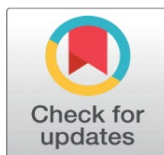
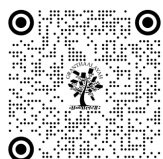


THE FRAMEWORK OF NEOCOLONIAL RUDIMENTS IN CHINUA ACHEBE'S ANTHILLS OF SAVANNAH

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DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.2432](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.2432)

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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ABSTRACT

Literature is observed as a serious and systematic mechanism to manuscript the tranquilities of human endeavours. The diversified domain of Africa is superlatively known for culture, rituals, heritage, tradition and wild life. These diversities have become the integral element of common folk who inhabit and experience the predicaments of African humanity. Most of the nations in African continent are under the silhouette of colonial inheritance even after attaining sovereignty. The literature of Africa has been instrumental in documenting the transformations perceived at different altitudes. It unlocks an option for authors to embody the boons and banes of African citizens. Writers like Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Nadine Gordimer, Chimamanda Ngozi Aiche and Chinua Achebe have focused on both the abstract and concrete rudiments of African social order. Chinua Achebe is clinical and influential in typifying the standards of African civilization. He is embarked as a literary figure that represents the African verve in a lucid and sober manner. His literary exposition *Anthills of Savannah* (1987) traces the life of colonized populace in Africa. With the consequence of colonization, both the individuals and homeland have lost the dignity and integrity. The novelist tries to reclaim the lost dignity for the betterment of Africa through this literary description. But the political leaders fail to restore the dignity of Kangan in Africa. In turn they continue to exist as the substance of white colonizers. The period after colonialism is called 'Postcolonialism' and it is also termed as 'Neocolonialism'. Hence, the research paper makes an attempt to study the framework of neoclassical rudiments in Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of Savannah* within the obtainable charter.

Keywords: Colonialism, Postcolonialism, Neocolonialism, Africa, Native, Rulers, Power

1. INTRODUCTION

The world is a plethora of opportunities for writers to showcase the social, physical, psychological and intellectual manacles. Literature is one of the thrust areas for writers where they can symbolise the hidden aspects of every individual restraint. Chinua Achebe is a prominent literary persona who embarks on the principles of African society. His fifth literary expression *Anthills of Savannah* (1987) is the best portrayal of African existence. The novel was final listed for Booker Prize in 1987 and has invigorated the literary stateliness of Achebe in Great Britain. He has fashioned a fictional nation called 'Kangan' to inscribe *Anthills of Savannah* and reminds us the sensation of R. K. Narayan's fictional township 'Malgudi'. The novel exhibits the incessant efforts of common folk to incarcerate the past suffering formed out of terrible administration. In *The Colonial and the Neo-Colonial Encounters in Commonwealth Literature*, T. R. S. Sharma quotes:

Achebe is a "committed" writer, committed to specific goals. He is militantly African, and believes in the writer's mission, which is "to teach my readers that their past"... was not one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God's behalf delivered them. (1983)

Colonialism is an academic strategy or authority which pacts with the partial or complete authority over another state. It is commonly referred to economic and political dominion of Europe in different continents. The colonial domination began approximately in the late 16th century and ended in the early years of 1970. The conception of colonialism can be alienated and understood in ways like 'Settler Colonialism', 'Exploitation Colonialism', 'Surrogate Colonialism' and 'Internal Colonialism'. The word 'neo-colonialism' is a combination of two words, namely, 'neo' and 'colonialism'. The word 'neo' is extracted from the Greek root word 'neo' meaning "new", whereas 'colonialism' from the Latin root word 'colonia' meaning a "place of agriculture". It was initially applied to European strategies as proposals to retain the control of African and other dependent countries.

'Kangan', the fictional realm has become the focal summit of incidents discerned in the novel. The entire narration revolves around three imperative characters, namely, Sam (Kanganese), Chris (Christopher Oriko) and Ikem (Ikem Osodi). The trio is observed as childhood associates who have acquired top official positions in the hierarchy of Kanganese management. Sam - "His Excellence" is epitomized as a dictatorial president who administered the nation with the support of military milieu. Being an obstinate personage, he received training under the military force of Great Britain. Then he came to Kangan with the greater support of Military, but not with the corrupt administration. He is distinguished as a typical character with explicit rationale to govern and enjoy the superior power in the politically tumult homeland called 'Kangan'.

The ingenious 'Kangan' is a country bound to have a 'President', 'Cabinet of Ministers' and 'Military Service'. But in the facet of democracy, Kangan reverberates the missing voice of members in the Parliament. The rest of administrative implementation is managed by Sam and Ikem Osodi. Ikem materializes as the finest editor of 'National Gazette' brought out by the government and Chris, as the commissioner for information. Though they have greater acquaintance, Sam quite often argues with Chris and Ikem. As per the directives of president, Chris franchises his authority to scrutinise the National Gazette. Ikem has a proclivity towards the tribulations of common folk and instigates them against the government. It places himself and Chris in an unnecessary dilemma. The archetypal mindset of Ikem projects him as a radical personality rather into the cadre of privileged group.

