

## The Postmodern-Postcolonial Synergic Interfaces in Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*

Monir A Choudhury<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

*This study explores the postmodern attitudes, approaches, and perspectives in Chinua Achebe's 1987 novel *Anthills of the Savannah*. It seeks to demonstrate how this novel navigates the readers to believe that African outlooks and world views align with the postmodern attitudes towards life and the world. Using postmodernist and postcolonial approaches as methodological tools to analyze the text has become an absolute must as the study envisages critically mapping a territory where both the postmodern and postcolonial approaches towards life and the world have synergic interfaces and complement each other. The study has also used extensively Jean-Francois Lyotard's key postmodernist concept of 'mini-narratives' to analyze some of the key passages of the text. The findings reveal that Achebe has underscored the values of the mini-narratives in building a culturally influential nation and suggested how to connect them for synergic results. In conclusion, this study argued that if a postcolonial society aspires to regain its lost dignity and identity, it does not necessarily mean it will return to its past cultural heritage and will be in binary opposition with the West.*

**Keywords:** *Postmodernism, Post Colonialism, *Anthills of the Savannah*, Mini-narratives, African Literature, Chinua Achebe.*

### Introduction

Chinua Achebe (1930 – 2013) is one of the most influential postcolonial writers and critics. He educated his people on seeing themselves from their perspectives and growing as dignified people. He endeavored to reinscribe their cultural history and regain confidence in them. In doing so, he did not construct the West as 'the other.' *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987), his last novel, was set in a postcolonial fictitious country named Kangan. It demonstrates how Achebe attempted to retain the best from their past and take the best from Europe. It is also a depository of diverse and often contradictory narratives. A critical analysis of the novel using the postcolonial and postmodern perspectives as methods of reading discovered their synergic interfaces and latent energies. The paper illustrated how the novel has foregrounded the African mini-narratives of diverse kinds, underscored their values in the culture, and portrayed their influential roles in rebuilding Africa.

Achebe had been projected as a champion of African culture and a prominent postcolonial critic. Subsequently, much research has been done on him and his works from postcolonial contexts. This paper has gone beyond postcolonialism to draw inspiration from postmodern outlooks as guiding principles to study *Anthills of the Savannah*. The paper demonstrates how Achebe facilitated mini-narratives, such as folklore, proverbs, oral traditions, and myths. Advocating to facilitate the unique and distinctive stories of each nation, Achebe (1975) asserted: "Let every people bring their gifts to the great festival of the world's cultural harvest, and mankind will be all the richer for the variety and distinctiveness of the offerings" (p.17). The study's primary purpose is to map the liminality of the people on the threshold of synergic interfaces by setting his text *Anthills of the Savannah* at a cultural crossroads of postcolonial and postmodern attitudes, tendencies, and approaches. The article attempts to find answers to the following questions:

Is there any textual evidence Achebe has put forward in the novel that demonstrates postmodern worldviews were already inherently present in African cultures?

How did Achebe use African mini-narratives to demonstrate their exhilarating influence on Africa's cultural regeneration?

---

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of English Language and Literature, College of Arts and Letters, University of Bisha, Bisha, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Apart from using Jean-Francois Lyotard's key postmodernist concept 'mini-narratives', what other postmodern discourses, such as liminality, cultural hybridity, celebrating fragmentation, rejection of metanarratives, questioning oneself, identity, and history are available in the text?

How could this novel prove that postcolonial trajectories in the African context and postmodern trajectories of learning can have a synergic interface instead of being in binary opposition?

It narrates the dramatic story of the friendship and betrayal of four friends in a fictitious country called Kangan, resembling Nigeria. All of them received their higher education from abroad. Sam became the President of the country and gradually turned into a dictator. His close friend Ikem Osodi started working as the Editor of the National Gazette and took the side of the ordinary people against their despotic ruler. Another friend, Christopher Oriko, was serving as a Minister for Information in Sam's cabinet but gave up his position to free people from his tyranny. His fiancé Beatrice Okoh was working at the secretariat of the Government but gradually became part of their national struggle for political freedom. Through the gradual portrayal of these four characters, Achebe introduced the politics of power, narration, subjugation, resilience, and neo-colonialism.

