

Chapter VI

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6.0. Introduction

Anthills of Savannah (1987) relates the aspects of the colonial process from the beginning to the end of the colonial contact in Nigeria. The novel has been received the great acclaimed after *A Man of the People* (1966), which was shortlisted for the *Booker Prize* in 1987. The title comes from a proverb about “anthills surviving to tell the new grass of the Savannah about the last years bush fires”. It throws the light on the usefulness of the narrative tradition in bearing the seeds future renewal. It sets out the significance of the story-telling to evaluate the African problems with potential effects of ideological reinforcement or challenge in the spheres of political legacy. It also represents the status of the Igbo mythological resonance in terms of political leadership. Simon Gikandi says that the novel is the representation of the “political and cultural crisis that marks the transition from the colonial system to a post-colonial situation” (Gikandi, 1991:18).

The anthills in Africa are referred symbolically to the independent selfish colonies during the post-colonial period. The African despots used the sweat of the people to protect their power like the termite mounds or anthills. On the other hand, Achebe’s suggestion is that story –telling is to be used as the special tool of the social change with an amalgamation of the traditional and new values. The three major figures Ikem, Chris and Sam are crucial in the new regime of the fictional West African Land of Kangan.

The colonial struggle among the African people doesn’t just touch upon the identity of the native people of Nigeria to grapple with a new culture. But the more serious hindrance that they faced is the suppression and protection of their culture by the issues of crossed identity, imposed inferiority and even a huge range of hatred from the colonizers to make them conscious about the importance of the mainstream of the traditional values. The post-colonial period reflects the two-dimensional issues identity to adjust the relationship between the changed and the changer. Being witness to the failure of social justice and democracy in Nigeria, Achebe distinguishes the fictional nation Kangan, which is parallel to Nigeria.

The novel revolves around the identity of two prominent intellectuals like Chris and Ikem, who are victimized in a military crackdown initiated by the nation’s President, Sam. The focus of the novel shifts between these two characters and their female friends, Beatrice and Elewa. Achebe fosters the dilemma of the elite figures along with their frustrations and urges for Africa’s future. Christopher Oriko holds an

unenviable position as the Minister of Information to defend the policies of a military dictator, who happens to be one of his childhood friends. His responsible act draws a fine line between loyalty and subversion. On the other hand, Ikem Osodi, a firebrand opportunist justifies the actions of Christopher through the editorials and serves as an emancipator for his own dissatisfaction with the post-colonial scenario in Nigeria.

The novel explores the post-colonial identities of the Nigerian people that experienced the military rule for a long time. It bears hints of impending trouble with Nigeria through the character like Sam, the military dictator, who is involved in finding out the remedies for the usurpation with his childhood friends, Chris and Ikem. Achebe narrates the bitter experiences, which he faced during the post-colonial period in Nigeria. The anthills of the elite people are visible in the barren landscape through consuming the public funds by imitating the former colonial master.

The reflection of the post-colonial Nigerian condition in *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987) exposes the issues of identity and culture concerned with the colonial legacy and social evolution. The historical forces related to colonization seem to have disrupted the spiritual foundation of the Nigerians by deterioration of their traditional values. It led the people to chaos, corruption and instability in all the sections of life. Achebe points out the socio-political forces operating in post-colonial Nigeria.

6.1. Issues of Identity in ‘*Anthills of Savannah*’

The identity issues of the people in Nigeria after Independence during the decades 1970s and 1980s are portrayed in the novel as the political satire in the novel. The civil war, the corruption of power, the rapid alterations of the civilian and the military rule were touched on at the end of *A Man of the People* (1966). The three characters Sam, Chris and Ikem are known to each other for twenty-five years, since their college days at Lord Lugard. Their careers are presented as the search for their identity by political captivity, intelligence and loyalty. Elewa comments on the careers of these three male characters. She says; “Well, you fellows, all three of you, are incredibly conceited. The story of this country, as far as you are concerned, is the story of the three of you” (AOS: 62). The three representative characters focus on the leadership and the political powers of Nigeria.

It is evident that the native rulers exploit the masses to justify their power in the form of the domestication. “They have the animal capacity to endure the pain of,

shall we say, domestication. The very words the white master had said in his time about the black race as a whole. Now we say them about the poor” (AOS: 37). The native ruler like Sam is the failure to get rid on the colonial legacy. Achebe points out about the usurpation of the native leaders for getting personal power disrupts the society. He says;

“The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or water or air or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leader to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership” (Achebe, 1990:118).

Sam is a satirical identity in the novel troubles the nation with all kinds of neo-colonial social malaise. As a result, the elite class tries to resist the usurpation by creating the national consciousness to make aware the people through education. The issues of identity of the Nigerian society after the 1960s disrupted the peaceful life. Sam is involved deeply in the eddy of power; Chris, Ikem and Beatrice identify themselves getting involved with the problems of the Nigerian people. Ikem, as an editor of the *National Gazette* says that “Worshipping a dictator is such a pain in the ass. It wouldn't be so bad if it was merely a matter of dancing upside down on your head” (AOS: 41). The eradication of the roots of corruption is the priority rather than the support to the bitterness of the government. It is noted from the protest of the Ikem that the role of the writer to get the regenerated identity of the people is an important to pass the hurdles of nepotism and corruption.

Chris is inspired by the sacrifice of Ikem for the eradication of the evils. He continues the movement by giving up his job and joins the union of taxi drivers. With the help of Immanual, the president of the Students' Union of Bassa and Braihmoh, he plays a role of an eye opener of the masses to bring to the notice of masses about the failure of the Government and exposes the murder of Ikem through media. To pay homage to the martyred Ikem, He becomes an integral part of the masses in Abazon. He is also shot dead by the soldiers while saving the young nurse, Adamma, who was travelling with him from Bassa. His endeavour is symbolic in the context of the resistance of male power in Nigeira in the neo-colonial period. The movement is led

by Beatrice after deaths of Ikem and Chris. She seems to be a new hope 'to appease an embittered history' (AOS: 211). The struggle of the three people like Ikem, Chris and Beatrice throw the light on the bitterness of the political power. The naming ceremony of Elewa's daughter heralds a new beginning in challenging not only dismantling the Western tradition but also the African. Basil Davidson comments on the issues of African people, which sought the disharmony among them. He says;

“Africa's crises of society derive from many upsets and conflicts ... but the root of human failures and corruption is seen to arise from the social and political institutions within which the colonized Africans have lived and tried to survive. Primarily, this is a crisis of institution” (Davidson, 1992:9).

Elewa's child birth during the social unrest is the blend of the middle-class representation and the Ikem's intellectual signifies the hope for the new brave world. It is evident from the narrative remark at the end of the novel. The narrator says, “This world belongs to the people of the world not to any little caucus, no matter how talented....” (AOS: 222). It reflects that the struggle of the people in Nigeria remains as the anthills “like anthills surviving to tell the new grass of the savannah about last year's brush fires”(AOS:28).

Achebe explores the struggle and the issues of the identity of post-colonial Kangan society, as a representation of Africa in general. The political leaders caused the problems to the masses. The social malaise becomes the core part of the political powers. The middle class and the lower class people restore the dignity of the nation as the new hope for the new nation. The role of the masses is poignant to eradicate the nepotism and corruption. In the context, reconciliation connects the people to reject the European culture as well as political domination. It gives a message that the Africans can seek the glorious future not by the civil wars but in the terms of social developments through the harmonious co-existence of the culture.

6.1.1 Post-colonial Identity in Nigeria

The post-colonial period in African literature exposes the discursive practices with the kind of subversion and dislocation of the Igbo identity in Nigeria. Selden says that “postcolonial studies overtook the troublesome ideological category of 'Commonwealth literature' to emerge in the 1980s as a set of concerns marked by the

decentredness otherwise associated, philosophically, with post structuralism and particularly deconstruction”(Selden ed.al.,2005:230) The post-colonialism focuses on the issues of the power relations influenced by the Western culture. The political leadership in Nigeria fails to dismantle the Western influences. The materialistic influences among people in Nigeria made them dislocated from the ethnic indigenous identity. As a result, they lost the spiritual foundation that was needed to adhere the social harmony and equality. Ashcroft Bill (ed.al) says that the European theories “may be more indebted to the cultural effects of the material practice of colonization and its aftermath than is usually acknowledged” (Ashcroft ed.al., 1998:156).

The colonial administrative practice was completely reverse after Independence in Nigeria to the popular saying ‘power belongs to the people’. The warrant chiefs and the local officials created the impression that the political power is a source to get the society secured in terms of equality in the economical spheres. The brutality of the colonial administration continued during the post-colonial period.

Anthills of Savannah (1987) represents the political powers by exposing its failure to connect with the people of Abazon in the fictional state Kangan. It reflects the need of a range of possibilities to open up the new horizons as the remedies to its social malaise. The three alternatives have been projected in the novel to get the society free from the clutches of the colonial-based administration. The leadership of enlightened intellectual person unlike Ikem Osodi, The equality and the space for the elevated status of the women like Beatrice and the group of the people, who insists on the dynamic policies. After Independence, the modest public officers serve as the objects of laughter, On the other hand, the nepotism made them distorted in their ideas to keep the masses vibrant with the changing pace. *A Man of the People* (1966) represents Odili Samalu as the failure to continue the antidote towards the ills of the political powers. *No Longer at Ease* (1960) is reflected as the insignificance of the intellectual capabilities of Obi, who represents Igbo community.

