

Exploration Of Identity In Achebe's Novels "Things Fall Apart" And "Anthills Of The Savannah"

Rajive Kumar Ranjan

Research Scholar

Dept. of English, Lnmu, Darbhanga

ABSTRACT

Chinua Achebe is considered as one of the most profound African writers. He is specially known for his novel Things Fall Apart. He is outstanding and high ranking African writers due to his rebellious work in post-colonial literature and his powerful writing that offered the world with the outlook of colonial understanding from the viewpoint of the colonized. This article focuses on parallel study of the first and the last Achebe's novels, namely "Things Fall Apart" and "Anthills of the Savannah". In this research I try to examine the author's inspiration through this stories that talk about the radical changes took place in African societies influenced by colonization. Similarly, the paper explores the narrative techniques Achebe employed in his writing to appropriate English language for the purpose of challenging the prevalent image of Africa that was represented in colonial intercourse as the barbaric image of Africa. Further, the paper deals the elements of Igbo oral poetic tradition. Achebe in his narratives, the major role he ascribed to prove himself as a social critic, educators of the common people and preservers of African history and culture in post-independence period.

keywords: Post-colonial, Igbo society, cultural identity

INTRODUCTION

Chinua Achebe is not Only the greatest Africa's literary authors but also the pioneer of the modern African novel. As an insider the author proves himself to represent his experience towards Africa, he began to write his first novel in the 1950's when his country was under British domain. Achebe realizes that Africa possesses both written and unwritten traditions. Moreover, the concept of oral literature is an unfamiliar one to people brought up in culture. Achebe mentioned in the stories that focuses various aspects of his native Igbo tribe's culture, superstitions, faith, believes, religion and lifestyle. His novel Things Fall Apart acclaimed as the first novel imposed on the life of Nigeria because growing up himself in the Igbo town of Ogidi. This novel throw light on African tradition it perfectly harmonized modulated by an awareness capable of encompassing the life of nature, history and the compulsion of the soul. The important point of his novels transfer over time with the expansion of his political thought. The novel Anthills of the Savannah, portrays a typical modern African nation which confronted

with deep-rooted disparity, widely poorness and is ruled out by corrupt political exclusive formed again in the colonial time. Though this novel, Achebe brings out to the prominence shows as the prime role of a writer in African societies and the significance of female deliverance for developing nation's prosperity entirely. His effort to made recognizing the views of connection between the above mentioned novels by analyzing the development of the author's political and social observations genuinely represent African culture, and finally by commanding the role of women and writers in both pre-colonial Igbo community and post-colonial Nigerian society, to whom Achebe attributed the extreme importance for protecting the identity of African people.

WRITING SKILLS USES

It is fact that the paper analysis of the two novels whose plot and themes are so firmly based on criticism of colonial representations of Africa and imperial pressure of colonized peoples in common that identify the conditions of indigenous in his works. Achebe occupied an important position and accomplished his education in English domains, which only privileged, and English-speaking members of Nigerian society could complete. It is fact that his young mind's observations were the first decorated by his own language admitted for developing a sense of appreciation for his people's indigenous culture and tradition.

Achebe spent his time in his father's library reading the works of English literary greats, thus, learning the history that engrossing him because they were about "things remote, and almost ethereal". However, he usually enjoyed with his mother and sister's elucidations of traditional Igbo stories like fables, myths and fairy tales. At the early age, Achebe was interested in stories, storytelling and origin of their culture. Though, the stories about Africa that is written by the colonial writers and more often than not offered a pitched image of Africans as uncivilized untamed, that have "only heard of culture for the first time from Europeans", as he puts it in the writer role in a New Nation, his most influential essays on the devastating effect of colonization on African peoples. In 1948 he was entered into a reputed University College in Ibadan, the first college in Nigeria, then within the University of London. Initially his aim was to avail the scholarship and awarded to study medicine, but after a year in college he opted for a rather different academic path and selected the courses of English literature, history and theology of them proved rather to his successful literary career. His studies in theology was very impressed because they were not only devoted to discuss the Christian belief, but also to examine the religious exercise of West African community. Achebe wanted to try to reveal the conditions of his community during the colonial power and for decades dwelled conclusive in the Western minds, an image of a monolithic, cultureless African continent, inhabited by