One of the reasons why Postmodernism significantly appeals to and dominates contemporary literary scholarship is its central tendency to facilitate micro-events, mini-narratives, and suppressed stories against the eclipsing and/or overpowering grand narratives. Postmodernism is perceived as a movement that provides hopes and aspirations to mentally defeated groups of people and marginalized cultures against the onslaught of grand narratives like great literary canons, high cultures, and universal civilizations. Postmodernism as a movement underscores that these mini-narratives are valuable and deserve critical attention in great academic activities, as they have the potential to (re)-invigorate any civilization.

The paper is significant in a few ways. First, it provides evidence that the postcolonial search for one's roots and traditions is not necessarily a trajectory that takes one back to past historical discourses. Instead, it may bring confidence in one's past, appreciating their dynamism and extending validity in the future postmodernist directions, albeit with doubt, interrogations, and suspicion. Secondly, it underscores the values of traditional cultural wisdom and how they may play influential roles in rebuilding Africa. Thirdly, the paper repositions Africa by facilitating a nuanced understanding of its cultural architecture. The analysis of the novel contends that the continent has inherent cultural artifacts that can be complementary in case of a synergic interface with any other major ideas of the world.

## Review of Literature

*Anthills of the Savannah* has always been a text of deep interest to the research community. The very title of the novel suggests that there are signs of hope for the regeneration of Africa's cultural heritage. Stephansen (2013) suggested that to regenerate such prosperity, "empowering local struggles" (p. 513) will be of utmost importance. This perspective resonates with the arguments put forth by Akpome (2014) when he suggested that Achebe's fictional delineation of their cultural heritage in the novel "offers suggestions and possibilities for the future of African nation states" (36). In an in-depth study, Gandhi (2012) argued that Achebe's characters, in general, were struggling in an "uncertain terrain" as they could not grapple with the "complexities of change" in the postcolonial era (p. 62). Reinforcing this perspective, Akwanya (2013) pointed out that Beatrice, the female character, made active efforts to get "connected and responsible to the people" (p. 492), albeit she had to struggle in navigating her identity and position in the new dynamics of power and political arena.

Consistent with the trend of the research, Mwinlaaru (2014) elucidated that Achebe, through the character of Chris, intended to urge the new generation to "transform his society through struggle" (103). With a view to empower the people, Akpome (2014) demonstrated how Achebe used multiple narrators in the novel to allow "the espousal of a range of ideological persuasions that are simultaneously diverging and complementary" (p. 35). In congruence with the views of Akpome (2014), Yakubu (2014) claimed that Achebe used a variety of English to delineate characters authentically and to "project themes" related to their respective lives (p. 7). Bhardwaj (2015) underscored the values of the mini-narratives of Africa and

read the ‘anthills’ in the novel as repositories of mini-narratives symbolizing “ancestral wisdom and communal experiences, ... the dreams lost and hopes yearned” against the impeding forces of “the poor leadership, neocolonialism, economic downturn, schism of cold war-isms” (p. 346).

Building on previous studies, Ilyas (2020) indicated how colonizers used their cultural "hegemony" (p. 84) to prolong their dominance in the colonial countries. However, Gwekwerere (2020) suggested that Achebe's narration in the novel celebrated “the human ability to dare to transform reality and challenge norms” of the hegemonic power (p. 574). Eze (2022) proposed the recent scholarship to come out of the colonizer and colonized binary of interpretations and warned that this type of binary interpretation prevents dialogic and ambivalent interpretations.