Public service among Igbo community was known as the main source to pay the taxes, which were forced by the colonial administration. The same scenario continued in the post-colonial period. During the colonial period, the local chief warrants got the favour of the colonial officers for well-being to collect the revenue for the structural development like roads, railways, postal and telegraphic services. The indigenous people were trapped into the clutches of the structures of governance. It leads to the post-colonial period and people to exploit the people. Ikenna Nzimiro

remarks that “the movement from the villages to the urban areas was a reaction to the new monetary stimuli provided by trade with the Europeans and also working for them” (Ikenna, 1971: 168).

The structure of the Government in Nigeria till 1983 was an open terrain for unchallenged corrupt practices. To resist the corrupt Government was a major issue merely in a cosmetic exercise. *The Anthills of Savannah* (1987) throws light on the conflicts between the elite classes against the middle-class people. The South Eastern Nigeria is known as the homeland of the Igbo people. After first Independence of Nigeria in 1960, The Igbo people were prompted by the new living conditions to migrate to other parts of Nigeria, Africa, Europe and America.

6.1.2 Social Identity

Achebe reflects the social identity of the Nigeria in the form fictitious social class of Kangan. He makes the readers enable to observe the issues of social identity in the Republic of Kangan with different facets of it. The society is divided into two groups; the ruling class and the opposing downtrodden people. The ruling class of the society represents the Sam, (His Excellency) and the members of his cabinet; they are engaged in fostering the economy and ethical ideas. The second group of the society comprises the students, taxi-drivers, traders, peasants and messengers. The kind of struggle of the working class of the people against the ruling system creates the issues of social injustice among various classes. The meeting of the cabinet with an air-conditioned chamber reveals the difference between the ruling class and the peasants. The narrator Chris says, “At first I thought the air-conditioners had become just fractionally louder which would be perfectly consistent with the generating vagaries of the National Electric Power Authority” (AOS: 8)., whereas the common people suffer from the draught like situation. It makes the ruling people alienated from the social issues of Kangan.

It is evident that the poor people do not get the clean water, shelter and the food and the rulers take advantage of their positions and live in a luxurious way. The narrator points out that the use of the public funds by rulers to build the Presidential Retreat for the luxury of them costs high instead of spending money for the upliftment of the downtrodden people. He says;

“Presidential Retreat twice before it was both in daytime. Going up to it now with the great shimmering expanse of the artificial lake waters stretching

eastwards into the advancing darkness on your left and the brightly lit avenue taking you slowly skywards in gigantic circles round and up the hill, on top of which the Presidential Retreat perches like a lighthouse, was a movingly beautiful experience even to a mood as frayed and soured as mine that evening.....twenty million spent on its refurbishment by the present administration since the overthrow of the civilians who had built it at a cost of forty-five million may still be considered irresponsibly extravagant in our circumstances..”(AOS: 69).

It makes the distinction between the usurped class and the exploited social class of the people in Kangan. It is noticeable that the colonial administrative luxury was imitated by the ruling class after Independence. The influence of the colonial masters is seen in the post-colonial identity of the ruling people in Nigeria by adaptation of their culture and social status. The political powers make them to keep the difference from the identity of the ordinary people. However, the childhood friends, Chris, Ikem and Beatrice sought their education from London University and Sam from Nigeria. Sam got the military training in Sandhurst and his stay in England makes him to follow the luxury of the English people. He is influenced by their customs rather than the Nigerian mode of life-style. It is one of the responsible factors, which make the difference between the ruling class and the ordinary people of Kangan. The narrator points out the fascination of Sam about English customs. He says, “He was fascinated by the customs of the English, especially their well-to-do classes and enjoyed playing at their foibles” (AOS: 46). The Abazon people hate the Presidency of the Sam over the issues of power-seeking and corrupt Government, who were suffering from the severe drought continuously for two years in the province. Vinay Kripal points out that the ruling class of the Kangan is completely “alienated from the people and insular in their privileges....They love the trappings of power are weak and bourgeois in their mentality” (Kripal: 1993:130).

When it comes to the point about to solve the problems of the people of Abazon, who were caught in the two years draught, Sam is reluctant to meet them. He feels scared about the issues of the peasants. His alienation from the socialization makes the difference about harmonious coexistence between the rulers and the peasants. On the other hand, Ikem who “articulates both an alternative political creed”, says David Carroll, “a new radicalism in defiance of the President, and a

mythic account of what is happening into Kangan” (Carroll: 1980, 173.) In both the aspects, he acquaints the people about their rights and the responsibilities of the rulers. His opposition with the President’s orthodoxy is revealed through his vision. He wants the people to come up like the tidal wave to transform their world into heaven. It can be sought through the actual freedom from the polygamy of the authorities or the rulers. The narrator says;

“Experience and intelligence warn us that man's progress in freedom will be piecemeal, slow and undramatic. Revolution may be necessary for taking a society out of an intractable stretch of quagmire but it does not confer freedom, and may indeed hinder it”(AOS:94).

Ikem’s speech at Bassa Rotary Club mediated on ‘The tortoise and the Leopard’ that reflects the distinction between the people to defeat the military coupe is a new hope shown by the intellectualist to get the change against a stereotyped notion of struggle. The Kangan people want to seek the actual freedom from the usurpation of the rulers. The narrator says, “They threaten all champions of control, they frighten usurpers of the right-to freedom of the human spirit--in state, in church or mosque, in party congress, in the university or wherever” (AOS:146). The social identity of the Kangan people was trapped into the usurpation of the rulers and the struggle of the people to get their rights. The emotional appeal of Ikem to the natives to fight against the injustice and inequality is the concept of the social identification. Sigmund Freud calls it;

“...the earliest expression of an emotional tie with another person...thereby an inserting ambivalence into the very centre of the process.... identification is, in fact, ambivalent from the very start” (Freud, 1921/1991:134).

It is same about the reaction of Ikem against the polygamy of the rulers; he sets to pierce the ambivalence of the people. He convinces them to resist the dictatorship by giving up the worship. Otherwise, the narrator points out, “Worshipping a dictator is such a pain in the ass” (AOS: 41). It is evident that the issues of the social identity in Nigeria form the certain disintegration of the society.

6.1.3 Masculine Identity

The dominance of the masculine identity is reflected in the earlier novels of Chinua Achebe. *The Anthills of Savannah* (1987) extends the same issues at certain level, whereas the power relations impact the class struggle. Much heat has been generated on the issues of patriarchal ethos in English literature by Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) and Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) about the oppressive, gender-oriented mechanism in the society throughout the world. However, it reflects in the African literature during the post-colonial period in Achebe's novels. Being Independent in 1960, Nigeria faced certain social bias up to 1990. The two-facet issues of masculine identity are seen in the novel with power-struggle and ideology.

The Anthills of Savannah (1987) projects the structure of patriarchal framework that supports the oppression of women. It implies a set of strategies initiated by the male characters in Kangan during the postcolonial period. The protagonist, Sam (His Excellency) and his followers foster the hegemonic control to hold their regime emphasizing their brute force as an emblem of the powerful male authorities. The class distinction is formed by the social norms to facilitate certain amount dominance of the masculine power. Amuta Chidi states,

“society manifest itself in terms definite classes, groups and formations in the process of the production and reproduction of the means and ends for their sustenance, There, literary values are not very literary but derive from the class configuration of social totality” (Chidi,1986:39).

It is evident that the deeply-rooted systematic oppression of humanity by the dominance of male characters is reflected largely as a function of materialism. The women involved in the trade are considered as the peasants. Ikem Osodi explains identity of the market women as the peasants. It is an outcome of the male dominance about not to accept the role of them in the society as the equal parts of the society. He says, “Market women.... are in the same category as peasants” (AOS: 149). It has been observed by one of the students in Bassa that “there are the fundamental problems of the Third World in general and Kangan in particular” (AOS: 148). The polygamy of the politicians is observed as the urge of them to put the nation under the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat.

The traditional values of the Nigerian society kept the masculine power vibrant during the post-colonial period. Beatrice, while talking with Chris about the issues of the female security by marrying the men is the inferior role of them in the society. She remarks;

“That's when you (Chris) hear all kinds of nonsense talk from girls: Better to marry a rascal than grow a moustache in your father's compound; better an unhappy marriage than an unhappy spinsterhood; better marry Mr. Wrong in this world than wait for Mr. Right in heaven; all marriage is; all men are the same; and a whole baggage of other foolishnesses like that” (AOS: 83).

Beatrice promotes the feminine perspectives to resist the manliness when she insists on in the naming ceremony of Elewa's daughter. She points out that the identity of the women is restricted up to mother-role in the society. The leadership and the political turmoil in the Kangan, which is an imaginary Nigeria, present the gendered society by the male counterparts. Sam, Ikem and Chris are the powerful figures, where the male dominance is attributed to all the spheres of the society. The treatment to the women as the 'others' is considered as the opium of the ideology of the Nigerian society. It is a sarcastic remark of Beatrice to compare Mr. Right and Mr. Wrong at the time of the marriages of the girls. It notifies that the options available for girls are limited in a sense of versatile bridegrooms. But it has indirectly pointed out that the women have to rely on the masculine traditional dominance. On the other hand, it poses the question of psychological security of the women in the post-colonial period. It is a great phenomenon in acquisition of the equality by women in the male-dominated societies.

