

## **I. Ngozi Adichie and The Rise of Nigerian National Consciousness**

This research attempts to examine the issue of nationalism and the process of nation formation in the novel *Purple Hibiscus* by Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. The writer uses the typical Nigerian words and attempts to see the life of Nigerian people and the cultural confusion created by the imported Christian Catholic values that brands the typical Nigerian values as pagan values, on the European basis, especially within linguistic paradigm. The European colonial discourse eroding the culture and creating the pathetic life among the Nigerians, hard- hit by the economic political turmoil has been beautifully foregrounded with the discourse of nationalism. To proceed to examine the novel as typical discourse of nation formation, this research first attempts to see the socio-political and economic contexts of the novel.

*Purple Hibiscus* is set in postcolonial Nigeria in which the colonial values are still rampantly imposed against the Nigerian cultural values. People are poor and aspiring for their own rule over their culture and society. This longing of the people is marred by the imposing tendency of the White Europeans treating them as Orientals, uncivilized, and pagan. Thus, they are necessitating and justifying their role to assist Nigerians to make them civilized with the Catholic missions throughout the Nigeria. The country is tormented by political instability and economic crisis, on the one hand, and the colonial presence and lack of democracy due to the autocratic rule of military Junta on the other. In this context, fifteen years old daughter of Staunch Catholic Nigerian father, narrates the story of Nigeria's cultural, social and political condition along with her difficulty to grow up coping with the devout and fanatic imposition of Christian values in the family by her father. The narrator of the novel is, the girl of fifteen, Kambili Achike, who is very intelligent in the case of observation. In the course of novel, she grows as a mature woman, with the sense of her own culture, her 'self'

and sexuality. Thus, the novel is a tale of the growth of the narrator's entering into the world of maturity, the journey from the ignorance to experience and from childhood to the adulthood.

The novel is set on the small town of Nigeria called Enugu where Achike family lives. The narrator Kambili is fifteen years old when the novel opens. Since she is still an ignorant teenage girl, she narrates the things and events, which she encounters, with childish curiosity. She is the daughter of a devout and fanatic follower of Catholic codes and conduct, Eugene Achike who imposes them tyrannically to his family. His soft and ironical side is that he is rich enough for distributing money to poor and helpless and advocates for the democracy in the country dominated by a military rule in his own newspaper called *Standard*. The tyrant of the family is so democratic outside the house is very ironical. Ironically, it suggests his failure to understand that he and his family are the microcosm and the whole Nigeria is the macrocosm. He himself is like the military tyrant of his family that he opposes outwardly. Further, he erodes the Nigerian culture and language with imposition of Catholic values and English language in the place of Nigerian Igbo language of home to show the impression of being civilized. In the novel, he is narrated as: "He hardly spoke Igbo, and although Jaja and I spoke it with Mama at home, he did not like us to speak it in public. We had to sound civilized in public, he told us; we had to speak English" (13).

Eugene is, thus, both a religious zealot and a violent figure in the Achike household, problematizing the subjectivity of his family members including the narrator, Kambili with physical torture and psychological cruelty. Further, he is the representative of the colonial English empire as seen above for his love and favor of English language in place of local Nigerian Igbo language.

Another important setting of the novel is the place called Nsukka, a university town of Nigeria. In Nsukka, the narrator Kambili and her brother Jaja spend the crucial time of their teen age in the household of their father's sister, Aunty Ifeoma and with her three children. In the contrast to tyrannical household of Achike family, the house of Aunty Ifeoma is democratic, nurturing and her three children are extrovert and free to speak their minds. Though, they were also Catholic, the Catholicism they practiced is completely different from the Catholicism imposed by Eugene. It is followed by them making the family happy and liberal that encourages them to speak their minds. In such nurturing environment both Kambili and Jaja become more open and more able to articulate their opinion. Most significantly, two situations are responsible there that made Kambili to grow as a mature woman. At first, she fell in love with simple and compassionate young Catholic priest, Father Amadi, who awakened her sense of sexuality. Another situation is that Aunty Ifeoma brings her father Papa-Nnukwu, the typical preserver of the Nigerian culture and values, to cure him during his last days. It provides Kambili and Jaja the chance to see the greatness of Nigerian cultural values which was regarded as pagan by the Eurocentric Catholics like her father. This leads to establish their cultural self. They grow culturally mature and start to see the evil politics underlying within the Catholic discourse.

The growth of Achike children to the mature state leads them to the violent resistance of the imposed colonial Catholic values of Eugene on the part of Jaja. The resistance reaches to its culmination as Beatrice poisons Eugene as being unable to cope with his continual physical and psychological violence to his family. Eugene is dead which symbolically suggests the defeat of the imported Catholic nationalism by the Nigerian nationalism and the quest for democratic values by Nigerian people. The

novel ends with great portrayal of resistance as Jaja takes the charge of his father's murder and goes to jail. There is new silence and some air of freedom and democracy in the family. Kambili has grown up as mature woman with logical mind.

In this typical Nigerian tale narrated by fifteen years old girl, Kambili, the plot progresses with the physical, mental, social and cultural growth of his brother in the very adverse environments in Nigeria along with the tyranny of military and Catholic orthodox codes in the family. The purpose of this research is to excavate the process of nation formation and nationalistic issues successfully brought into the front by the Nigerian writer Adichie. Resistance is adopted as the vehicle to oppose the imported colonial Christian values. As the third-world writer of postcolonial Nigeria, she refuses the imported discourse of Catholic Christian community as the "Imagined, political community" of English and European nationalism with the brilliant juxtaposition and observation of the values of Nigerian nationalism and Nigerian language along with the colonial nationalism in Andersonian sense. Taking this as legacy, she violates the ground of the colonial discourse with the help of the Nigerian nationalistic discourse proving them as far more civilized and important than the imported discourses for Nigerians. She advocates Nigeria not as pagan but much more humanistic, civilized and valuable having its own capacity of autonomy without the help of so-called civilized colonizers.

Along the lines laid by various postcolonial theories and formulations in nationalism, the socio-political, economic, and cultural colonization and the writer's disruption of the colonial discourses with the ideology of nationalism and Nigerian third-world identity will be examined and the process of nation formation toward the refusal and resistance of the colonial discourses will be explored and analyzed in the course of this research.

### **Purple Hibiscus: The String of Nationalism**

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, being a Nigerian nationalist, experiences the postcolonial discourses imposed upon them by Christian theology, Eurocentric values and English language. She grew as a teenager with extreme curiosity to search and possess the god. She spent most of her life in the university campus in her own nation and then in America. Since her parents both worked at the University of Nigeria, in Nsukka, father as the professor of statistics and mother as the institution's first female registrar. She studied in University Primary School in Nsukka and continued her further study in University Secondary School there. Her parents raised her along with her two elder sisters, two elder brothers and a younger brother in a university-owned house and sending them to school in the same university. She started to study higher education in the same university. Adichie studied medicine there and immediately after completing the study she realized that medicine was not her proper choice rather it should have similar to her nationalistic ethos to raise the voice against the colonization.

Then, she transferred to Connecticut State University to study communication. There she became influenced with American sense of 'can do' filling a person with sense of possibility. Her heart continually longed for her home, Nigeria. This sense of the longing for her home is typical of the postcolonial, diasporic writers who are suffered with the lack of home in alien culture of America. She says: I was living in Connecticut and hadn't been back to Nigeria for four years. I was intensely homesick. It was winter here and terribly cold. I looked out and saw this blanket of white and thought: "I want home" (qtd. by Clare Garner 4).

Thus, the sense of the Nigerian culture and its belongingness becomes the major presence of her literary works. Further, her mind was occupied with

colonialism and its antecedences as other African writers write about it knowingly or unknowingly. To shape them as major themes in her literary works she used the vehicle of religion as she had the obsession with religion from her early teens. She is quoted as saying in Clare Garner's essay "Profile of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie" about her deep and profound influence of religion as, "[. . .]Until about 19, I was in my intense period of God searching. I read the writings of St. Augustine and fat books about Church history. I was always asking questions. I wanted to know why some people had car accidents and some didn't. I wanted to capture God in a bottle" (4).

Religious obsession becomes major vehicle for Adichie to write for her profound expression about the theme of colonialism and its aftermaths. In her novel, *Purple Hibiscus*, she embodies all of those features in her character Eugene Achike that marks her strong presence among her predecessor African writers. The handling of Christian religion as vehicle is also seen in the novels of Chinua Achebe, reputed Nigerian writer and Adichie's idol in *Things Fall Apart*, and *Arrow of God*.