Some of the most recent studies have focused on how to read the novel *Anthills of the Savannah* for the re-worlding of Africa's cultural world and the challenges involved. Achebe suggests multiple versions of modernities in his fictional writings (West-Pavlov, 2022). Tugume (2022) depicted corrupt practices and political decadence are the main impediments to development. Aligned with this viewpoint, Duan (2022) pointed out that the African states faced “dictatorship and military coups” after their independences, and they messed with the potential to become democratic and progressive nations (p. 4). Reinforcing this perspective, Mengistic (2023) argued Achebe depicted how the dream of a prosperous nation is being broken by a “despotic, corrupt regime” (p. 36). In rebuilding Africa, Osinubi (2024) claimed the novel argued agonistic attitudes among the characters and social groups for facilitating new forms of ideas for a brighter future. Roshan (2024) illustrated how to analyze Achebe's text to “contribute to the larger narratives of decolonization” (p. 8). Emah, Joseph, and Akanya (2024) argued that the "scorch of the sun in the text symbolizes the insensitivity of the African political leaders to the plights of the citizens" (p. 240), and that had a destructive role for their narratives to grow.

A critical review of these articles demonstrates that they have tended to focus on rebuilding and re-worlding Africa as if it is a continent utterly different from the rest of the world. Some of these articles tended to be too engrossed in the African cultural world and tended to ignore the West's positive contribution in forming emerging culture due to the contribution of the Western-educated people. They failed to acknowledge its positive contributions and failed to show how Achebe wanted to re-world, synthesize, and synergize by showing the common grounds. These impressions misrepresent Achebe as he was ambivalent and equally critical of colonial administrators and postcolonial societies in his analysis.

As per the existing body of research, no study has investigated whether postmodern ideas align with the wisdom of Africa's oral literature and tradition. The presumption is that if one celebrates African cultural heritage, it will drive one away from the ideas of the West and that they are in binary opposition as constructed during the colonial era narratives. While extensive research exists on African culture and tradition, there remains a lack of focus on how that cultural artifact can be used to build a progressive and democratic nation. Previous studies have not explicitly addressed the question of the possibility of a synergic interface between postcolonialism and Postmodernism. The present study of *Anthills of the Savannah*, an influential novel by Achebe, using the critical approach of the postmodernism, has demonstrated that they have not been in a mutually exclusive position. Instead, it has opened a new vista of exploration with immense potential for new outlooks and world-views. The study has proved that one can be an Igbo and a postmodernist at the same time. This analysis of Igbo cosmology vis-e-vis postmodernism will give validity to Igbo minds about the richness of their culture and restore confidence in them on any of their future trajectories of life and world-views to explore from their history and tradition.

## Methodology

This paper intends to answer the question if the trajectory of postcolonialism/ decolonization essentially alienates one from the trajectories advocated by the proponents of postmodernism. The study envisages to prove that there is a synergic interface between the two trajectories. A re-inscription of Africa's cultural heritage and oral tradition, as presented in the novel, reveals that Igbo culture also carries the proponents of postmodernist worldviews. This “reinscribing” (Spivak, 1999, p. 228) of their cultural past is needed by

depicting how the colonization process “distorts it, disfigures it, and destroys it” (Fanon, 1963, p. 149). In the same vein, Edward Said (2003, p. 3) emphasized re-constructed their past, which had been depicted as “surrogate....self”. Homi K. Bhabha (1994, p. 211) documented the consequences of colonization in the form of “the liminality of the nation, the margins of modernity, ... ambivalence and vacillation”.

To restore the dignity and confidence in their marginalized cultural heritage, both postcolonial and postmodern attitudes and tenets have been used to explain the implications and significance of various African proverbs, customs, religious rituals, and traditions. By using these two critical approaches as research tools in correlating and comparing some of the passages of the text, one visualizes deep similarities between them. Using a postmodern-postcolonial hybrid approach to study the novel is vital in enhancing a cross-racial understanding and illuminating their inherently harmonious values, philosophies, and attitudes.

The primary scope of this research is *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987), and the core approaches and methods of postmodernism and postcolonialism have served as recurrent undercurrents in the pursuit. The advantages of using such comparative, correlative, and analytical methodology in the research are manifold. It has also identified and fostered mini-narratives showcasing their dynamic and organic power in the culture.

