

British Imperialism and Perspective

Les Pays du Commonwealth : héritages, unité, diversité - “The conquest of the earth... is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much.” — Joseph Conrad (*Heart of Darkness*) How has British colonialism shaped the way people, cultures and societies see one another?

	How has British colonialism shaped the way people, cultures and societies see one another?
At the end of the Unit, I will	Write a story in class
What vocabulary will I need ?	Colonialism imperialism
What grammatical structure will I need ?	Opinion supposition
What documents will be used ?	1- Introducing the British Empire 1a- Horrible Histories Rise and Fall of the British Empire, humoristic video, 2014 1b- The British Empire explained, How it Rose, Ruled and Fell, <i>video 1440 Daily</i>, 2024 1c- The Secret of England's Greatness' (Queen Victoria presenting a Bible in the Audience Chamber at Windsor) Thomas Jones Barker (1815–1882) 1d- Quizz imperialism 2- Different perspectives of colonialism 2a- Agatha Christie in Egypt, photo taken in 1933 2b- Street Sellers by the Nile, Agatha Christie, <i>Death on the Nile</i>, chapter 1 part 1, 1937 2c- Nadine Gordimer interview on racism, The Nobel Prize, 2008 3- Power and Imbalance : The train of Rhodesia, Nadine Gordimer, The Soft Voice of the Serpent and Other Stories, 1952 PART 1 – Arrival at the station PART 2 – The Sellers Arrive PART 3- The Bargain for the Lion PART 4 - The Lion and the Argument 4- Cultural domination: Dead Men's Path Chinua Achebe, Girls at War and Other Stories (1972) PART 1- Ambitions PART 2- The Path PART 3- A clash of world 5- The Legacy of the British Empire 5a- Commonwealth Day Explained: What It Is and Why It Still Matters, The Royal Family Channel , 2026 5b-Jamaica, Kingston : Prince William and Kate, in the Land Rover

Anne-Charlotte Legrand et Alexis Troszczynski – Académie de Versailles, en partie inspirée de l'unité *The Train to Rhodesia*, *Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.

	as a nod to the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh visiting Jamaica during their Royal Tours, <i>BBC</i> , 25 March 2022 5c---Prince William and Kate's Tour Was Meant to Secure the Monarchy in the Caribbean. Instead, It's Raising New Questions About Its Future Eloise Barry, <i>Times</i> , March 24, 2022 5d- Prince William suggests Commonwealth could be led by a non-royal one day Sky News 26 March 2022
What will I learn about ?	How colonialism shaped a certain vision of literature
Final project	Write what happens next in one of the story. You may choose either, any part of the story and will need to write from another character's point of view

Instructions for your Final Project :

- 1- You will have one hour full to write your story
- 2- You may have up to 10 ideas written on a paper, hand-written bullets notes only
- 3- You must write from an intern point of view

idée DST: CO Chimanda Adibie

Source text: Nadine Gordimer. *The Train from Rhodesia*, a short novel part of *The Soft Voice of the Serpent*. 1952. Wake County Public School System.

Source images: *Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.

Source front cover: painting by Ellis Silas from the photograph by Smart & Copley. *Passing through the Amatongas Forest en route from Beira to Umtali*. c. 1914. www.rhodesia.me.uk. Colin Weyer.

Page setting: M. Troszczynski. Professeur certifié. Lycée Alain, Le Vésinet (78). Académie de Versailles.

Axis : Les Pays du Commonwealth : héritages, unité, diversité

Issue : How does literature shed light on the colonialism in Africa?

Projet Final : Write the end of the story from the point of view of the seller.

Anticipation : présentation British Empire -> focus sur l'Afrique

Part 1: Décolonisation

1- Introducing the British Empire

Anne-Charlotte Legrand et Alexis Troszczynski – Académie de Versailles, en partie inspirée de l'unité The Train to Rhodesia, *Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.

1a- Horrible Histories Rise and Fall of the British Empire, 2014

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PuDQ6B1ygFo>

1b- The British Empire explained,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C63u7akSOBs>

travail sur les vidéos : prise de note contenu + image (travail en pair work)
mise en commun des éléments donnés puis contraste : que disent les deux vidéos ?
Message donnés ?

1c- The Secret of England's Greatness' (Queen Victoria presenting a Bible in the Audience Chamber at Windsor) Thomas Jones Barker (1815–1882)

travail sur le tableau, repérage des éléments

1d- Sipping the tea: an elegant British tradition, photo

travail sur l'image : description, analyse

liste de verbe d'action pour décrire l'image → partage puis rédaction d'un texte utilisant un minimum de verbes

Le texte doit être cohérent et intéressant, point de vue interne imposé (numéro donné aux personnages, choisis au hasard en amont)

2- different visions of colonialism

2a- Agatha Christie in Egypt, photo taken in 1933

2b- Street Sellers by the Nile, Agatha Christie, *Death on the Nile*, chapter 1 part 1, 1937

point de vu impérialiste (personnages blancs mise en valeur)

Objectif : vocabulaire pauvreté / différence sociale

Trace écrite : éléments les plus choquants ? // en quoi *Death of the Nile* est un point de vue Impérialisme

2c- Nadine Gordimer interview on racism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWcxSsd8N2M>

TE : pourtant, même sous l'Apartheid (concept impérialisme moderne), Nadine Gordimer s'en détache

Micro-tâche : faire l'interview de Agatha Christie : quelle serait son point de vue sur l'impérialisme

3- Power and Imbalance : The train of Rhodesia, Nadine Gordimer, *The Soft Voice of the Serpent and Other Stories*, 1952

<https://jerrywbrown.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-Train-from-Rhodesia-Gordimer-Nadine.pdf>

Découpe en 4 parties : lecture en individuel à la maison + partage 15min en classe de ce

Anne-Charlotte Legrand et Alexis Troszczynski – Académie de Versailles, en partie inspirée de l'unité The Train to Rhodisia, *Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.

qu'ils ont compris (méthode du reading circle ? discussion leader, summary builder, words master, quizz master → un rôle différent chacun pour qu'ils soient actifs)

Part 1

Écrire le prompt d'un dessin qu'ils pourraient générer par IA (choisir 4/5 éléments importants + justifier choix). possibilité de le faire générer ou dessiner soi-même.