*Purple Hibiscus* is Adichie's debut novel dealing with the issues of colonialism, postcolonial longing of Nigerians for their cultural nationalism, the subjection of Nigerians by the imported colonial Christian values which covers three years of life of her narrator, Kambili and the Nigerian political turmoil as well. This novel was the winner of the Hurston/ Wright Legacy award for debut fiction. Adichie won the Orange Broadband Prize for fiction with her novel *Half of a Yellow Sun* which depicts Nigeria during 1960's blighted by Civil War. It depicts the horror of war and the loyalties of the characters to each other during hard time of war.

Since its publication, the novel *Purple Hibiscus* paved way for the various critics for criticisms from multiple viewpoints. Most of the critics of the novel have hailed the novelist as the emerging voice of Africa following the footsteps of great

Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe. Emily Whitchurch, reviewing the novel *Purple Hibiscus* sees the novel as deceptively insightful portraying the nostalgic picture of Nigeria. She writes, “Debut novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie makes words work in this deceptively insightful novel. Her descriptive passages consure up a sensual, nostalgic portrait of Nigeria in a time of cultural and political change”. (6)

Whitchurch sees the exploration of the notions of freedom and religion gently explored in the novel and sees the journey of the narrator Kambili through sexual and political awakening as parallel to the Nigeria’s journey in the search of unity amidst external imposition of the colonial values and the internal political unrest. She writes; “Kambili must navigate her way through a complex of confusing and contradictory symbols just as Nigeria itself searches for unity amidst external imposition and internal unrest” (6).

Cultural hybridity and interchange has been insightfully examined by Emily Whitchurch with the examination of the language of the novel. She writes:

Language mirrors this cultural interchange. At first, Igbo words forbidden by Papa mix uncomfortably with standard English, reflection the speech of Kambili, who is little more than mute in her father’s house. By the last section of the book, however, the narrator and reader have become used to the Nigerian tongue and without understanding all the words, the sounds feel right. (7)

Language is the major vehicle for the cultural transmission and cultural interchange as language is the major component of the culture. The restriction of Igbo language and the imposition of English language in place of it is to restrict the Nigerian cultural features to curb them creating the space for the imperial, colonial cultural is obvious because English is colonial language and the part of colonial culture. The refusal to

the English language using unfamiliar Igbo words throughout the novel is the stubborn reluctance of Adichie to let the room for colonial language, culture, thus, creation of the sufficient place for Igbo culture and its cultural transmission and interchange to the world of her readers. Both narrator and the readers become prepared for the space for the unfamiliar Nigerian culture by means of language wiping out the more familiar English, colonial culture. Thus, Adichie is successful to create the universe of Nigerian culture with the use of Nigerian language and both the narrator and the readers successfully learn to accept the Nigerian culture at the end of the novel. By this Adichie is successful to reconstruct the Nigerian culture and ensure its cultural interchange by the means of language.

In this book review of the novel, Oseloka Obaze sees the paradox embedded in the very title of the novel *Purple Hibiscus*. He writes:

*Purple Hibiscus*, like Nigeria, is a paradox. To read *Purple Hibiscus* is to relive life in Nigeria for those who know it and a shock therapy education in the vagaries of everyday life for those who perchance, might have just been insinuated into Nigeria by Ms. Adichie. This is a book about Nigeria, its culture, extended family system, human desires, more so those of adolescents, and clash of African and Western norms. It has been rightly dubbed “a subtle study of family life and political complexity in Nigeria. (19)

Since the very title *Purple Hibiscus* encompasses the most of the problems of life in Nigeria and the life of Nigeria both, it is very curious and paradoxical title for Obaze. Inside the novel, purple Hibiscus has been used to denote the experimental flower in Auntie Ifeoma’s garden. The very experimental attitude in her can be seen in her home where she experiments with the democracy and freedom when the country is under



the tyranny of military rule. She experiments the Nigerian cultural values of Papa-Nnukwu in Catholicism. Catholicism is like a group of various parasitic plants in the garden which surround and kill the experimental plant purple Hibiscus of the Nigerian culture and values. Thus, the emblematic use of purple Hibiscus is full of paradox, the opposites clash in the image of it. It has properly been located while reviewing the novel by Obaze.

Obaze also comments upon the historical side of the novel. He writes:

*Purple Hibiscus* reduces and personifies the fate of a disenfranchise nation to the “microcosm” that is its dysfunctional academic institutions as well as individuals. It lampoons a nation that wallows in self-doubt and pity, where “*the educated ones leave, the ones with the potential to right and wrongs. They leave the weak behind. The tyrants continue to reign because the weak cannot resist*”. (21)

Thus, Obaze, sees the personification of Nigerian history in the microcosm of the novel that has further been the weapon to lampoon the pathologies of Nigerian society. The tyranny of the rulers continues due to the selfishness of the educated people as they leave their country looking for own better future leaving the future of the nation dark. The weak people have no option but to bear the sufferings inflicted upon them by the rulers as the stronger persons, both educated and rich, never back them to fight for the light of democracy. The rampant corruption, tyranny, brain drain are the major problems seen by Obaze in his review. Further he also sees the personification of two values conflicting in Nigeria. He sees the clash of civilization, the conflict between traditional and imported Catholicism as personified by Papa-Nnukwu and his son Eugene. Obaze writes about the two persons representing the opposite and conflicting poles as, “whereas both parted ways on matters of native

customs and religion, they ironically both prayed to the same *Chineke*-God, in their different ways, with each using different symbols as means for intercession” (21). Thus, the construction of hierarchy between the two different values is superficial and the colonial discourse of Christian superiority perpetuated in Nigerian society is ludicrous. With the refusal to such exclusive colonial discourses, Adichie attempts to show that the Nigerian national values are no way inferior to other values but in many ways superior to other discourses.

The present research work has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter fundamentally deals with introductory outline of the present study. It introduces critical review and the writer and her characters in relation to their subjection with tyrannical colonial values, violence, and their growth to the stage of maturity and resistance to the imported and imposed colonial discourses. Thus it presents the bird's eye view of the entire research. The second chapter aims at providing the theoretical methodology briefly. It attempts to define the terms: nation, nationalism and its ideology and its pivotal role to subvert the colonial discourses with refusal and resistance to the colonial discourses. On the basis of theoretical terrain, the third chapter will be analyzed the novel. It will further sort out some extracts from the text to prove the hypothesis of the research. This part serves as the core of the present research. The Fourth chapter concludes the ideas put forward in the earlier chapter, focusing on the rejection of imported and imposed Christian god, Catholic tyranny and colonial language and culture with the awareness and experience of own Nigerian cultural identity and nationalism.

## II. Nation, Nationalism and Resistance

Nationalism has been prominent point of convergence as the basic weapon of resistance in post-colonial studies latterly. To begin with, it is closely connected to the idea of 'nation'. This chapter devotes to shed light upon the concept of nation, nationalism and the examination how resistance has been converged to these terms. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* defines nation as "large community of people associated with a particular territory usu speaking a single language and use having a political character or political aspirations" (561). Thus the concept of nation is deeply rooted to the people living in particular regions and they are bound with certain political aspirations which are more or less present in most of the people. Nation, thus, acts as demarcation among the people and they are ready to die for their nation. The vivid examples we find consist of the World Wars I and II when many people sacrificed their lives in the name of the nation and it has become "the strongest foci for resistance to imperial control in colonial societies" (117) as Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin assert in their introduction to nationalism in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*. So, the concept of nation has the seminal role to unite the people as well as divide the people.

The concept of nation helps people to see themselves inventing their self-image and with that people are linked together with certain language, territory and political aspirations that can be categorized as the as the as the as the basic definition of nationalism. Even though, nationalism as a concept of patriotism, George Orwell, in his essay "Notes on Nationalism" writes about the sharp distinctions between them. He writes, "Nationalism is not to be confused with patriotism. Both the words are normally used in so vague a way that any definition is liable to be challenged" (1).

Thus, as early as 1953, Orwell had seen the ambiguity and difficulty handling the term nationalism. In most of the cases it was thought to be synonymous to patriotism. To talk about the distinction and to clarify the ambiguities embedded with it, Orwell further writes:

By ‘patriotism’ I mean devotion to a particular place and a particular way of life, which one believes to be the best in the World but has no wish to force on other people. Patriotism is of its nature defensive, both militarily and culturally. Nationalism, on the other hand, is inseparable from the desire for power. (3)

From this distinction, we clearly see the political orientation and quest of political power embedded to the idea of nationalism. After Orwell, the concept of nationalism has been better clarified by Frantz Fanon. As Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin observe in the introduction to nationalism in *The Post Colonial Studies Reader*:

Nationalism [. . .] is nowhere better summed than in the work of Frantz Fanon and his dictum that ‘a national cultural is the whole body of efforts made by a people in the sphere of thought to describe, justify and praise the action thought to describe, justify and praise the action through which that people has created itself and keeps itself in existence (117).