The narrator compares the role of the women which is referred in the Old Testament as an oppressed woman faces the similar accusation at present. Beatrice says;

“The original oppression of Woman was based on crude denigration. She caused Man to fall. So she became a scapegoat. No, not a scapegoat which might be blameless but a culprit richly deserving of whatever suffering Man chose thereafter to heap on her. That is Woman in the Book of Genesis. Out

here, our ancestors, without the benefit of hearing about the Old Testament, made the very same story differing only in local colour” (AOS: 92).

It has been observed that the masculine power that comes from the problematic individual psyche. The social system doesn't change the supremacy of it and the society is known as the extension of the individual. Richard Taylor affirms that identity of the people is measured by the personal values and the capabilities. He says;

“Identity represents an evolving articulation of personal capacities, value identification and plans, ideals, expectations and opportunities”(Taylor,1986: 202).

The Kangan government sustains the male-oriented structured violence through the corrective regime. Achebe refers the dominance of masculine power to promote corruption, selfishness, and greed, which results into bad governance as well as the military coups. Sam rules the country Kangan with a tense hold and a corrupt government. The earlier novel *A Man of the People* (1966) deals the identity issues of the Nigerian people in relation to the political powers and taking cue from it *Anthills of Savannah* (1987) extends the issues of nationhood with divisions of the oppressed and the elite classes of the society from the perspectives of gender identity. It implies to the socio-political entity exposed by the male dominance and their urge for the opportunities in the pursuits of the power relations. In relation to the ideological, social and economic suppression of the women, the root of the cultural change reflects the realities of postcolonial Nigeria.

6.1.4 Feminine Identity

The African traditional women are reflected in the post-colonial period with certain challenges to resist the marginalization in relation to their social, economical and ideological rights. Achebe tries to present the available avenues for women to uplift their identity through moral strength in compare to the colonial feminine practices, which kept them subordinated in respect of all the rights. The migrated villagers in the urban areas find the scope for expansion of the feminine identity to

come up with the calibers. Beatrice challenges the polygamy of the masculine power. She rejects the male chauvinism. She says;

“every woman wants a man to complete her is a piece of male chauvinist bullshit I had completely rejected before I knew there was anything like Women's Lib...There was enough male chauvinism in my father's house to last me seven reincarnations”(AOS:83-84).

Her position as a senior Assistant in the Ministry of Finance in the postcolonial Kangan makes her able to foster her identity as a respectable person. She represents a small minority of the women with cosmetic skills on the parts of male dominance. Her name *Nwanyibuife* (A Female is also something) represents the role of the women as the contributors in the socio-economical recovery. She has identified herself concerned as the dependent on ‘bottom-power’ when her birth didn’t make any sense of pleasure in the house from the point of view of her mother as she was the fifth girl-child in a row. It implies that the girls had not been given the due importance in the traditional African societies. Ironically she had been named as *Nwanyibuife*.

The courageous and decisive women had thrown out the traditional social malaise. It is narrated by Chris that one of his twenty-six year’s old unmarried girlfriends shows the sensibility to hammer on the traditional attitudes of the people about the marriages when she was insulted by the aunt of her fiancé. She was taken by him to meet his people to the village. She didn’t tolerate the insult and had thrown him out of her life. It implies that the marriages of the girls in the traditional African tribes used to decide by the elders. But the rejection of the bridegroom is an instance of the moderate feminine identity in the postcolonial period.

Beatrice is intellectual and compatible with Ikem, who excels herself beyond the expectations. Ikem praises her by saying that she possesses the muscular qualities. She tells him that “he has no clear role for women in his political thinking; and he doesn't seem to be able to understand it” (AOS: 87). She resists the injustice against women when she had summoned the President for his drunken act and the sexual desire to Miss Cranford, an American journalist. Her urge for the national development reflects the role of the women in changing the political upheavals. When she shows the courage to challenge Sam’s attitude towards the women, she makes her identity as the “sacred symbol of the nation’s pride” (AOS: 76). It is evident from the

behaviour of Beatrice that she articulates her patriotic zeal by the way on the way to secure the identity of the women in power politics.

Questions are posed on the powerful masculine regime in the postcolonial period when women show the courage to retrieve the remnant pride and “the men in the hour of their defeat and left there in the circle of their last dance together” (AOS: 79). Ikem is represented as the symbolic stoppage of the feminine prospects of by the traditional male-dominated ethics. His idea about the women by refereeing the Old Testament makes it clear that the women were oppressed since the ages and they have been uplifted by men. He writes in his essay;

“Out here, our ancestors, without the benefit of hearing about the Old Testament, made the very same story differing only in local colour. At first the Sky was very close to the Earth. But every evening Woman cut off a piece of the Sky to put in her soup pot or, as in another version, she repeatedly banged the top end of her pestle carelessly against the Sky whenever she pounded the millet or, as in yet another rendering--so prodigious is Man's inventiveness--she wiped her kitchen hands on the Sky's face. Whatever the detail of Woman's provocation, the Sky finally moved away in anger, and God with it” (AOS: 92-93).

Actually, he writes about the lessened superiority of men in order to seek the empathy for the African masculine power which is considered as the most pivotal in African culture. He makes the people to think about the ancestral belief;

“Nneka, they said. Mother is supreme. Let us keep her in reserve until the ultimate crisis arrives and the waist is broken and hung over the fire, and the palm bears its fruit at the tail of its leaf. Then, as the world crashes around Man's ears, Woman in her supremacy will descend and sweep the shards together” (AOS: 93).

The idea behind exploring the ancestral beliefs of the Igbo people, Ikem wants to promote the masculine power that had been deteriorating through by the Western influences and the changes in the role of women. The idea behind exploring the ancestral beliefs of the Igbo people he wants to promote the masculine power that had

been deteriorating through the Western influences and the changes in the role of women. The feminine identity of the women in Africa is well-accentuated by the novelist in comparison with the Allegorical figure the Goddess *Idemili*, who is considered as the '*Pillar of Water*'. It is believed that the anarchy extended into their world long ago and the Sun decided to send his daughter to wrap the rude waist in order to bring peace and modesty, which is known as *Idemili*. If anyone in Igbo people wants to grab the 'Ozo' title, he must "inform the Daughter of the Almighty of his ambition" (AOS: 98). The feminine identity has the hold on the macular power. It has been noted that the role of *Idemili* is played by Beatrice that convinces the hold on the masculine power of Ikem and Sam when the suppression of the market women goes on. The narrator says;

"She (*Idemili*) holds his hand like a child in front of the holy stick and counts seven. Then she arranges carefully on the floor seven fingers of chalk, fragile symbols of peace, and then gets him to sit on them so lightly that not one single finger may be broken"(AOS:98-99).

It makes a sense that the power of women makes the people to believe in their capacities. So far as concerned with the role of Beatrice when she proposes the name for Elewa's daughter *Amaechina*—meaning "*May the path never close....in the sense of the Old Testament...The remnant shall return*" (AOS: 213). In the context of the feminine identity, African life-style of the women is reflected the transformed and emancipated. Achebe explores an idea of the feminine identity as the challenging and with the canons of the African culture. It accounts that the feminine identity issues are related with the capitalism and colonialism but not with the traditional African patriarchy.

6.1.5 Political Concerns

Anthills of the Savannah (1987) exposes the political affairs of Nigeria by identifying Nigerian society with the native cosmic cultural background. As an acute observer of the Nigerian colonial and post-colonial upheavals, Achebe highlights the significant roles played by the political concerns in Nigeria. The political concerns of the novel relate the socio-political condition of the post-colonial African countries. It has been portrayed in *A Man of the People* (1966) that the corruption and urge for

seeking political powers make the difference in the Independent countries. In response to that social malaise, the group of the intellectuals resists the corruption in order to offer a sense for creditability by throwing out the doctoral rule of the military coupe.

The characters in the novel are reflected from the various social strata ranging from the Head of the Kangan State and his cabinet Ministers to the Students of Union, Taxi-drivers and peasants from Abazon. The political concerns are presented through a trio of friends, Sam, Chris and Ikem, who are eye-openers of the power after military coup in Kangan. The insights of the political powers are given through the trained army-officer Sam, who had been transformed into his Excellency to foster the supreme political power. The identity of Sam as a military leader forms the layers of the dictatorship. The state Kangan becomes the private estate for him in order to pursue the materialistic interest to nurture the political atmosphere with the corrupt politicians, indifferent intellectuals and the peasants.

The power of military coup terrifies the people and the officials in a brutal manner. The cabinet comprising lawyers, professors, university graduates obey the dictatorship of Sam. Achebe indicates the political power as the slavish mode of acts by saying that “There were unconfirmed rumours of unrest, secret trials and executions in the barracks” (AOS: 13). It represents the Gestapo regime in Hitler’s Germany. Sanya Osha points out that the political history of Nigeria is an instance of the subservience of the political power, which was in a need of a good governance. He says;

“Nigeria is one of the best examples of how a nation should not be run. Its disastrous history of protracted military rule has virtually destroyed all facets of its national existence. And militarism is a scourge that mere cosmetic reforms cannot eradicate” (Osha, 2002:82).