The study contends that postmodern attitudes are already inherently entrenched in Africa's ethos and culture in the context of Igbo cosmology. To do that, the researcher used text analysis as a tool to prove the points and, at times, to correlate these texts with Achebe's critical writings. The postmodern outlook was seen as an import to Africa till Achebe demonstrated in fictional terms and through his critical writings, that they, too, had such outlooks in their cultural heritage. The novel demonstrates the conviction of Achebe:

That African people did not hear of culture for the first time...; that their societies...had a philosophy of great depth...they had poetry and, above all, they had dignity. It is this dignity...lost during the colonial period...they must regain. (Killam, 1977, p. 8)

The way Sam, the dictator, denigrates the people of the Abazon delegation in the novel demonstrates that the task of recovering their people from a denigrated situation is far from over.

The author's conviction in this research is to demonstrate that Achebe's writings had abundant examples of how he wanted to re-world Africa as a continent based on their cultural wisdom. Jean-François Lyotard's influential postmodernist concept, 'mini-narratives,' has been used recurrently in the critical analysis of the text. He drew the attention of the leadership and/or of the readership to the mini-narratives available in the society and suggested how to synergize them for a better, more effective, and more exuberant nation-building process. The central tendency in the novel was to give voice to and facilitate the suppressed, marginalized people. This study has provided a more comprehensive view of Achebe's literary landscape, fostering new knowledge, understandings, and interpretations for the people and society.

An analysis of the novel's plots, points of view, conflicts, themes, and characters demonstrates how he attempted to empower the marginalized (ethnic, black) people, women, the suppressed stories of 'the rural peasants,' and 'the urban poor.' He brought these diverse and often neglected/marginalized stories to empower the nation. He did it to connect the marginalized, indigenous people for their social emancipation. The researcher has selected some important examples from the novel to critically explain how they achieve that.

## Discussion and Results

The post-modernist tenets Achebe demonstrated in the novel resonating with their oral tradition are highly divergent in nature and abundant in numbers. Achebe did it with a view to prove that their cultural artifact is too rich with such perspectives and worldviews. First, he emphasized the values of reforms, contradictions, and multitudes. Secondly, he developed a culture of skepticism, doubt, and suspicion. Thirdly, he attempted to re-inscribe African histories, cultures, and narrations back to their roots to facilitate

their latent talent and stories. Fourthly, he re-interpreted traditional myths to foster new meanings and significance. Fifthly, he connected/networked with the marginalized voices of diverse groups like taxi drivers, market women, women's stories in general, students, village elders, etc. Sixthly, he foregrounded the mini-narratives, for instance, roles of fables, folklore, proverbs, oral traditions, cultural heritage, myths, customs/rites, anecdotes, mythical stories, and local histories in depicting and evaluating African culture. Finally, he used multiple points of view and multiple narrative voices in the text to facilitate marginalized voices against one central hegemonic voice.

Achebe portrayed how women's stories and experiences can become a source of power and strength in society if they are involved with mutual respect and honor. Beatrice Okoh, the novel's female protagonist, realized the need to develop herself educationally and set an example for others to follow. She committed, "I was determined from the very beginning to put my career first..." (Achebe, 1987, p. 88). Beatrice became an active member of social and cultural engineering. She reasoned with Ikem and advocated for a "clear role for women in his political thinking" (Achebe, 1987, p. 91). Illuminated with the conversations with Beatrice, Ikem started foregrounding the marginalized voices of the nation. Ikem noted how women were marginalized in their country along with the "... rural peasants... urban poor... Black people... ethnic and religious minorities and castes..." (Achebe, 1987, pp. 98–99). A slow and gradual revolution is needed to recognize and incorporate these marginalized voices, experiences, and stories in the nation-building process. Ikem asserted:

Reform may be a dirty word then but begins to look more and more like the most promising route to success in the real world. I limit myself to most promising rather than only for the simple reason that all certitude must now be suspect. (Achebe, 1987, p. 99)

The undertone of Ikem Osodi in proposing a revolution as a means of transforming society is not a blind one with absolute conviction; rather, he underscored the value of interrogating and questioning his idea. One of the prominent attitudes of the postmodern worldview is very much resonated when Ikem insists that 'all certitude must now be suspect.' This prominent postmodernist attitude is compared to a double-edged sword. While it interrogates the authenticity and validity of other ideologies and perspectives, it suspects, questions, and challenges the validity of its own standpoints, perceptions, truths, and realities.

