

# The 'Producer' versus the 'Parasite' in the Fiction of Ayn Rand and Chinua Achebe.

Hyacinth Pink<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Science & Humanities , Division : English Language & Literature ,  
Kumaraguru College of Technology, Chinnavedampatti, Coimbatore -49; Tamilnadu , South India .*

**Abstract** - The present chapter with reference to Ayn Rand's, *The Fountainhead*, and Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* and *A Man of the People* investigates the contemplative value of representative policy unique to the medium of Fiction in actualizing the subjective experience of "Individualism versus Collectivism, not in Politics but in Man's Soul." (TFH, 1943:11) This concept arises from the conflict and tension that exist between the 'Producers' (the ideal men) and the 'Parasites' ('second-handers' or 'social-suckers') ; and offers profound and original philosophical themes expressed in logical and dramatic plot structures. They illustrate an uplifted and dignified vision of man, in the persons of Rand's protagonists. Individualism seems to be acquiring a new meaning and dimension as one examines it in relations to the multiple reality of the African urban ethos. The factors weaving up to this particular fictional milieu are numerous, and essentially different from and more complex than those of the tribal world in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*. Two major educational factors and economic advancement have come to exercise a wider and more potent force on the protagonists of *No Longer at Ease*, and *A Man of the People*, reshaping their total thought pattern. The chapter deals with the dislocation in the African psyche that followed the disintegration of a situation in which a meaningful social and moral orientation is made difficult.<sup>19</sup> (Irele 1967:12) It is also the story of an individual, Obi Okonkwo who is caught up in this situation, which demands the individual to create a firm moral order out of the flux of values in the world in which he lives – a situation that demands an exceptional moral and intellectual initiative. The chapter also seeks to demarcate the socio-cultural power of explicit memoirs by positioning them at the crossroads of the Producers versus the Parasites as exemplified in their respective fictional works drawing on theoretical insights from Hubert Bonner's 'Psychology of Personality Series' discussing while contrasting the Hellenic and Hebraic view of Man, both represented in Ayn Rand and Chinua Achebe's protagonists..

**Keywords:** Producers, Parasites, Man's Soul, Hellenic, Hebraic, psychology, individualism, collective consciousness, moral, intellectual, philosophical ,initiatives.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This article comprises Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead* and Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* and *A Man of the People*. With Rand's first novel *We the Living*, which Rand herself dismisses as "only an exercise, it was not my full novel yet,"<sup>1</sup> (Branden, 1986:212) Rand is not ready to bring forth into her fictional universe either literary or philosophically, this concept of the ideal man. In *We the Living*, the foetus of the ideal man is only suggested in her feminine protagonist, Kira Argounova and in the hero Leo Kovalensky; and the potential they might have realized, had they been born into a free country. This foetus grows into the 'man-child' of *The Fountainhead*. Rand identifies the theme of this novel as Individualism Versus Collectivism not in Politics but in Man's Soul." (Rand, TFH, 1943:11) In *The Fountainhead*, Rand attempts to contrast 'the Soul of an Individualist' with the 'Soul of a Collectivist.' Rand states the goal of her writing:

The motive and purpose of my writing is the projection of an ideal man, the portrayal of a moral ideal as my ultimate literary goal, as an end in itself." (Rand, 1971:16)

It is this aspiration of the ideal man that becomes the fundamental theme of Rand's fictional world and gives birth to the concept- the primacy of the individual, which consequently results in an estrangement from the collective mass, moulding her protagonists in this phase, as 'outsiders.' The birth of the ideal man becomes the core of both her literary and philosophical interests; it is the very radiance of her soul. The fiction of Rand radiates superlative values that are unique in this age. *The Fountainhead* offers profound and original philosophical themes expressed in logical and dramatic plot structures. They illustrate an uplifted and dignified vision of man, in the persons of her protagonists. Like Kira, the protagonist in *We the Living*, Howard Roark the Protagonist of *The Fountainhead* is characterized by strength, purposefulness, integrity and creativity. He is a happy idealist, self confident, serene and very much at home on this earth. The plot portrays a gifted young architect who believes that the ego is the fountainhead of all human progress. Roark has an explosive love affair with a beautiful woman, Dominique Franconia, who claims to love him excruciatingly but struggles to destroy him and his career. But Roark, the protagonist, conquers all the obstacles in his path, overcomes all struggles and difficulties and for the first time in Rand's fiction, the individual evolves triumphant, steadfast in his goal and the pursuit of his own happiness. The concept of the individual versus society in this phase arises from the conflict and tension that exist between the 'Producers' (the ideal men) and the 'Parasites' ('second handers' or 'social-suckers'). The experience that helps

Rand grasp this distinction between the two basic types of human motivation is her meeting with a young woman whose goal is to possess what no one else has in life- if someone has an automobile, she desires two. This young woman, it appears, is seeking to make an impression on society. She wants to feel superior as a social climber..2 (Branden, 1986:357) This realization fills Rand with a contempt that she never forgets. It dawns on her that she now has the key to the questions that she has pondered over for years- the question about people whose values and actions seem incomprehensively and unintelligible irrational.3 (Pruett, 1943:31) From her experience with this young woman, Rand creates her Peter Keating's, Ellsworth Toomey's, and James Taggart, who are all to be formed in the mould of this young woman. This concept that names the essence of the difference between the young woman and Rand, leads Rand to define two different ways of facing life, two antagonists, two types of men: the creator and the 'social-sucker'; the individualist and the collectivists; the 'first-hander' and the 'second hander'; a Howard Roark and a Peter Keating, modeled after Rand and the young woman, respectively. The producer, creator or the 'first-hander' is described in all the works of Rand as the man of self-sufficient ego, of independent judgment, who lives for his own sake and whose convictions, values and purposes are the product of his own mind. He is the prime mover whose source of movement is within his own spirit. Rand, advocating the creator concept, attempts to state her objective in writing *The Fountainhead*, which is quoted by Peikoff in his book *The Early Ayn Rand: A Section from her Unpublished Fiction*:

... a defense of egoism in its real meaning. The question of what makes a person an individual or a collectivist what is the principle had interested me. The conversation with the girl, gave me not just the key to personal motivation, but to political motivation as well.4 (Peikoff 1984:136)

In an article entitled "The Only Path to Tomorrow", quoted in William O'Neil's *With Charity Towards None*, Rand states her definition of Individualism and Collectivism: Man is an independent entity with an inalienable right to the pursuit of his own happiness, in a society where man regards each other as equals; and Collectivism is the subjugation of an individual to a group, be it a race, a class or a state. 5(O'Neil 1971:43)

In *The Virtue of Selfishness*, Rand observes that life is a process of self-sustaining and self generated action which leads to happiness."(Rand 1964:19) But when an individual is condemned by society for that 'self-generated action and happiness', and is subordinated to a group or state, he becomes estranged from the collective group. There exists a dichotomy between the individual's quest for happiness and the society's standard of happiness. The spontaneous assertion of the individual's initiative, feelings, wishes and opinions are stifled. In some extreme cases, such alienation may throw an individual off his or her psychological balance. Howard Roark, the protagonist in Rand's *The Fountainhead*, is the victim of such an estrangement from society. The whole focus of Roark's life is to promote life and action: that is the creative and the innovative. Rand tells us in *The Virtue of Selfishness*, that which sustains life and enriches it is termed 'the good' and that which negates and impoverishes it is termed 'the evil'. (Rand VOS 1964:10) The most significant element in the fiction of Rand is her characters. Part of her credo of Literature is that the writer should populate his or her stories with individuals who inspire the reader, ideal characters or, 'people we would want to meet rather than the characters like the people who live next door.(Rand TFH, 1943:39) The Protagonist, Howard Roark is projected as the 'Ideal man' in a corrupt society. From Kira Argounova in *We the Living*, there is a linear progression to the development of the individual as the "Ideal Man" in *The Fountainhead*, to the Man-God of *Atlas Shrugged*. The society here is not 'The State', but the social unit of man with the parasites and social suckers who stand in direct contrast to the protagonist. One of the purposes of this chapter is to analyze the character of the producer, Howard Roark and contrast him with the 'social-suckers' of *The Fountainhead*: Howard Roark is a young architect, who fights a violent battle against conventional standards in architecture. A man of exceptional caliber, he sets his own standards. His genius and integrity are as unyielding as granite. *The Fountainhead* throws light on Roark's explosive love affair with a beautiful woman who loves Roark passionately but struggles to defeat him by marrying his worst enemy, Peter Keating. Juxtaposed against Roark are three other men: Peter Keating, Ellsworth Toohey and Gall Wynand. Wynand is a cynic who has qualities of greatness; but disillusionment with his fellowmen causes him to seek control over others. He becomes a political outsider functioning as a dictator. Ellsworth Toohey undermines ability by extolling ineptness and mediocrity. Toohey suffers from self alienation along with Peter Keating, who rises to the top of his career by being a 'parasite' and a 'social sucker'. He luxuriates in manipulating people, rather than creating sound architectural designs. Dominique Francon, Rand's heroine, is convinced of the triumph of evil over good, that she submits herself to every possible degradation. Each of these characters represents a variation on the theme of good and evil. Roark, the protagonist in *The Fountainhead*, and a brilliant architect, is based on the model of the then leading architectural genius of the times, Frank Lloyd Wright. However, Rand contends that this is not true, as the only similarity is that both Roark and Wright were innovators fighting for modernism, as opposed to traditionalism in architecture. At the beginning of the novel, Roark is encountered naked and laughing, an innocent Adam, poised on the edge of a cliff. An uncompromising man of unswerving integrity and exceptional ability, he is guided by no values but his own.

The plot follows his career from the day of his expulsion through his difficulties in establishing himself as a working architect, to his professional and personal vindication. He diverges from his code on rare occasions but even then, only in full awareness of what he is doing. Sometimes Roark compromises for the sake of Dominique Francon, the woman he loves or Gail Wynand, his friend. In these cases, he is still true to himself for they are his 'top value.' The quality he demands from his friends is a 'self-sufficient ego.' He does not see a love-relationship as an amalgam of beings. Roark lives up to his own definition of the creator as an individual who not only looks Nature in the face but also conquers it. He looks at the world around him and transforms Nature as it were. He looked at the granite. To be cut, he thought and made into walls. He looked at a tree. To be split and made into rafters. He looked at a streak of rust on the stone and thought of iron ore under the ground. To be melted and to emerge as girders against the sky. These rocks, he thought, are here waiting for me, waiting for the drill, waiting to be split, ripped, pounded, reborn, waiting for the shape my hands will give them. (TFH 31)