Chris, Ikem and Beatrice represent the voice of change, charged with the responsibilities of resisting the policies of Sam. Chris’ loyalty to his nation portrays along with his old friend Ikem justifies his inaction through a kind of aloofness. The novelist penetrates the patriotic zeal of them by comparison of Nigeria with other nations as a revolutionary one. Chris says;

“Nations, he said, were fostered as much by structures as by laws and revolutions. These structures where they exist now are the pride of their nations. But everyone forgets that they were not erected by democratically-elected Prime Ministers but very frequently by rather unattractive, bloodthirsty medieval tyrants. The cathedrals of Europe, the Taj Mahal of India, the pyramids of Egypt and the stone towers of Zimbabwe were all raised on the backs of serfs, starving peasants and slaves. Our present rulers in Africa are in every sense late-flowering medieval monarchs, even the Marxists among them. Do you remember Mazrui calling Nkrumah a Stalinist Czar? Perhaps our leaders have to be that way. Perhaps they may even need to be that way” (AOS: 69-70).

Chris expresses his disgust about the post-colonial development in Nigeria by comparison with the world politics. Ikem Osodi also exemplifies his dissatisfaction with the post-colonial political issues when the political crisis becomes the grave being Independent. As a man of action, Ikem, the editor of *National Gazette* fosters revolution against the dictatorship and policies of the government. His Excellency, Sam treats the Abazonians in a brutal manner when he notices that the Abazon the only province had opposed him during the election. Ikem states that the revengeful attitude of the new government evokes the oppression of the masses. He draws the attention of the masses towards Sam’s imperialism. He says;

“And the fool who oppresses him will make a particular point of that enjoyment: You see, they are not in the least like ourselves. They don't need and can't use the luxuries that you and I must have. They have the animal capacity to endure the pain of, shall we say, domestication. The very words the white master had said in his time about the black race as a whole. Now we say them about the poor” (AOS: 37).

It is evident from the attitude of Ikem about the deep political concerns exercised by the ‘new rulers’ throws light on the political powers that are deeply rooted in the post-colonial period. The beginning of the novel reflects the political realities of Nigeria in the decade 1980s. The Military rule with the civil wars, corruption of power and anarchy pose questions of the paradigm of good governance.

On the other hand, the apple-polishing cabinet meetings, the issues of traffic jam in the capital Bassa are epitomized as the breakdown of the law and order due to the slavish subversion of the people. The use of the myth *Idemili* is significant to consider the values of a woman in the ethical laws. It is an eye-opener ideology presented through the cosmic traditional Almighty goddess of Idemili when the power rampaged and clutched their voices. Beatrice plays a pivotal role as “Idemili, to bear witness to the moral nature of authority by wrapping around Power’s rude waist a loincloth of peace and modesty” (AOS: 97). The quest for the identity of women is another political issue that makes an impact in the post-colonial period. Beatrice’s urge to find a way about the voice of women to be heard in the militarized social milieu of Kangan with Sam’s power game about the political rights of women constitutes the marginalization of women.

The political concerns reflect the power game, political upheavals and agitation of women for their political rights and the unequal share of the masses. The basic questions of class struggle are executed by the materialistic approach of the imperialists. The duel between Sam, His Excellency and Chris Oriko projects absolute power corrupts absolutely by generating the problems of the country like Kangan. The trouble with Nigeria simply refers the failure of leadership. Achebe comments about the inability of the leaders by saying that it is one of the responsible factors to raise the political issues among North and Eastern Igbo people. He says;

“The Nigerian [African] problem is the unwillingness or the inability of its leaders to raise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership” (Achebe, 1984:1).

The issues of Political leadership are dealt to expose the chaos and the crisis of the government. It initiates the transformation through the intellectuals like Ikem, Chris and Beatrice to find the ways of their culture in the sense the ‘real Kangan’. The fall of the civilian regime by heralding the coups in the country in *A Man of the People* (1966) is continued in *Anthills of Savannah* (1987) with the rampant corruption and a sense of disgust. It is an intension of the author that the writer has a responsibility to chart out a future course of action by pointing out the extreme political concerns.

6.1.6 Satirical Elements

The satirical elements of the novel throw light on the cynicism, corruption and exploitation of the masses. The satires related to politics examine the hypocrisy by exposing the follies of the leaders. Achebe presents rise and fall of the protagonists in *Things Fall Apart* (1958), *No Longer at Ease* (1960) and *Arrow of God* (1964) who were attributed to the machinations of colonialism. The respective protagonists of these novels elicit the sympathy of the readers. But the satires used in the novels like *A Man of the People* (1966) and *Anthills of Savannah* (1987) make the readers to feel disgust about the political leaders, who have stepped into the shoes of their colonial masters. Achebe's shift the focus from the 'goat-skin bags' in *Things Fall Apart* to 'national cake' in *A Man of the People*, which draws the attention towards the inevitable change in the Nigerian identity. But in the sense of their cosmic integration, the ethical values seem different during the post-colonial period being Independent in 1960. It is an outcome that Achebe focuses on the political practices in Nigeria, which made the people to think about the importance of good governance.

It is satirical that the Head of the state Sam, His Excellency lacks the vigilance, who chides his Cabinet Ministers on the part of the security in the state. David Carroll rightly says that "the novel opens with the military ruler of the African state of Kangan disdainfully treating his civilian Cabinet like children" (Carroll, 1980:167). The novel projects the political power as the main hindrance to keep the social harmony with equal justice and opportunities. Ikem comments satirically about the leaders of Kangan, who are unlike the villain, who do not foreground peace for oppressed people. He says;

"Those who would see no blot of villainy in the beloved oppressed nor grant the faintest glimmer of humanity to the hated oppressor are partisans, patriots and party liners. In the grand finale of things, there will be a mansion also for them where they will be received and lodged in comfort by the single-minded demigods of their devotion" (AOS: 95).

The power separates the three intimate childhood friends when it becomes the matter of pride. It is evident that the European values of Sam, Chris, Ikem and

Beatrice keep them alienated from the ordinary people. Ikem is a passionate crusader but he had no solid contact with the ordinary people of Kangan” (AOS: 35). It is satirical that the enlightened intellectuals do not have the rapport with the ordinary people, whom they try to convince about the social malaise of the government. It makes a sense that the intellectuals in post-colonialism are gripped by doubts of their own identity and the identity of their community so far. It assumes the crisis of self-identity along with dilemma.

The satirical elements occur about the feminine identity when Beatrice proves to be the healer and change seeker. Unlike male rulers, she is self-reflective and questions her political stance and action. She believes that the deaths of Ikem and Chris were pre-ordained. She says that “Were they not, in fact, trailed travellers whose journeys from start to finish had been carefully programmed in advance by an alienated history?”(AOS: 211). She becomes disgusted about the political power by saying, “What must a people do to appease an embittered history?”(AOS: 211). The representation of the hermeneutical circle along with Elewa’s girl baby is given a masculine name Amaechina after the death of Ikem by challenging the traditional ways remarks the vacuums in their male-heredity. David Hoy points out that “the hermeneutical circle, which becomes a condition for the possibility of human experience and inquiry” (Hoy, 1982: vii).It throws the light on the issues of hermeneutical identity through the perspectives of Nigerian traditional norms.

By taking into consideration, the role of Beatrice at the end of the novel proves an eye-opener in a satirical way. Simon Gikandi says that Achebe “intends Beatrice to be the proverbial anthill that survives to tell the tale of draught, the ultimate witness to the tragic drama of the nation” (Gikandi, 1991:147). It denotes the idea of the sufferings of the people in fictitious Kangan, which represents Nigeria in the post-colonial period.

6.1.7 Disruption of Traditional/Ethnical Identity

The disruption of the traditional ethnical identity of Nigeria is reflected through the point of view of three characters, Chris, Ikem and Beatrice. It has been projected at social, personal and national levels from the perspectives of political importance in the fictional nation-state Kangan with fundamental issues in postcolonial Africa. Achebe identifies the disruption of the traditional/ethnical values by throwing the light on the life-style of the urban elite and intellectuals, who are

puzzled to connect with the ordinary people of the country. Beatrice confesses that the story of Kangan is particularly the story of the three people like Sam, Ikem and Chris. They foster the traditional/ethnic identity of Kangan by their involvement with the social issues of the country. Chris states that he and the other elites are the real representatives of the traditional/ethnic identity of Kangan. He says that “We tend sometimes to forget that our story is only one of twenty million stories--one tiny synoptic account” (AOS: 62). It is evident from the class distinction in Nigeria that poses the issues of the traditional identity such as the postcolonial disruption of the Nigerian people who are grappled with the ‘Western’ ethical ideology and the traditional cosmic values of the society.