Ikem reaffirmed his conviction that real growth, progress, and prosperity in terms of ideas and directions will occur through conflicts and contradictions: "In the vocabulary of certain radical theorists, contradictions are given the status of some deadly disease to which their opponents alone can succumb. But contradictions are the very stuff of life" (Achebe, 1987, p. 100). To facilitate such a flow of ideas and arguments among the characters and to effect multiple mini-narratives, perspectives, and diverse stories to grow, Achebe allowed diverse individuals to tell his or her own stories from his or her own perspectives. As a result, multiple narrators presented their own points of view: Ikem, Christopher, Beatrice, and, of course, the pre-dominant voice is the voice of the third-person omniscient narrator.

Achebe underscored the value of his African oral tradition and demonstrated how they stand for individualism, democracy, and postmodernism. They have been implicitly prevalent in their oral tradition. Achebe cogently explicated:

Where one thing stands another thing must stand beside it... 'There is only one way' is something which is new to my people... 'They tell you where there are two heads, there are four eyes... You multiply the possibility to see around things. That's what my culture teaches, and I think it is more civilized, more sensible, than the fanatical view that 'I have got the truth; I have got the righteousness'. This is what is in fact probably going to destroy the world (Jussawalla, F. and Dasenbrock, 1992, p. 63).

This cultural wisdom fragments any grand narrative that attempts to subjugate and dominate the alternative voices of society. The search for ideas, respect for individuals, appreciation of micro-events, and listening to mini-narratives are already inherent in African culture and society. If Africans get re-educated and re-oriented in their own cultural wisdom, they will find the things they have been searching elsewhere in their cultural heritage. They will stop suffering from inferiority complexes by considering their past as savage

and barbaric. Postmodern perspectives are also visible in their oral traditions. For instance, Achebe cogently described what an Abazonian village elder explained to his community:

How do we salute our fellows when we come in and see them massed in assembly ... Do we not say: To everyone his due? ...It is saying to us: Every man has what is his; do not bypass him to enter his compound... (Achebe, 1987, p. 123)

The old man taught that people should learn from their oral tradition, which emphasizes the value of each community member's unique and distinctive nature. The value and importance of what postmodernists termed mini-narratives and micro events are clearly visible in the teachings of the village elder. He underscored their intrinsic power and significance and motivated the younger generation to uphold their cultural heritage and oral tradition:

... it is only the story can continue beyond the war and the warrior. It is the story that outlives the sound of war-drums... It is the story, not the others, that saves our progeny... The story is our escort: without it we are blind. ... it is the story that owns us and directs us. It is the thing that makes us different from cattle; it is the mark on the face that sets one people apart from their neighbors (Achebe, 1987, p. 124)

Ikem Osodi carried the story of the struggle of the old man of the Abazon delegation and how the government illegally arrested the delegation to the student community. He created a revolutionary sensation among them against their despotic ruler. He used a mini-narrative, "The Tortoise and the Leopard," to educate and ignite their latent power to make a change in the nation. The role of the mini-narrative "The Tortoise and the Leopard" demonstrated the power and potential of mini-narratives in connecting and empowering the subjugated people. The tone of a postmodernist fragmenting the grand narratives that control, subjugate, and marginalize the voices of ordinary people is visible when Ikem cogently argued: "...story-tellers are a threat. They threaten all champions of control, they frighten usurpers" (Achebe, 1987, p. 153). Ikem implied that the story has the generative power to dismantle the hegemonic position of the dictator. He inspired the students at the university:

"Time is short! We want results! Now, now!" .... No I cannot give you the answer... Go home and think! I cannot decree you pet, text-book revolution. I want instead to excite general enlightenment by forcing all the people to examine the condition of their lives because, as the saying goes, 'unexamined life is not worth living'...You must develop the habit of scepticism, not swallow every piece of superstition you are told by witch doctors and professors. I see too much parroting, too much regurgitating of half-digested radical rhetoric... When you have rid yourselves of these things your potentiality for assisting and directing this nation will be quadrupled.... Writers don't give prescriptions. They give headaches. (Achebe, 1987, pp. 158–161)

In this short speech, Ikem Osodi wanted every individual in the nation to become a source of ideas and a center of change by breaking the barriers of what has been taught to them in the textbooks of schools and colleges to believe. He also used skepticism as a tool to fragment the metanarratives of 'witch-doctors' from their society. By the habit of skepticism, he wants the students to interrogate, debate, and challenge what they have been learning from both the university professors of Western education and witch doctors of their traditional society. He advocated debates and discussions so that the people can get the best and reject the worst from both the sources of education.