The dictum of Fanon quoted by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin makes it clear that national culture or nationalism is necessary discourse for the people to exist as it is made by the people themselves to describe, justify and praise their own action and thus it is charged with the ideology of particular group. In the similar line to Fanon, Benedict Anderson in his book in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on The Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1992) terms nationalism as a discourse with certain

ideological system. He defines nationalism as “a particular form of ideological system which, like kinship and religion, often represents itself as natural, spontaneously generated and fully developed world view uninfluenced by history, economics and politics” (143). Thus, the discourse of nationalism operates like kinship or religion and it is not affected by history, economics and politics. It is hardly set among the people and has assumed the status like natural value. People follow it as their value and they identify themselves with it. It is what Fanon calls the national consciousness.

Earnest Renan sees the past as the social principle in which the nationalism or the national ideas rest. The present feeling of nationalism is, thus, based upon the piles of discourses of the heritage all the people which they keep to themselves for their identity and glory. He writes in his famous essay “Qu’es-ce qu’une nation?” as “A heroic past is the social principle on which the national idea rests. To have common glories in the past, a common will in the present; to have accomplished great things together, to wish to do so again, that is the essential condition for being a nation” (qtd. in Hutchinson and Smith 25).

On the foundation of the heroic past, as per Renan, the concept of nationalism and nation rest. The heroic past is not only the factor to unite all the people with the sense of kinship or emotional, spiritual ties but it also prepares the people to sacrifice for their common interests in coming factor among the people that can be used positively for the progress of people but if it is used with some power interests then it becomes counterproductive. Fanon is one of the earliest theorists to see this. He warns of the pitfalls of national consciousness as it can be an empty shell not any progressive force. Nationalism can become the mockery and it may be abused to establish the hegemonic control by the imperial power. As analyzed by Ashcroft et. al., “[. . .] Fanon was also one of the earliest theorists to warn of the pitfalls of

national consciousness, of its becoming an 'empty shell', a travesty of what it might have been" (117).

Ashcroft et. al. see the observation of Fanon as an important development in the theoretical corpus of nationalism. They see the insightful observation of Fanon that there is the danger of the concept nationalism that national bourgeoisie can use this concept as its own discourse "to maintain its own power"(117). Then the very concept of nationalism becomes the vehicle that "it takes over the hegemonic control" and "it develops as a function of this control, a monocular and sometimes xenophobic view of identity and a coercive view of national commitment" (117). Thus, the discourse of nationalism at once points to two different culminations. The one is of the identity of people and sets of their beliefs and behaviors and the second, the distorted and manipulated forms of same identity and beliefs of the people to maintain hegemonic control going against the assumed spirit of nationalism itself.

Benedict Anderson has also traced the difficulty dealing with the terms nation, nationality and nationalism in his book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. They are notoriously "difficult to define, let alone to analyze" (123). Anderson presents the readers a glance into the ambiguity and anomaly imbedded with these terms and the concept of nationalism as he quotes Hugh Seton-Watson's "conclusion that no " scientific definition" can be devised; yet the phenomenon has existed and exists" (5). Anderson further contends with Tom Nairn's assertion that "The theory of nationalism represents Marxism's great historical failure" (qtd. in Anderson 123). Then Anderson proposes the definition of nationalism which he terms "satisfactory interpretation of the anomaly of nationalism" (123). He proposes definition of nation from anthropological spirit. For him, the nation is an

imagined political community. Thus, Anderson proposes nationalism as an imaginary discourse. He terms nation as:

[. . .] an imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the mind of each lives the image of their communion. (124)

Thus, Anderson postulates the imaginary ties or relationship among the people living within certain geographic boundaries. This tie has been established as 'kinship' or 'religion' and it is there with the people as if it is the part of their consciousness.

On the foundation of Anderson's analysis of anomaly of nation and nationalism Partha Chatterjee examines the inherent problems in the concept of nationalism in his essay "Nationalism As a Problem". Chatterjee, first, sets out to see the emergence of national consciousness. With the agreement to Anderson, Chatterjee sees the Protestantism and print-capitalism as the basis of the emergence of national consciousness:

[. . .] because print-languages created 'unified fields of exchange and communications' below Latin and above the spoken vernaculars, gave a new fixity to language, and created new kinds of 'languages-of-power' since some dialects were closer to print- languages and dominated them while others remained dialects [. . .]. (126)

Thus, for Chatterjee, the print capitalism gave rise to the hierarchy among the dialects and created domination. Some dialects headed near the center and some to the margin, thus, print- capitalism devised the demarcation among the linguistic groups. To resist the marginality and domination and to keep themselves in existence, protecting

themselves from the center or the dominant languages of power, the marginalized linguistic communities used nationalism or national consciousness as the shield of resistance. In this way, print-capitalism is the major catalyst or the promoters of the formation of the discourse of nationalism. Seen in this light, nationalism is very useful discourse to question the marginality, domination and for raising the resistant voice of the marginal, dominated languages and cultural communities.

Chatterjee also discusses the types of nationalism which are historically emerged. He sees three distinct types or models of nationalism emerged historically. They are “‘Creole nationalism’ of Americas, [. . .] ‘linguists’ nationalisms of Europe’ (126) and ‘official nationalism’ – typically, Russia provided model” (127). Chatterjee sees “‘Creole nationalism’ of Americas “built upon the ambition of the classes whose economic interests were ranged against the metropolis” (126). This model just questioned the lack of economic opportunities in the marginalized creole speaking linguistic community and resisted the economic exploitation upon the communities by privileged English speaking White communities. The resistance was not for the overall emancipation of the community but for the economic emancipation only.

The second model of nationalism, for Chatterjee, is the model of independent national state. With the reference to Anderson, Chatterjee shows that the second model had the deeper implications and objectives than in the Creole nationalism of America. Not only the economic interest of certain group was there but going beyond the economic interests, people resisted and abolished serfdom and legal slavery. These forms of nationalism added the new dimensions to resistance.

Chatterjee sees the third model or the ‘official nationalism’ as the official Russian model which “involved the imposition of cultural homogeneity from the top, through state action” (127). Thus, he sees the model as ‘Russification’ in which the



all- powerful state prescribed and imposed the basic cultural criteria among the people from the top and produced the cultural homogeneity among the otherwise varied and diverse cultural groups. Chatterjee sees this model of nationalism as a project and it could be emulated elsewhere. Then, with the examination of the features of all the three models of nationalism, Chatterjee concludes all the modular forms of nationalism mentioned above “were available to third world nationalisms in 20<sup>th</sup> century” (127). It is, thus, the nascent state of third world nationalism.

Chatterjee also examines how the third world nationalisms developed and gained the own modular form or character. For it various factors are responsible. The evolution of third world nationalisms, for Chatterjee is due to the factors like, “increase in physical mobility, [. . . ] imperial ‘Russification’ programmes sponsored by colonial state as well as by corporate capital, and the spread of modern-style education created a large bilingual section which could mediate linguistically between the metropolitan nation and the colonized people” (127). Thus, it is clear that the ‘Russification’ project and the modern education system with the ideology of the colonizer countries are responsible to give rise to the situation where the evolution of third world nationalism exists as the distinct form was inevitable. Due to those factors a homogeneous bilingual mass was created which is the ‘imagined linguistic community’ for Anderson. It is the mass of 20th century third world with its own discourse to resist the imperial power which is responsible to construct the marginality of the third world. Thus, resistance to the imperial power centers becomes the basic character of the third world nationalisms in the course of its development. Thus, 20<sup>th</sup> century nationalisms of the third world acquired the ‘modular’ character.

Timothy Brennan in his essay “The National Longing for Form” sees nation and nationalism as ‘discursive formation’ capitulating upon Foucauldian terminology.