Roark has just been expelled from the Architectural School, for refusing to design buildings in the tradition of the past, and for designing instead buildings such as had never existed before. Roark is dismissed because he wants to express his own ideas and set his own goals. The Dean of the Institute wants to subordinate him to a group, a class. "Everything beautiful in architecture has been done already ... We can only choose from the great masters. Who are we to improve upon them?" (TFH 23) Roark tells the Dean that he does not care what anyone thinks about architecture. He decides he has only sixty years to live and he has chosen the work he wants to do in joy and happiness, not the condemnation of sixty years of torture in the Institute. Roark can find fulfillment only if he does his work in the best way possible to him. "The best is a matter of standards. And I set my own standards. I inherit nothing. I stand at the end of no tradition. I may, perhaps, stand at the beginning of one." (TFH, 25) Roark wonders about the principle represented by men like the Dean that alienates him from them. Years later, he identifies it as the phenomena of the 'second-hander', the 'social sucker' or the 'parasite' - "the man who lives off the productivity of others and contributes nothing to production itself" (TFH 31) It is interesting to have an insight into Rand's speculations. What Roark feels and thinks is entirely a matter of his own; it cannot be influenced by anything or anyone on the outside. His feelings are, in the words of Leonard Peikoff in *The Early Ayn Rand*, "a steady unruffled flame, a profound joy of living and of knowing his power, a joy that is not even conscious of being joy because it is so steady, natural and unchangeable." (Peikoff 1984:140) Rand intends her ideal man to represent the creative principle of man and so she chooses architecture as Roark's profession. Architecture assists Rand to glorify the skyscraper as a symbol of achievement and of life on earth. Since architecture involves art, science and business all in one, she can with ease and grandeur illustrate the creative principles in man's three major types of productive career. (Branden. 1986:211) Roark in Rand's early notes as Leonard Peikoff observes has been described as "a man who was in conflict with the world in every possible way, but at complete peace with himself." (Peikoff 1984:142) The life he lives in *The Fountainhead* confirms Hegel's second concept of alienation from the self that man is essentially spirit and the social substance is one form of the spirit, a form that has objectified itself. Roark, though in Randian terminology, is at peace with himself; in Hegelian ideology, Roark is alienated from the society which is his objectified spirit. There are two instances in *The Fountainhead* which illustrate Roark's alienation from society: The Hopton Stoddard Temple case and the Cortlandt Homes Trial. Roark designs a temple for Mr. Hopton Stoddard on the premise that a temple should symbolize man's experience of exaltation. So Howard Roark builds a temple to the Human Spirit. He sees man "as strong, proud, clean, wise and fearless. He sees man as a heroic being." (TFH 355) And he builds a temple to that spirit. But society, in the person of Ellsworth Toohey and Hopton Stoddard sees it as "a monument of profound hatred to humanity... as depraved." (TFH, 355) They reject Roark's temple because society's standard of values does not harmonize with Roark's sense of value and hence they flout it. The second instance of the Cortlandt Homes trial reveals the society's attempt to force its value, hollow as it is, on the individual creation. There exists an estrangement from society with the individual flouting the values of society. Hegel contends that personality development is characterized by one's freedom to express oneself freely. By creating an object, one makes the object an extension of one's personality, reflecting the will of the individual and thereby objectifying it. (Hegel, 1961: 89). In both the instances of the Stoddard Temple case and the Cortlandt Homes Trial, Roark's 'Spirit' and 'Will' is objectified, but in the language of Dominique, it is like: Casting pearls without getting even a pork chop in return, and when a man casts pearls before swine, it is not against the swine that you feel indignation, but against the man who valued his pearls so little that he was willing to fling them into the muck. (TFH, 356)

The Cortlandt Homes incident is the climax of *The Fountainhead*. Peter Keating grabs the designing of the Cortlandt Homes, a gigantic, government housing project to be built on the shore of the East River, a model for the whole world, as his only opportunity to rise from the debris of his failing career. He realizes he cannot design it. He asks Roark to do it for him and to allow him to present it as his own work. Roark agrees. He has spent years working on this problem of low-cost housing and he knows he will never be hired by any group, board, council or committee

– public or private. Roark attaches only one condition to his agreement. Cortlandt Homes is to be built exactly as Roark designs it; that is his purpose, his goal and his reward, his own work, done his own way. Keating agrees. Roark designs Cortlandt Homes. The building commences and Keating fights the first fight of his life to save it from so many people involved, each with authority, and each wanting to exercise it in some way or another. He fails to save it, Roark's structural and engineering plans without which the project would not have been possible, are retained. But the finished building has only "the skeleton of what Roark had designed, with the remnants of ten different breeds piled on the lovely symmetry of the bones".(TFH, 610) with a charge of dynamite, Roark destroys the butchered body of his creation. A malevolent world in the form of these collectivists of the spirit tries to destroy and humiliate the spirit of Roark, which is objectified in the Cortlandt Homes. Roark is condemned to court trial. At the trial, Roark summarizes the philosophy which the events of the novel and of Roark's life illustrate and this is also the philosophy of all Rand's protagonists. Her ideal men are victims of society and socially-alienated outsiders, because they uphold the dictum that progress and achievement come only from an independent mind; that altruism is the second-handers' weapon for enslaving the creator; that man is not a sacrificial animal but has the right to exist for his own sake. Social reviewers renounce The Fountainhead and Roark's action, as a selfish betrayal – the assumption being that Roark dynamites Cortlandt Homes "because someone changed the look of his building and he didn't like it – so he blew up the home of the poor". (TFH 84) The issue involved is a breach of contract. The contract of the building guarantees that it would be erected as it is designed. It was not. The building was a government project and the government could not be used or forced to honor its contract without its consent. Roark has no legal recourse to undo the butchering of his work. Rather than have his "objectified spirit" mangled in Cortlandt Homes, he chooses to devastate it totally. "I agreed to design Cortlandt Homes, "Roark told the jury at the trial, For the purpose of seeing it erected as I designed it. That was the price I set for my work. I was not paid. The owners of Cortlandt got what they wanted from me – a scheme to devise a structure as cheaply as possible, they took the benefit of my work and made me contribute it is a gift. But I am not an altruist. I do not contribute gifts of this nature. (TFH 686)

Roark argues that but for him, the destitute would not have had this particular home. Those who are concerned with the poor. They imagine they have a right to his own work and a claim to his life. He is not willing to let them have either, because he does not recognize anyone's right, to a single minute of his life nor any part of his energy, not any achievement of his; no matter who makes the claim, how huge the number nor how great their need. Roark testifies that "I wish to come here and state that I am a man who does not exist for others. It has to be said. The world is perishing from an orgy of self-sacrifice."(TFH, 687) The Cortlandt Homes is destroyed because it is a "double monster, in form and in implication," (TFH, 684) Both have to be blasted because its form is mutilated by second-handers who assume the right to improve upon that which they have not made and cannot equal. Rand, like the psychologist Erich Fromm, disapproves of this social contract theory advocated by Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau who state that man must lay down his property rights and resign it to the hands of the community. Rand, through her protagonists like Roark, Dagny Taggart, John Galt, Rearden and others, lashes out violently against such a theory. and believes in the doctrine of rational selfishness which she expresses in her article entitled "What is Capitalism?" in *Capitalism : The Unknown Ideal* "Every man is a sovereign individual who owns his person and no man is a 'natural resource' at the (rightful) disposal of others."10 (Rand, 1967:54) Howard Roark and all Rand's heroes and heroines are romantic realists and rebel against restrictive and mundane societies. In their rebellion, they act alone and on principle; they are all gifted and have unusual talents. Roark's triumph is given great emphasis by contrasting his success with the hardships and obstacles he goes through. These obstacles evolve only from one source: other men or society with all its chaos of selfishness and compromise; servility and lies that stand in the path of Roark. As he moves on, it is every second-hand living that combats him and tries to crush him in every possible manner but fails in the attempt. To every second-hander, Roark stands as a contrast, a reproach, a lesson a successful outsider. These second-handers are represented in the person of Peter Keating, Ellsworth Toohey and to a certain extent, Gail Wynand. They represent four distinct psychologies and ways of dealing with good and evil. But they may also be taken as realistically possible individuals, engaged in realistically possible courses of action. Only Dominique Francon stands solely as a symbol—a symbol of idealism frozen by contempt.11 (Branden, 1986:21) It is interesting and important to observe the manner in which Rand arrives at the creation of her outsiders. Quoting Rand, Barbara Branden observes in *The Passion of Ayn Rand*: If I took the ideal man as the creator, in relationship to him I would show three other types. Every character was devised in relation to the main theme. Roark is the man who could be the ideal man –and was; Wynand is the man who could have been –but wasn't; Keating who wasn't - and didn't know it; Toohey who wasn't-and knew it.12 (Ibid: 197)

These are not fundamental definitions but helpful analysis of why she chose these as her key figures. Rand wonders what would happen to Roark if he surrenders to society and concludes that he would be the man of good premises who has given in, and thus is born Wynand. Rand contemplates on the arch villains and the enemies of Roark and

Wynand and arrive at Ellsworth Toohey and Peter Keating. While Roark is shown as the individual who does not subordinate himself to the whim of the society and the looters, Gail Wynand, is a brilliant newspaper publisher whatever his readers want to read. He is the man who could have been the ideal man but was not; rather a man who gives in to the looters and becomes a political, dictatorial outsider. Gail Wynand becomes the victim of two types of alienation: Karl Marx in his Early Writings discusses his theory of alienation where 'the product does not reflect the individual's personality.'<sup>13</sup> (Marx 1975:26) The individual is forced to produce an object in accordance with another's desire. Man's creative instincts, because it is governed by the laws of the markets, are destroyed and man is dehumanized. The second concept of alienation that Wynand suffers from is described in the language of the psychoanalyst, Erich Fromm in *The Sane Society* as "the negation of personality." This is a situation where "one adopts the kind of personality offered to one by cultural patterns and hence ceases to be one's own self."<sup>14</sup> (Fromm, 1956:24) Rand explains that she does not consider individuals, who are generally regarded as ambitions, 'truly selfish'. The problem, as she sees it is, that most ambitious men of the times achieve success by 'pandering to the masses' and in doing so negates the 'self', thus becoming in her view, 'selfless.'<sup>15</sup> (Branden, 1986:214) The character of Gail Wynand is the personification of the man who becomes a slave to those he thinks he controls but who control him instead. In *The Ayn Rand Comparison*, Gladstein tells us that Rand believes "If a man goes after power by appealing to mob taste, he has the least power over anyone."<sup>16</sup> (Gladstein 1982:18) Wynand is one of Rand's most tragic characters. At the green age of twelve he pulls himself out of his miserable environment, "Hell's Kitchen," in search of beauty and integrity. This quest brings him disillusionment. Two instances in his early life educate him. Wynand recognizes nothing but the accuracy of his own judgment, and had always been the leader of his gang. When he is fifteen, he is beaten up into a bleeding pulp by a longshoreman; both his legs are broken and he is thrown into a gutter. Conscious of his inability for action and needing help for the first time in his life, he knocks on the door of a near-by saloon. The saloon keeper opens the door, looks at Wynand, conscious of the injustice of the act, but shuts the door in Wynand's face, as the saloonkeeper does not want to get mixed up with gang fights. This saps Wynand's concept of mercy and humanity dry. The second instance in when Wynand, reading an article in the newspaper on 'Integrity' rushes to the editor of the newspaper and pleads with him to defend only honest man he has ever met in his life, Pat Mulligan, a police officer who is framed. The editor yells at Wynand: "Do you expect me to remember all the swill I write?" (TFH, 408) Wynand's education of life is complete. He realizes that love, humanity, mercy, integrity etc. are floating abstractions never to be realized in this world and this makes Wynand a cynic. Nothing a young writer of profound caliber, Wynand tries to buy him over to his newspaper, *The Banner*. But the youngster refuses to work for Wynand stating, "You have no ideals". (TFH, 410) Wynand's cynicism reveals itself in his spontaneous reply: You can't escape human depravity kid. The boss you work for may have ideals but he was to take orders and beg money from many contemptible people. I have no ideals... but I don't beg. That's your choice ...there is no other. (TFH 412)