Part 2

Le parallèle avec Agatha Christie → lecture critique, TE pov favorable aux indigènes
Exercice envisageable : réécrire extrait Agatha C. style N. Gordimer

Part 3

Récit fait par un point de vu secondaire (stationmaster's wife, beer drinker, another salesman).

Part 4

Résumé en 4 questions : 3 concernent la partie 4 et une plus générique sur la nouvelle.
→ partage des questions par groupe et TE mise en commun des questions génériques.

4- Cultural domination: Dead Men's Path Chinua Achebe, *Girls at War and Other Stories* (1972) : recap en 3 mots à chaque fois; justification de son choix, pourquoi?

Échange à chaque fois entre groupe et explication // mise en parallèle.

Résumé du texte en 1 question par groupe.

Les questions sont mise au tableau, choix de 3 questions, on les réduit en une seule et recap ramassé.

PART 1- Ambitions : recap en 3 mots clé et explication => qui est qui et pourquoi?

PART 2- The Path

PART 3- A clash of world

5a- Commonwealth Day Explained: What It Is and Why It Still Matters, The Royal Family Channel, 2026

CO prise de note et résumé information

travail de groupe, deux écoutes.

Mise en place de stratégies d'écoute: comment faire pour réussir à avoir le max d'info, qu'ont fait les uns et les autres

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3VdZYADUID4>

5b-Jamaica, Kingston : Prince William and Kate, in the Land Rover as a nod to the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh visiting Jamaica during their Royal Tours, *BBC*, 25 March 2022
travail sur les deux images, mise en // pour savoir les ressemblances et donc ce qui est susceptible de poser problème

5c- Prince William and Kate's Tour Was Meant to Secure the Monarchy in the Caribbean. Instead, It's Raising New Questions About Its Future Eloise Barry, *Times*, March 24, 2022
travail sur le texte – écriture d'un article correspondant : article Jamaïcain et article journal britannique
rédaction ramassée et notée

Anne-Charlotte Legrand et Alexis Troszczynski – Académie de Versailles, en partie inspirée de l'unité The Train to Rhodisia, *Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.

5d- Prince William suggests Commonwealth could be led by a non-royal one day Sky News 26 March 2022

travail sur le texte: opinion?

PF : une heure en classe, notes autorisé (à prendre avant), travail IND.

Idée DST : Once Upon a Time N. Gordimer // The Dark Continent Léonard Kibera

<https://www.pearltrees.com/s/file/preview/378195197/Agatha%20Christie%20-%20Death%20On%20The%20Nile%20%20PDFDrive%20.pdf?pearlId=782674105>

<https://www.pearltrees.com/s/file/preview/378195197/Agatha%20Christie%20-%20Death%20On%20The%20Nile%20%20PDFDrive%20.pdf?pearlId=782674105>

They came out from the shade of the garden on to a dusty stretch of road bordered by the river. Five watchful bead sellers, two vendors of postcards, three sellers of plaster scarabs, a couple of donkey boys and some detached but hopeful infantile riff-raft closed in upon them.

"You want beads, sir? Very good, sir. Very cheap "

"Lady, you want scarab. Look---great queen--very lucky ."

"You look, sir--real lapis. Very good, very cheap ."

"You want ride donkey, sir? This very good donkey. This donkey Whisky and Soda, sir ' "You want to go granite' quarries, sir? This very good donkey. Other donkey very bad, sir, that donkey fall down"

"You want postcard--very cheap--very nice "

"Look, lady Only ten piastres--very cheap--lapis--this ivory "

"This very good fly whisk---this all amber "

"You go out in boat, sir? I got very good boat, sir "

"You ride back to hotel, lady? This first-class donkey " Hercule Poirot made vague gestures to rid himself of this **human cluster of flies**. Rosalie stalked through them like a sleep walker.

"It's best to pretend to be deaf and blind," she remarked.

The infantile riff-raft ran alongside murmuring plaintively.

"Bakshish? Bakshish? Hip, hip, hurrah--very good, very nice " Their gaily coloured rags trailed picturesquely and the flies lay in clusters on their eyelids.

They were the most persistent. The others fell back and launched a fresh attack on the next corner.

Now Poirot and Rosalie only ran the gauntlet of the shops--suave persuasive accents here.

"You visit my shop to-day, sir?" "You want that ivory crocodile, sir?" "You not been in my shop yet, sir?"

"I show you very beautiful things." They turned into the fifth shop and Rosalie handed over several rolls of film--the object of the walk.

Then they came out again and walked towards the river's edge.

One of the Nile steamers was just mooring. Poirot and Rosalie looked interestedly at the passengers.

"Quite a lot, aren't there?" commented Rosalie.

She turned her head as Tim Allerton came up and joined them. He was a little out of breath as though he had been walking fast.

Anne-Charlotte Legrand et Alexis Troszczynski – Académie de Versailles, en partie inspirée de l'unité The Train to Rhodisia, *Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.

They stood there for a moment or two and then Tim spoke: "An awful crowd as usual, I suppose," he remarked disparagingly, indicating the disembarking passengers.

"They're usually quite terrible," agreed Rosalie.

All three wore the air of superiority assumed by people who are already in a place when studying new arrivals.

Agatha Christie, *Death on the Nile*, chapter 1 part 1, 1937

et deconlisation zimbawe explained

Back in his village, the old man tells another vendor what happened at the station that day. Imagine his story.

QUIZZ : IMPERIALISM

1. What is imperialism?

- a) When one country takes over another country for political and economic reasons
- b) When one country is allied with another country
- c) When one country is at war with another country
- d) When a country changes from handmade goods to manufactured goods

2. Which word best describes "the extension of a nation's power over other lands"?

- a) Imperialism
- b) Nationalism
- c) Communism
- d) Industrialization

3. Which term best describes extreme pride in one's country?

- a) Nationalism
- b) Communism
- c) Imperialism
- d) Social Darwinism

4. Which of the following was NOT a cause of imperialism?

- a) The need for natural resources
- b) National pride

Anne-Charlotte Legrand et Alexis Troszczynski – Académie de Versailles, en partie inspirée de l'unité The Train to Rhodisia, *Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.