He refuses to see them as simply an allegory or imaginative vision, thus, contradicts Jameson and Anderson. He sees them as necessity of the third world artists. They are ‘consciously building’ or suffering the lack of this discourse. The third world artists, for Brennan, use these discourses “as the institutional uses of fiction in nationalist movements themselves” (128). Brennan sees the important role played by novels in post-war scenario to develop from the discourse of nation and nationalism. He asserts:

[N]ovels in the post-war period are unique because they operate in a world where the level of communications, the widespread politics of insurgent nationalism, and the existence of large international cultural organizations have made the topics of nationalism and exile unavoidably aware of each other. (130)

Thus, to enhance the agenda of resistance and cultural identity, it is seen normal that the third world artists sought the form inside the genre of novel. For Brennan ‘The idea of nationhood is not only a political plea, but a formal binding together of desperate elements’ (130). This formal binding of diverse cultural elements and the idea of nationhood is made possible in novels of post-war period. Brennan also sees not all the Third World novels about nation as nationalistic. Some artists express the nostalgia for European status quo, some works are anti-colonial emphasizing native culture and some works are written by the writers acquainted with the tastes and interests of dominant culture. Commenting upon the works of the Third World writers like Rushdie and Vargas Llosa, Brennan highlights the features of Third World novel and their project as:

Distanced from the sacrifices and organizational drudgery of actual resistance movements, and yet horrified by the obliviousness of the west towards their own cultures, writers like Rushdie, and Vargas

Llosa have been well poised to thematize the centrality of nation-forming while at the same time demythifying it from a European perch. (131)

Brennan, thus, sees the resistance working upon the works of the Third World writers like Rushdie and Llosa by the formation of the discourse of nation with some contempt to the western apathy to the third world cultures. This resistance is distanced from actual and organizational resistance movements, yet it questions the cultural marginalization of the third world cultures with the counter-discourse of nation and nationalism.

Homi K. Bhabha in his essay, *“Dissemination: Time, narrative and the margins of the modern nation”* sees ideological ambivalence imbedded with the association of modernity to the nationalism as many of the theorists see nationalism as modern discourse. According to Gellner, “Homogeneity, literacy and anonymity are the key traits (38)” but modernity stands with the feature of irrationality and diversity. Bhabha questions; “How do we plot the narrative of the nation that must mediate between the teleology of progress tipping into the ‘timeless’ discourse of irrationality?” (133). Nation as social totality and cohesion and its juxtaposition with the diversity of modernity is itself ambivalent for Bhabha.

In the analysis of nation and nationalism, we need to engage ourselves to study the critical engagement with the difference between nation and state. Sullivan’s dichotomy between nation and state is fruitful to see the underlying differences and relations between them. He defines state as, “. . . tangible, observable, recognizable set of facts. The state has borders, central government, a population, an economy and a bureaucracy, all of which to maintain and perpetuate continuity” (69). On the other hand, Sullivan writes, “Nation [. . .] constitutes itself through the will and imagination

of the citizens of the state. The health of the nation depends on each citizen's desire to identity with the entire population of the nation despite racial, ethnic, or religious differences" (71).

Sullivan, thus, goes on the similar line to Anderson defining nation in the terms of will and imagination of the people having different race, ethnicity, and religion. He overtly accepts the nation as imagined community but at least he underscores the diversity among the people belonging to the nation. For him state has the clear sets of characteristics like geographical borders, definite population ruled by a central government, an economic mechanism and a bureaucracy. The nation, thus, is boundless in terms of borders depending upon the discourse among the people that they have certain ingredients in common. Anderson himself sees "a deep, horizontal comradeship" (7) among the people belonging to a certain nation. Anderson claims, it is this "fraternity makes it possible" that people are "willing to die for such limited imagines" (7) or the nation. Discussing this formulation of Anderson, Grosby argues that nationalism is an ideology, it "repudiates civility and differences that it tolerates by attempting to eliminate all differing views" and people represent it as being united, against the enemies to their nation despite the differences underlying them (17). It is the sense of belonging to the nation or nationalistic feeling that people feel home in their nation and it is for the discourse or ideology of the nation they are ready to die for it.

The ideology inherent in the discourse of nationalism has been effectively discussed and clarified by John Breuilly in his essay "Approaches to Nationalism". He writes, "Logically, the two concepts of nation, a body of citizens and a cultural collectivity conflict. In practice, nationalism has been a sleight-of-hand ideology which tries to connect the two ideas together" (166). Breuilly, throwing the glance

into the ideology he sees “nationalism has taken a bewildering variety of forms” as it is “available for any political uses, (166). Then, he attempts to show “how [...] very general ideas can be used to make sense of particular cases of nationalism” (166). To prove how general ideas of nationalism have been variedly applied in different instances by which giving them different shapes in different cases, he draws the instances of Habsburg Empire and Ottoman Empire with some comparisons between them.

In both the empires, Romanians existed and they both were dealing with the same idea of nation, Ottoman Romanians “formed very limited autonomy movements led by local ruler, [. . .]. International intervention was crucial to establish the Romanian state and that international intervention “even compelled those in power to accept the many ideas of the West” (169). Showing the contrast with this Ottoman Romanian nationalist movement, Breuille talks about the Romanian nationalist movement in Habsburg Empire which was reacting against Magyar domination as it was:

[. . .] led by churchmen and secular intellectuals, advocating a programme of reform and autonomy was a much more impressive oppositional movement. However and closely linked to that, it confronted a much more powerful state and one which had far more international support than the Ottoman Empire. (166)

Thus, for the same community raising nationalistic movement with the same target to form own autonomous nation, the discourse of nationalism has been applied with different strategies and in totally different ways. This observation is very significant as it contends the Chatterjee’s division of nationalism in certain models and shows it can have various models even if the same cultural group is forming the nationalistic

movements though they can emulate the certain basic premises of nationalism in various contexts. Thus, the discourse of nationalism is contingent. Its form depends upon the ideology working within it and the power centers leading the nationalistic movements as per their political interests.

As Breuilly sees ideology of different power centers working within the various nationalist movements, Bhabha sees the ambivalent position of the counter-narratives of nation as they can both be the vehicles of ideology and the weapons to disrupt the ideology. He writes, “Counter-narratives of the nation that continually evoke or erase its totalizing boundaries both actual and conceptual disturb those ideological maneuvers through which ‘imagined communities’ are given essentialist identities” (300). Here Bhabha also agrees that within the counter-discourse of nation and nationalism, essentialist identity of the nation given by certain ideologies are formed and disrupted continually as the counter-narratives are both actual and conceptual at the same time.

In the post-Renaissance period, the ideology of a nation formation on the basis of unifying culture turned out to be the imperialism. Similarly, later in the post-imperialism era, the newly emergent nation-states were largely the emulation of European nationalism. The force of nationalism, at the beginning fuelled the growth of colonialism and later it became the catalyst to motivate and form anti-colonial movements. But it is ironical that the construction of post-colonial nation-states is largely based upon European nationalist models. Modern nations are heterogeneously constructed, so one can't claim that single common culture can create homogeneous conception of national tradition. Single common culture can't create the exclusive nation-state. A nation state or national culture must be inclusive of various heterogeneous voices of the diverse culture cultural groups. As Asha Sen argues;

“National Culture [. . .] must today be represented as a hybridity of different voices, [. . .] modern, colonial, all of which continually define and redefine each other” (46). In the post-imperial era, thus, the assimilation among different cultures is greatly abetted and intensified by nationalism and the idea of nation-states.

One of the notable contentions to the Anderson’s proposition of the discursive formation of “an imagined linguistic community” is foregrounded in the essay “The National Imagination” by Gopal Balakrishnan. Discussing the Anderson’s formulation of imagination of the cultural groups in the basis of linguistic differences, Balakrishnan unravels the various points to show how nations are not conceived in the linguistic differences. He contends, “Throughout the world, the boundaries of nation-states and the boundaries of linguistic distributions rarely overlap - many nations share the same language; many states are officially multilingual; in some the most official language is no one’s mother tongue” (208).

With Balakrishnan, thus, radical contention to Anderson has been manifested. Balakrishnan studies the linguistic distributions and nation-states and their co-existence and coincidence. But he sees language not as the essentially decisive factor to form a nation-states as many of the nation- states use the common language as their official language and many more are officially using multiple languages.

Balakrishnan further writes:

If the first point raises no insurmountable difficulties for Anderson’s claim, the second and particularly the suggest that the language is only one dimension of the ‘nationality principle’. More problematically, it raises the question as to whether there are any cultural attributes which uniformly designate nationhood. (208)

In this way, Balakrishnan claims language not as all in all factor for nation formation but it is just one of the dimensions of nationality principle and there may be many more cultural attributes which act uniformly to form the nation and nationhood.