Ikem’s attitude to treat the lower classes of the country, especially the peasants of the Abazon is an instance of disruption with the social issues. The narrator says;

“In any event he (Ikem) had always had the necessity in a vague but insistent way had always felt a yearning without very clear definition, to connect his essence with earth and earth's people. The problem for him had never been whether it should be done but how to do it with integrity” (AOS: 134).

Ikem struggles to foster his identity as the voice of the peasants being an intellectual and influenced by the Western education. His alienation from the society indicates the superficial ethnic values with the society. He points out that the rulers of the country made the people disintegrated as they were made by the colonizers before Independence. He says;

“It is the failure of our rulers to re-establish vital inner links with the poor and dispossessed of this country, with the bruised heart that throbs painfully at the core of the nation's being”(AOS:135).

It is evident that the disconnection of the rulers and the elite people of Kangan with the peasants is one of the major issues which form the backdrop of the entire novel. The conflicts between the ‘Western’ and ‘traditional’/ethnic values are represented by the failure of government to deal with the rebellious peasants of the Abazon province. The Western-based government and traditionally-oriented peasants

hold the distinction between the traditional ethical values as they do not make any sense of harmonious co-existence in the ethical values of their country.

The Abazon province represents the traditional/ethnic values of Africa. The old man, who addresses the crowd of Bassa signifies a way of life of the Nigerian people that is rooted in the old memories of the ethnical identity. It raises the issues of integrated traditional social importance of the nation. On the whole, Achebe reveals the disruption of the traditional/ ethnical identity as a phenomenon that although problematic, makes the ground for re-order of the society in postcolonial Africa.

6.2. Issues of Culture in ‘*Anthills of Savannah*’

Neither in the sphere of Economics nor of politics, Nigerian rulers and Nigerian intellectuals denied the significance of cultural patterns in the postcolonial period. The cultural values got the prominence in all the spheres of life in the post-Independence of Nigeria. The issues related to cultural patterns are associated to the authentic governance, which had the clash between Westernization and traditional values. The most important issue of the cultural identity becomes prominent to pose the questions that the cultural change to be called the national cultural or the ethnic culture.

Development in all the spheres such as-education, urbanism and life-style reflected the constant process of cultural change, so it is evident that the cultural change is reflected in the new type of Nigerian culture and identity. But it doesn't imply that there was a hybridity of cultural traditions. It made a way to project the different modern cultural identity of Nigeria. Ernest Gellner rightly says that the nationalism in Nigeria “claims to depend on folk culture while in fact it is forging a high culture; it claims to protect an old folk society while in fact helping to build up an anonymous mass society”(Gellner,1983:124). On the other hand, the cultural life is much influenced by mass media. Ikem, the editor of the *National Gazette* points out the polygamy of African governance to promote the European culture is one of the major hindrances of executing the traditionalism among people in Nigeria during the postcolonial period. He says that the “Polygamy is for Africa what monotony is for Europe” (AOS: 75). It is a comment on the sameness of European ideology that makes a difference in the Nigerian cultural patterns.

Achebe exposes the issues of culture which are expected to rectify, he depicts the reality of the laudable precursor of modern civilization in Nigeria. The issues of

cultural identity make an impact if Nigeria governance doesn't improve the destructed past culture. The reciprocal relationship between the traditional and modern culture is the part of harmonious coexistence of social identity if the groups of people follow the influence of the Western culture. Simon Gikandi quotes Achebe's vision regarding the importance of an amalgamation of traditional and modern civilization that makes the sound judicious attitude among the people. He says;

“However, many of the characters in *Anthills* often find it impossible to experience this sense of otherness because, as intellectuals and officials, their constitution as subjects is already predicted on their elevation, and hence isolation, from their kind of community that might ensure their fulfilment” (Gikandi, 1991:132).

In fact, while coping with the Western culture, the natives were advocated about the new set of cultural patterns to forget the sense of ethnic values. The characters in the novel are exposed with the struggle of them with the cultural heritage. When it comes to the point to discuss the alienation of the people during the colonial period and its continuity in the postcolonial period, it poses the questions of cultural identity from the social levels to individuality. Achebe observes that the British people made the culture of Nigeria disrupted by making them divided as the rulers, western influenced intellectuals and the peasants like Abazons. He observes;

“They had totally and completely ruled out the keeping of domestic animals in their reservation. Except dogs, of course. That habit, strange to say, has survived but not for the reasons the British established it. You wouldn't see any of their black successors walking his dog today but you will find affixed to the iron grill or barbed wire gate a stern warning: BEWARE OF DOG, sometimes embellished with the likeness of an Alsatian or German Shepherd's head with a flaming red tongue. Unfortunately armed robbers of Kangan do not stop at kicking dogs; they shoot them” (AOS: 102).

It is evident that the people of Kangan are influenced by the foreign cultural values. In one or another way, Sam, Ikem and Chris tend to promote the foreign cultural patterns among the people in Nigeria. The narrators like Chris and Ikem are

as obsessed with the past of Nigeria as they concerned with the future. The reflection of the traditional cultural values in relations with the modernity in Nigeria foregrounds the ideological cultural concerns of the society in the context of the issues of culture.

6.2.1 Hybridity in Cultural patterns

Hybridity in cultural patterns during postcolonial period in Nigeria marks the issues of culture with different perspectives in the formation of the social layers with a blend of Westernization and traditional colours. According to Homi K. Bhabha, hybridity in the cultural patterns is one of the dominant discourses, which reveals the social milieu in the context of culture. But it can be analyzed as a new conception of power that is treated as the remedies for the changing scenario. He says that it is a “shift from the cultural as an epistemological object to culture as an enactive, enunciatory site” (Bhabha, 1994:178). In this context, hybridity in culture throws light on the social subversion to analyze the influence of the West on local colours or the salient repression of the native traditional values.

Anthills of Savannah (1987) reflects hybridity in the cultural patterns to make the characters to think about their identity. By taking into consideration, the practicality of the cultural shifts in shaping their identity is a colonial impact in Nigeria. Achebe describes the identity of Beatrice, which is related to the hybrid culture in the postcolonial Nigeria. He states;

“Beatrice Nwanyibuife did not know these traditions and legends of her people because they played but little part in her upbringing. She was born as we have seen into a world apart; was baptized and sent to schools which made much about the English and the Jews and the Hindu and practically everybody else but hardly put in the word for her forebears and the divinities with whom they had evolved. So she came to barely knowing who she was” (AOS: 100).

The European influence creates dilemma among the intellectuals like Ikem, who is trapped between the alienation from the social situations and expansion of his ideas for the purpose of the underprivileged people of his country. His puzzled state of mind is revealed by the novelist as an instance of the power of hybridity in the cultural patterns of the Nigerian people. Ikem states;

“What about renouncing my own experience, needs and knowledge? But could I? And should I? I could renounce needs perhaps, but experience and knowledge, how? There seems no way I can become like the poor except by faking. What I know, I know for good or ill. So for good or ill I shall remain myself, but with this deliberate readiness now to help, and be helped. Like those complex, multivalent atoms in Biochemistry books I have arms that reach out in all directions--a helping hand, a hand signalling for help. With one I shall touch the earth and leave another free to wave to the skies” (AOS: 136).

It symbolizes the crisis of the selection of the cultural patterns for the appropriate execution of his ideology for the well-being of the society. As far as the cultural issues are concerned and the hybridity during the postcolonial period, there is a close exploration of the realistic mindsets of the intellectuals in terms of their association with the traditional community, being influenced by the Westernization.

The differences between the ethnic cultural patterns were replaced by the influences of European cultural facets. The festive celebrations elaborated in *Things Fall Apart* (1958) such as celebration of *New Yam Festival* throughout the nine villages got the lesser importance in the postcolonial period. The elite class of the society got engaged in the party-celebrations on the parts of imitations of European style. The cultural differences between black and white are seen differently in the form of hybridity. Beatrice narrates;

“The food was simple and tasty. Shrimp cocktail; _jollof__ rice with plantain and fried chicken; and fresh fruit salad or cheese and English crackers for dessert. The wines were excellent but totally wasted on the company, only His Excellency, the American girl and myself showing the slightest interest. The Bassa men stuck as usual to the beer they had been drinking all day; one of the ladies had double gins and lime and the other two a shandy of stout and Seven Up which one of them--Irene, I think her name was-- apostrophized as _Black Is Beautiful__.”(AOS: 72).

The exchange of the palm-wine and sharing kola-nuts are the aspects of kindness of Igbo people in *Things Fall Apart* (1958) Okeye says in a proverb to Unoka, “He who brings kola brings life”(TFA: 5). It denotes an idea of the ethnical culture of Igbo people without any influence of European culture. It is evident in *Anthills of Savannah* (1987) that the sharing of the bottles of beer is to make the people to amuse the event with temporary affections. In such a way, hybridity in cultural patterns of Nigerian people makes a sense of artificiality, while in the traditional way of the sharing palm-wine or kola-nuts execute the real intimacy among people.

In maintaining the ‘difference’ in the cultural patterns of the Nigerian people, Achebe emphasizes the distinctive characteristics of postcolonial society in relation to the hybrid culture. According to Robert Young;

“There is no single or correct concept of hybridity; it changes as it repeats, but it also repeats as it changes, it shows that we are still locked into parts of the ideological network of a culture that we think and presume that we have surpassed”(Young,2006:159).