Wynand, another variation of spiritual collectivism, has all the qualities of greatness like Roark, with visions of the clean, the good, the beautiful and the perfect; but his disillusionment with his fellowmen causes him to become a power-seeker, seeking control over others, buying man's spirit, not to make them but to mar them. He does not believe, like Roark, that it is important to one's integrity, to project the best that is within the individual. For Wynand, there are no bests. He decides to give the masses what they want and thirst for. Wynand himself asserts that *The Banner*, his newspaper, was the voice of the collective: "I am representing the majority." (TFH, 409) He was a power-seeker as he observes to Dominique: "Power, Dominique, power... the only thing I ever wanted. To know there's not a man whom I can't force to do anything ... anything I choose. The man I cannot break would destroy me. (TFH, 498) This power he achieves through 'The Banner'. He surrenders himself to the vulgar and the mediocre, turning the newspaper into a cheap scandal sheet full of crime and punishment. Paying with his honour for unlimited power leaves him with nothing more to conquer. Bored and in a state of misanthropy, he is ready to play Russian Roulette with the lives and the spirit of man. Wynand delights in breaking the spirit of industrialists and financiers. Once he loses interest in such men, he finds a new kind of sport, a new kind of victim. He begins breaking honest men, men of integrity who are passionately devoted to their convictions. The first victim is Dwight Carson who champions the cause of the individual over the collective. Wynand brings Carson out and forces him to write an article for *The Banner* where he preaches the superiority of the masses over the individual man of genius. Wynand then forces an atheist to write on the glories of religion. He makes a disciplined scientific method. Wynand has no mercy for his prey nor does he show any interest in men of glittering success. His victims have a single attribute in common: their immaculate integrity. Once they are all broken, he continues to pay them scrupulously but he feels no concern for them and no desire to see them again. Dwight Carson becomes a dipsomaniac; two men become drug addicts one commits suicide. Alvah Scarret tries to stop Wynand's sadistic pleasures and destructive forces. But Wynand's only defense is: "If lightning strikes a rotten tree, it's not the fault of the lightning." "But what do you call a healthy tree?" ask Alvah Scarret. "They don't exist, Alvah," said Wynand cheerfully, "they don't

exist.”(TFH, 416) Toohey, knowing Wynand’s fascination for things exquisite and beautiful, sends Wynand the statue of Dominique which renews Wynand’s interest in life. But unfortunately Wynand meets Dominique and Roark too late. Having given himself to the parasites and the secondhanders, Wynand cannot use his newspaper effectively when he decides to battle for positive values. Wynand attempts to fight for the first time for the cause in which he believes. He then sees the public rising against him and realization dawns on him that it was not he who had directed public opinion, but public opinion that had controlled and directed him. He capitulates and cannot forgive himself. He divorces Dominique, closes down “The Banner” but gives Roark the building commission which includes a proviso that he and Roark are never to meet again. Commenting on Wynand’s alienation as he thirsts for power, Rand asks: What is accomplished if the man attains power and prominence at the cost of playing to the masses? It is not he that triumphs; it is not his ideas and standards. (Rand, 1943:376)

Wynand, though a power seeker, can be analyzed as a virtuous character of equal stature with Roark. Like Dominique Francon, he is the embodiment of similar values and both of them serve as adjuncts in the quest to discover and maintain the good. Dominique Francon, Rand’s heroine is an outsider and like all Rand’s protagonists and sub-heroic protagonists, she is also alienated from society and the world. Dominique’s premise is a withdrawal from the world, not out of bad motives or cowardice, but out of an unbearable idealism. She does not know how to function in reality as it is. She becomes an interesting case study in perverseness. She is so convinced of the triumph of evil over good that she submits herself to every possible degradation. Dominique Francon has twin sources regarding her characterization: one is Rand “in a bad mood” and the other is Frank O’Connor “had he been a woman.” 17 (Branden 1986:261) These twin sources may be the reason why Dominique Francon is a beautiful woman with a body so exquisite that she models for a statue of tribute to the indomitable human spirit which the Hopton Stoddard Temple, designed by Roark, exemplifies. Proceeding from the conviction that good has no chance in this world, a premise, the opposite of Rand’s belief, she chooses to be careless in order not to let anything or anyone have power over her. Masochistic in the extreme, she marries men she despises, in order to prove her careless spirit that she is too worthy of this world. The perversity does not stop there. She loves Roark but spends years attempting to destroy his career. It could have been more intense and carefully structured a vendetta, had she hated him. Whenever she does something particularly hurtful to him, she would go to him that night, to draw strength from him for her future battle. She spent years trying to destroy, herself and her own vision of life, which is, what the world ought to be. This is the cause of her torture—the state of the world as it is. She is to do it by leaving Roark, the man she loves and by marrying two men she despises, first Peter Keating and then Gail Wynand. She marries Peter Keating because he is the representation of the lowest breed of men and in her opinion herself degradation would be perfect if she married him. Gail Wynand buys her from Peter Keating for 250,000 dollars, and the Stoneridge commission. Dominique marries Wynand as an expression of a similar self-contempt, but grows to care for him in the end. When Gail Wynand gives up his battle in order to save Roark, it is then that Dominique openly, and in a scandalous manner, gives Wynand reason to divorce her. But, by the end of the novel, after the Cortlandt Homes trial, Dominique is trained to harmonize her conflict with the world and accept happiness to live openly and unafraid as ‘Mrs. Howard Roark.’(TFH, 341) Dominique Francon, condemns the Stoddard Temple because it is not part of its site; and Roark builds his temple for a world which is not worthy of it. Against this site, the Stoddard Temple that glorifies man’s spirit is an ‘unspeakable indignity. ‘The Stoddard Temple is a threat to many things -men wealth, fame, love, brutality, murder and self-sacrifice and it symbolizes man’s self-respect.

Dominique’s criteria are:

What is the use of being a martyr to the impossible? What is the use of building for a world that does not exist...? The Stoddard Temple should be devastated not to save men from it but to save it from men, because mankind has been reduced to moles and object to mountain peaks. (TFH, 360)

Dominique feels like Roark, helpless in such a depraved world. The one and only time that she battles openly uphold the cause she believes in, is when she asserts: “This is my Stoddard Temple... my first and last.” (TFH, 357) Rand’s protagonists, be it a Roark or her sub-protagonists, be it Wynand or Dominique, are cast with over whelming and persuasive reality and are characters who are genuinely heroic and able. This is one of the chief reasons for the enormous popularity of Rand’s fiction. Her characters, especially her heroic ones, have served as a source of moral and psychological inspiration for thousands of readers, especially the young. That she has been able to project convincingly such heroes and heroines is made possible not only by her literary spirit but by the nature of her philosophy, by virtue of the fact that hers is a philosophy for ‘living on earth.’ Having dealt with the protagonist who forms the world of the creators and the producers symbolizing ‘The Good’ in *The Fountainhead*, the researcher, in this section of the chapter, proposes to analyze the arch villains and sub-villains who live as ‘spiritual parasites’, ‘social-suckers’ and ‘second-handers’, symbolizing ‘The Evil’ force in *The Fountainhead*. In this phase, Rand has juxtaposed the creator against the parasite. Rand is convinced that man as he exists is not what he is ordained to be.

'The Parasite', the Social-Sucker', or the 'second-hander' has been defined by Rand as the man who rejects the responsibility of judging; who is moulded and shaped by other men who set his goals and standards for him. The parasite is the man who is the collectivist of the spirit, the man who places others over self. He is the soulless being who is motion without an internal motor. Ellsworth Toohey, Peter Keating and Gail Wynand are the parasites in this phase and symbolize a sick society. Roark, the protagonist, in his trial speech very aptly distinguishes these two concepts of the creator and the parasites: The creator originates. The parasite borrows. The creator faces Nature alone, the parasite faces nature through an intermediary. He creator's concern is the conquest of nature; the parasite's concern is the conquest of men. (TFH, 681)

From the beginning of time, the two antagonists have stood face to face; the first hander and the second-hander. When the first creator invents the second-hander responds and invents altruism – the doctrine that preaches that man should live for others. Using this ideology as a weapon of exploitation, the altruist or the second-hander teaches man the concept of dependence as a virtue.

While the virtuous characters aid in the morality of the novel, the arch-villains and the sub-villains in the persons of Peter Keating, Ellsworth Toohey support the immoral in the novel. These serve to counteract the good. They embody and perpetuate the evils of Collectivism, Altruism and Mysticism. Rand's secondary villains swarm over her literary canvas. Rand's satire of, and inventive against a large part of society, are often capsulated in her portraits of the villains. How these arch-villains use and exploit the sub-villains to reach their goal of destroying man and his spirit and thereby achieving power over them, will be briefly dealt with in this section of the chapter. The major arch-villains who stand for the sick parasitical society are Peter Keating and Ellsworth Toohey, against whom the major protagonists combat to retain their individuality. Mr. & Mrs. Dale Ainsworth, Atherton Beasley, Sally Brent, Dwight Carson, Lancelot Cloakey, Jim Davis, Neil Dumont, Jules Fougles form the sub-villains, who assist the arch-villains in their pursuit of the immoral and the evil. But the focus of analysis here, as in the previous chapter, is limited to the major protagonists and arch-villains. Ellsworth Monkton Toohey, like Gail Wynand, is a power seeker, who knows the concept of the ideal man and realizes that he is not one. He is cast as an arch-villain, alongside Peter Keating, who knows the path of good but deliberately indulges in evil. Toohey symbolizes a kind of Hitler and Stalin presence in his quest for power. They serve as obstacles to prevent Roark from attaining his goal. In the process they also attempt to destroy Roark. Rand creates two types of negative characters: 1) those who are weak and ignorant. And 2) those who actively choose to do evil. Keating belongs to the first category and Toohey to the second. Both of them are arch villains, perverse by nature, whose behavior and attitude are repulsive and detrimental to human happiness. Ellsworth Toohey is as vicious a villain as contemporary literature presents. His goal is power. His aim is to rule. He is cognizant of the effects of the destructive means he employs towards his end. By extolling ineptness and mediocrity, Toohey undermines ability and quality. The talentless thereby remain under his influence and the forces that would oppose him are reduced. Toohey wants Roark imprisoned, not to kill him, as he tells Keating but to subordinate the spirit of Roark. Toohey desires to get an intense gratification from seeing Roark locked up behind bars, strapped, but alive. He gloatingly tells Keating: He'll get up when they tell him to. He'll eat what they give him. He'll move when he's told to move and sleep when he's told. They will push him if he doesn't move fast enough and slap his face when they will feel like it. And he will obey. He will take orders. He will take orders. (TFH, 634)

Toohey believes that man's soul must be ruled. If one man's soul is ruled, the rest of mankind could be easily conquered. It is the soul that is the hardest to break and the most difficult to vanquish. An aunt, who sees through Toohey's treachery, tells him "you are a maggot, Elsie ...you feed on sores."To which Toohey replies: "Then I'll never starve."(TFH, 298) Toohey thinks man is depraved and low and hence must be made to feel 'small' and 'guilty. 'His aspiration and integrity should be destroyed and he should be taught 'selflessness' because he should live for others and not for himself. Altruism is the ideal. Altruism teaches man to become aware of his own worthlessness. Since the supreme ideal is beyond man's grasp, he will ultimately give up his ideals and his sense of personal values. Man will learn to distrust himself and to consider himself unclean. Such is the philosophy Toohey lived by. He uses this philosophy as a means to his end; the destruction of the human spirit! He laughs at a Roark and praises a Peter Keating. Toohey's desire is to be the great leveler, to extinguish all desire to excel.