- c) The quest to cure diseases in Africa
- d) Rivalries with other countries

5. What does "The sun never sets on the British Empire" mean?

- a) Great Britain is near the equator
- b) Great Britain continues to fight after dark
- c) Great Britain has colonies all over the world
- d) Great Britain never set out to conquer new colonies

6. Economic motives for imperialism include:

- a) A desire to spread Christianity
- b) A need for military bases around the world
- c) A need for raw materials to be used in factories
- d) A desire to gain glory

7. The race for European countries to claim land in Africa was called the:

- a) Scramble for Africa
- b) African Marathon
- c) Great Competition
- d) Monopoly

8. What was the Berlin Conference?

- a) A meeting of European nations to declare war
- b) A meeting of the US and European nations to partition African lands
- c) A meeting of Germans to create a plan for German unification
- d) A meeting of Africans to keep Europeans out

9. Who was excluded from the Berlin Conference?

- a) Representatives for the US
- b) Representatives of European countries
- c) Representatives of African countries
- d) Representatives of the 3rd Estate

Anne-Charlotte Legrand et Alexis Troszczynski – Académie de Versailles, en partie inspirée de l'unité The Train to Rhodisia, *Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.

10. The main motivation for imperialism was:



- a) Economic
- b) Religious
- c) Ideological
- d) Political

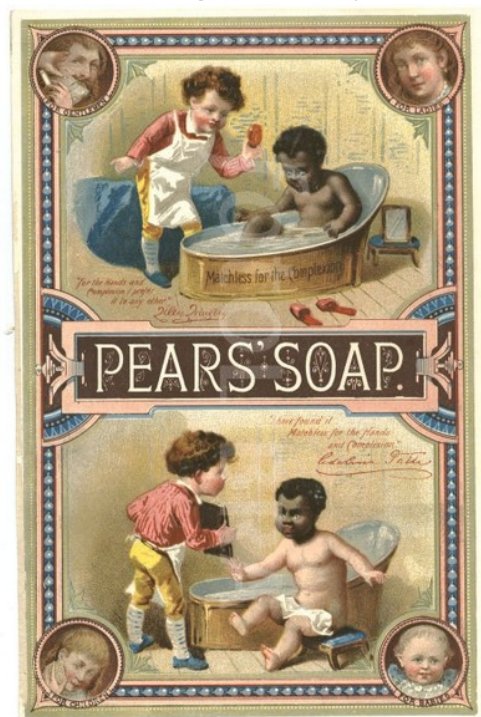
11. Which is a push factor for imperialism?

- a) Lack of natural resources in Africa
- b) Nationalism
- c) Abundance of natural resources in Africa
- d) Lack of natural resources in Europe

12. Which is a pull factor?

- a) Abundance of natural resources in Europe
- b) Lack of natural resources in Europe
- c) Abundance of natural resources in Africa
- d) Lack of land in Europe

13. What imperialism motive is being shown by this image?



- a) Social Darwinism

Anne-Charlotte Legrand et Alexis Troszczynski – Académie de Versailles, en partie inspirée de l'unité The Train to Rhodisia, *Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.

- b) Nationalism
- c) Economic
- d) Religious

14. What is Social Darwinism?

- a) Survival of the fittest in society
- b) The idea that some races are better than others
- c) The idea that you need to "civilize" other cultures
- d) All of these options

15. Which describes a territory that belongs to another country?

- a) Mother country
- b) Island
- c) Innovation
- d) Colony

Corrigés

- 1. a
- 2. a
- 3. a
- 4. c
- 5. c
- 6. c
- 7. a
- 8. b
- 9. c
- 10. a
- 11. d
- 12. c
- 13. a
- 14. d
- 15. d

PART 1 – Arrival at the station

The train came out of the red horizon and bore down towards them over the single straight track. The stationmaster came out of his little brick station with its pointed chalet roof, feeling the creases in his serge uniform in his legs as well. A stir of preparedness rippled through the squatting native vendors waiting in the dust; the face of a carved wooden animal, eternally surprised, stuck out of a sack. The stationmaster's barefoot children wandered over. From the grey mud huts with the untidy heads that stood within a decorated mud wall, chickens, and dogs with their skin stretched like parchment over their bones, followed the piccanins down to the track. The flushed and perspiring

Anne-Charlotte Legrand et Alexis Troszczynski – Académie de Versailles, en partie inspirée de l'unité The Train to Rhodisia, *Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.

west cast a reflection, faint, without heat, upon the station, upon the tin shed marked “Goods,” upon the walled kraal, upon the grey tin house of the stationmaster and upon the sand, that lapped all around, from sky to sky, cast little rhythmical cups of shadow, so that the sand became the sea, and closed over the children’s black feet softly and without imprint.

The stationmaster’s wife sat behind the mesh of her veranda. Above her head the hunk of a sheep’s carcass moved slightly, dangling in a current of air.

They waited.

The train called out, along the sky; but there was no answer; and the cry hung on: I’m coming...I’m coming...

The engine flared out now, big, whisking a dwindling body behind it; the track flared out to let it in. Creaking, jerking, jostling, gasping, the train filled the station.

Here, let me see that one—the young woman curved her body farther out of the corridor window. Missus? smiled the old man, looking at the creatures he held in his hand. From a piece of string on his grey finger hung a tiny woven basket; he lifted it, questioning. No, no, she urged, leaning down towards him, across the height of the train towards the man in the piece of old rug; that one, that one, her hand commanded. It was a lion, carved out of soft, dry wood that looked like spongecake; heraldic, black and white, with impressionistic detail burnt in. The old man held it up to her still smiling, not from the heart, but at the customer. Between its vandyke teeth, in the mouth opened in an endless roar too terrible to be heard, it had a black tongue. Look, said the young husband, if you don’t mind! And round the neck of the thing, a piece of fur (rat? rabbit? meerkat?); a real mane, majestic, telling you somehow that the artist had delight in the lion.