The cultural patterns were displaced during the postcolonial period in the form of ‘changes’. The hybridity foregrounds the new avenues in their changing patterns, but the imperialism, materialistic approach, individualism are the nuances for traditional ethnic and cultural paradigms, which are the outcomes of ‘Hybridity’.

6.2.2 Proverbs

The wisdom of the elders is usually referred to the use of proverbs in literature. In Africa, especially in Nigerian context, intelligence of the people is laced with the proverbs to reflect the diversified cultural patterns. Proverbs make the readers to know about the great African cultural heritage. Proverbs related to all the spheres throw the light on the issues of culture, politics, hybridity, education, women empowerment, masculinity, colonialism, betrayal, crime, justice, praying, war, celebrations, marriages, punishments etc. to aware the people about social harmonious co-existence.

The use of proverbs to know the ideology of the Nigeria as one of the cultural patterns that are reflected in *Anthills of Savannah* (1987). While speaking on the

issues of Abazon after draught, the peasants became rebellious and wanted to see the Sam, His Excellency to discuss the problems. Professor Okong says;

“It is not because I am blind to all the hanky-panky that is going on. It is because I have always believed in the old adage to paddle my own canoe. But today's incident has shown that a man must not swallow his cough because he fears to disturb others ...” (AOS: 18).

It has been suggested by Professor Okong that the solutions to the issues of the Abazon to be made instead of being revengeful about them, who didn't support Sam during the election. As a result, Sam, His Excellency avoids the meeting with the villagers but it becomes the grave situation. In a traditional proverb, the fearfulness of Sam is described in the elders' wisdom. The proverb states that there should not be any bias about others while dealing with the tough situations of the society. Moreover, it is a lesson for the people to handle the social issues without thinking about how others would react to the decisions. While speaking about the emancipation of women in the post-colonial period, Chris comments on the traditional way of thinking about the marriages of the girls. It had been considered that the 26 years old unmarried girl, who had been one of the girlfriends of Chirs, went to her fiancé's house to discuss their marriage. His aunt taunted her in a typical proverb. Chris, the narrator says;

“One of my girlfriends--a more sensible and attractive person you never saw--except that she committed the crime to be twenty-six and still unmarried; she was taken by her fiancé to meet his people in some backwater village of his when an aunt or something of his made a proverb fully and deliberately to her hearing that if _ogili_ was such a valuable condiment no one would leave it lying around for rats to stumble upon and dig into!”(AOS: 84).

It is evident from the traditional beliefs that the unmarried girls are called the valuable 'Ogili' (traditional magi or soup spice) and they are not to be left without marriages for a long time i.e. up to 26 years old. It is a kind of saying of the Nigerian people that the girls are not meant to neglect for long without paying attention towards them about marriages. The 'Ogili' word conveys the idea about the sap of the youthfulness of the girls, which must have been utilized in a proper time. The proverb

focuses on the marriages of the girls in Nigeria. The proverb regarding the feminine power in Nigeria reveals comparison of women with masculinity. According to Beatrice, capriciousness of the divine power is not a weakness in shaping the role of women right from their baptism. It is identified by Achebe that the people like Ikem are the real artists to make a way from the difficult situations especially about women. Beatrice points out;

“But knowing or not knowing does not save us from being known and even recruited and put to work. For, as a newly-minted proverb among her people has it, baptism (translated in their language as Water of God) is no antidote against possession by Agwu the capricious god of diviners and artists” (AOS: 100).

It reveals that the god ‘Agwu’ is a healer and a diviner and the artist, it makes a point that the god ‘Agwu’ means the helping hand of the people to each other in the difficult situations to serve the compound. In social functions, it has an implication that the god ‘Agwu’ helps the people a lot by the spiritual forces in a sense of artist. The political implication of it seeks refuse for the deprived at large scale to create healthy social relations. In relation to the feminine aspects, “Agwu’ the spiritual force dwells upon the difficulties of the women.

Ikem’s speech at Bassa makes a ground fertile for the rebellion against the imperialism, that made the people allured about their expectations of good governance, but the rulers did follow the colonizers in disrupting the idea of integrated society. There were a hue and cry about corruption, social malaise and anarchy. Ikem explains the differences between the elite class of the society and the peasants of the country. He says that the elite class of the people is “no less than running dogs of imperialism” (AOS: 150). He reminds the crowd about the Nigerian proverb. He says about the earthworm in a proverbial sense. “Our proverb says that the earthworm is not dancing, it is only its manner of walking” (AOS: 150). It is a sarcastic comment about the rulers of Nigeria, who act as the well-wishers of the society, but, in reality, they are supposed to be the followers of the colonial power. It is a showy act of them which is compared with ‘dancing’ and ‘walking’ earthworms.

Ikem continues by explaining another proverb. He says, “If you want to get at the root of murder, they (elders) said, you have to look for the blacksmith who made

the matchet” (AOS: 151). It is an idea about to find the truth of the inequality being clueless to the police. The military coup tries to arrest the youths, who go against the government. Ikem convinces the people that the police will neither detect the blacksmith nor the matchet if the people of Nigeria are united to resist the social malaise of the government.

The proverb regarding the interest of the people to know about others is used by Chris while talking with Emmanuel Obete, the President of the Students Union. He asserts that the quest of a man to know from others is like a proverb, “a man looking for something inside the bag of a man looking for something” (AOS: 181). It is a kind of traditional goat-skin bag of the people, which is used to carry all the necessary tools. The people in Kangan are looking the editorials of the *National Gazette* as the search for the new happenings of the country. The exchange of the ideas and sharing of the people is described in the symbolic form of the social harmony. The narrator says that “the cock that crows in the morning belong to one household but his voice is the property of the neighbourhood” (AOS: 117). The involvement of the people in ceremonies, social gatherings and festivals is pointed out by the aloofness of them in the postcolonial period. The proverb draws the attention towards the ethics of the Nigerian people and the advice of the elders about their cultural patterns and issues related to the postcolonial period.

6.2.3 Moral Issues

Moral issues in the postcolonial period are associated with the tribalism and political stability in Nigeria between the 1970s and 1980s. The corruption, dictatorship, lack of vigilance on the part of security are reflected the outcomes of the political instability. The characters projected in the novel struggle with a sense of morality. As a result, the moral issues in Nigeria during the 1980s were at the toe of creating the impact of good governance. Achebe writes about Professor Okong, who is a part of the governance, Sam, His Excellency believes in the opinions of him. Chris narrates;

“Professor Reginald Okong, though a buffoon, is a fighter of sorts and totally self-made. Unfortunately, he has no sense of political morality which is a double tragedy for a man who began his career as an American Baptist minister and later became Professor of Political Science at our university.

Perhaps he has more responsibility than any other single individual except myself for the remarkable metamorphosis of His Excellency” (AOS: 9).

It is noted from Christopher’s point of view that the moral issues are exposed during the postcolonial period. On the other hand, Beatrice shares her opinions about the need of the morality in a boarder sense. The existence of rampaged power is needed the hold with divine aspects of culture. Her urge to foster the moral ideas in the community becomes the significant aspect of moulding the thoughts of the people. It reminds that the traditional way of execution of the moral sense among people by the wrath of the Goddess Idemili on the brutal force is the divine power of peace and modesty. The narrator says that the morality was executed among the people in past with the divine power of *Idemili*.

“In the beginning Power rampaged through our world, naked. So the Almighty, looking at his creation through the round undying eye of the Sun, saw and pondered and finally decided to send his daughter, Idemili, to bear witness to the moral nature of authority by wrapping around Power's rude waist a loincloth of peace and modesty”(AOS:97).

It is evident from the view of Beatrice that when there was anarchy and people were suffering from the immoral sense. The goddess *Idemili* made them to follow the right path. She refers the past regarding the moral and ethical values of the people because she wants such an Almighty divine power of *Idemili* to get the hold on immoral sense of the people in the postcolonial period. The imbalance between the political power and morality got the moral issues persisting after Independence. Though, the people of Nigeria believed in the traditional customs of the society, they find it difficult to get the social harmony in the existing rule of the government.

The narrator says that the people in Kangan were worried about the original moral sense to adjust with the disruption of their culture with the effects of power.

“Man's best artifice to snare and hold the grandeur of divinity always crumbles in his hands, and the more ardently he strives the more paltry and incongruous the result”(AOS:98).

It can be argued that the lack of morality made the people interested to involve in the political power rather than the harmonious social relationship. The failure of nationalism in the state of Kangan is depicted with the repression of humanity, which can be argued as one of the moral issues in the novel. Ikem, the childhood friend of Sam suspects the moral duties of Sam being the Head of Kangan. He doesn't deserve any sense of morality because of the European influence. He is aloof from the social commitments on the ground of humanity. Ikem says;

“He is basically an actor and half of the things we are inclined to hold against him are no more than scenes from his repertory to which he may have no sense of moral commitment whatsoever. He was fascinated by the customs of the English” (AOS: 46).