The interest upon the theories in recent time has brought nation and nationalism as the most debated topics of contemporary theory. Theorists attempted to see their theoretical terrain, limitations, anomalies, ideologies and the ambivalence which are in the play inside them. As Brennan notes, “the rising number of studies on nationalism in the past three decades reflects its lingering almost atmospheric insistence in our thinking” (64). Thus, the concepts of nation and nationalism have left lingering impact upon the thought of present time. We can also say the reason behind the great interest in nationalism reflects the growing disillusionment in postmodern Europe and as the alternative to it people see nationalism and its discourses which prove very useful in the hands of post-colonial societies and the their world. It is because, the post colonial societies and the third world countries are wary of internationalism as the neo-universalism which subsumes them within monocentric, or Europe dominated politics and culture. It is exactly where, they use nationalism and its discourses to counter the Eurocentric internationalism and, thus, it has become the place of resistance against the colonial control in colonial society. It is suggested by Ashcroft et. al. as the “strongest foci for resistance to colonial culture in colonial societies” (117).

Even though nationalism was operated as a general force of resistance in the earlier times in postcolonial societies, a perception of its hegemonic and monologic status is growing. Brennan and Bhabha locate the growth of nationalism coterminous with the rise of the most dominant modern literary form of novel especially in European and Europe-influenced cultures. The ties between literary form of novel and



nation evoke the sense of “fictive quality of the political concept itself” (61) as noted by Brennan. In this sense, the story of the nation and the narrative form of the novel inform each other in a complex and reflexive way. It is true that “a nation is primarily a cultural community” (84) noted by Dziemidok. A common culture lies on the basis of ethnic and national identity unifying a given group. The language cannot only be the unifying force as suggested by Anderson rather we need to assume the network of various complex factors interacting together in complex way to give rise to the concept of nation. Balakrishnan is one of the theorists to criticize Anderson and view the complex interaction in the formation of nation. Even in the nation formation of similar linguistic communities, different spatial, temporal and ideological factors might be under play in them.

### III. Nation Formation in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*

Since the writer of this novel *Purple Hibiscus*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is considered to be a fresh African voice from the post-colonial Nigeria, the project of nation formation of Nigeria can be traced in her novel. She is not only received by African readers with praise and acclaim for bringing out the African voice and Nigerian nationalism, but was also appreciated by the great Nigerian post-colonial figure Chinua Achebe. Achebe has been the major influence for Adichie as she rates Achebe's novel *Arrow of God* as the most favorite book for her. As Clare Garner clarifies the major reason behind writing this novel for Adichie with her quote in the essay "Profile of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie" writes, "I wanted to write about colonialism, which I think every African writer does without meaning to. The way we are is very much the result of colonialism the fact that I think in English, for example" (4). Garner further notes that in writing about colonialism, her vehicle was religion and an abiding obsession since her early teens.

Thus, with the vehicle of religion she continually disrupts and terminates the colonial identity and leads the project of Nigerian nation formation resisting the identity provided to the Africans by colonialism. To lead this project of nation formation and resistance, she continually violates the limitations of the Christian religion and its forcefully imposed cultural homogeneity. She achieves her goal with the inclusion of considerably liberal Christian priest Father Amadi in contrast to the rigid priest Father Benedict and Eugene, the father of the narrator, Kambili and her brother Jaja. She draws sharp contrast between those two categories of the Christians officials. Father Amadi is liberal character who doesn't follow Christianity as the rigid Orthodox Christians like Eugene and Father Benedict do. He enters into the Igbo

song in the middle of rosary and he is so intelligent and friendly to all of the people in community which could be considered as ungodly by the orthodox Christians.

The formation of nation as the resistance and imposition of values from Christianity can be insightfully observed in the people of Nigeria. It is very fruitful to see that Eugene dropped the Nigerian name and always favored the English language in the place of national Igbo language for communication in public and he is stuffed with the colonial values. As the narrator Kambili, the daughter to Eugene describes him, “He hardly spoke Igbo, and although Jaja and I spoke it with Mama at home, he did not like us to speak it in public. We had to sound civilized in public, he told us; we had to speak English. Papa’s sister, Aunty Ifeoma, said once that papa was too much of a colonial product” (13).

The above description is very insightful that one can clearly observe how the colonizers had imposed their values and language to the Nigerians in the name of being civilized. In the contrast, Father Amadi and the family of Aunty Ifeoma are more Nigerians than the followers of the colonial values. They are light hearted, always ridiculed the colonial values and orthodox Christianity with the laughter, tended towards their own values and language and valued the rational debates with the large number of questions. Though Father Amadi is faithful servant of Christ and very friendly and protective to the people of his community or the people under his church; he never drops his Nigerian name. He is seen using his own Nigerian name as a faithful servant to Christ, goes wherever the church sends him to spread the humane values. Questioning the church and priesthood is forbidden with Eugene and Father Benedict but the questioning seems simple and normal for Father Amadi. When Father Amadi is about to go to Papua New Guinea from Nigeria in the service of church, Amaka, the daughter of Aunty Ifeoma questions him as, “The White

missionaries brought us their god,” Amaka was saying. “Which was the same color as them, worshipped in their language and packaged in the boxes they made. Now that we take their god back to them, shouldn’t we at least repackage it?” (267).

We see the play of Nigerian nation formation and contempt to the hardliner values of Christianity under the questioning. This questioning would be impossible before Eugene and Father Benedict; it would be the sin and ungodly before them to question the colonial god.

From the very beginning of the novel the writer begins to assess the position and social reception of the colonial church officials. She describes Father Benedict from the point of view of the Nigerian people and shows their refusal to let him the place as the part of society. In the long time period of seven years, Father Benedict has not been assimilated by the people of Enugu even though they regularly go to the church St. Agnes for the service of church. Thus, there is the continual distance between the colonizer and colonized and the colonized have the certain degree of contempt to them. It is the division mark between the colonizer’s and colonized’s nations. As the narrator narrates this:

Even though Father Benedict had been at St. Agnes for seven years, people still referred to him as “Our new priest”. Perhaps they would not have if he had not been white. He still looked new. The colors of his face [ . . . ] had not tanned at all in the fierce heat of seven Nigerian harmattans. (4)

It is ironical to see that the new product or thing is white when it has just been manufactured by the company and imported but with the frequent use it becomes black. Father Benedict is still new in seven years time like the new product and thus, it is very insightful to see that he has not still been used by the Nigerians. In the other

words, the Nigerians refuse to use the colonial products and values as they have their own values to nurture. The narrative of nationalism has been foregrounded in these narrations. The hatred between the colonizers and colonized is visible in them. Father Benedict is the typical representative of colonial authority with the determination to shatter the nationality of the Nigerian people with the measured imposition of Christian culture and English language. He is not completely assimilated as the Nigerians are in the position of ambivalence and the extreme state of hybridity and imposition of Christian values can be observed in Eugene's family. Father Benedict's values are the values of the colonizers and they have been largely adopted by Eugene still the family members of Eugene still continually violate the mechanical colonial nation formation tending towards their Igbo nationalism and Igbo language. Father Benedict, after his arrival at St. Agnes, the Catholic Church in Enugu, he tries to impose the rules that forbid the Igbo language in most of the church services. The narrator, Kambili narrates about Father Benedict as:

Father Benedict had changed the things in the parish, such as insisting that the Credo and Kyrie be recited only in Latin; Igbo was unacceptable. [. . .] But he allowed offertory songs in Igbo; he called them native songs, and when he said "native" his straight-line lips turned down at the corners to form an inverted U. (4)

As quoted, the daughter to Eugene Kambili shows her inclination towards the Igbo nationalism. The imposition of the Christian cultures and values in the Nigerians by the means of church has clearly been highlighted. The hatred and mimicry is visible in Father Benedict in his term "native" used for the Nigerian people which is spoken by him in certain strained face forming the shape of his lip as inverted U. The term 'native' is very insightful that the colonizers see Nigerians as helpless people without

their civilized culture and thus, in the expense of their own nationalistic values, they are forced the so called civilized colonial values. The binarism is, thus, very helpful for the colonial nation formation and the dissolution of the so-called native nationalism.