PART 2 – The Sellers Arrive

All up and down the length of the train in the dust the artists sprang, walking bent, like performing animals, the better to exhibit the fantasy held towards the faces on the train. Buck, startled and stiff, staring with round black and white eyes. More lions, standing erect, grappling with strange, thin, elongated warriors who clutched spears and showed no fear in their slits of eyes. How much, they asked from the train, how much?

Give me penny, said the little ones with nothing to sell. The dogs went and sat, quite still, under the dining car, where the train breathed out the smell of meat cooking with onion.

A man passed beneath the arch of reaching arms meeting grey-black and white in the exchange of money for the staring wooden eyes, the stiff wooden legs sticking up in the air; went along under the voices and the bargaining, interrogating the wheels. Past the dogs; glancing up at the dining car where he could stare at the faces, behind glass, drinking beer, two by two, on either side of a uniform railway vase with its pale dead flower. Right to the end, to the guard’s van, where the stationmaster’s children had just collected their mother’s two loaves of bread; to the engine itself, where the stationmaster and the driver stood talking against the steaming complaint of the resting beast.

The man called out to them, something loud and joking. They turned to laugh, in a twirl of steam. The two children careered over the sand, clutching the bread, and burst through the iron gate and up the path through the garden in which nothing grew.

Passengers drew themselves in at the corridor windows and turned into compartments to fetch money, to call someone to look. Those sitting inside looked up: suddenly different, caged faced, boxed in, cut off after the contact of the outside. There was an orange a piccanin would like....

What about that chocolate? It wasn't very nice...

A girl had collected a handful of the hard kind, that no one liked, out of the chocolate box, and was throwing them to the dogs, over at the dining car. But the hens darted in and swallowed the chocolates, incredibly quick and accurate, before they had even dropped in the dust, and the dogs, a little bewildered, looked up with their brown eyes, not expecting anything.

PART 3- The Bargain for the Lion

—No, leave it, said the young woman, don't take it...

Too expensive, too much, she shook her head and raised her voice to the old man, giving up the lion. He held it high where she had handed it to him. No, she said, shaking her head. Three-and-six? insisted her husband, loudly. Yes baas! laughed the old man. Three-and-six?—the young man was incredulous. Oh leave it—she said. The young man stopped. Don't you want it? he said, keeping his face closed to the old man. No, never mind, she said, leave it. The old native kept his head on one side, looking at them sideways, holding the lion. Three-and-six, he murmured, as old people repeat things to themselves.

The young woman drew her head in. She went into the coupe and sat down. Out of the window, on the other side, there was nothing; sand and bush; and thorn tree. Back through the open doorway, past the figure of her husband in the corridor, there was the station, the voices, wooden animals waving, running feet. Her eye followed the funny little valance of scrolled wood that outlined the chalet roof of the station; she thought of the lion and smiled. That bit of fur round the neck. But the wooden buck, the hippos, the elephants, the baskets that already bulked out of their brown paper under the seat and on the luggage rack! How will they look at home? Where will you put them? What will they mean away from the places you found them? Away from the unreality of the last few weeks? (...)

Outside, a bell rang. (...) There was a grunt. The train jerked. Through the glass the beer drinkers looked out, as if they could not see beyond it. Behind the flyscreen, the stationmaster's wife sat facing back at them beneath the darkening hunk of meat.

There was a shout. The flag drooped out. Joints not yet coordinated, the segmented body of the train heaved and bumped back against itself. It began to move; slowly the scrolled chalet moved past it, the yells of the natives, running alongside, jetted up into the air, fell back at different levels. Here, one-and-six baas!—As one automatically opens a hand to catch a thrown ball, a man fumbled wildly down his pocket, brought up the shilling and sixpence and threw them out; the old native, gasping, his skinny toes splaying the sand, flung the lion.

The old native stood, breath blowing out the skin between his ribs, feet tense, balanced in the sand, smiling and shaking his head. In his opened palm, held in the attitude of receiving, was the retrieved shilling and sixpence.

The blind end of the train was being pulled helplessly out of the station.

The young man swung in from the corridor, breathless. He was shaking his head with laughter and triumph. Here! he said. And waggled the lion at her. One-and-six!

What? she said.

He laughed. I was arguing with him for fun, bargaining—when the train had pulled out already, he came tearing after... One-and-six Baas! So there's your lion.

PART 4 - The Lion and the Argument

She was holding it away from her, the head with the open jaws, the pointed teeth, the black tongue, the wonderful ruff of fur facing her. She was looking at it with an expression of not seeing, of seeing something different. Her face was drawn up, wryly, like the face of a discomforted child. Her mouth lifted nervously at the corner. Very slowly, cautious, she lifted her finger and touched the mane, where it was joined to the wood.

But how could you, she said. He was shocked by the dismay of her face.

Good Lord, he said, what's the matter?

If you want the thing, she said, her voice rising and breaking with the shrill impotence of anger, why didn't you buy it in the first place? If you wanted it, why didn't you pay for it? Why didn't you take it decently, when he offered it? Why did you have to wait for him to run after the train with it, and give him one-and-six? One and six!

She was pushing it at him, trying to force him to take the lion. He stood astonished, his hands hanging at his sides.

But you wanted it! You liked it so much?

—It's a beautiful piece of work, she said fiercely, as if to protect it from him.

You liked it so much! You said yourself it was too expensive—

Oh you—she said, hopeless and furious. You... She threw the lion onto the seat. He stood looking at her.

She sat down again in the corner and, her face slumped in her hands, stared out of her window. Everything was turning round inside her. One-and-six. One-and-six. Oneand-six for the wood and the carving and the sinews of the legs and the switch of the tail. The mouth open like that and the teeth. The black tongue, rolling, like a wave. The man round the neck. To give one-and-six for that. The heat of shame mounted through her legs and body and sounded in her ears like the sound of sand pouring. Pouring, pouring. She sat there, sick. A weariness, a tastelessness, the discovery of a void made her hands slacken their grip, atrophy emptily, as if the hour was not worth their grasp. She was feeling like this again. She had thought it was something to do with singleness, with being alone and belonging too much to oneself.