Achebe has bestowed ample importance to woman characters in the much-awaited African fiction. They represent the feministic perspectives of Kangan culture. Beatrice, an educated feminist and heart rendering acquaintance of Christopher Oriko is serving in the government of Kangan. The intimate woman of Ikem Osodi is Elewa, witnessed as less educated and never moved out of the motherland. These two women protagonists are portrayed as loyal and stand as a moral support to their adorable companions. The archetypal personalities like Bassa, John Kent and Professor Okong provides the literal impetus to the narration. The symbolical rudiments like the National Gazette, Palace of President, Taxi Cabs, Abazon and Political Unrest have shed light on Achebe's pronouncement of African supervision. In *Sexist Matters*, U. Nwagbara writes:

The characterization of Beatrice as a major character in the novel illustrates Achebe's devotion to offering a new meaning to womanhood against what traditional customs and values rendered. (2010)

Anthills of Savannah sets the motion with much anticipated protocol of cabinet congregation. After the end of cabinet discussion, the president has decided to address the common folk of Abazon. He has assured them to provide basic infrastructure and solve the water problem. But his assurance has remained only as an assurance. The dictatorial attitude of president made the people of Abazon province to suffer from drought. The inner voice of Ikem always beats for the common folk and decides to meet their delegation. As a result, he raises the voice against the poor administration and he is halted by the traffic police. They are the agents of State Research Council and insisted him to produce the proof for he had met the delegation of Abazon province. Upon the strict instructions from president, Ikem is restricted to write and throws him out of the Gazette.

Ikem Osodi delivered a radical oration in the University of BASA addressing the community of Abazon territory. His vocalizations at the headquarters of Kangan are completely misquoted in the print media. The impact of his speech created the notion of regicide and delusion. Even he is charged with the description of overthrowing the sovereign regime. As a result, he is shot dead by the military officials, but concluded it as a deadly catastrophe. Chris begins to comprehend the situation and feels insecure to work with Sam, the President. He has lost confidence of his endurance and travelled far to conceal in a mysterious place. Then he is also charged with disloyalty and they declared him as

fugitive. He has witnessed an insurgence when crossing the province and found a cop attempting to seduce a girl. He goes on to rescue her, but he is shot dead by the military personnel.

Achebe is quite sensitive to recognize the problems and predicaments of indigenous community in Africa. He asserts that corruption, dictatorship, fascination and anticipating instant solutions for the problems are an act of neo-colonialism. Though the political leaders are indigenous, they try to project themselves as the product of British empirical society. It also reflects the authority of colonized states on African political affairs. This is very much perceived when the president Sam hosts revelry to electrify the American reporter. The party exposes the Western domination of Africa when Beatrice attends the party. The American journalist addresses the party about the Kanganese government, foreign matters and debts. His attitude highlights the approach of colonizers and their asymmetrical decisions in the political affairs. Beatrice says:

If I went to America today, to Washington DC, would I, Could I, walk into a White House private dinner and take the American President hostage. And his Defence Chief and his Director of CIA? (1983)

The literary theories like 'Colonialism', 'Post-colonialism' and 'Neo-colonialism' have dealt ingeniously with the African literature. Achebe has thought provokingly applied the theme of neocolonialism in *Anthills of Savannah*. It is clearly apparent when understanding the mindset of the president Sam. The treatment of his own native people by the president exhibits his colonial mindset. His decisions in the administration are not only self-centric, but also troublesome and penalize his native folk. The decisions upheld by the government have helped in favour of Western, Educated and Upper Class. These instances have drawn the attention of readers to connote the influence of colonizers even in disbursing the basic amenities in Africa. The neo-colonial attitude is obvious in the policies and decisions put forth by the Kanganese regime.

In the course of narration, the protagonists Sam, Chris and Ikem appear as completely disconnected from the common folk. They failed to display and reserve faith with the lower-working class. The character of Sam showcases about how a politician elevates himself to the position with the mandate of common people and abandons them completely. The selfish and colonial attitude makes the politicians to forget the responsibilities. The forgetting of responsibility leads to the forgetting of natives who extended their support and helped to reach the attic of politics. The dream of Sam to be elected as 'President' and being pronounced as 'Your Excellency' clearly connotes the transformations before and after elevating to the positions. The political ladders often escort the leaders to peak positions, but they forget and dwell in the realm of hallucinations.