It is observed that the people of elite class like Sam promote the foreign values and their culture which foreground the less moral values rather than the national zeal among the people. The religious faith of the people is symbolized by the death of Chris, who tried to save the girl from the rape by a Police Officer. The narrator says;

“The police sergeant was dragging her in the direction of a small cluster of round huts not far from the road and surrounded as was common in these parts by a fence of hideously-spiked cactus. He was pulling her by the wrists, his gun slung from the shoulder” (AOS: 210)

It is believed that the death of Chris is symbolically an aversion of the ethical values and the anarchy takes place rather the inhuman acts like the incest. The Police Officer's immoral and disgraceful behaviour draws the attention towards the loss of cultural patterns of the people in the postcolonial period. When Chris was shot dead by the Police Officer, the crowd on the road didn't help him out to avert the situation. The sunset along with the death of Chris symbolizes the lack of humanity. The narrator says that “The crowd on the road saw him get up again and continue his run, unattended this time, into a red sunset” (AOS: 207). The passive reaction of the crowd towards the death of Chris is an instance of the loss of moral sense as a human being.

6.2.4 Confluence of Religion

The confluence of religion and economic structure of Nigeria is represented significantly as the part of the cultural patterns during the 1980s. Ikem's speech indicates the confluence of the religion and the economic structure of Kangan. He says that the issues of culture in Kangan are mainly related with the elite's power. They preach the gospel of Christianity and ignore the needs of the masses. The political power is executed by the use of religion and money. It is evident that the masses seem to the followers of the ruling authorities. Nigerians follow a form of English culture. Beatrice refers the Western influences in Nigeria. She says;

“I had been foolish enough to telephone him after I had suffered one of the most humiliating evenings of my life in the hands of my boyfriend, Guy, at a Nigerian Christmas dance at the St Pancras Town Hall. I wasn't really asking Ikem to set out for my place at that hour but just needed to talk to someone like him, someone different from that noisy, ragtag crowd of illiterate and insensitive young men our country was exporting as plentifully at the time as its crude oil”(AOS:87).

Achebe points out the influence of Western culture on the Nigerian ruling class by using the satirical comments along with the traditional ethos of the Nigeria that was afflicted with the Europeans. Ikem convinces the masses that the problems of Kangan lie in the oppressive ruling class rather than the colonial power. He claims that the elite class of the government is responsible for the common people's issues subsequently the issues of their culture due to the Western ideology. He says;

“The charge of élitism never fails to amaze me because the same people who make it will also criticize you for not prescribing their brand of revolution to the masses. A writer wants to ask questions. These damn fellows want him to give answers. Now tell me, can anything be more elitist, more offensively elitist, than someone presuming to answer questions that have not even been raised, for Christ's sake?”(AOS: 150).

Ikem further states that the civil servants and the urban employees imitate the European values; they wear the undersize T-shirts and school-boy caps on May Day by forgetting the history and the struggle of the Nigerian people. Ikem states;

“For they are the very comrades who preside over the sabotage of the nation by their unproductivity and fraud, and that way ensure that the benefits of modern life will ever remain outside the dreams of the real victims of exploitation in rural villages”(AOS:151-152).

The villagers became the victims of exploitation by the unproductive power, which was enthralled on the part of modern life. The deterioration of the economy of the Kangan is one of the aspects that the ruling class made the people to suffer from the poverty. The protest of the people after death of Chris is marked the issue of anarchy. The narrator describes the influence of Western ideology being executed in the dispersal of the community. He says;

“Even the gullible people of Kangan, famous for dancing in the streets at every change of government, were asking where this loyal officer was hiding in the first twenty-four hours after his Commander was kidnapped from the Palace by 'unknown persons', tortured, shot in the head and buried under one foot of soil in the bush”(AOS:209).

Ikem revolts against the Western ideology by saying that the social scale descends from the elite to the common people. He says;

“The sweeping, majestic visions of people rising victorious like a tidal wave against their oppressors and transforming their world with theories and slogans into a new heaven and a new earth of brotherhood, justice and freedom are at best grand illusions. The rising, conquering tide, yes; but the millennium afterwards, no! New oppressors will have been readying themselves secretly in the undertow long before the tidal wave got really going” (AOS: 94).

It is evident from the speech of Ikem that the grand illusion about brotherhood and justice had undergone through the phases of the European culture and the governmental system follow the cross –class lines. The naming ceremony at the end

of the novel fosters the national unity among the elite and the masses. It is symbolic in the democracy to unite the people from the different religions and the social classes. Beatrice, being a Christian, Agatha, a Muslim servant and Elewa, a member of masses convey the message of being formidable position of Kangan in the postcolonial period. Beatrice reveals the intention to celebrate the naming ceremony as homage to the death of Ikem, who fought for the freedom. She says, “We have a different metaphor, though; we have our own version of hope that springs eternal. We shall call this child AMAECHINA: May-the path- never-close (AOS: 213). The child represents the hope for the cultivation of Ikem’s ideas and impetus for further unification.

The unification of the people in Nigeria is the new hope for the changing patterns of the society to resist the internal religious crisis. In this context, the role of the writers to aware the people about the realities are significant. Dr. J.A.Ushie asserts;

“... in the continent as a whole, writers have been in the forefront of cultural producers in the fight for the survival and well-being of the prey-Africa. They have fought consistently on the side of the oppressed, right from colonial days” (Ushie, 2001:27).

Achebe marks the cultural identity of Nigeria through the confluence of religion during the postcolonial period. The novel plays a pivotal role in concerned phases of the survival of the cultural patterns.

6.2.5 Sacrifice and love

Sacrifice in terms of the national legitimacy in Kangan is ratified by the cohesiveness of the traditional tribal community. The naming ceremony of the girl-child of Ikem and Elewa is symbolic which claims to be the union of the people of all the religions. At the end of the novel, the two sacrifices are promoted as the genuine aspects of the forthcoming birth of Ikem’s daughter as the hope for ‘peace’ and ‘union’. Ikem, a victim of Sam’s political repression and Chris, a victim of the power, who tries to prevent the rape are reflected as the friends of slain, who come from different social backgrounds and speak different African languages.

The sacrifices of Ikem and Chris are commemorated in social a ritual that includes the breaking and sharing of kola nut. Hope for the integrity among people is literary assumes in a form of the naming ceremony of Ikem and Elewa's daughter. She is the heir of the Ikem's intellectuality and the sense of market woman's daughter. On the other hand, Chris' death proves to be an instance of sacrifice. Emmanuel, the leader of the Students' union is influenced by the dignified death of Chris that inspires him a lot. He says, "...look at Chris, a young man with all his life still in front of him and yet he was able to look death in the eyes and smile and make a joke. It was too wonderful ..." (AOS: 222). Both, Chris and Ikem preach the lesson of being a sense of paternity and sacrifice. Chris had taught Emmanuel how one can 'die with dignity' (AOS: 222).

The elements of love in a broad sense about nationalism are attributed to Sam's failure to embrace the nation. It is represented through the invitation to Beatrice to the Presidential Guest House. Chris tells Beatrice about the only alternative is left for Sam to extricate himself from the situation. He says, "He (Sam) knows things are now pretty hopeless and may see in you (Beatrice) a last hope to extricate himself"(AOS:68). Chris, as a lover of Beatrice holds the possibility for Sam to come out of the political crisis. Beatrice, the 'sacred symbol' and 'nation's pride' (AOS: 76) is accompanied by Miss Cranford of the American United Press, whom she considers as a rival. Beatrice knows that Sam is vulnerable to white women and their seductive tongues. Beatrice plans to seduce Sam by throwing herself at him. She says;

"I threw myself between this enemy and him. I literally threw myself at him like a loyal batman covering his endangered commander with his own body and receiving the mortal bullet in his place" (AOS: 76).

Beatrice fails in her attempt, even she convinces Sam about not to be captivated by American temptresses, he pushes her away in rage. She further states that her act to seduce Sam was just to keep him away from the captivity of whitish girl. It is a kind of nationhood reflected in the act of Beatrice, who decides to put herself at the risk of sacrifice. She says;

“I did it shamelessly. I cheapened myself. God! I did it to your glory like the dancer in a Hindu temple. Like Esther, oh yes like Esther for my long-suffering people” (AOS: 76).

The communion at the end represents the fulfilment of romantic love, in contrast to Sam’s seduction of the American journalist. Chris prevents the rape of American journalist. The love between Ikem and Elewa symbolises the combination of an intellectual and the daughter of a market woman. They constitute a community of consent that abolishes the boundaries of the ethnic communities and religions. Beatrice represents the mythical goddess *Idemili*, who expresses a divine intension about to resist the power relations. The love relations between Chris and Beatrice are typically reflected on the basis of mutual understanding. Beatrice’s mutual relations are described by the narrator. He says;

“She (Beatrice) picked her steps carefully through the confusion of young sleeping bodies on straw mats on the floor and gained the bed. She had brought pyjamas in her picnic bag but had left the bag unopened beside her chair. Sitting now on the edge of the bed she took off her blouse and hung it on the sagging curtain-rope. She then loosed her ‘lappa’ from her waist and retied it above the breast and lay down beside Chris” (AOS: 190).

The narrator further states that the union of them represents wholeness to which the young intellectuals and the nation itself aspire. The narrator says;

“Their love-making that night was cramped by distractions. At least two of the children lying on the floor beyond the cotton screen--a boy and a girl--could easily possess enough street-lore to know if something was going on and what. Then there was the multiple-pitched squealing of the bed at the slightest change of position” (AOS: 190).