She sat there not wanting to move or speak, or to look at anything even; so that the mood should be associated with nothing, no object, word, or sight that might recur and so recall the feeling again.... Smuts blew in grittily, settled on her hands. Her back remained at exactly the same angle, turned against the young man sitting with his hands drooping between his sprawled legs, and the lion, fallen on its side in the corner.

The train had cast the station like a skin. It called out to the sky, I'm coming, I'm coming; and again, there was no answer.

Dead Men's Path, part 1 : ambitions

Michael Obi's hopes were fulfilled much earlier than he had expected. He was appointed headmaster of Ndume Central School in January 1949.

It had always been an unprogressive school, so the Mission authorities decided to send a young and energetic man to run it. Obi accepted this responsibility with enthusiasm. He had many wonderful ideas and this was an opportunity to put them into practice.

He had had sound secondary school education which designated him a "pivotal teacher" in the official records and set him apart from the other headmasters in the mission field. He was outspoken in his condemnation of the narrow views of these older and often less educated ones.

"We shall make a good job of it, shan't we?" he asked his young wife when they first heard the joyful news of his

promotion.

"We shall do our best," she replied. "We shall have such beautiful gardens and everything will be just modern and delightful ..."

In their two years of married life she had become completely infected by his passion for "modern methods" and his denigration of "these old and superannuated people in the teaching field who would be better employed as traders in the Onitsha market." She began to see herself already as the admired wife of the young headmaster, the queen of the school.

The wives of the other teachers would envy her position. She would set the fashion in everything . . . Then, suddenly, it occurred to her that there might not be other wives. Wavering between hope and fear, she asked her husband, looking anxiously at him.

"All our colleagues are young and unmarried," he said with enthusiasm which for once she did not share. "Which is a good thing," he continued.

"Why?"

"Why? They will give all their time and energy to the school."

Nancy was downcast. For a few minutes she became skeptical about the new school; but it was only for a few minutes. Her little personal misfortune could not blind her to her husband's happy prospects. She looked at him as he sat folded up in a chair

He was stoop-shouldered and looked frail. But he sometimes surprised people with sudden bursts of physical energy. In his present posture, however, all his bodily strength seemed to have retired behind his deep-set eyes, giving them an extraordinary power of penetration. He was only twenty-six, but looked thirty or more. On the whole, he was not unhandsome.

"A penny for your thoughts, Mike," said Nancy after a while, imitating the woman's magazine she read.

"I was thinking what a grand opportunity we've got at last to show these people how a school should be run."

Dead Men's Path, part 2 : The Path

Ndume School was backward in every sense of the word. Mr. Obi put his whole life into the work, and his wife hers too. He had two aims. A high standard of teaching was insisted upon, and the school compound was to be turned into a place of beauty.

Nancy's dream-gardens came to life with the coming of the rains, and blossomed. Beautiful hibiscus and allamanda hedges in brilliant red and yellow marked out the carefully tended school compound from the rank neighborhood bushes.

One evening as Obi was admiring his work he was scandalized to see an old woman from the village hobble right across the compound, through a marigold flowerbed and the hedges. On going up there he found faint signs of an almost disused path from the village across the school compound to the bush on the other side.

"It amazes me," said Obi to one of his teachers who had been three years in the school, "that you people allowed the villagers to make use of this footpath. It is simply incredible." He shook his head.

"The path," said the teacher apologetically, "appears to be very important to them. Although it is hardly used, it connects the village shrine with their place of burial."

"And what has that got to do with the school?" asked the headmaster. "Well, I don't know," replied the other with a shrug of the shoulders. "But I remember there was a big row some time ago when we attempted to close it."

"That was some time ago. But it will not be used now," said Obi as he walked away. "What will the Government Education Officer think of this when he comes to inspect the school next week? The villagers might, for all I know, decide to use the schoolroom for a pagan ritual during the inspection."

Heavy sticks were planted closely across the path at the two places where it entered and left the school premises. These were further strengthened with barbed wire.

Dead Men's Path, part 3 : A clash of world

Three days later the village priest of Ani called on the headmaster. He was an old man and walked with a slight stoop. He carried a stout walking stick which he usually tapped on the floor, by way of emphasis, each time he made a new point in his argument.

"I have heard," he said after the usual exchange of cordialities, "that our ancestral footpath has recently been closed ..."

"Yes," replied Mr. Obi. "We cannot allow people to make a highway of our school compound."

"Look here, my son," said the priest, bringing down his walking stick, "this path was here before you were born and before your father was born. The whole life of this village depends on it. Our dead relatives depart by it and our ancestors visit us by it. But most important, it is the path of children coming in to be born ..."

Mr. Obi listened with a satisfied smile on his face.

"The whole purpose of our school," he said finally, "is to eradicate just such beliefs as that. Dead men do not require footpaths. The whole idea is just fantastic. Our duty is to teach your children to laugh at such ideas."

"What you say may be true," replied the priest, "but we follow the practices of our fathers. If you reopen the path we shall have nothing to quarrel about. What I always say is: let the hawk perch and let the eagle perch." He rose to go.

"I am sorry," said the young headmaster. "But the school compound cannot be a thoroughfare. It is against our regulations. I would suggest your constructing another path, skirting our premises. We can even get our boys to help in building it. I don't suppose the ancestors will find the little detour too burdensome."

"I have no more words to say," said the old priest, already outside.

Two days later a young woman in the village died in child bed. A diviner was immediately consulted and he prescribed heavy sacrifices to propitiate ancestors insulted by the fence.

Obi woke up next morning among the ruins of his work. The beautiful hedges were torn up not just near the path but right round the school, the flowers trampled to death and one of the school buildings pulled down ...

That day, the white Supervisor came to inspect the school and wrote a nasty report on the state of the premises but more seriously about the "tribal war situation developing between the school and the village, arising in part from the misguided zeal of the new headmaster."