Adichie, thus, accelerates the major goal of nation formation in her novel. Time and again she frequently lets her readers see across the imposed colonial nationhood and its values and continually lets the Nigerian characters doubt and question the colonial values. The characters who are most affected by the imposition of the Christian values are Beatrice, Kambili and Jaja, the wife and the two children of Eugene. Eugene has been the typical Nigerian representative of the colonial Christian values and fanatical runner behind the Christian values who imposes the strict Christian values in family. Among the characters of this novel, Papa Nnukwu is the character who has been unaffected by the catholic values and colonial ambivalence. But he is old, lonely, and his family has been broken due to the colonial imposition of Christian values. Though he is old and pathetic his own son Eugene never sees his terming him a pagan and doesn't allow the grandchildren Kambili and Jaja to see him more than fifteen minutes. Auntie Ifeoma, the liberal Catholic daughter of Papa Nnukwa and her family is only the support for him in need. We see the division of the family and their treatment to him as Eugene, his rich son calls him a pagan but Auntie Ifeoma, his daughter does not call him pagan or heathen as she said, "[. . .] Papa Nnukwu was not a heathen but a traditionalist, that sometimes what was different was just as good as what was familiar, that when Papa Nnukwu did his *itunzu*, his declaration of innocence, in the morning, it was the same as our saying the rosary" (166).

Thus, the characters like Aunty Ifeoma are torn between the colonial Catholic values and the Nigerian values. Aunty Ifeoma, unlike the hardliner Catholic brother Eugene, doesn't see her father as a heathen rather she terms him as a traditionalist. As the Christians pray their god and declare their faith and innocence in rosary, the Nigerians do the same in Itu-nzu, with the commitments before his ancestors. In Aunty Ifeoma's flat Papa Nnukwu spends his last few days before death where he gets the chance to mix up with his grand children Jaja and Kambili. Otherwise, it would be impossible for them to live with together at the same house as Eugene would never permit his children to live with a heathen. This time is very important for the Nigerian nation formation in the narrator and her brother Jaja. When they come into the touch, Aunty Ifeoma's children Amaka, Obiora and Chima demand the traditional oral stories from Papa Nnukwu and Jaja starts to see across their rich oral tradition that valorizes the ancestors in place of god. Slowly Jaja starts to be defiant to the Christian values and doesn't go for the communion in the church on Palm Sunday. Thus, ideas about own Nigerian nationalistic values in Jaja start to stir and refuse the colonial White god. Adichie begins her novel with the details of that particular Palm Sunday on which Jaja refuses the service to the church. The title of first part of the novel "Breaking Gods –Palm Sunday". His rejection of the colonial White god comes as the reaction to the hard routine life he and his sister have to follow at home, the continual violence from his father, the arousal of the faith upon the nationalistic values and the realization of self in the flate of Aunty Ifeoma. In the story Papa- Nnukwu says there is the great famine in the jungle and animals have nothing to eat. In such condition, a dog looks very healthy even-though it doesn't have anything to eat. Finally, it is found by a tortoise that somebody always drops the dog to climb up the tree where the dog is fed with delicious food. The children of Aunty Ifeoma and Eugene listen to the

story and discuss about the possibility who could be there in the sky and think about the possibility of the Dog's ancestors as:

“Don't you wonder how only Dog's mother got up to the sky in the first place?” Obiora asked in English.

“Or who the wealthy friends in the sky were,” Amaka said.

“Probably Dog's ancestor,” Obiora said. (161)

Here, not only the valorization of ancestors in the place of god is there but the use of English language is very important. The third –world nation formation is possible only when we use the English language. Typical nationalistic African Oral tradition learnt from the children's ancestor like Papa-Nnukwu has been translated to English language that violates the nation formation of Christianity and shows them that African values are also as much as plausible and important as the English speaking colonial values. It also generates the nationalistic feelings and enclosure of the nationalistic self of the Nigerian children and further they cross the boundary of the imposed Christian values and start to find their own self, own voice and identity.

Amaka, the daughter to Auntie Ifeoma, listens to the music which she says culturally conscious music. She is contemporary to Kambili and their continual touch in Auntie Ifeoma's house also helps the narrator Kambili to find her cultural identity. At the beginning she is not used to those musics but slowly she starts to find her cultural identity and nationhood in those music. She narrates: “I could tell her culturally conscious musicians apart now. I could distinguish the pure tone of Onyeka, Onwenu, the brash power of Fela, the soothing wisdom of Osadebe” (151).

Here, we see the growth of Kambili as a cultural being, her finding of her cultural heritage which would be impossible for her if she were at her home coping with the unbearable Christian colonial values. Amaka is thus, very much important for



the narrator to let her grow and she is very cultural being with the aim that she would become the cultural activist when she finishes the school and joins the university.

When Kambili first sees her listening the cassette player she is amazed with her frankness and strong spirit that was not the colonial rather characteristically Nigerian.

She narrates about Amaka:

She turned the cassette player on, nodding to the polyphonic beat of drum. “I listen mostly to indigenous musicians. They are culturally conscious; they have something real to say. Fela, and Osadebe and Onyeka are my favourites. Oh, I’m sure you probably don’t know who they are, I’m sure you’re into American pop like other teenagers. [. . .] she said “culturally conscious” in the proud way that people say a word they never knew they would learn until they do. (118)

Two significant issues can be explored in the quote. To be a true Nigerian cultural being, the rejection of the colonial music is necessary and such resistant and protesting spirit we can see in Amaka which in the course of time leads Kambili to turn into the cultural being and find her cultural identity under the sheer domination of the Christian colonial culture. On the otherhand, the refusal of American pop shows Amaka as the different teen of the time. The teens of the time have been ruined by the imported colonial values like American pops which are responsible to corrupt the Nigerian teens.

The practice of rich Nigerian culture, its preservation and continuation by the characters like Papa-Nnukwu dispels the cloud from the heart of otherwise confused narrator Kambili. Aunty Ifeoma has played the great role to let her see across the Nigerian values preserved by Papa-Nnukwu as she sees Papa –Nnukwu as “not s heathen but a traditionalist (166)” and shows Kambili how the Nigerian values are

preserved by Papa-Nnukwu are as important and no way inferior to Christian values. Christian values always taught Kambili to shun the contact to the heathen or the typical Nigerian. As Aunty Ifeoma motivates Kambili early one morning before dawn to look at the prayer of Papa-Nnukwu which heralds the new sense of cultural identity and nationhood in her letting her the chance to compare between the Christian prayer before god and the prayer before ancestor by a typical Nigerian or the so-called heathen or ungodly activity to the Christian Orthodox. When she sees Papa-Nnukwu in prayer without making any noise to disturb him. She narrates about the prayer of Papa Nnukwu as “He was talking to the gods or the ancestors; I rembered Aunty Ifeoma saying that the two could be interchanged” (167).

Aunty Ifeoma is, thus, very impotent character who lets the beginning of the new sense of nationhood in the narrator. It was she who continually guided Kambili to attain the state of mature girl using her own mind. The deconstruction of Christian and omnipotent colonial god that it can be replaced by any other things which people faithfully worship in any part of the world has been achieved. So, Nigerian ancestors are no way the pagan deities but they are as important as the Christian god and the Nigerian values are as civilized as the imported and imposed Christian values has been justified. Thus, to develop such perspective in the narrator has been the very important part of the nation formation.

The prayer is also very insightful and filled with humanistic feelings. First, Papa-Nnukwu prays the ancestors for the new morning and thanks for “the sun that rises” (167). Then he declares his own innocence. He says he has killed no one, he hasnot taken anybody’s land and he has not committed adultery.

Papa-Nnukwu’s prayer is unselfish and intended for all the humanity and thus, the Nigerian values are not for the petty things but they are also very important

surpassing the colonial Christian values. It has been shown contrasting the Christian prayer rosary and the Nigerian prayer Itu-nzu with the contrast between Eugene and Papa Nnukwu. Eugene while praying for Papa- Nnukwu only prays the Christian god asking for Papa-Nnukwu's conversion to the Catholicism but while Papa-Nnukwu prays for Eugene, he prays his ancestors for the prosperity of Eugene his Catholic son who terms Papa-Nnukwu as a heathen and shuns the contact with his own father. So, the Nigerian prayer is so humane that it has the place for all the good and bad people, all the nearest ones and distant ones.

Declaring his innocence he further declares that he had always wished others well. Then, he prays for the blessing for him, his daughter, Aunty Ifeoma and his son Eugene and their family. Through his prayer, Kambili comes to know the transcendental and all-inclusive values and the virtue of praying for blessing to the people who behave him as a heathen without any enmity to them. Thus, she comes to the understanding that Nigerian values are wider and purer than the colonial Christian values. Christian values are seen trifle as they are guided with petty material interests and gaining advantage over the nationalist Nigerian people terminating their communal values.