Toohey preaches sacrifice and collectivism because he is convinced that every system of ethics that advocates sacrifice grows into a world power and rules millions of men. As he say one has to camouflaged it and 'dress it up differently, sugar it over and promise people that they would achieve a 'superior kind of happiness' by giving up everything that makes them happy."Use vague words like: 'Universal harmony, eternal spirit, divine purpose, nirvana, paradise, racial supremacy, the dictatorship of the proletariat ...'(TFH 635) Toohey is the kind of villain who has the most self-awareness. Thoroughly conscious of his actions, he continues to mutilate and hack the spirit of his fellowmen mercilessly. His self-awareness is revealed in his dynamic dialogue with Keating where he reveals

his deviousness, his cunning mind, his perverse nature, his knowledge of the truth that an Individualist is the man who leaves another with enough space to breathe, while an Altruist is the man who thirsts for another's soul. The man who speaks to you of sacrifice speaks to you of slaves and masters. But if ever you hear a man telling you that you must be happy, that it's your natural right, that your first duty is to yourself, that will be the man who is not after your soul. (TFH 639)

Everything that Toohey advocates could be contained in one word- 'Collectivism'. A spiritual collectivist, Toohey is aware of the glorification of the individual man of genius, the co creator or the god. That is why Toohey's betrayal to himself and consequently to the world at large, is more tragic. He is like the Roman Emperor who wishes that the whole of Humanity had just one neck, so that he could hack it off at one stroke. Toohey follows only one technique in the drama of his life. He offers "poison as food and poison as the antidote." (TFH, 640) His only purpose and motivation of life is to "kill man's soul ... Kill the individual". (TFH, 641) Ellsworth Toohey is not just the figment of Rand's imaginative powers. He is modeled after a British socialist Harold Laski; Lewis Mumford, the writer on architecture who wrote in *The New Republic*, and Clifton Fadiman the editor of the *New Yorker*, and Heywood Brown, the columnist of "It Seems to Me." (TFH, 656) The men who seek power make real their profound inferiority, intellectual self-doubt, furtive lust to deceive and manipulate the consciousness of others, resentment towards anything confident, able, benevolent, self-assertive, and above all their virulent rebellion against reason. And so it is with Toohey.

Peter Keating is classified under Karen Horney's concept of psychological alienation analyzed in the book *Neurosis and Human Growth*, where the individual is alienated from two dimensions of the self; the actual and 'real' self. The actual self consists of negating all that a person actually is and the individual silences 'his genuine feelings, thoughts and emotions. Horney characterizes the 'the real self' as the most alive centre of one's self and to be cut off, as Peter Keating is, from his 'real self is to be hacked off from the "spring of emotional forces of constructive energies, of directive and judiciary power." (Horney 1951:47)

Keating belongs to the group of the parasites. "I am a parasite", Keating tells Roark, and in that statement of self recognition, he aptly characterizes his villainy and his weakness. Because he wants to feel superior, Keating blackmails, plagiarizes and beguiles his way to the top of his field. His dark, good looks and easy popularity are used to ingratiate himself with his superiors. He moves easily from the star at the Stanton Institute of Technology, to the rising young architect in the firm of Francon and Heyer, by becoming whatever people want him to be. He marries Dominique whom he does not love. Keating's last meeting with Catherine Halsey throws light on the abject selflessness of his entire life and the futility of his quest to survive by means of adjusting blindly to the values of others:

Katie, I wanted to marry you. It was the only thing I ever really wanted. And that's the sin that can't be forgiven- that I hadn't done what I wanted ... Katie, why do they always teach us that it's easy and evil to do what we want. And it takes the greatest kind of courage. I mean what we really want. As I wanted to marry you. Not as I wanted to sleep with some woman, or get drunk or get my name in the papers. Those things- they are not even desires- they're things people do to escape from desires- because it is such a big responsibility really to want something. (TFH, 599-600)

Keating sells Dominique for the Stoddard Commission. By the age of thirty nine, he is a miserable 'has-been', and though he understands the nature of his betrayal of self, he is too weak and dependent to change. His presence at Roark's trial has little impact because there is on being left in the shell of his body. Peter Keating possess a modicum of talent, but rather than develop his gift, he guides his life by pursuing what other people think is important. He never learns his craft and when important commissions are called for, he must put his name on other people's work, as in the Cosmo-Slotnick Building and the Cortlandt Homes Housing Project. When he achieves everything he should want, he does not understand the hollowness of it. He is never satisfied because he has never gone after what he wants. While Roark does not need any one's approval for his work. Since he knows his worth, Peter Keating needs Committees, Unions, and Groups to reinforce themselves. Peter Keating, like Ellsworth Toohey also represents a variation of spiritual collectivism. Rand's concept of the 'second hander' is a landmark of psychological analysis. The character of Peter Keating is the psychological analysis of the spiritually dependent; the man who rejects the responsibility of living by the judgment of his mind. The *Fountainhead* can be read as a modern version of a Medieval Morality play. Each of its characters represents a variation of the continuum between good and evil.

An individual's human life should be the standard by which his religious, moral, ethical life is judged, according to Rand. Rand further develops her concept of 'man worship' in this phase. Mr. Stoddard tells Howard Roark, "You are a profoundly religious man, Mr. Roark." (TFH, 320) Roark acknowledges his religiosity in a whisper after a long contemplation; "that is true." (TFH, 320) Roark's spirit within, harmonizes with what he projects on the without. Stoddard wants Roark to build a temple to his spirit: "I wish to call it God. You may choose any other name, but



what I want in that building is your spirit. Your Spirit Mr. Roark.”(TFH, 320) thus the Stoddard Temple to the Human spirit is built. Its symbol is man-worship. It is glorification of that which is intelligible, probable, graspable and the definable, which is the exact opposite of institutionalized religious worship, not to the Divine Creator, but to a heroic vision of man.

This concept of Man-worship, Branden observes in the *Passion of Ayn Rand*, evoked a storm of reactions to *The Fountainhead*, condemning the book as ‘too intellectual’, ‘too controversial’, that it goes ‘against the prevailing climate of opinion’- collectivism, that the story is ‘improbable’, the hero ‘unsympathetic’, and no one can identify himself with Roark and that ‘no audience existed for it and hence it will not ‘sell.’ Thus the *Fountainhead*, like Rand’s protagonists, is condemned for being too good, too idealistic. But today, Barbara Branden observes, the book that was too controversial is studied in university classrooms, and has achieved the status of a modern classic. Letters poured in from all areas of life, saying that they find in Roark:

“a moral intransigence, a personal ideal that the image of Roark had given them a greater courage to stand by their own convictions, that *The Fountainhead* had liberated them from any guilt they had experienced for their failure to live by the ethics of Altruism-that it had given them a sense of what is possible in life, what is possible in Man what is possible to them. (TFH, 415)

This leads Ayn Rand to believe that there is hope for humanity because the sales of *The Fountainhead* confirm that man ultimately responds to values, which is the reason why she chooses Frank O’Connor’s painting for its cover, titled: ‘Man Also Rises.’ (TFH,417). When one moves on to the second phase in Achebe’s fiction, one sees how Achebe’s concept of the emerging individual in *No Longer at Ease* and *A Man of the People* is very different from that of Ayn Rand’s, and portrays a new concept.

Individualism seems to be acquiring a new meaning and dimension as one examines it in relations to the multiple reality of the urban ethos. The factors weaving up to this particular fictional milieu are numerous, and essentially different from and more complex than those of the tribal world in *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*. Two major factors mentioned in the previous chapter i.e., educational factors and economic advancement have come to exercise a wider and more potent force on the characters of *No Longer at Ease*, and *A Man of the People*, reshaping their total thought pattern. In *No Longer at Ease*, the quest for knowledge and power becomes a pronounced motif. The emerging individuals here are inextricably related to the socio-economic climate dealt with in the narrative, simultaneously affecting a further severance of the individual from his tribal affiliation. *No Longer at Ease* could be described as marking the initial stages of individualism, where it involves an enormous amount of conflict and tension, as Obi is still very much part of the corporate existence of the traditional type. It is his wide exposure to Western values that creates a new awareness in him and his rights as an individual is divorced from any collective responsibility. Individualism is thus upheld as an ideal and fought for by Obi. Thus in *No Longer at Ease* and *A Man of the People* we move on to the second stage of the steady phase of the progression of individualism in the context of Achebe’s world. The encounter with European values and Christianity is no more a conflicting issue; rather it has become an accepted thesis and effectively constitutes the social framework of the novel. The focus is on Obi, son of Nwoye, and grandson of Okonkwo of *Things Fall Apart*.

Aboile Irele, in his article “The Tragic Conflict in the Novels of Chinua Achebe” says that ‘*No Longer at Ease* is a sequel to *Things Fall Apart*, not only in the fact that a lost generation of Okonkwo’s family is involved, but also in the theme. It treats of the dislocation in the African psyche that followed the disintegration of a situation in which a meaningful social and moral orientation is made difficult.’<sup>19</sup> (Irele 1967:12) it is also the story of an individual, Obi Okonkwo who is caught up in this situation, which demands the individual to create a firm moral order out of the flux of values in the world in which he lives – a situation that demands an exceptional moral and intellectual initiative. Obi’s dilemma is contained in the conflict between his developed intellectual insight and his lack of moral strength to sustain it. Irele argues that the whole novel is built out of the profound gulf that exists between Obi’s western education and its practical relevance to his individual place in the world. “Obi is something of an aesthete, but his culture is manifest in an attachment to things that are of no real consequence.”<sup>20</sup> (Ibidem: 16)

The various forces at work are made comprehensible only with an accurate understanding of the political situation, social stratification and the economic problems of a definite historical context of the Nigeria of 1950, a composite product of the intermingling of Europe and Africa. The theme of *No Longer at Ease* is, in one sense, as G.D. Killiam says, in *The Novels of Chinua Achebe*, the price of modernity for an African society: it is Nigerian society itself which is “no longer at ease” and not merely Obi himself, though of course the social unease centers in Obi, the “only palm-fruit.”<sup>21</sup> (Killiam 1969:64) There is a conflict between Obi’s at-times wayward individuality and the expectations of the group which has been responsible for subscribing to the loan which has enabled Obi to go to England for a university education that is intended to benefit society first and foremost. The Umuofia Progressive Union expects Obi to pay back the money loaned to him, and to maintain a European standard of living, and at the same time to fulfill his financial obligations according to the requirements of the ‘extended family system.’(NLAE

47) Although Obi is made to appear exceedingly, if not incredibly careless about money, and the financial demands to which he is to be subject, 22(Killiam 1969:66) there is nevertheless a real sense of irrevocable beliefs and Christianity, and between both these, a non-religious superficial rationalism.