Chinua Achebe, *Girls at War and Other Stories* (1972)

Dead Men's Path

Michael Obi's hopes were fulfilled much earlier than he had expected. He was appointed headmaster of Ndume Central School in January 1949.

It had always been an unprogressive school, so the Mission authorities decided to send a young and energetic man to run it. Obi accepted this responsibility with enthusiasm. He had many wonderful ideas and this was an opportunity to put them into practice.

He had had sound secondary school education which designated him a "pivotal teacher" in the

official records and set him apart from the other headmasters in the mission field. He was outspoken in his condemnation of the narrow views of these older and often less educated ones.

"We shall make a good job of it, shan't we?" he asked his young wife when they first heard the joyful news of his promotion.

"We shall do our best," she replied. "We shall have such beautiful gardens and everything will be just modern and delightful ..."

In their two years of married life she had become completely infected by his passion for "modern methods" and his denigration of "these old and superannuated people in the teaching field who would be better employed as traders in the Onitsha market." She began to see herself already as the admired wife of the young headmaster, the queen of the school.

The wives of the other teachers would envy her position. She would set the fashion in everything . . . Then, suddenly, it occurred to her that there might not be other wives. Wavering between hope and fear, she asked her husband, looking anxiously at him.

"All our colleagues are young and unmarried," he said with enthusiasm which for once she did not share. "Which is a good thing," he continued.

"Why?"

"Why? They will give all their time and energy to the school."

Nancy was downcast. For a few minutes she became skeptical about the new school; but it was only for a few minutes. Her little personal misfortune could not blind her to her husband's happy prospects. She looked at him as he sat folded up in a chair

He was stoop-shouldered and looked frail. But he sometimes surprised people with sudden bursts of physical energy. In his present posture, however, all his bodily strength seemed to have retired behind his deep-set eyes, giving them an extraordinary power of penetration. He was only twenty-six, but looked thirty or more. On the whole, he was not unhandsome.

"A penny for your thoughts, Mike," said Nancy after a while, imitating the woman's magazine she read.

"I was thinking what a grand opportunity we've got at last to show these people how a school should be run."

Ndume School was backward in every sense of the word. Mr. Obi put his whole life into the work, and his wife hers too. He had two aims. A high standard of teaching was insisted upon, and the school compound was to be turned into a place of beauty.

Nancy's dream-gardens came to life with the coming of the rains, and blossomed. Beautiful hibiscus and allamanda hedges in brilliant red and yellow marked out the carefully tended school compound from the rank neighborhood bushes.

One evening as Obi was admiring his work he was scandalized to see an old woman from the village hobble right across the compound, through a marigold flowerbed and the hedges. On going up there he found faint signs of an almost disused path from the village across the school compound to the bush on the other side.

"It amazes me," said Obi to one of his teachers who had been three years in the school, "that you people allowed the villagers to make use of this footpath. It is simply incredible." He shook his head.

"The path," said the teacher apologetically, "appears to be very important to them. Although it is hardly used, it connects the village shrine with their place of burial."

"And what has that got to do with the school?" asked the headmaster. "Well, I don't know," replied the other with a shrug of the shoulders. "But I remember there was a big row some time ago when we attempted to close it."

"That was some time ago. But it will not be used now," said Obi as he walked away. "What will the

Anne-Charlotte Legrand et Alexis Troszczynski – Académie de Versailles, en partie inspirée de l'unité The Train to Rhodisia, *Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.

Government Education Officer think of this when he comes to inspect the school next week? The villagers might, for all I know, decide to use the schoolroom for a pagan ritual during the inspection.”

Heavy sticks were planted closely across the path at the two places where it entered and left the school premises. These were further strengthened with barbed wire.

Three days later the village priest of Ani called on the headmaster. He was an old man and walked with a slight stoop. He carried a stout walking stick which he usually tapped on the floor, by way of emphasis, each time he made a new point in his argument.

“I have heard,” he said after the usual exchange of cordialities, “that our ancestral footpath has recently been closed ...”

“Yes,” replied Mr. Obi. “We cannot allow people to make a highway of our school compound.”

“Look here, my son,” said the priest, bringing down his walking stick, “this path was here before you were born and before your father was born. The whole life of this village depends on it. Our dead relatives depart by it and our ancestors visit us by it. But most important, it is the path of children coming in to be born ...”

Mr. Obi listened with a satisfied smile on his face.

“The whole purpose of our school,” he said finally, “is to eradicate just such beliefs as that. Dead men do not require footpaths. The whole idea is just fantastic. Our duty is to teach your children to laugh at such ideas.”

“What you say may be true,” replied the priest, “but we follow the practices of our fathers. If you reopen the path we shall have nothing to quarrel about. What I always say is: let the hawk perch and let the eagle perch.” He rose to go.

“I am sorry,” said the young headmaster. “But the school compound cannot be a thoroughfare. It is against our regulations. I would suggest your constructing another path, skirting our premises. We can even get our boys to help in building it. I don’t suppose the ancestors will find the little detour too burdensome.”

“I have no more words to say,” said the old priest, already outside.

Two days later a young woman in the village died in child bed. A diviner was immediately consulted and he prescribed heavy sacrifices to propitiate ancestors insulted by the fence.

Obi woke up next morning among the ruins of his work. The beautiful hedges were torn up not just near the path but right round the school, the flowers trampled to death and one of the school buildings pulled down ...

That day, the white Supervisor came to inspect the school and wrote a nasty report on the state of the premises but more seriously about the “tribal war situation developing between the school and the village, arising in part from the misguided zeal of the new headmaster.”

Chinua Achebe, *Girls at War and Other Stories* (1972)

Dead Men's Path

Michael Obi’s hopes were fulfilled much earlier than he had expected. He was appointed headmaster of Ndume Central School in January 1949.

It had always been an unprogressive school, so the Mission authorities decided to send a young and energetic man to run it. Obi accepted this responsibility with enthusiasm. He had many wonderful ideas and this was an opportunity to put them into practice.