To lead Kambili to understand all these and fill her with the nationalistic, communal sentiment, Aunty Ifeoma's role is the most important as she continually let her see through the things with her own participation. Aunty Ifeoma is poor college professor without her husband and she has three children to rear. She is bold and experimental, experimenting about the things and her children also letting them go on step further in every condition. The children are like her plants. Her experimental tendency has started the quest of new possibilities in their life. She is liberal Christian and keeps continually questioning the fanatic Catholic values followed by her brother

Eugene. She has also the image fighting against the injustice and for democracy in the university she teaches. She teaches in University of Nigeria Nsukka. To see the symbolic representation of the flower purple hibiscus and to understand the approach of the university lecturer, widowed character Auntie Ifeoma we can see in her interest and care upon unconventional, new species of hibiscus. When Jaja and Kambili arrive to her flat in Nsukka to spend their holidays, she plans them to show the university area. When she is about to drive, she stops in her garden to see the condition of her new species of flower. The narrator narrates:

Auntie Ifeoma stopped to pluck at some browned leaves in the garden as we walked to the car, muttering that the harmattan was killing her plants. Amaka and Obiora groaned and said, “Not the garden now, Mom.” “That’s a hibiscus, isn’t it, Auntie?” Jaja asked, staring at a plant close to the barbed wire fencing “I didn’t know there were purple hibiscuses.” (128)

This conversation symbolically suggests how Auntie Ifeoma takes care of the unique, and typically Nigerian experimental plants letting them the chance to grow. In the same manner, she is nurturing her children, planting the sense of protest and the seeds of Nigerian nationalism. Harmattan which was killing her plants can symbolically be seen as the Christian, colonial values killing the sense of cultural identity from the mind of the Nigerian Children with the slow poison of the colonial values. The barbed wire fencing is suggests the chain created by the colonial rule not letting the Nigerian child to grow conscious of their cultural heritage. Against the harmattan of colonial rule, Auntie Ifeoma has taught her children in the logical freedom in her flat and sowed the seed of their cultural awareness. Amaka’s listening the music of culturally

conscious singers in the result of same sense of experimentation Auntie Ifeoma works on as she works in the garden for the experimental purple hibiscus.

The sense of ignorance about her sense of experimentation is there with the children of her brother Eugene, Jaja and Kambili, the narrator. It has been symbolically presented in Jaja's assertion that he hadn't known anything about the purple hibiscus. Slowly, the awareness of those children about their position in society and cultural starts to bloom and they start to realize the limitations imposed upon them by the colonial, orthodox Christian values by their father back home in Enugu.

Auntie Ifeoma always busy planting the seed of protest in her children is obvious. While describing the surrounding of university she is narrated as saying:

“[. . .] this is Bello Hall, the most famous hostel, where Amaka has sworn she will live when she enters the university and launches her activist movements”.

Amaka laughed but did not dispute Auntie Ifeoma.

“May be you two will be together Kambili.” (130)

In this way, she starts planting the seed of freedom equality and identity by the means of the protest, resistance against the army-rule of Nigeria on the one hand and the colonial values on the other. She refers about the students' riot and shows the importance of resistance whenever people don't get the minimum requirements to sustain their lives . The child psychology of Jaja and Kambili is dominated by Catholic tyranny starts to grow conscious about the protest and Auntie Ifeoma prepares the new phase of their journey full of experience about their rights and protest and resistance against the subjugation. We sense the growing curiosity about the riot Auntie Ifeoma mentions as narrator narrates the conversation about it:

“Where was the riot about?” Jaja asked.

“Light and water,” Obiora said, and I looked at him.

“There was no light and no water for month,” Aunty Ifeoma added.

“The students said they could not study and asked if the exams could be rescheduled, but they were refused.” (131)

The riot is, thus, important thing for the resistance when people are not provided with the minimum requirements of life and they have no air of freedom. It starts dawning in the mind of Jaja and Kambili, and slowly they start to resist the Christian god as they see their Nigerian nationality and culture as important as the light and water. Though, Kambili feels dread of her father and can't resist the Christian god overtly after seeing the prayer of Papa Nnukwu and even seeing that the Nigerian cultural was far more superior to the Christian, imported colonial values, Jaja overtly starts defying or resisting the Christian god and his father's tyranny by not going to the Church for communion on Palm Sunday. That is the first section of the novel titled “Breaking Gods”. The preparation of the revolutionary protest or defiance was done when Jaja and Kambili visited Aunty Ifeoma before the Palm Sunday during their holidays.

Laughter and freedom of logical conversation among the children are very important aspects of Aunty Ifeoma's house. Even though their life in a flat provided by the University of Nnuka is full of limitations and scarcities, still they laugh heartily and during the conversations they present themselves with boldly using strong logic. The laughter is symbolic resistance against the lack of democracy and the colonial imported values in Nigeria. The freedom inside the house to step ahead in each turn of conversation with strong logic is very sharp symbol that ironizes, mocks and blurs the demarcation constructed by the colonial discourse marked between the so-called civilized Catholic values and so-called pagan Nigerian values. It helps to

develop the sense of resistance in Jaja and Kambili to defy the imposed rigid values of Catholicism. Aunty Ifeoma is presented as the person who suggested Beatrice, the wife of her brother Eugene to choose the nickname for her son as 'Jaja' after the name of "Jaja of Opobo (144)" whom Aunt Ifeoma terms as, "He was a defiant king" (144) while describing about the King, she describes him as, "He was king of the Opobo people", Aunty Ifeoma said, "and when the British came, he refused to let them control all the trade. He did not sell his soul for a bit of gunpowder like the other kings did, so the British exiled him to the West Indies. He never returned to Opobo" (144).

This clarification of the coincidence of the same name 'Jaja' as used by the resistant king of Opobo is very significant as it builds Jaja, the son of Eugene as the resistant or defiant man who starts defying or resisting the Christian, white, colonial and imported god of his father with the rejection going to Church St. Agnes for communion with a lame excuse that the Wafer had given him bad breath. When his father asked why he had not gone to communion on the Palm Sunday he said, "The Wafer gives me bad breath," (6) and thus he starts defying the colonial British god and the god so firmly ruling over the Achike family starts to break down. This tendency of refusal is typically nationalistic as we see in the defiant king, Jaja of Opobo who did not bow his head before the British power and violence created by gunpowder, thus, resisting the colonial authority. To come to this stage of resistance of the colonial values, Aunty Ifeoma had long experimented with the boy. Further, she had taught the boy about the power of defiance or resistance as suggested in the narration as, "Being defiant can be a good thing sometimes", Aunty Ifeoma said. "Defiance is like marijuana-it is not a bad thing when it is used right" (144). This lesson imprinted in the psychology of Jaja before Palm Sunday starts materializing on

the particular day. This resistance is the resistance for the choice of own cultural nationalistic life refusing the imported colonial domination imposed with orthodox Catholicism.

Aunty Ifeoma is very possessive of the Nigerian nationalistic values as she is the only support to Papa-Nnukwu, the preserver of the pure Nigerian values and its cultural heritage unaffected by the colonial Christian values. She and her children visit him during the Christmas every year and on the contrary, Eugene brands him as a pagan and lets only fifteen minutes time for his children Jaja and Kambili to see Papa-Nnukwu during Christmas. Eugene is indifferent to his father, Papa-Nnukwu as he is not converted to the colonial Catholic religion. Still, it is because of Aunty Ifeoma, the children of Eugene are able to mingle with their cultural values preserved by Papa-Nnukwu, see that the Nigerian values are really valuable, Papa-Nnukwu was not a pagan but a traditionalist; the oral tradition of Nigerian cultural heritage. Thus, they are lit with the torch of the Papa-Nnukwu's cultural heritage and able to find their Nigerian nationality and thus, they start burning the Colonial values with the fire of resistance.

Resistance reaches to culmination as the long- born violence upon the Achike family is ended by poisoning of Eugene by his wife Beatrice. Jaja proves to be really defiant as he takes the charge of the killing of his father killed by his mother and goes to the prison. Thus, the colonial Catholic violence ends in Achike family and gives them the air of freedom. Symbolically, the death suggests the fall of colonial values and hence proves to be the landmark of nation formation and victory of Nigerian values which has been aptly handled by Adichie in her novel *Purple Hibiscus*.



### **Imagined Linguistic Community of Christianity**

This research focuses upon the study of the Christian, colonial community and its formation of nation by the means of English language imposed upon the Nigerian people by the Catholic Church in Andersonian sense. In Andersonian terms, we can describe the Christian community inside Nigerian as “imagined political community” (124), which is under operation by the means of English language distinguishing itself from the Nigerian, Igbo linguistic community and strives further to gain the political power inside the Nigerian political arena. We see the handling of English language over the Nigerian Igbo language as a rule by white priest Father Benedict in Enugu, in the activities of the Church St. Agnes. As we see in the narration, “Father Benedict had changed things in the parish, such as insisting that the Credo and Kyrie be recited only in Latin; Igbo was not acceptable” (4). Thus, it is seen that the use of alien languages in the activities of the Church are systematically imposed to violate the Igbo nationalism of Nigerian people while the Christian values are imposed to violate the nationalistic Nigerian values by the colonizers.