Adrain Hastings, in his book *African Christianity* discusses the traditional belief most crucial in Obi's fate, which is the opposition of his parents to his relationship with the 'OSU'<sup>23</sup>(Hastings 1976:17) girl Clara; for it is at this point that he gives way under pressure, and Obi realizes partially and too late his own hollowness, that in the face of his father's objection "there was nothing in him, with which to challenge it honestly."<sup>24</sup> (Ibidem: 18) Obi tries the argument of Christian compassion as a means of persuasion, but there is in Obi no real commitment to Christian belief. Yet, Isaac's own Christian belief is real. He has been through a fire that Obi does not even know exists and Isaac's retention of the prohibition against the "Osu", is a sign that he, like so many others, is a divided man in a divided society. Obi therefore returning to transform society, or at least to make it more honest, or to resist corruption himself, finds a society full of conflicting demands. All those around him are divided as fragmentary beings in one way or another: his friend, Christopher, an economist, has his religion of sex (Christopher's bed is flippantly called the 'Holy of Holies') and a specious line of reasoning about corruption; Joseph, Obi's countryman, is both urbanized in his employment and sufficiently traditional to warn both Obi's parents and the Umuofia Progressive Union about Obi's involvement with Clara; Mr. Green, Obi's boss is a man born out of his time, in power yet powerless, totally unable to see that it is the civilization of which he is a member, that has been responsible in large part for the historical element in Obi's fate; finally, Clara too is divided, an 'Osu' and a modern nurse, a 'been-to' who is yet unable to escape from her traditional role and divided, in another way, between a real relationship and cinema fantasies. Achebe is therefore dealing with a many sided fragmentation, but is doing so in a highly structured formal discipline.

The novel is more than a refutation. It shows a society radically changed from that in *Things Fall Apart*; it shows a city Lagos, not to be imagined in the context of the earlier novel, it shows a phenomenon, 'corruption' in the city, Lagos, and most of the changes that are manifest. The city, in its complexity, is symbolic of the aspiration and corruption of the new society.

At the risk of being simplistic, *No Longer at Ease* can be said to be depicting a decisively transitional phase in the history of West Africa and the social milieu is an amalgam of values carried over from Umuofia and borrowed from England, represented in the urban reality of Lagos. The values upheld in *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God* have lost much of its validity, yet is not totally irrelevant and continues to be a binding force through the powerful Umuofia Progressive Union, which is symbolic of the eventual transference of tribal values of the urban milieu. The religious atmosphere that pervades the two novels in the last phase has been lost considerably. Instead there is an atmosphere of 'peaceful coexistence' (NLAE 45) where religion as understood and practiced by the earlier generations, has ceased to be a decisive force and has come to signify a solemn, social celebration, as in the reception given to Obi on his return from England.

An effortless blending of two religions and the ease of its employment, symbolizes the leap made from the earlier novels in their social vision. Despite its initial conflicts, Christianity has made a palpable impact on the tribal people within a time span of two generations. A new dilemma is enacted further on with the inevitable breakdown of the religiously orientated world view in the emerging urbanized ethos. There is a marked absence of any new creed with which it is to be substituted, and has an equal grip on events and individuals. Society here is caught in the process of a fast change. Values are vague and in a flux; objectives are confused; allegiances are not clearly defined. J.V.Taylor in *The Primary Vision* says that the economic motif logically entailing a devaluation of their modes of thought, is on its way to replacing all other considerations.<sup>25</sup> (Taylor 1963:72) Thus what happened in West Europe applies to West Africa too as far as it resulted in a reorientation of their values.

In Chapter II of *No Longer at Ease*, Obi gives us a comprehension of the city of Lagos as it would mould his career and reshape his destiny. Obi, while in England for four years, realizes that Nigeria is more than a name to him. His predicament is ironic, because he is unable to come to terms with the Nigeria he discovers after his studies. It also exposes the irony of the situation, because the people have shifted their attention from the 'great light' (NLAE 8) that was Religion in *Things Fall Apart*, to the 'great light' (Ibidem) that is Education in *No Longer at Ease*. This shift from the 'sacred' to the 'secular,' results in respective sequential reorientation embracing their total apprehension of reality. The tribe still asserts its hold on the individual, Obi. The most interesting feature of Achebe's fictional world is, as C.R. Larson points out in *The Search for the Past, East and Central African Writing* that in the present context, Obi is expected not only to defend the status quo; the establishment of which his grandfather died trying to prevent, but also to transform it as well, as he leaves his country in quest of more knowledge which ultimately aims at the economic emancipation of his tribesmen. In the next stage of this dialectical process, "the old synthesis has without their knowledge become the new thesis which will in turn be questioned by the new values Obi brings back from abroad."<sup>26</sup> (Larson, 1978:12-15) The Umuofian (or even the people of Lagos

for that matter) do not anticipate that the knowledge which brings power will bring detachment and alienation too in its train. And hence one witnesses this inevitable process of the growing pains of a new mode of all the decisive stages of the unfolding of the 'Ibo Saga'-an outlook which needs with hostility at every stage and emerges, triumphant. Obi's fate is no different.

Obi's alienation becomes apparent to the Umuofia Progressive Union at the reception it holds in Lagos in his honour. Four years of study in London, invests Obi with a new vision, a radical awareness, that in unconventional to the core. For him, education means initiation into a highly personalized grasp of reality which makes him utter confidently to Joseph: "I'm going to marry the girl. I wasn't actually seeking your approval."(NLAE 72) He has moved away from ideologies still valid to the tribes men, and the numerous clashes are a result of mutual inapprehension of Obi's deliberate assertion of his individual rights. Obi's moving away from the collective to a potentially subjective level of existence implies two basic attitudes:

- I. The individual is fully responsible for his actions.
- II. An increased and intense consciousness of the self as an ultimate entity.

This presupposition gives one a deeper penetration into the thematic development of the novel beyond its formal realism. It is worked out through social relationship where Obi struggles for freedom of thought and action, inconceivable to the tribal mind. Pressure forces him to give up his idealism. He retraces his steps and attempts to recede into introspection, verging on egocentricity, yet strangely lacking in perception, as a character.

Obi's idealistic individualism makes him fall short of the great expectations of the Umuofia Progressive Union. The Union's major interest is in tribal solidarity and self-interest and the meeting ends with a discussion of bribery and influence. The 'Cultural Conflict.'<sup>27</sup> (Ibidem: 18) of Obi, manifested in his first encounter with his tribesmen is explored. Numerous conflicting issues orbit him;

- I. His estranged relationship with his tribe.
- II. Obligations towards the family.
- III. Relationship with Clara.
- IV. Mounting financial pressures.
- V. The allurements of city life and his professional idealism.

The whole series of events are almost spatialized, constituting a highly suggestive spectrum of the prevailing social morale. Disillusioned with the system and alienated from his own society, Obi himself sounds like a colonial describing the natives. What an Augean Stable! he muttered to himself. Where does one begin? With the masses? Educate the masses? He shook his head. "Not a chance there." It would take centuries, handful of men at the top. Or even one man with vision, an enlightened dictator. People are scared of the word nowadays. But what kind of democracy can exist side by side with so much corruption and ignorance? Perhaps a halfway house -a sort of compromise. (NLAE 40)

H.Barba observes in "Image of the African in Transition": the novelist, with a sustained irony repeatedly unravels the "cultural dislocation of his hero."<sup>28</sup> (Barba,1963:251-21).The roots of this unique 'schizophrenia' could be traced back to his early childhood in a very logical manner. Obi's lack of grip on any single life principle and his "mission house upbringing and European education had made him a stranger in his country."(NLAE, 71-72) Fed on diverse religion-cultural elements, the seeds of an unresolved conflict and unsteady affirmations were absorbed into his mental makeup as a child. The Nigeria of the first half of the century possessed a hybrid culture, which accommodated elements of tribal religious values and Christianity. His father, as village catechist, insisted dogmatically upon Christian upbringing, whereas the mother tried to modify this quietly but insistently with her native folk lore. (NLAE 57-58) This double heritage frustrates and leaves him in a spiritual void without anything substantial to hold on to.

The cultural conflict is made manifest through two main issues: duty and marriage. There is a discrepancy between Mr. Green's concept of ideal duty and the view of duty and loyalty envisaged by the Umuofia Progressive Union. Mr. Green's diligence and rectitude makes him almost an abstraction. Obi is forced to step too low, to the level of being demoralized. Obi perceives the full implication that has followed him into Lagos. From one point of view, it is an impressive continuation of the communal solidarity into the modern city and the tribal ethnic one witnesses in the previous chapter. Obi is expected to help fellow Umuofian, using his position to pay back his debt to his tribe. The tribe fails to see that commendable ideal of tribal fellow feeling, when transferred to the town becomes nepotism and self-interest. It is also a question of viewing the whole situation from a totally different individualized framework. The task performed by individuals is mostly roles ascribed to them by the society. They expect whatever they come to inherit. This, inevitably results in conformity to the prevailing modes, and prevents any form of unconventionality. Having been exposed to a different pattern of thinking, and being strongly influenced by it, Obi's norms are now personally validated ones, which naturally turn out to be unacceptable to the tribe. Within the new bourgeois scale of values, one's personally achieved status is what matters and that point to the inviolable rights

of the individual as against those of the tribe upheld in the earlier circumstances. Obi is in debt to the community, yet his concept of duty demands he act as an independent agent. The ambiguity of relationship, stifling phenomena curbs the growth of Obi as a person and nullifies his individualism.

The two versions of 'Duty' represented by Greene, and Obi reinforce the contradictory views of the individual in the society. David Carroll in his book *Chinua Achebe*, uses two potential terms in this connection; the 'atomistic view', which holds the individual solitary and self-sufficient, where "duty is a means of exercising his will and testing, his integrity", and the second is the 'Organic View' which incessantly affirms that "the individual is a member of a community", a fact which guides and controls his action. Here, "duty is the constant awareness of the self as an integral part of the organic whole of the village or "tribe through which one acts and achieves identity." It provides one with a concrete example of the meeting of European individualism and African tribalism, "in the confused no-man's land of the city which represents-both;"<sup>29</sup>(Carroll 1980:49) and one is compelled to restate the earlier assumption that within the context of tribal values, one's individuality is realized only in terms of the corporate body. The tragic inevitability of the situation is fully captured in the fact that he has been educated at great cost by his clan, but the lesson he has learnt is inviolability of the freedom of the individuals.

Obi's sense of individualism is treated rather ironically by Achebe, because the increased awareness of his potentials, somehow transforms him into a misfit, incapable of responding effectively to the demands of the situation. Another facet of Obi's identity crisis is eventually brought to light in spite of his consistent attempt to reconcile conflicting claims. Here again Obi is trapped between two different value systems in the choice of a life partner. He wants to marry Clara, but the tribes' sets up arms against him because Clara is an 'Osu'. Obi refuses to be controlled by outdated practices:

It was scandalous that in the middle of the twentieth century a man could be barred from marrying a girl simply because her great-great-great-greatgrandfather had been dedicated to serve a god, thereby setting himself apart and turning his descendants into a forbidden caste to the end of Time. (NLAE 65) He insists they get engaged, confident he can master his own life. But he is summoned home by his father, to meet the fiercest opposition of all and when he tells his father, whom he wants to marry, "His father laughed. It was the kind of laughter one sometimes heard from a masked ancestral Spirit" (NLAE 120)

Disconcertingly, one is back in the world of *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*, where Obi is told that if he marries an Osu,

....your children and your children's children ... (until the third and fourth generation) will curse your memory. It is not for myself I speak; my days are few. You will bring sorrow on your head and on the heads of your children. Who will marry your daughters? Whose daughters will your sons marry? Think of that my son. We are Christians, but we cannot marry our own daughters. (NLAE 12)

Obi argues that being Christians, they cannot accept Osu prohibition, and professes to meet the challenge ... but his father rejects Christianity and reverts to tribal law. This regression to earlier beliefs, states that apparent assimilation of cultures and faiths are built on shaky foundation, in the case of both father and son. This implies that society is still in the process of change and no new values have taken deep root. Beneath all innovation and change, lies the solidarity of the tribe.