He had had sound secondary school education which designated him a “pivotal teacher” in the official records and set him apart from the other headmasters in the mission field. He was outspoken in his condemnation of the narrow views of these older and often less educated ones.

“We shall make a good job of it, shan’t we?” he asked his young wife when they first heard the joyful news of his promotion.

“We shall do our best,” she replied. “We shall have such beautiful gardens and everything will be just modern and delightful ...”

In their two years of married life she had become completely infected by his passion for “modern methods” and his denigration of “these old and superannuated people in the teaching field who would be better employed as traders in the Onitsha market.” She began to see herself already as the admired wife of the young headmaster, the queen of the school.

The wives of the other teachers would envy her position. She would set the fashion in everything . . . Then, suddenly, it occurred to her that there might not be other wives. Wavering between hope and fear, she asked her husband, looking anxiously at him.

“All our colleagues are young and unmarried,” he said with enthusiasm which for once she did not share. “Which is a good thing,” he continued.

“Why?”

“Why? They will give all their time and energy to the school.”

Nancy was downcast. For a few minutes she became skeptical about the new school; but it was only for a few minutes. Her little personal misfortune could not blind her to her husband’s happy prospects. She looked at him as he sat folded up in a chair

He was stoop-shouldered and looked frail. But he sometimes surprised people with sudden bursts of physical energy. In his present posture, however, all his bodily strength seemed to have retired behind his deep-set eyes, giving them an extraordinary power of penetration. He was only twenty-six, but looked thirty or more. On the whole, he was not unhandsome.

“A penny for your thoughts, Mike,” said Nancy after a while, imitating the woman’s magazine she read.

“I was thinking what a grand opportunity we’ve got at last to show these people how a school should be run.”

Ndume School was backward in every sense of the word. Mr. Obi put his whole life into the work, and his wife hers too. He had two aims. A high standard of teaching was insisted upon, and the school compound was to be turned into a place of beauty.

Nancy’s dream-gardens came to life with the coming of the rains, and blossomed. Beautiful hibiscus and allamanda hedges in brilliant red and yellow marked out the carefully tended school compound from the rank neighborhood bushes.

One evening as Obi was admiring his work he was scandalized to see an old woman from the village hobble right across the compound, through a marigold flowerbed and the hedges. On going up there he found faint signs of an almost disused path from the village across the school compound to the bush on the other side.

“It amazes me,” said Obi to one of his teachers who had been three years in the school, “that you people allowed the villagers to make use of this footpath. It is simply incredible.” He shook his head.

“The path,” said the teacher apologetically, “appears to be very important to them. Although it is hardly used, it connects the village shrine with their place of burial.”

“And what has that got to do with the school?” asked the headmaster. “Well, I don’t know,” replied the other with a shrug of the shoulders. “But I remember there was a big row some time ago when we attempted to close it.”

“That was some time ago. But it will not be used now,” said Obi as he walked away. “What will the Government Education Officer think of this when he comes to inspect the school next week? The villagers might, for all I know, decide to use the schoolroom for a pagan ritual during the

Anne-Charlotte Legrand et Alexis Troszczynski – Académie de Versailles, en partie inspirée de l'unité The Train to Rhodisia, *Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.

inspection.”

Heavy sticks were planted closely across the path at the two places where it entered and left the school premises. These were further strengthened with barbed wire.

Three days later the village priest of Ani called on the headmaster. He was an old man and walked with a slight stoop. He carried a stout walking stick which he usually tapped on the floor, by way of emphasis, each time he made a new point in his argument.

“I have heard,” he said after the usual exchange of cordialities, “that our ancestral footpath has recently been closed ...”

“Yes,” replied Mr. Obi. “We cannot allow people to make a highway of our school compound.”

“Look here, my son,” said the priest, bringing down his walking stick, “this path was here before you were born and before your father was born. The whole life of this village depends on it. Our dead relatives depart by it and our ancestors visit us by it. But most important, it is the path of children coming in to be born ...”

Mr. Obi listened with a satisfied smile on his face.

“The whole purpose of our school,” he said finally, “is to eradicate just such beliefs as that. Dead men do not require footpaths. The whole idea is just fantastic. Our duty is to teach your children to laugh at such ideas.”

“What you say may be true,” replied the priest, “but we follow the practices of our fathers. If you reopen the path we shall have nothing to quarrel about. What I always say is: let the hawk perch and let the eagle perch.” He rose to go.

“I am sorry,” said the young headmaster. “But the school compound cannot be a thoroughfare. It is against our regulations. I would suggest your constructing another path, skirting our premises. We can even get our boys to help in building it. I don’t suppose the ancestors will find the little detour too burdensome.”

“I have no more words to say,” said the old priest, already outside.

Two days later a young woman in the village died in child bed. A diviner was immediately consulted and he prescribed heavy sacrifices to propitiate ancestors insulted by the fence.

Obi woke up next morning among the ruins of his work. The beautiful hedges were torn up not just near the path but right round the school, the flowers trampled to death and one of the school buildings pulled down . . .

That day, the white Supervisor came to inspect the school and wrote a nasty report on the state of the premises but more seriously about the “tribal war situation developing between the school and the village, arising in part from the misguided zeal of the new headmaster.”

Chinua Achebe, *Girls at War and Other Stories* (1972)

made by Meghan Markle, the first biracial woman to marry into the royal family.

“Suddenly, all of us who before didn’t really take much notice of the royal family began to see what was happening to Markle,” McClymont says. “She was vilified as a Black woman and no statement of support was made by the [royal] family.”

Markle’s allegations were so damaging the royal family was forced to respond. The Queen issued a statement calling them “concerning,” while Prince William defended the monarchy, saying, “We’re very much not a racist family.”

What does the future hold for the British monarchy around the world?