The conflict and negotiation between the powerful grand narratives of the government and the dynamic yet suppressed voices of the people are visible in the speech of Ikem Osodi: "We may accept a limitation on our actions but never, under no circumstances, must we accept restriction on our thinking" (Achebe, 1987, p. 223). However, the dictator Sam got him killed and accused him of conspiring against the country. Achebe (2000) once underscored the subjugating influence of grand narrative: "...Those who secure this privilege for themselves can arrange stories ... as, they like" (p. 24).

A common narrative constructed against the African tradition is that, in their cosmology, there is no freedom or room for mini-narratives to grow due to societal pressure. Achebe (1975) deconstructed this narrative:

...(Igbo) postulate the concept of every man as both a unique creation and the work of a unique creator. Which is as far as individualism and uniqueness can possibly go! And we should naturally expect such a cosmogony to have far reaching consequences in the psychology and institutions of the people... all this might lead one to think that among the Igbo the individual would be supreme, totally free and existentially alone. (pp. 98-99)

The fictional world of *Antbills of the Savannah* resonates with this Igbo cosmology, and the Igbo cosmology could be seen as resembling postmodern attitudes, approaches, and values. Achebe (1988) observed: "Igbo formulate their view of the world as: 'No condition is permanent'. In Igbo cosmology even gods could fall out of use; and new forces are liable to appear without warning in the temporal and metaphysical firmament" (p. 64). In line with this argument, Achebe (1988) further explained that, in Igbo arts, culture, and society, the consumers of art, to enjoy it at its best form, need to change their positions: "...those who want to enjoy its (the masquerade's dance) motion fully must follow its progress up and down the arena. ... 'You do not stand in one place to watch a masquerade'" (p. 65). These attitudes demonstrate that they are in alignment with the postmodern world. The postmodernist tenets, tendencies, attitudes, and worldviews can be meaningfully co-related and found vividly reflected in the Igbo cosmology, rituals, beliefs, and practices. In both Igbo cosmology and postmodern worldviews, life, meanings, and interpretations are fluid, contingent, relative, contextual, and constructed against the fixed and absolute truths.

Celebrating Postmodern concepts of local, isolated events and heroes are again epitomized in the characters of Christopher and Beatrice. Achebe attempted to redefine the concept of hero and hero worship. While acknowledging the grandeur of Ikem Osodi as a national hero as he could steer a revolution in the making and sacrificed his life in the process for the freedom of the people against the tyrannical rule of the dictator, Achebe argued that people should also recognize Christopher Oriko as a hero with equal rights even though he sacrificed his life in a scuffle with a military officer to protect an unknown girl from his sexual violence. Another implication here is the postmodern protest that a nation often celebrates people who struggled to bring freedom but neglects, ignores, and underrates individuals who sacrificed their lives to protect individuals from mental and physical harassment due to their race, culture, sex, and ethnicity in the post-independence era. These people remain unsung heroes beneath the celebrations of grand stories of national heroes.