Obi's professional ethics is challenged. Obi lives now in the cult of despair and experiences almost a dismembering of the self. His mind was troubled not only by what had happened but also by the discovery that there was nothing in him with which to challenge it honestly. All the day he had striven to rouse his anger and his conviction, but he was honest enough with him, to realize that the response he got, no matter how violent it sometimes appeared, was not genuine. (NLAE 124) He finds it hard to accept his parent's values, and also to reject it. The hybrid nature of his individuality is neatly drawn, as he is a product of Umuofia, Lagos and Europe. His manner in relation to people, display deep rooted inner conflict and lack of grip. He is no longer at ease with Clara. When he returns to Lagos he wants to break off his engagement. This is financially a breakdown too. With his mother's death, all ties with the past are dissipated. Engulfed in social impasse, he attempts a series of rationalizations aimed at self justifications, in the repudiation of Clara and in the acceptance of bribes. His attempts to preserve his 'old self' are seen in his efforts to draw distinctions between accepting bribes from those candidates who are likely to win and those who cannot.

With a feeling of guilt, he senses extreme loss at his mother's death. He tries to redefine his relationship with her and finds solace in "the memory of his mother (which) seemed to release this kind of peace... the peace that passeth all understanding." (NLAE, 25 :149) He attributes his despair and guilt to a new philosophy, a new vision of reality. This is suggestive of a more objective vision, yet it speaks of a passive acceptance of life as it is. His thought process reflects irresolvable conflicts in the present, aggravated by his almost mechanical surrender to it. Yet his attitude is nebulous, which puts it outside the confines of neat formulations and renders it rather abstract. His 'idealism' is unable to struggle for survival and dies a natural death. The novelist has not been very eager to unravel

the psychic mysteries of his hero. No pattern of consistent thinking can be formed from the narrative. This inherent ambiguity contributes to the tragedy in a very unique and modernistic sense of the term.

Obi's 'identity crisis' is due. He is lost in a world of contradictions and oppressive forces. He feels victimized by his own people. The final paragraph flashes back to the first chapter and reminds the reader of the inexplicability of the whole dilemma, and suggests what a vicious circle it has been:

Everybody wondered why. The learned judge, as we have seen, could not comprehend how an educated young man and so on and so forth. The British Council man, even the men of Umuofia, did not know. And we must presume that, in spite of his certitude, Mr. Green did not know either. (NLAE 154) Emmanuel Ngara in *Art and Ideology in The African Novel*, says that Obi, a hybrid product in search of a stable point of view, faces the dilemma of idealism, and "the effects of the flashback is to concentrate attentions on the causes for Obi's conviction and the complexity of events, actions and decision which lead up to it."<sup>30</sup> (Ngara 1985:22) The understanding of 'individualism' which Achebe portrays in the character of Obi, is one which leaves no doubt as to the impossibility of synthesizing two opposite values—those of Umuofia and Europe. It is vital to see beyond the surface conflicts of social moves and view it as a predicament of the individual who contains diverse conflict within his own self and those of religion and its values. This inherent dualism forces on him irreconcilable demands. The 'divided' commitment (Ibidem) is further deepened as the narrative proceeds and leaves Obi with a sense of the lack of a unified view of life and a specifically relevant awareness.

This could be viewed as his inability to assert himself in the face of pressures, because this premature death of an idealist takes us to Colin Wilson's analysis of the outsider in his book, *The Outsider*. In his eagerness to repudiate the falsity around him, and possessed by a desire for action, the outsider tries to find an act, "a definite act that will give him power over his doubts and self-questioning."<sup>31</sup> (Wilson 1970:163) He looks for an effective way of establishing contact with the power within him. Obi returns from England positive about his goals to build a New Nigeria, free from corruption and constraining outlooks. In a society where 'duty' and 'individuality' involves contradictions, the chances of relating effectively, is gauged. For Obi, it leads to estrangement from society and strained personal relationship, where once cherished values cease to hold any possibilities any more. Like the magi in T.S. Eliot's epigraph, he can only say in despair:

We returned to our places, these kingdoms. But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation, with an alien people clutching their gods I should be glad of another death. <sup>32</sup>(*The Journey of the Magi*)

Achebe concludes his tetralogy with *A Man of the People*, a book which brings the historical record right down to contemporary times and deals with a single theme: the moral relations of the individual with his society. Indeed, this novel, published on January 24th 1966, only nine days after the first military coup in Nigeria, also ends with a military coup. This extraordinary coincidence has led many reviewers and critics, like D.A.N. Jones to hail the novel as 'prophetic work,'<sup>33</sup> (*New Statesmen*, 1966:132-133); one in which Achebe predicts with uncanny accuracy, the end of his country's First Republic. But Bernth Lindfors observes that Achebe intended "the coup as a parable, not a prophecy"<sup>34</sup> (Lindfors, 1979 130136)

Nevertheless, this completely fortitudinous correspondence between fiction and reality should not blind the reader to the fact that Achebe has not changed his underlying theme; he is once again dramatizing against the background of a particular era in Nigeria's history, the consequences of a collision of cultures. The only major difference between this novel and the earlier ones is that, the entire narrative bristles with sharp satire which at times explodes into hilarious burlesque. In an uncommonly happy ending, the villain is brought low, the hero gets the right girl, and the country is purged of politicians.

There is no doubt that Achebe presents the ideals of Okonkwo's society as admirable, when they are properly balanced and Okonkwo's opposition to them as unusual and misguided, though noble; or that he sees Odili as right, in opposing his apathetic, immoral society. In Achebe's two historical novels, the society chooses to reject grand dreams propounded by ambitious individuals, and opts instead for survival, but the way to survival lies through fragmentation of the community and confusion of moral values. In *A Man of the People*, the instinct to survive, which leads Umuaro to choose life and Christ over starvation and Ulu, produces the self-seeking spirit of Anala and Urua. Things have indeed fallen apart, and the community which was once the source of wisdom and law now apathetically endorses any corruption which will bring it food.

Achebe may on the surface seem to have turned to a new kind of social commitment in *A Man of the People*, but the novel is closely linked in its essential argument with the earlier ones. As Rosemary Colmer observes in "The Development of moral Values in *A Man of the People*: "There was the place where the rain began to beat the people; here, now, is where they must begin to dry themselves."<sup>35</sup> (Colmer, 1990:89) Anthills of the Savannah continues the argument, two decades later, in a world where the necessity to identify the right moral behavior, and to find the courage to see it through, still confronts the central characters. *A Man of the People* looks at the possibilities of a right government and finds a dearth of right-minded men to make up such a government.

As in the earlier novels, Achebe is dealing with a central character that is regarded by most of his society as a misfit. *Things Fall Apart* examines the traditional Ibo ideal by showing how Okonkwo, who aims to embody it, in fact fails to realize it. *Arrow of God* shows a man exalted by his community who abrogates to himself the power which is in the gift of the community. *No Longer at Ease* investigates the modern ideal by comparing the practical expectations of the Umuofians with the abstract moral principles of Obi, and by showing through Obi's failure, (both in relation to the bribery charge and in his behavior towards Clara) the sort of social pressures which have produced the Umuofian way, and against which Obi's idealism must be strong enough to stand, if it is to justify itself.

In *A Man of the People*, one sees a protagonist who sets himself against the tide of public judgment, but because he capitulates on some of the material issues, he survives. For the same reason, he is a less sympathetic character than Obi, whose swiftly narrated lapse of principle is not allowed to detract from the effect established by his idealistic stand on corruption in the rest of the novel, and whose treatment of Clara is shown to be, to some extent, forced on him by his concern for his mother. Okonkwo's and Ezeulu are nobles in their stand for a principle, even if it brings them into conflict with the valid (and pragmatic) terms of reference of their community. Obi's principles are equally admirable, but he fails them.

Odili Samalu, the protagonist in *A Man of the People*, comes across as an honest, intelligent, somewhat naïve but engaging, idealist-an individual who attempts to swim against the tide of materialism, corruption and immorality that is engulfing his society. He is both sensitive enough to understand the currents that swirls about him and sensible enough to comprehend the motives of those who drift with the tide, while he struggles against it. However, one wonders if a man possessed of such good sense, moral courage and unyielding integrity would behave as Odili does on occasions. For example, it is hard to believe that a man, too timid to check an assault on his mistress, would have the bravado necessary to carry out dangerous political campaigns of his own. Also, Odili's readiness to exploit sexually any compliant female, who crosses his path makes it difficult to believe in the sincerity of his sudden love for Edna, the girl he wins away from Nanga and plans to marry. These inconsistencies in Odili's conduct diminish his stature as a hero, for they prevent us from viewing him as a stable moral being in an unstable, immoral world. The issues however are not directly political, but moral.

Achebe focuses on the moral dilemma of the protagonist, the way in which his ideals clash with the community ethic, and the extent to which he is true to his own beliefs. From the first scene in the novel, Odili is faced with the question of what are the proper standards to apply: "I knew I ought to be angry with myself but I wasn't. I found myself wondering whether perhaps I had been applying to politics stringent standards that didn't belong to it". (AMOP 9) The society depicted in this phase is an immoral one. Almost any crime is tolerated, and the criminal admired for his success. Town and clan loyalties are carried into the political arena as well as into personal life. Odili is critical of his friend Andrew Kadibe, who feels he cannot oppose Chief Nanga's visit to the school because they come from the same town; but once this behavior is translated into political terms, it becomes more sinister. Odili's candidature is welcomed in his home town, Urua, when Max makes the point which Odili finds unworthy of him or of C.P.C., namely that the town will share in the good fortune of its elected son, and that it is time for: Our own son to go and bring our share ... that word entered my ear. The village of Anata has already eaten, now they must make way for us to reach the plate. No man in Urua will give his paper to a stranger when his own son needs it. (AMOP 141)

Achebe's indictment of this new spirit in society which measures good only by the immediate benefits in cash or kind, is nevertheless tempered with an understanding of its causes. The expansion from village to nation has made it impossible for the enlarged community to control the behavior of its member. Odili suggests at the end of the novel that only the individual can act against those who are beyond the control of the community. Eunice can avenge the death of Max Kalama, when the society would not. Odili's own stand against "P.O.P. and P.A.P., and the way he conceives the role of the C.P.C., suggest again the importance of the stand of an individual for an ideal, in the face of public apathy". (AMOP, 140) Odili's most sympathetic feature is his belief in the effectiveness of honesty as a weapon against cheating and corruption. He is deeply disturbed by Max's venture into a further realm of dishonesty than even Nanga has tried: accepting a bribe and then refusing to honour the agreement. Odili insists that while the agreement may not have been legal, it had moral force (AMOP, 142) and he fears that "Max's action had jeopardized our moral position, our ability to inspire that kind of terror which I had seen so clearly in Nanga's eyes despite all his grandiloquent bluff, and which in the end was our society's only hope of salvation". (AMOP, 144) Odili's refusal to accept Nanga's bribe has impressed Nanga in a way which Max's duplicity has negated.

One significant stand by an individual is Odili's father's refusal to dissociate himself from his own actions by signing Nanga's document. He attributes his action to a respect for traditional behavior: 'Our people have said that a man of worth never gets up to unsay to what he said yesterday. I received your friends in my house and I am not going to deny it', (AMOP 152) but the parallel with Odili's refusal to sign a similar document, (AMOP 132-133) is too close to be ignored. Traditional morality and individual idealism are united in this action.