Despite a string of royal controversies in recent months, public opinion of the Queen herself remains high. But the same may not be true of her heir. A poll conducted

Anne-Charlotte Legrand et Alexis Troszczynski – Académie de Versailles, en partie inspirée de l'unité The Train to Rhodisia, *Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.

by Ipsos Mori of over 2,000 British adults found that the Queen is more than three times more popular than her immediate heir, Prince Charles. Some royal observers have suggested that the Queen is investing in Prince William and Kate, aged 39 and 40 respectively, as future leaders of the royal family. The couple are twice as popular as Charles who, at 73, may not be on the throne as long as his mother. The Caribbean tour was a crucial test of the monarchy's relevance in the modern era—the scale of the opposition William and Kate faced may well trouble the Queen.

Ultimately, however, Barbadian political analyst Wickham believes the future of the British monarchy outside the U.K. is less an issue of royal popularity than it is about countries' national identity. "This is not about Queen Elizabeth herself. It's not about an individual," he says. "It's really about us moving in a different direction."

Eloise Barry, *Times*, March 24, 2022

Anne-Charlotte Legrand et Alexis Troszczynski – Académie de Versailles, en partie inspirée de l'unité *The Train to Rhodesia, Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.



Jamaica, Kingston : Prince William and Kate, in the Land Rover as a nod to the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh visiting Jamaica during their Royal Tours, BBC, 25 March 2022

Prince William suggests Commonwealth could be led by a non-royal one day

Anne-Charlotte Legrand et Alexis Troszczynski – Académie de Versailles, en partie inspirée de l'unité The Train to Rhodisia, *Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.

"What matters to us is the potential The Commonwealth family has to create a better future for the people who form it, and our commitment to serve and support as best we can," the duke says at the end of a tour of the Caribbean.

Prince William has ended a tour of the Caribbean by suggesting he doesn't mind if he isn't head of The Commonwealth in future-and that he believes one day it may be led by someone other than a member of the Royal Family.

In remarks issued to mark the end of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's first official trip to the region, he said: "Who The Commonwealth chooses to lead its family in the future isn't what is on my mind. What matters to us is the potential the Commonwealth family has to create a better future for the people who form it, and our commitment to serve and support as best we can."



His comments are striking when you consider the importance of The Commonwealth to the Queen throughout her reign as head of the institution. [...] There has also been a perception that some of the photo opportunities have looked out-dated and colonial.

William said: "I know that this tour has brought into even sharper focus questions

Anne-Charlotte Legrand et Alexis Troszczynski – Académie de Versailles, en partie inspirée de l'unité *The Train to Rhodisia, Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.

about the past and the future. In Belize, Jamaica, and the Bahamas, that future is for the people to decide upon. But we have thoroughly enjoyed spending time with communities in all three countries, understanding more about the issues that matter most to them." [...] "Catherine and I are committed to service," he said. For us, that's not telling people what to do. It is about serving and supporting them in whatever way they think best, by using the platform we are lucky to have. It is why tours such as this reaffirm our desire to serve the people of The Commonwealth and to listen to communities around the world."

Sky News 26 March 2022

Prince William and Kate's Tour Was Meant to Secure the Monarchy in the Caribbean. Instead, It's Raising New Questions About Its Future

The British royal family is facing embarrassment on the international stage this week as protests disrupt Prince William and Kate Middleton's tour of former British colonies in the Caribbean. The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge began their week-long visit to Belize, Jamaica and the Bahamas March 19.

Officially, the trip was meant to commemorate Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee, celebrating 70 years on the throne. Many observers say the trip was meant to persuade the three countries to keep the Queen as head of state.. But growing calls to cut formal ties with the Queen and campaigns for slavery reparations have ignited a reckoning with the region's colonial past.



How is Prince William and Kate's visit sparking controversy?

Prince William and Kate arrived in Jamaica, the second stop of their trip, on March 22. Only a day later, *The Independent* reported that the Jamaican government had begun the process of transitioning the island nation—which is the largest English speaking country in the Caribbean—to a republic.

The news arrived at a difficult moment for the royals. The day before the couple's arrival in the country, one hundred Jamaican academics, politicians, and cultural figures signed an open letter calling for the royal family and British government to apologize and pay reparations for subjecting the island to colonial rule and slavery.

"We are of the view an apology for British crimes against humanity, including but not limited to the exploitation of the indigenous people of Jamaica, the transatlantic trafficking of Africans, the enslavement of Africans, indentureship and colonialization is necessary to begin a process of healing, forgiveness, reconciliation and compensation," the letter said.

The letter's consignatories describe Prince William and Kate as "direct beneficiaries of the wealth accumulated by the royal family...from the trafficking and enslavement of Africans". In reference to the Queen's Jubilee, the letter reads: "We see no reason to celebrate 70 years of the ascension of your grandmother to the British throne because her leadership, and that of her predecessors, has perpetuated the greatest human rights tragedy in the history of humankind.

The group, called the Advocates Network, staged a protest March 22 outside the British High Commission in Kingston to coincide with the couple's arrival. Demonstrators held banners reading "#SehYuhSorry and make REPARATIONS."

The following day, Prince William stopped short of an apology, instead expressing "profound sorrow" for the "appalling atrocity of slavery" during an address to Jamaica's prime minister March 23. "Slavery was abhorrent and it never should have happened," he said. "I strongly agree with my father, the Prince of Wales, who said in Barbados last year that the appalling atrocity of slavery forever stains our history."

Events in Jamaica weren't the only controversy for the couple on their tour. They canceled their first major engagement the day before touching down in Belize, the first stop on the trip. William and Kate were due to visit a cocoa farm March 20 but locals staged a protest against the visit, objecting to the couple's plans to land their helicopter on a nearby football pitch without consultation, the Daily Mail reported.

The protests were part of a wider land dispute between indigenous communities and Flora and Fauna International (FFI), the conservation charity that William supports as patron. Locals allege that the charity controls their communal ancestral lands, lost in the colonial era, as "private property," according to the report. Demonstrators carried banners reading 'Prince William leave our land' and 'Colonial legacy of theft continues with Prince and FFI'.

Eloise Barry, *Times*, March 24, 2022

Anne-Charlotte Legrand et Alexis Troszczynski – Académie de Versailles, en partie inspirée de l'unité The Train to Rhodisia, *Shine Brighter 2de*. Editions Nathan. 2025.



The secret of GB tableau