Saddened by the deaths of Ikem Osodi and Christopher Oriko, Beatrice Okoh started to scrutinize the events and perspectives to discover the causes and effects, and the inherent logic and rationality among the events. Engrossed in the labyrinth of meanings, contexts, realities, and perceptions, she wanted to reinterpret things to see if there is any logic, reason, and rationality as events take place or if they are, as postmodernists believed, arbitrary, interpretative, and relational. Imbued in a journey to find the absolute truth, she found herself in the world of 'hyper-realities' to quote the postmodernist term coined by Jean Baudrillard:

If indeed they [Ikem and Christopher] were his [Sam's] victims... Were they not in fact traileed travelers whose journeys from start to finish had been carefully programmed in advance by an alienated history?... What must a people do to appease an embittered history? (Achebe, 1987, p. 220)

In this thought-provoking question, "What must a people do to appease an embittered history?" (Achebe, 1987, p. 220), she implied fragmenting all the metanarratives that impede the people from inside. She attempted to reinscribe their history to reclaim their identity, dignity, and culture.

In the very last scene of the novel, Achebe depicts how society has been celebrating micro events in African society. An example can be seen in the small congregation for the ceremonial event for the

naming of Elewa's child. Beatrice conducted the naming ceremony, and people from diverse socio-religious backgrounds were present at that small event and accepted her leadership. Achebe argued that people must honor such leaders of the micro, isolated events with equal dignity and respect. To portray her role as an agent of positive, constructive change, Achebe (1987) dramatized her, "Why are you all sitting in darkness? she said, turning the lights on" (p. 230). In an interview, Achebe argued that Beatrice was a leader because "she suddenly has the group around her to acknowledge her leadership. I would call it leadership" (Jussawalla, F. and Dasenbrock, 1992, p. 64). Celebrating micro-events, giving validity to marginalized people, and restoring their dignity and honor are the directions where both postcolonial and postmodern thinkers align.

Postmodernists perceive that no one can reach a definitive position in terms of meaning about a particular history, culture, and identity. The postmodern tendency to interrogate meaning, history, and identity as the linguistic discourse itself is relative, constitutive, and arbitrary is clearly voiced in the reflections of Beatrice:

For weeks and months after I had definitely taken on the challenge of bringing together as many broken pieces of the tragic history as I could lay my hands on I still could not find a way to begin. Anything I tried to put down sounded wrong- either too abrupt, too indelicate or too obvious—to my middle ear (Achebe, 1987, p. 82)

This is the worldview of a typical postmodernist who finds himself/herself amid illusions, constantly interrogating the perceived truths and realities to discover what is real. Beatrice has been debating and disintegrating/fragmenting the apparently established concepts of meaning, identity, reality, and authority in a world of 'hyperreality.'

## Conclusion

The paper has attempted to prove that the ideals of postmodernism and the ideals of Africa's cultural heritage align with each other and will have a synergic and divergent impact on society. They are not in binary opposition. The core African cultural ideals have been critically analyzed and compared with the tenets of postmodernism as evidence of their alignments. Through the characters of Christopher Oriko, Ikem Osodi, and Beatrice Okoh, Achebe attempted to demonstrate how to synthesize the best from Africa and the best from the West. It has illustrated how the marginalized people, oral literature, traditions, and African cultural heritage have the potential to subvert the national narratives of the despot Sam and can rewrite their histories, identities, and characters. The paper examines how Achebe, with his minute delineations of oral stories, traditional rituals, and Igbo cosmology, restores the intellectual stature of their cultural artifact. The study has also demonstrated how Achebe used traditional African proverbs and wise sayings to honor/facilitate the multiple ways of living and growing. In consonance with postmodernist ideas, outlooks, and spirits, it celebrated the local individuals, unique events, and isolated incidents. Achebe underscored the values of celebrating local heroes like Beatrice, martyrs like Christopher, and events like the naming ceremony of Elwa's daughter.

## Funding Acknowledgement

I am thankful to the Deanship of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research at the University of Bisha, Bisha, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for supporting this work through the Fast-Track Research Support Program.

**Institutional Review Board Statement:** Not Applicable.

**Transparency** The author states that the manuscript is honest, truthful, and transparent and that no key aspects of the investigation have been omitted. This study followed all writing ethics.