Sam, the president never creates a circuit to interact with the people, but always indulged in asserting power and supremacy. The bibliophile can remind the fate of William Shakespeare's mind blowing and heart reckoning tragedy *Macbeth* with the similar hungry for power. His attitude of supremacy is emanated when he decides not to meet the delegation and how Professor Okong manages the situation by fallaciously telling that the president is active with other preoccupied commitments. His egoistic behaviour presents him as a facsimile of colonial mindset. The altered behaviour and gesticulation of Sam makes the community to recognize that the threat is not from White colonizers. The fault is with the indigenous Africans who imitate the stance and behaviour of White colonizers. It is the fate of the inhabitants to endure in the egoistic administration of native leaders who constantly aspire for power and supremacy. In *The Trouble with Nigeria*, Achebe Opines:

These are the real victims of our callous system, the wretched of the earth. They are largely silent and invisible... They drink bad water and suffer from all kinds of preventable diseases... The politician may pay them a siren-visit once in four years and promise to give them this that and the other. He never says that what he gives is theirs in the first place. (1983)

The characteristic difference is quite visible in understanding the trio - Chris, Ikem and Sam. Chris and Ikem are not in good terms with Sam. Though Chris does not like the colonial attitude of Sam, but enjoyed the power bestowed to him in Kangan political hierarchy. He made sincere attempts to sow the seeds of unification between Ikem and Sam. Even he sacrificed his will to bring the coordination and never made remarks against the government. Being completely aware of Sam's English approach, he never tried to revolt and gives up the position in Cabinet. Committing himself to the prevailing situation, he is not sympathetic and acted against his will towards the problems of people. But the passage of time transforms him to work in favour of the destitutes and disadvantaged. Eventually he developed the psyche of patriotism and begins to be empathetic towards the common folk of Kangan.

An individual should ever possess the humanitarian values to stain his existence as fruitful and meaningful. The insight of humanity is inherent in Ikem and his thoughts are crystal clear in responding to the needs of people. He visualizes himself as a vibrant persona stands firm against Sam who never emerge as a symbol of nationality. Sam, being Western - Educated maintains certain distance from the illiterate and semi-literate folk. He is not mindful of his position and responsibility in providing basic infrastructure to the citizens of Abazon province. His westernized political orations are not understood by the elders and women of Kangan. In the eyes of Africans, he appears as a replica of neocolonial and upholds colonial ideals. They come to the conclusion that he is a threat to construct the notion of nationality which would give them the identity in the neocolonial world. In *Towards the Decolonisation of African Literature*, I Chinweizu opines:

Neocolonial African leaders were still receiving instructions from Europe on how to administer Africa... it was only able to help us retrieve the fragments of our lost selves in the form of language spoken when we do not need English, traditional songs... and tales to comfort our souls that we have not totally embraced English literature and culture. (1980)

Ikem is conscious and cautious of president's treacherous mindset which would harm the poor and innocent individuals for trifling motivations. He is ready to commit any heinous misdeed for his safety, dignity and decorum. It is evident when he points the torch on driver's face and checks the registration details of cab. The girlfriend Elewa stands as the proof for this inhuman deed of the president. He employs highly sophisticated and authoritative language even when transacting with an ordinary individuals like cab driver. His demonstration of high-class life is relatively apparent; it can never be accepted and tolerated by the struggling inhabitants of Kangan. Chris, Ikem and the common folk of Kangan are destined to sense the whiff of colonization not only from the White British colonizers, but also from the breed of their indigenous clan to foresee the decree of casualty.

2. CONCLUSION

To embrace it in the academic conch, the sphere of literature constantly presents the world in the realistic manner. The literary expressions eavesdrop as fairy, creative and imaginative tale. The subjects which are touched upon by the authors clearly connote the life of human objects. Race, caste, creed, religion, power, position and money are the factors that demonstrate the insight of an individual. The control and authority of White colonizers represent the nuance of outsiders over the insiders during pre-independence. But the post-independent images provide the insight of power-hungry native individuals who wants to have everything under their clutch. These typical conditions provide the instances of Neocolonial African society. The neocolonial theory exhibits the mutations and manifestations of national values and moralities. In *The Colonial and the Neo-Colonial Encounters in Commonwealth Literature*, H. H. Anniah Gowda reveals the views of Achebe:

From my reading of African of African literature and from my visit to the creative centres, I feel that African literature in English is born in adversity, the result of an encounter often marked by a systematic fight between Europe and Africa. (1983)

Achebe's *Anthills of Savannah* is a masterstroke on the facets of neocolonial representations. It examines the neocolonial civilization as the least and perilous form of colonial fragrance. The fictional personas like Sam, Chris, Ikem, Beatrice and Elewa represent the values, ethics, ambitions and thirstiness of contemporary world. As per the expectations and anticipations, the political leaders would have displayed right aptitude and moral attitude to emerge as the epitome of development and spreading nationality. The fascination of African folk towards western style, imitation of music and utterance of sophisticated English language has pushed them to the state of illusion which is far from reality, humanity and magnanimity. These notions of illusion have ignited and fostered the bibliophiles to comprehend postcolonial society emerged as neocolonial society.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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