barbarian tribes who are deeply insightful need of enlightenment that only a civilized, white Europeans could provide. The enforcement by the necessity to impart a truthful, more complicated history of his people, he designed *Things Fall Apart*, a treasure of postcolonial literature that transmitted an unclear educational message, which helps continue self-respect and self-acknowledgement in his compatriots and keeps repudiate bias about Africans to this day. Achebe was provided by the colonial institutions and helped him to feel through all the ways a foreign culture was implemented on his people, insignificant and repressing the Igbo identity in the process, and it also provided him with a means of attempt for again establishing his indigenous culture on a global scale. The post-colonial author had to be familiar with European literary tradition even try to challenge the dominant delineation of Africa and to succeed in his effort by using the language that was appointed on his people as an ideas of communication. Achebe controlled to modify both the colonizer's language and the concept of a novel in such a way as to generate a narrative that reveals African heritage from an evidently African outlook.

The novel, *Anthills of the Savannah*, which appeared to be his last one. This novel that personify the totality of Achebe's socio-political analysis. Nevertheless, Achebe also attributed to the Nigerian elite the power for interrupting with the nation's chronical of oppression and for designing a more hopeful future for its tribes.

Achebe's novels and unliterary output reveals balanced social critique in terms of central objective on the viciousness of colonist. However, highlighting the defect and misapprehension of his own people displayed in the pre-colonial era and afterwards. He was acquainted to change the minds of his countryman before the interchange of the reality of life.

Post-colonialism literature addresses the problems and social conditions of the society particularly connecting to political and cultural wisdom of overpower people such as discrimination and colonialism. Post-colonial literatures in the mid of the last century was led and go along with the spirit of national oppressions and insightment that challenged the British rule. The action of changing from colonial to independent status was one of those policies that looks good on paper but doesn't work lots of things are imported because there is no alternatives. The reason was the irreversible dominant of the colonizer's language that still served its purpose of creating a reasonable mass to convey informations, news or ideas within a bilingual society, as it had been at the time it was introduced upon the colonized.

OUTLOOK OF AFRICAN LITERATURE

It is fact that the writing system of Africa was no developed well because of enriched communication while Africa is a realm of rich cultures, traditions, customs and producing great writers from different field. Although, it is obvious that African literature in the small sense of

the word had not entered before colonial activity of African lands, the societies that occupied the African continent were not wanting of any kind of literary and artistic utterance, as the presiding image of Africa may recommend. These tribes had actually developed in the course of history a complex and varied oral poetic tradition which is argued to be on par with its British complement. The value of verbal artistry in Igbo society that is reflected in the unusual revered role of the artist in their society. The role of an artist in Africa was to perform first and foremost an important social function of countries.

Achebe's political attitudes and orientations were voiced most detailed through speeches and considering of one of the main characters of *Anthills of the Savannah*. Ikem Osodi is not only a journalist but also a talented poet. He is a member of the "troika" who took over the bridle of power in Kangan and devoted themselves to the nation-building task. In spite of being the editor of government-controlled newspapers *National Gazette*, he flung many "editorial movement" in which he ferociously criticized awful policies of Kanganese government and constantly intensified to extensive poverty, corruption and inequality in Kangan. Still, he belongs to the educated, upper class of the Kanganese society, and is ultimately detached from the majority's problems. However, in the story he is aware of the full extent of the common man's sufferings. As the narrator puts it, Ikem "had generally felt a craving without very clear definition to connect his essence with earth and people", so his problem was not "whether it should be done but how to do it with integrity. It made him to see the state of affairs crystal clear was the powerful speech given by the Abazonian sage.