In the first half of the novel Odili makes his loudest claims to idealism, but succumbs to the temptation of Nanga's patronage. The period under Nanga's influence is a valuable experience which gives him some real knowledge and understanding of the world. In the second half of the novel, Odili brags less about his ideas (recognizing instead that his motives may be ignoble or personal), but some of the moral choices and cash bribe. (AMOP 118-119) His earlier experience has enabled him to withstand this temptation, but he has not yet acquired the experience or the self-knowledge to resist temptations which may come in other forms. "He that knows not and knows not that he knows not is a fool", (AMOP 117) is a warning Odili should heed. He is blindly, willfully ignorant of many things he should make it his business to know, from the source of his party's funds, to his own father's character:

I thought to myself: You do not belong in this age, old man. Men of worth nowadays simply forget what they said yesterday. Then I realized that I had never really been close enough to my father to understand him. I had built up a private picture of him from unconnected scraps of evidence. Was this the same D.O.'s Interpreter who made a fortune out of the ignorance of poor, illiterate villagers and squandered it on drink and wives or had I got everything terribly, lopsidedly wrong? Anyway, this was no time to begin a new assessment; it was better left to the tax people. (AMOP 135)

With such flippancies, Odili dismisses the need to know. And yet the whole novel affirms the importance of knowledge as the basis of right moral judgment.

One reason why Achebe's criticism of Nigerian society is sharper in this novel than in any of the others, is that he allows his hero to tell the story in retrospect. As narrator, Odili not only reports events but criticizes, corrects judgments and editorializes on them, voicing strong protest against what is evil in his world. His observations are shrewd, penetrating and just. At times he is devastatingly honest about past mistakes:

Sitting at Chief Nanga's feet I received enlightenment; many things began to crystallize out of the mist-some of the emergent forms were not nearly as ugly as I had suspected but many seemed much worse. However I was not making these judgments at the time, or not strongly anyhow. I was simply too fascinated. (AMOP 45)

Most importantly, Odili knows little about practical politics and nothing at all about people, individually or collectively. Worse, he is not aware that his knowledge is dangerously limited, and he passes up many chances to improve his understanding. David Carroll in his book *Chinua Achebe* points out that because of his family background Odili has grown up lonely, alienated and selfish.<sup>36</sup> (Carroll 1980:124) He has learned a few lessons about people, and this has made him both genuinely more idealistic and more cynical. He is still demonstrably selfish, still alienated from the people, but he has learnt to recognize his past actions and attitudes as ridiculous.

Odili faces his first moral trial when Nanga's arrives at the Anata School. This is the beginning of Odili's real education in life. In a delightful comic reversal, one minute Odili is scowling icily at the display of enthusiasm by Nanga's constituents, and the next he melts in the sunny rays of Nanga's recognition, as Nanga greets him as a former pupil revives an old nickname, 'Odili the great'. In that moment he learns what it is to be singled out by a man of the people for praise and attention.

I became a hero in the eyes of the crowd. I was dazed. Everything around me became suddenly unreal; the voices receded to a vague border zone. I knew I ought to be angry with myself but I wasn't. I found myself wondering whether perhaps I had been applying to politics stringent standards that didn't belong to it. (AMOP 10)

Odili has faced his first trial, and had failed it. He is ashamed of a great deal of his past behavior, not always from the best of motives. Odili's defensiveness echoes throughout the first part of the novel. Once he ceases to defend his own actions and begins to criticize those of other people, like Max's speech for the C.P.C., one is dealing with an Odili whose values have matured to the level of the narrator's.

On his visit to the capital Bori, Odili's moral equivocations cannot conceal the fact that he willingly lays himself open to temptation. Yet while he is dazzled by Nanga's life, he is not completely blind to the moral contradictions he sees. Even at the time he is aware of the irony in Chief Koko's belief that he has been poisoned when he tastes the home-grown product his government promotes, and he greets Nanga's fear at the suspected poisoning with an appropriate proverb: "When one slave sees another cast into a shallow grave he should know that when the time comes he will go the same way." (AMOP 40) Yet Odili's revolt against Nanga does not spring from political motives. He is inclined to enjoy the luxury of being a minister. He confesses "if I were at that moment made a minister I would be most anxious to remain one forever." (AMOP 41)

Odili's split with Chief Nanga has nothing to do with politics or corruption; it is Nanga's appropriation of Odili's girlfriend, Elsie. Odili is horrified when Elsie deserts him and detests Nanga for invading into his territory. Odili ignores the fact that he himself referred to Elsie as 'just-a-good-time-girl', and forgetting his own annexation of Jean Odili determines on a much more serious incursion into Nanga's bride-to-be, Edna. As he walks the street in a fury of resentment, Odili sees the slums and the night-soil men emptying the bucket latrines he has despised, but the sight means nothing to him. Achebe is emphasizing Odili's blindness, at this stage in the novel, to the social issues which ought to concern an idealistic young politician. Uppermost in his mind is his sexual humiliation. Elsie has changed

in his mind from the friendly, generous girl he goes to see at the hospital, (AMOP, 63-66) and to whom he laughingly suggests that Nanga might want to swap girls, into “a common harlot” (AMOP 80), and then, when his image in the eyes of others is concerned, she is “a casual acquaintance whom both Chief Nanga and I knew”. (AMOP 87) Odili’s judgment is formed according to the enthusiasm others show for him. His remark that the talk at Jean’s party was very good is immediately followed by the reason for this judgment: ‘My closeness to the Minister gave everything I said, heightened significance. And-I don’t know whether this happens to other people, but the knowledge that I am listened to attentively, works in a sort of virtuous circle to improve the quality of what I say. (AMOP 55) Nanga’s appropriation of Elsie is taken as a personal insult, and Odili’s overreaction is proportionate to his former enjoyment of Nanga’s regard for him. Odili realizes that he has become not the Minister’s pal, but the Minister’s pimp, and it is the attitude to himself which he bitterly resents.

In his political activities, Odili begins to show signs of a new maturity. He still enjoys recognition, and watches the placards of the opposition for his name, but he also shows that he understands the nature of his own rather limited power. His only hope is in his honesty. Max’s attempt to appeal to the greed of Odili’s electorate is recognized as a betrayal of the ideals which Odili wants to uphold, while his father’s refusal to deny his past actions is seen as morally correct behavior. Odili is learning to understand the people’s cynicism, but he is learning also the value of his own idealism. The Odili of the present sees his past actions of this period as naïve but right. He still runs from Nanga (AMOP 133), but he knows that Nanga is more afraid of his honesty than of Max’s political opposition. He is able to dismiss his chagrin at the fact that Max’s bribe is four times the size of the one he is offered, and to see that the real issue is one of honesty. By refusing two hundred and fifty pounds he has made himself greater than Max, who accepted a thousand.

In a novel which is deeply concerned with the question of who shall be the guardian of the public conscience, Odili’s refusal to accept the bribe shines out as the one gesture which raises him above the others in the novel, and it is this moral stance which Nanga fears. Odili’s incorruptibility makes him a potential watcher set upon the watchman. Honesty in the electorate may keep the elected politicians honest.

Odili’s stand against Edna’s father has marked a new kind of maturity in his approach to Edna. His final confrontation with Nanga is distinguished by a similar access of courage. Publicly accused by Nanga of dishonesty, Odili confronts Nanga and calls him a liar. In a practical sense, the incident saves Odili by putting him out of action until after the election, when it is again safe to be the man who opposed Chief Nanga. Morally, it puts him in open opposition to the values Nanga represents.

Yet so great is Odili’s ignorance and moral blindness that he cannot see the extent to which his own behavior has come to resemble Nanga’s. Odili’s moral laxity, his unwillingness to apply stringent standards to his own behavior which he still applies elsewhere, leads to his own implication in a world of violence. Odili’s standards are certainly less than stringent when it comes to enquiring about the source of his own campaigning funds. Those same funds from dubious sources have an even more damning end. Odili has learned how to survive from the cynicism of the people, and quietly helps himself from the party funds entrusted to him. The main evidence on the moral state of Odili at the end of the novel must come from the voice of the narrator throughout the novel. He approves of his past idealism, but laughs at his own naivety. He invites us to admire his prowess, both as speaker and as lover, and his recognition of his own craving for admiration does not lead him to any radical reappraisal of his own self-concept. He is honest enough to let the truth appear to the reader, but not honest enough with himself to change his concept of himself. The most important change in him is his recognition of the importance of honesty and integrity in the individual, coupled with his new understanding of what it means to be ‘a man of the people’; but these are not enough to prevent him, by the end of the novel, applauding murder as an unselfish act and embezzling party funds. Odili’s trials and his many errors have not brought him to any firm moral ground. He has acquired a vast cynicism, a limited experience, and very little appreciation of the extent of his own ignorance. One may well say, in Odili’s own words, that “a man who avoids danger for years and then gets killed in the end has wasted his care.”(AMOP 109)

Odili begins the novel idealistically opposed to Nanga, and contemptuous of the villagers; “they were not only ignorant but cynical.” (AMOP 2) He ends the novel guilty of most of the same moral errors and even the same crimes as Nanga; he is guilty too of the same moral errors as he villager’s ignorance and cynicism.

The message Achebe wants to get across is that there are new injustices in Africa which Africans cannot blame wholly on Europe. In an essay “The Black Writer’s Burden” published in the same year as the novel, Achebe states that:

One of the writer’s main functions has always been to expose and attack injustice. Should we keep at the old theme of racial injustice (sore as it still is) when new injustices have sprouted all around us? I think not.37 (Achebe 1956:138)



In style as well as theme, Achebe introduces several new innovations in *A Man of the People* for e.g. first person narration and an extensive use of pidgin in dialogue, but he does most of his work with tools he has used effectively before. His opening paragraphs not only establishes an appropriate mood and setting but penetrates to the very heart of the subject he is to explore. By fastening on the significant and avoiding the trivial and irrelevant, he builds a tight, cohesive structure which never lacks point or direction. And in the last page he rounds off his story with a wry ironic twist, his characteristic signature. These feats are quite impressive, but more impressive still is Achebe's sheer eloquence. Take, for example, the last sentence in the novel: "I say, you died a good death if your life had inspired someone to come forward and shoot your murderer in the chest without asking to be paid." (AMOP 167) Here, in a fine rhetorical flourish, Odili sums up his experience and utters a fitting epitaph to an ugly era in his nation's history. Achebe engineers this peroration with characteristic grace, simplicity, urbanity and syntactical sophistication.

But in spite of these impressive achievements, *A Man of the People* cannot be considered Achebe's strongest novel. Indeed it may well be his weakest. What mars it most is not Odili's instability of character, but his involvement in a rather torrid succession of sensational events. One is willing to concede that politics is a very dirty business and that politicians in newly, independent, African nations, seldom lead serene lives. It is difficult to accept the hasty pace at which Odili and Nanga confront their numerous crises and catastrophes. Characters caught in such a whirlwind of events are inevitably twisted into melodramatic poses. Although *A Man of the People* is a comedy and ends happily, it remains like Achebe's other novels, a disturbingly pessimistic work. While censuring Africa for allowing itself to be corrupted by forces from within and without, Achebe indicts Europe for contributing to the moral confusion and political chaos that beset independent African states. His characters are representative men and women of their time, yet emblematic of the ills and insanities that afflict modern African society. Odili himself is not without his 'civilized' affections. Nothing seems completely right in so debauched a world.