When the son of Eugene, Jaja starts defying the colonial Christian god and the rigidly imposed Christian values at home by his father like sharing a drink with his father we see the ambivalent presence of Igbo and English language in his father. As we see in the narration of the situation:

Papa was staring pointedly at Jaja. “Jaja, have you not shared a drink with us, gbo? Have you no words in your mouth?” he asked, entirely in Igbo. A bad sign. He hardly spoke Igbo, and although Jaja and I spoke it with Mama at home, he did not like us to speak it in public. We had to sound civilized in public, he told us; we had to speak English.

Papa's sister, Aunty Ifeoma, said once that Papa was too much of a colonial product. (13)

The two languages are clearly seen as violating each other's regions and there is the systematically imposed binarism between them. The Nigerian Igbo language and the words like 'gbo' to address the junior male member of the society are 'uncivilized' 'barbaric' and branded as 'inferior' by the colonial values and to seem 'Civilized' and 'Superior' the Nigerian are compelled to use English language. English language becomes the mask which is worn to show the civilized code to the outer world with the domination over the cultural Igbo identity. The ideology of the colonizers has been clearly suggested in the narration that in the name of making the people civilized they are forming an imagined political, linguistic community and in turn they are focussed to gain the political ends. That is why, Aunty Ifeoma brands her brother Eugene as a colonial product as he is blindly running after the imported colonial values and languages in the expense of the language and values of his own culture.

The inherent politics in the gospel of Father Benedict is noticeable when he refers "to the pope, papa and Jesus in that order" (4). He presents Eugene, or Papa of the narrator as very big man of his country as he blindly follows almost all the Colonial Christian values blindly. The inherent politics inside such comparison is that Father Benedict, the White man come to Africa is encouraging the mass of the people congregated in the Church to forget their cultural values and follow the Christian empire stretch further, thus, elevating the power of the British colonizers while nullifying their own power promoting the domination and violence. The gospel wants the death of the nationalistic identity of Nigerians pushing or sidelining them to the cultural anonymity. The ideology of exclusion and marginality is under the play in the so-called gospel leading the people towards the truth. The discourse of the colonizers

that if Nigerians follow the Christian dogma blindly they would be prosperous and big like the fellow Nigerian, Eugene. Thus, Benedict is emotionally blackmailing the Nigerians with the constructed dream of prosperity in which they would attain the material prosperity in the exchange of their cultural anonymity.

Father Benedict has been narrated with his gospel on that particular Palm Sunday on which Jaja started to resist the Christian god as speaking:

Look at Brother Eugene. He could have chosen to be like other Big Men in this country, he could have decided to sit at home and do nothing after the coup, to make sure the government did not threaten his businesses. But no he used the *Standard* to speak the truth even though it meant the paper lost advertising. Brother Eugene spoke out for freedom. How many of us have stood up for the truth? How many of us have reflected the Triumphant Entry? (5)

The overt political implication is evident in this sermon delivered by Father Benedict on the Palm Sunday. Eugene is running the magazine named *Standard* that protests the political coup in Nigeria and advocates for the freedom of the Nigerian people. But the backing up of that newspaper by the church and Father Benedict suggests that the freedom would be no freedom of the Nigerian people rather it would give the colonizers the political advantage over Nigerians. In the name of truth freedom the colonizers are busy promoting their own political interests veiled behind their seemingly noble motive of the truth and freedom. For the political advantage, they are arousing the mass of Nigerian people as if the truth and freedom are their weapons to hit the Nigerian culture to expand their empire of Christendom.

#### **IV. Victory of Nigerian Nationalism Over Imposed Colonial Discourse**

With the use of the vehicle of religion and language, Adichie charges the colonial discourse imposed upon the Nigerian cultural values and shows how far the subjectivity of Nigerian people has been constructed by the colonial discourse in the novel *Purple Hibiscus*. The English language and its forceful imposition by church disrupt the Nigerian mainstream language, Igbo. Adichie uses typical Igbo language and its terminology in conversation among the characters presents their behavior and their tendency to the refusal of the colonial languages. The characters want strong shift ahead to their own culture and oral tradition. Resistance to the colonial Catholic values is, thus, the major tendency of the nation formation and their denial of the colonial empire building in Africa.

The development of the character of fifteen years old narrator Kambili is very crucial to see the process of nation formation which extends from the physical to at psychological and emotional level. The family of the narrator represents Nigeria as a whole and it is under the suffocation of the tyranny of the Catholic, Christian values imposed by her father, Eugene. Eugene is the representative of the colonial values and it is, thus, the colonial values rule the cultural values of Achike family. To seem civilized Eugene advocates for the use English language outside the family but the family loves the Igbo, the Nigerian national culture and values. Thus, loss of cultural values is at the core of the family like the repressed, latent desires waiting for the expression; they are looking for the chance to take place of the tyrant, imposed colonial values. Papa-Nwukwu is the representative of those repressed, dominated cultural values and thus, he is related to the collective consciousness of the Nigerian people.

The value of resistance and the taste of freedom have been shown to the narrator Kambili and her brother Jaja by Aunty Ifeoma and they witness the Nigerian values and their greatness embodied in Papa-Nwukwu's practices of them. Further, they witness that the Catholicism can be practised in more liberal way like Aunty Ifeoma and Father Amadi; as to bring life for the Nigerians and in Nigerian way but the Catholicism practiced by father is against the Nigerian cultural life as it kills the Nigerian life and culture. Thus, the new sense of the Nigerian cultural identity dawns in them.

Beatrice's poisoning her husband is ultimate rebellion against the colonial values after the refusal of Jaja to go to Church on the Palm Sunday, which was the beginning of the resistance and the rise of Nigerian national consciousness. Thus, the colonial values finally meet their fate and the Nigerian nationalist values are established in the ruin of the colonial values. Thus, the establishment of Nigerian nationalism is the major thematic content of the book.

### Works Cited

- Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *Purple Hibiscus*. London: harper Perennial, 2007.
- Alcoff, Linda Martin and Edurarelo Mendieta. Eds. *Identities: Race, Class, Gender and Nationality*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2003.
- Anderson Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and the Spread of Nationalism*. Rev. ed. London: Verso, 1991.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1991.
- Anderson Benedict. "Imagined Communities". *The Postcolonial Studies Reader*. Eds. Ashroft. Bill et al. London and New York: Routledge, 2005. 123-25.
- Ashroft, Bill. et al., eds. *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*. London: Routledge 1998.
- Balkrishnan, Gopal. "The National Imagination". Balkrishnan. 198-213.
- Bhabha, Homi K. "Dissertation: Time, Narrative and the Margins of the Modern Nation". *The Postcolonial Studies Reader*. Eds. Ashroft, Bill et al. London and New York: Routledge, 2005. 132-33.
- Brennan, Timothy. "The National Longing for From". *The Postcolonial Studies Reader*. Eds. Ashroft. Bill et.al. London and New York: Routledge, 2005. 128-31.
- Breully, John. "Approaches to Nationalism". Balkrishnan 146-174.
- Chatterjee, partha. "Nationalism As a Problem". *The Postcolonial Studies Reader*. Eds. Ashroft, Bill et al. London and New York: Routledge, 2005. 126-27.
- Chatterjee, Partha. "Whose Imagined Community?" Ed. Balkrishnan 214-225.

Fanon, Frantz. "National Culture". *The Postcolonial Studies Reader*. Eds. Ashroft, Bill et al.

London and New York: Routledge, 2005. 119-22.

Gellener, Earnest. *Nation and Nationalism*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1983.

Gellner, Ernest. "The Coming of Nationalism and Its Interpretation: The Myths of Nation and

Class". *Mapping the Nation*. Ed. Gopal Balkrishanan. London: Verso, 1999. 98-145.

Huntington, Samuel. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remarking of World Order*. New York:

Simon and Schuster, 1996.

Renan, Ernest. "What is Nation?" *Nation and Narration*. Trans. Martin Thom. Ed. Homi K.

Bhabha, New York: Routledge, 1990. 8-22.

Robrtson, Roland. "Globalization as a Problem." *The Nation-State and Violence*. Berkeley:

University of California Press Year. 295-310.