

It can well be understood that Tuere from this passage, fits another figure in literature. She is a scapegoat by the fact that she is, like Okolo, accused of being responsible of things she does not know. She is taken as a danger in the society and no one can approach or live with her in the town anymore. From the same passage above another figure emerges, that of young innocence. So, Tuere is a young innocent because really she is innocent. She does not know why people are accusing her like that while she cannot be blamed for that.

3.2.4 TEBEOWEI AND THE OWNER OF THE RESTAURANT AS AN ARCHETYPE

As it has been mentioned earlier, these two characters are described as villain characters by the fact that they also fight against Okolo like other characters during his search. Their first encounter with Okolo is promising as they start by showing their goodness towards him. At this level, as it can be seen, they appear as mentors due to their somehow pieces of advice though looking for ways to forbid Okolo to continue his search for it. However, the way Tebeowei starts to advice Okolo cannot really show that he is against him. He shows him how difficult and dangerous his search is. Consequently, he ends by showing Okolo that they have nothing to do against that regime so that they may change the situation. Thus, they have to follow what others are doing so that they may not lose their lives for nothing as no one is ready to understand what they say. At this level then, Tebeowei is considered as a villain character by the fact that his thoughts are different from those of Okolo. This can be understood when Tebeowei says: "If any falls at my feet, I stoop and pick it up. If I don't and kick it away, I will be called a know-nothing man and I will be kicked away", p50.

From these lines Okolo sees that Tebeowei is not different from Chief Izongo and Abadi. Surely, he cannot act differently as they all partake in the same council of elders and take decisions together.

The Owner of the Restaurant looks like Tebeowei in the attribute of archetypes. He starts by showing generosity, pity and sympathy toward Okolo. Okolo does not think that this man can react in a way different from what he is talking about. When he welcomes Okolo, he tells him that their insides are alike. He even asks Okolo to stay with them because they have many things in common. Okolo leaves him after finding that that man is like the ones he left in Amatu. Again when Okolo reads the message written at the wall of the restaurant, "Even the whiteman's Jesus failed to make the world fine". So let the spoilt world spoil", p82, he gets disappointed and cannot understand why a man presenting goodness can put such words on his wall.

3.2.5 THE MOTHER-IN-LAW AS AN ARCHETYPE

The mother-in-law is another character who opposes the main character during his journey to Sologa. She attacks Okolo when she understands that Ebire was sleeping on Okolo's laps covered by his raincoat. She does not understand how a girl who is going to meet her husband can sleep on another man's laps. This creates a kind of conflict until the problem is spread in the whole canoe. Her aggressive words toward Okolo show that she is against him by the fact that she promised that the problem will not end in the canoe. The woman says: "And you this man, between you and me a big thing has fallen. Not one word from your mouth has come out since you joined the canoe. You have been silent more than silence. So in your silence you were knotting bad thoughts

in your inside. This big thing will not finish here. All you my witnesses be. You all saw how my son's wife was on his lap covered with raincoat", p65).

From this passage it can be understood that the mother-in-law does not want to see Okolo in her presence. She has taken him as an enemy by the fact that Okolo touches the wife of his son. That is why this mother-in-law can fit the terrible mother archetype. She does not like Okolo to live in peace. The terrible mother can also be called evil mother by the fact that all her actions against the main character are nefarious. In Sologa the problem continues and the Mother-in-law does not accept that her son can marry Ebiere. She wants everybody in the meeting believe that Ebiere is a bad girl and that she does not deserve to marry her son. From such a conflict, it can be well understood that as the mother-in-law's actions are against the hero she presents the terrible mother archetype which is different from the mother figure or good mother. This is even seen when she obliged Okolo to come and declare if truly he did not touch her daughter in law by swearing calling their goddess.

3.2.6 EBIERE AS AN ARCHETYPE

Ebiere is among characters who are not repeated in the novel. By the fact that she is blamed for having accepted Okolo to touch her, she can be called a scapegoat. As said above, this archetype goes hand in hand with the young innocent archetype. She does not know why she is being blamed for things she did not do. That is why she fits such an archetype. Her innocence continues during her trial at the groom's house. She was defended both by her boyfriend and Okolo who is not shaken by the eyes of the elders and all the attacks from the mother-in-law.

4 CONCLUSION

To conclude the present research, I can say that the understanding of characters through the role they play is an important activity that gives readers a clear understanding of the message conveyed by the work. By a simple reading of "*The Voice*", though a well known novel in African literature, no one could understand how it is connected to other literary works around the world. It is only through the actions, optimism, courage and other situations Okolo, as main character, is found in, either with others or alone, that the reader can understand the reasons of his heroism. The present paper has contributed to the implementation of new techniques of understanding literary works, by removing false considerations of artistic plagiarism or general imitation. In so doing, any reader of the present paper is likely to understand "*The Voice*" as a collection of different archetypes that connect the writer, Gabriel Okara, to not only his counterparts of Nigeria but also to all the writes of literary works around the world. This is well understood through the roles played by characters like leaders, messengers, elders, white, intellectual, etc.

By not having finished all concerning the novel under study, I can suggest to other researchers to analyse "*The Voice*" differently from the way I did in order to help readers understand it correctly.

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