On the whole, the elements of sacrifice and romance penetrate the aspects of the personal relations to point out the communal wholeness in a symbolic way of reciprocal relations in the fictitious Kangan.

6.2.6 Myths

The use of myths encodes the hegemonic aspects found in the spheres of narratives. They are connected with the cultural patterns of the society as well as the issues of culture. Myths occur in a monologic form in the context of evidence about the entrenched power formations from the pre-colonial cultures generating the comparison with the issues of culture related to the postcolonial period. Stephen Slemon rightly says that the use of myths is the discourse of the discursive system of the colonizers in the spheres of cultural issues. He says;

“Such acts of post-colonial literary resistance function counter-discursively because they "read" the dominant colonialist discursive system as a whole in its possibilities and operations and force that discourse's synchronic or unitary account of the cultural situation toward the movement of the diachronic”(Slemon,1987:13)

Anthills of Savannah (1987) represents the political situation rifted with the corruption and immoral sense in the suppressive regime of fictional Kangan i.e. Nigeria. It portrays the dominant discourses by using the myths through plural dialogic styles. Philip Wegner states that the use of myth “fixes and provides legitimations for the contemporary social organization” (Wegner, 2002:36). It is stated that the ideal government in Kangan would lead to fulfilling the needs of people; the needs of the people are metaphorically described as the ‘bruised heart’. The narrator says that “It is the failure of our rulers to re-establish vital inner links with the poor and dispossessed of this country, with the bruised heart that throbs painfully at the core of the nation's being”(AOS:135).

The General is identified as the ravaging sun in Abazon with its blazing heat, the President’s men convince about the draught in Abazon as the consequences of turning down the request of President in the Election. The Sun is used symbolically that is offended and the people are suffering from its scorching heat. The narrator says;

“Because you said no to the Big Chief he is very angry and has ordered all the water bore-holes they are digging in your area to be closed so that you will know what it means to offend the sun”(AOS:121).

The myth of Sun is symbolized in Sam, His Excellency, whose power destroys everything in Abazon. It is responsible for the draught in Abazon forcing its leadership to visit His Excellency for the discussion of their problems persisted by the draught. The myth related to the Pillar of Water, which is the most powerful that seeks out the fire of the Sun and quenches the thirst of the parched land. Beatrice, in the context like *Idemili* resists the monstrous masculine power. Achebe reflects the legend of male-power which is sought to be neutralised through the female resistance. The divine power of *Idemili* is referred as;

“In the beginning Power rampaged through our world, naked. So the Almighty, looking at his creation through the round undying eye of the Sun, saw and pondered and finally decided to send his daughter, Idemili, to bear witness to the moral nature of authority by wrapping around Power's rude waist a loincloth of peace and modesty”(AOS:97).

Both the myths, Sun and the Pillar of Water make “Idemili's contempt for man's unquenchable thirst to sit in authority on his fellows” (AOS: 99). The corruption-prone power is needed to be countered by means of the struggle in the novel. Beatrice convinces Chris to find out the solutions to the dispersal situation by talking with Ikem, But Chris himself was in trouble about his position in the cabinet. Ikem resists openly with the fascist regime but fails to continue his resistance for long. When he was the part of the delegations of the Abazon, he uses the oral-lore of the land. The narrator says;

“It is proper that a beggar should visit a king. When a rich man is sick a beggar goes to visit him and say sorry. When the beggar is sick, he waits to recover and then goes to tell the rich man that he has been sick. It is the place of the poor man to make a visit to the rich man who holds the yam and the knife” (AOS: 122).

It is evident that the people who legitimate the authority and those in power should be disgraced as beggars are supposed to be the doom on the part of the rulers and the people. Abazonian leader concludes the speech with a parable regarding leopard and tortoise. Leopard is on the look out to kill the tortoise, when the latter is

about to kill, he pleads with his killer to leave him alone for a minute or two enabling him to prepare himself mentally for death. The narrator further states that the tortoise is rescued for a minute by Leopard. The tortoise started to kick, rove and throw dust in different directions. The leopard asked about it.

“The tortoise replied: Because even after I am dead I would want anyone passing by this spot to say, yes, a fellow and his match struggled here”(AOS:122-123).

The old man’s speech at Bassa influences the people in Kangan. In such a way, myths folklores, songs and inventor-cum-performers are considered to be a challenge to state power and its authorities. Achebe directs the readers about the subversive power in terms of the moral conduct through the myths projecting the issues of culture in the postcolonial period.

6.2.7 Dislocation of Culture

Anthills of Savannah (1987) reflects the issues of culture which are marked by the influence of British tradition on the Kangan elite culture and its life. The new leaders of Kangan were the products of the imposed European culture. Sam, Ikem, Chris and Beatrice were educated in British schools modelled their lives and beliefs on the European British lifestyle. Both Chris and Ikem return to Kangan after their education in U.K. with the hope to build the nation and keep a vibrant nation in the democratic sphere. Sam, His Excellency is admired by the European culture, so he seems unable to understand the issues of the peasants related to their lives. The traditional cultural patterns are dislocated in Kangan, especially with the elite class. The European influence is seen in the life-style of Sam. The narrator says, “He was fascinated by the customs of the English, especially their well-to-do classes and enjoyed playing at their foibles” (AOS: 46). It’s a kind of dislocation of the traditional culture of the Nigerian people.

Chris’ marriage with an American girl testifies the different aspect of the Nigerian culture, which was not fruitful one. There is an opposite aspect of the two cultures find no good outcome and the separation of them causes the bitterness and lesson for Sam. Ikem says that Sam didn’t marry an English girl in Surrey. He further says;

“Chris and his American wife Louise whom he married, if you please, not in New York which might have made a certain sense but in London. I suppose it is not impossible for two strangers to fabricate an affinity of sorts from being exiled to the same desert island even from opposite ends of the earth. Unfortunately Chris and Louise didn't make it once in bed, or anywhere else, throughout their six months cohabitation” (AOS: 45).

It is about the influence of European culture that made Chris to step in the decision. Sam's vulnerability for the white American girls is another part that makes a sense of their dislocation of the traditional culture in the postcolonial period. The dilemma of the African intellectuals is a result of the European influences. It is not easy for them to use their experiences for the use of peasants and the underprivileged. Ikem finds himself isolated in the social situation witnessing the ‘stubborn sense of community’ (AOS: 135). The dislocation of the culture is portrayed in the novel is not only related to the cultural issues but it also reflects the political one.

The two classes of the society are portrayed differently in concerned with the cultural issues. The elite class i.e. privileged and the peasants i.e. underprivileged. The former class exploits the latter whose conditions remind us the actual suffering of Africa. The celebrations, parties, rape, incest, corruption, murders, exploitation are the aspects of the dislocation of the Nigerian culture in the postcolonial period.

6.3. Summary

Achebe points out the identity issues of the people in Nigeria in the postcolonial period through the fictitious state of Kangan. The identity issues of the people in Nigeria are reflected through the two groups of society. The elite class and the masses are projected to reveal their identity in the form of privileged and underprivileged. The intellectuals like Ikem, Chris and Beatrice attempt to build a nation with an ideal democracy. Sam, His Excellency, being a leader of the nation fails to create a rapport with the masses due to Westernized influence on him. The sufferings of Abazon people for not supporting the government during the election lead subsequent challenges. The polygamy of the leaders is one of the reasons that make the stoppage to make an ideal democratic country.

The novel extends the issues of nationhood with divisions of the oppressed and the elite classes of the society from the perspectives of gender identity. It implies to the socio-political entity exposed by the male dominance and their urge for the opportunities in the pursuits of the power relations. In relation to the ideological, social and economic suppression of women, the root of the cultural change reflects the realities of postcolonial Nigeria.

Achebe exposes the issues of culture which are expected to rectify, he depicts the reality of the laudable precursor of modern civilization in Nigeria during the 1980s. The issues of cultural identity make an impact if Nigeria governance doesn't improve the destructed past culture. The reciprocal relationship between the traditional and modern culture is the part of harmonious coexistence of social identity. The use of the myths finds the hope to rectify the cultural patterns which are disturbed by the western influences.

The characters in the novel are exposed with the struggle of them with the cultural heritage. When it comes to the point to discuss the alienation of the people during the colonial period and its continuity in the postcolonial period, it poses the questions of cultural identity from the social levels to individuality. The ending of the novel reunites the people on the basis of challenging the polygamy of the authorities by execution of social power. Achebe observes that the British people made the culture of Nigeria disrupted by making them divided as the rulers, western influenced intellectuals and the peasants like Abazons. The sacrifice of Ikem and Chris to make the people to realise about their sufferings is the source of a new hope for the people to come out of the polygamy of the corrupt political leaders.

Major Findings:

- The novel mirrors the issues of the identity of Nigerian people in the postcolonial period.
- Achebe reflects the power relations of the elite class and exploitation of the masses pertaining to the issues of nationalism in Nigeria.
- Issues of culture during the post-colonial period are more vulnerable than the ethnic pre-colonial identity.
- Hybridity in cultural patterns is visible which makes a sense to know the culture through myths.

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