**Competing Interests:** The author declares that he has no competing interests.

**Authors' Contributions:** Not Applicable (Single author).

## References

- Achebe, C. (1975). *Morning yet on creation day: Essays*. London: Heinemann.
- Achebe, C. (1987). *Anthills of the Savannah*. London: Picador.
- Achebe, C. (1988). *Hopes and impediments: Selected essays, 1965-1987*. London: Heinemann.
- Achebe, C. (2000). *Home and exile*. New York: Anchor.
- Akpome, A. (2014). Dispersal of narrative point of view in Chinua Achebe's anthills of the savannah. *English Academy Review*, 31(1), 19–37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10131752.2014.909000>
- Akwanya, A. N. (2013). Need that throbs at the heart: Solidarity in Chinua Achebe's anthills of the savannah. *International Journal of English and Literature*, 4(10), 486–494. <https://doi.org/10.5897/IJEL2013.0496>
- Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The location of culture*. New York: Routledge.
- Bhardwaj, P. (2015). The dynamics of change in African sensibility: Anthills of the savannah. *International Journal of Innovative Research & Development*, 4(3), 345–352.
- Duan, J. (2022). Orature: The political interpretation of performance framework in Anthills of the Savannah and Half of a Yellow Sun. *Comparative Literature and Culture*, 24(5). <https://doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.3988>
- Emah, S S., Joseph, O. S. and Akanya, J. (2024). Discursive strategies employed in Chinua Achebe's anthills of the savannah. *Journal of Arts & Humanities*, 14(2).
- Eze, V. O. (2022). Between no longer at ease and a man of the people: Problematizing the analytical methods. *Journal of the African Literature Association*, 16(3), 512–524.
- Fanon, F. (1963). *The wretched of the earth*. New York: Grove Press.
- Gandhi, N. (2012). At the crossroads: Culture and cultural identity in the novels of Achebe. *African Identities*, 10(1), 55–62. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2012.629027>
- Gwekwerere, T. (2020). Narrating the struggle, theorizing the genre: The convergence of narrative and literary-critical theory in Chinua Achebe's anthills of the savannah (1987). *Journal of Black Studies*, 51(6), 565–586. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021934720926060>
- Ilyas, M. (2020). Traumatic portrayal of nativity and post-colonial cultural hegemony in Chinua Achebe's things fall apart. *International Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, 9(2), 76–85. [10.18488/journal.23.2020.92.76.85](https://doi.org/10.18488/journal.23.2020.92.76.85)
- Jussawalla, F. and Dasenbrock, R. W. (1992). *Interviews with Writers of the Post-colonial World*. JHackson and London: University press of Mississippi.
- Mengistie, D. (2023). The postcolonial problems presented in Chinua Achebe's antilles of savannah. *Harla Journal of Social and Behavioral Studies*, 2(1). <https://journals.ddu.edu.et/index.php/HJSBS>
- Mwinlaaru, I. N. (2014). Style, character, and the theme of struggle and change: Chinua Achebe's anthills of the savannah. *Research in African Literatures*, 45(2).
- Osinubi, T. A. (2024). Transportation and agon in Chinua Achebe's no longer at ease and anthills of the savannah. *English Studies in Africa*, 67(2), 16–30. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/00138398.2024.2359780>
- Roshan, M. K. (2024). Environmental racism and ecological crisis in Achebe's Things fall apart (1958), and Gordimer's My son's story (1990). *Cogent Social Sciences*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2024.2350110>
- Said, E. W. (2003). *Orientalism*. London: Penguin Books.
- Spivak, G. C. (1999). *A critique of postcolonial reason: Toward a history of the vanishing present*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Stephansen, H. C. (2013). Connecting the peripheries: Networks, place and scale in the World Social Forum process. *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 49(5), 506–518. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449855.2013.842773>
- Tugume, B. (2022). Exploring Africa's political dilemma in Chinua Achebe's a man of the people and anthills of the savannah. *Journal of African Languages and Literary Studies*, 3(2). <https://journals.co.za/doi/full/10.31920/2633-2116/2022/v3n2a2>
- West-Pavlov, P. W. (2022). Modernisms and modernities in Achebe's things fall apart. *English Studies in Africa*, 65(1), 72–86. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00138398.2022.2055860>
- Yakubu, M. A. (2014). Language and theme in Charles Dickens's oliver twist and Chinua Achebe's arrow of God. *International Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, 3(1), 1–11