STRUGGLE FOR IDENTITY IN THINGS FALL APART

Chinua Achebe portrays that African can consciously generate their own identities as well as transfer it as identity is not commonly reducible to the public groups to which people belong. Umuofia is shown in the novel "Things Fall Apart" as a traditional society with firm cultural stance that depends on a man's state. The protagonist Okonkwo presents a resolute force resisting change and striving to protect his identity which is based upon the traditional standards by the society judges him. Moreover, female characters were removed in this novel from any position of power or the prospects of particularly making decisions on their life choices. The concept of Igbo community is utterly impracticable for an Igbo woman. People are known as a principal of their families and marry a girl who effectively becomes their property, as well as children are issued by a woman are one of the unique identity of women in the society. The role of women don't go away looking after of "her husband" children and of their household, serving as his sexual object whenever his desires to grow "female crops" like cassava and coco-yam. For both men and women, breeding is considered mandatory because thereby they continue ancestral life. The failure for a woman is to end up being childless. One

can suppose that the sharpness Ekwefi emanated after enfolding multiple children, that did not even go beyond their infancy, was induced by her not being able to fulfill the role of a mother, the primary social role of a woman in Igbo community. Feminist critics bring forth the concept of double colonization that was the result of women's quashed in colonial societies "both to common distinction as colonial subjects and specific distinction as women" in male-dominated cultures. However, Achebe's novels we are taking into historical periods in Nigerian history when the colonial persecution was either yet to be realized in its full might or it had been long quenched, but still stick around in the hands of indigenous ruling class and in the psyche of yet "unliberated" lower classes. Therefore, marginalized position of women in *Things Fall Apart* can only be ascribed to the patriarchal disposition of traditional Igbo society. Thus, the theme of identity in the sense of an African people can be traced back to Achebe's outlook as a native of the Igbo people in Africa. *Things fall apart*' search aspects of identity through its main character Okonko's views of what it means to be Africans.

ANTHILLS OF THE SAVANNAHAFRICAN POINT OF VIEW

Anthills of the Savannah is a fictional novel, set in African nations of Kangan in which the story focuses that lead to the fall of an African Military Ruled led by his excellency and the fates of two of his initially friends. The character like Beatrice Okoh is an educated, self-reliant and sophisticated woman, which immediately distinguishes her from other female characters in the novel, like Elewa or her maid Agatha, that belongs to deprive majority of the Nigerian population. She earned a degree in English with first-class honors at Queen Mary's College, University of London and works as a Senior Assistant Secretary in the Ministry of Finance. The reader is acquainted to all the major male characters and was given insight into the dynamic power relations within Kanganese government does he meet Beatrice Okoh the fiancée of the Commissioner for Information Chris, an intimate friend of the editor of *National Gazette* Ikem and an employee of His Excellency Sam, the seemingly all-powerful president of Kangan. Her belated appearance in the story is symbolic of the newly-found appreciation for female cause in African societies that Achebe felt uncomfortable but her connection to the trio of main male protagonists immediately qualify her as the compatible agent of the story.

Beatrice is a successful woman in a close relationship with people within the Kanganese power-structures brought her plenty of enemies. It is quite bothered by male jingoism in Kangan society which assumed that she uses "bottom power" to boost her career prospects, while pretentious journalists "created an image of which could not be farther from the truth.

Beatrice born in a patriarchal family with her father wielding complete authority over his wife and children. They spent in an Anglican Church compound, her father being a priest at a village church famous throughout the diocese for his frequent whipping of village children. He was a

very serious man who, similarly to Okonkwo, showed no kindness to his family members and on top of that, often flogged them. By the time of *Anthills of the Savannah* the practice of power has become even more extreme; the novel opens with the military rules of the African state of Kangan disdainfully treating his civilian cabinet like children.

CONCLUSION

The present paper explores the ending of *Things Fall Apart* predicts the future deterioration of the Igbo people. Achebe is as a newcomer to the Nigerian literary scene, although today he looks like the father of modern Nigerian writing and its ablest spokesman. The literary scene in Nigeria today is dominated by some new writers, Achebe who continue to explore in his writings some of the subjects and themes found in the Onitsha literary tradition. Achebe is one of such writers of post-colonial Africa who has artistically used the colonizer's language and by giving it a touch of his native culture, he was introduced an English language which seems to be his own. the present paper aims to investigate achebe's innovation with african lexical words in english language under the title.

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