Thus in phase II the progression of the concept of the individual versus society moves on to the next stage of individualism, as depicted in *The Fountainhead* and Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* and *A Man of the People*, the three novels chosen for analysis in this chapter. Here both Rand and Achebe examine the concept of individualism against totally different backgrounds. Unlike in Phase I, where Rand argues the cause of the individual against the State, here in phase II, Rand argues the cause of the individual as producer against a parasitical society. Individualism in this case is more at the psychological and philosophical level as Rand discusses two types of men, symbolizing 'The Good' and 'The Evil' in Society. Here the herd not only lives on the production of the individual creators, but also attempts to swallow up the individual. Achebe's individuals, on the contrary, struggle against a chaotic, corrupt and complex, urban society quite different from the disciplined collected and peace loving Ibo society of Phase I. The encounter with European values and Christianity are no longer a conflicting issue, as in Phase I, rather it has become an accepted part of the social framework of these novels.

This phase is a sequel to the first phase for both Rand and Achebe. Rand's study of individualism moves on from the Political (Man against The State) level to the spiritual level, as Rand herself states in the "Introduction" to *The Fountainhead* ("Individualism versus Collectivism not In Politics but in man's soul" vii). It is a sequel in Achebe's case as this phase also develops the theme of the dislocation of the African psyche. It is also the story of the growth and development of individual protagonists. In phase I, Kira-Argounova is just the foetus of an individual which grows into the ideal 'man-child' in the person of Howard Roark of *The Fountainhead*; Achebe's Obi of *No Longer at Ease* and Odili of *A Man of The People* are caught in the shackles of a very corrupt society, not to be imagined in Phase I, and which demands from them a firm moral order out of the world in which they live. In phase I, Okonkwo and Ezeulu are cast as courageous and heroic men of integrity, but Obi Okonkwo and Odili are seen as less heroic individuals swallowed in by the corrupt society. Consequently a quest for creative knowledge and power is seen as potential forces that operate on the protagonists.

The theme of the individual versus the society is more fully developed in this Phase, but while the linear progression of the individual is seen in Rand's fiction; in Achebe's world, there is a gradual liquidation in strength and character as seen in the protagonists of Achebe. The individuals in Phase I, to a certain extent, are failures in the sense that they do not evolve triumphant. For example, Kira Argounova of *We the Living* is shot while crossing the Latvian border, Leo Kovalensky chooses the life of a Gigolo and Andrei Taganov, the most remarkable character of *We the Living* commits suicide. In Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Okonkwo hangs himself, Nwoye dissatisfied with the rituals and customs of the Ibo society, converts to Christianity and Ezeulu turns mad. Though the individuals struggle in this phase, they do not evolve triumphant; society to a large extent becomes the winner. But in this phase, Howard Roark, the protagonist of *The Fountainhead* triumphs for the first time Rand's fiction. Though in *Anthem*, the beginnings of a triumph is seen in the protagonists *Equality 7-2521* and *Liberty 5-3000*, who escape from the State into the Unchartered Forests to discover and invent, it's only Howard Roark, the architect who actually bears the badge of triumph. Expelled from the Architectural Institute, he sets his own standard and never complies with the Institution's traditional norms. He is considered an innovator because his buildings are of a nature

and quality that has never existed before. Achebe's Obi and Odili of *No Longer at Ease* and *A Man of the People* respectively are not creators and innovators like Howard Roark, but they attempt to uphold a cause and live by it. Obi and Odili are influenced by educational factors and economic prosperity which gives them, not the creative power and energy of Roark, but a knowledge and strength to relate their knowledge to the socio-economic climate dealt with in *No Longer at Ease* and *A Man of the People* respectively. In this manner, Roark is covered from the other traditional architects of his time and Obi and Odili from their primitive tribal affiliations. Roark, Obi and Odili mark this initial stage of individualism. Conflict and tension become very much part of Obi and Odili, but never Roark. While Roark is depicted as one who always believes in his rights as an individual creator, Obi and Odili experience a new awareness because of their sudden exposure to Western education and values. Gradually their rights as individuals are divorced from any collective responsibility. In this phase the quest for creative knowledge and power becomes a pronounced motif.

These protagonists are in direct contrast with the arch-villains Rand's Howard Roark (*The Good*) is cast opposite Ellsworth Toohey and Peter Keating (*The Evil*). While Roark knows exactly what he wants and is not the least bit interested in what other people think of him, Keating not only acknowledges to Roark that he is a parasite but guides his life by what other people think is important. In architectural terms while Roark's work is original, Keating plagiarizes and needs Toohey to tell him that he is a great architect. Toohey is a maggot who feeds on sores. A spiritual collectivist, his only mission in life to kill the individual. The protagonist Obi Okonkwo of *No Longer at Ease* is estranged from his tribal ethos and is torn between two worlds, Africa and Europe. Never did he realize that with Western Education comes power and with power corruption, which results in gradual detachment and emancipation from his tribe. Odili, the protagonist of *A Man of the People* is cast opposite the corrupt politician Nanga. He stands as the symbol of political chaos, confusion and culture-conflict in Nigeria. He believes that just, because he led the political struggle for independence, he uses people for his own purposes, and buys off the opposition. His death symbolizes that there is still hope for Nigeria and the possibility of purgation. Ellsworth Toohey, Peter Keating and Chief Nanga are bloated parasites who draw their strength from the weaknesses of their society and thrive on chaos, confusion, disorder and instability. All of these arch-villains in this phase symbolize a parasitical society.

## II. DAVID CARROLL IN HIS BOOK CHINUA ACHEBE REFERS TO TWO VERSIONS OF DUTY:

- i) Atomistic View which includes protagonists who live solitary lives but who are self-sufficient and fulfilled like the protagonists of Ayn Rand.
- ii) The Organic view refers to those individuals who function as members of a community like the protagonists in Achebe's fiction.

The concept of the love theme is also further developed here in this phase. In Rand's fiction love plays a dominant role and finds a place in all her fictional works, but in Achebe's it is only in *No Longer at Ease* and *A Man of the People* that the theme of love is introduced.

The Love theme in Rand's earlier novels is not very successful because the protagonists in *We The Living*, Kira Argounova and Leo Kovalensky loved and lost. In *Anthem* the beginnings of a successful love is seen when Liberty 7-2521 elopes with Equality 5-3000 into the Uncharted Forests. But in *The Fountainhead*, Howard Roark's relationship with Dominique Francon ultimately triumphs. Initially Dominique Francon believes that a man like Roark is too good for the world and hence seeks every opportunity to destroy him by marrying his worst enemies, Peter Keating and Gail Wynand. But in the end of the novel, Dominique is convinced that however powerful and detestable a world, it cannot destroy a man with Roark's integrity and finally becomes his wife. There is not much of a love theme in Achebe's novel except for the Obi-Clara relationship which ends tragically. Obi's individually is always in conflict with his individual desire and his society's demand. He loves Clara but his parental opposition to her because she is an 'Osu' causes him to reject her. Odili of *A Man of the People* is too timid to check an assault on his mistress. Odili is ready to exploit any compliant girl. His sudden love for Edna, the girl he wins from Nanga and Plans to marry makes him out to be quite an inconsistent being. But unlike Obi, Odili's love triumphs in the end.

While Roark is attached only to things and persons who matter to him and for whom he will make exceptions, Obi experiences a gulf between what he learns and his practical life in this world. He is an aesthete but is attached to things of no importance. Though Roark, Obi and Odili are thrown in a very materialistic, commercialized, fragmentary world. Roark of *The Fountainhead* is neither influenced nor corrupted by the world around him. But Obi of *No Longer at Ease* and Odili of *A Man of the People* suffer the consequences of the values of Umuofia and Europe being synthesized in them. Roark exemplifies Hubert Bonner's Hellenic view of man where the individual tries to live the perfect idealistic life, while Achebe's exemplifies Hubert Bonner's Hebraic view of man, where the individual experiences a life of discipline and responsibility-a life shared, like Obi and Odili.<sup>37</sup> (Hubert Bonner,

1961 ) Roark stands apart as a distinct breed by itself as he lives so idealistically a life that he becomes to Dominique “worthy of worship.” (TFH 95) While Roark tries to redeem his society by his art and integrity Obi and Odili try to eradicate all forms of corruption from their society. But the society is too strong for them and does not release its hold on these individuals. Gradually one observes in this phase that Obi, unlike Odili, takes to bribes himself and becomes one with his society, corrupt. Odili is the only protagonist who manages to swim against the tide of materialism and has moral integrity. But unlike Roark Obi and Odili are inconsistent characters-unstable moral beings in an unstable immoral society.

### III. CONCLUSION

There is most positively an emergence of the autonomous individual to a large degree in this phase. Compared to the protagonists discussed in the two phases so far, Rand’s Howard Roark and Achebe’s Odili manages to show tremendous growth as characters. Roark is pictured as an ideal-man, worthy of worship and Odili manages to emerge from his struggle body and soul intact, uncorrupt by Westernization, and never cringes before injustice, bends under pressure, nor resorts to bribes.

Rand and Achebe’s social satire in this phase is sharper than in the previous one. In phase I, Rand satirizes the policy of man living for the State, instead of the State living and functioning for the benefit of man. This is what Rand scorns in her two novels *We the Living* and *Anthem*. The individuals in Phase II emerges more autonomous than the first phase but there is still room for the parasites like Toohey’s and Keating’s who are all still secure in their comfortable positions in the world of *The Fountainhead*. Achebe satirizes the impact of the white man on Ibo Society and things fall apart at the socio-cultural and religious levels. In Phase II Achebe satirizes the political corruption and power that comes as a consequence of Western Education and Economic advancement this Achebe observes has replaced religious beliefs and traditions of the first place. Values here are vague and changing, aims and objectives are complex and not clearly defined.

There are also new stylistic innovations in this phase in both the writers. Rand is an innovator in the literary and philosophic field. On intellectual issues she said what no one else did, she voiced it so simply, logically, factually, persuasively that they seemed to be self-evident. It’s no surprise that Loraine Pruett in “Battle Against Evil” observes: “Ayn Rand is a writer of great power. She has a subtle and ingenious mind and the capacity of writing brilliantly, beautifully and bitterly.”<sup>38</sup> (Pruett 1943:9) Such a stylistic skill was found lacking in Phase I. But there are a few demerits in her literary writings. There is a contradiction at times in the events of her story. The events are conventional but their meaning and motivation are utterly unconventional. Dominique’s passionate love for Roark is, on the surface, a very conventional event, but her decision to destroy him and marry the man she despises is rather unconventional, because her decision to marry these other men is not self-sacrifice but self-preservation and the reaffirmation of her values. This is what transforms an otherwise ordinary tale.

Achebe’s criticism of Nigerian Society is sharper in this novel than in any of the others. Achebe not only laughs at corrupt politicians but also at these political leaders who imagine that since they were involved with the political struggle they had a right to eat the national cake. There is an extensive use of Pidgin in this novel, an apt mood and setting is captured, a well-knit structure which makes Achebe’s work an impressive artistic work.

In this phase, both Rand and Achebe reach the end of the road they have been traveling so far; the individual’s struggle to emerge autonomous; and in the next phase written after a long span of fifteen to twenty years, Rand and Achebe offer solutions and suggestions for the problems facing their respective countries. The next phase is a movement towards the creation of the ‘demi-gods’ in a Utopian Society of *Atlas Shrugged*. In this phase the parasites are completely eliminated and there is place only for the creative brains of society. Achebe also presents his suggestions and solution for an ideal Society through his concept of an ideal leadership in *Anthills of Savannah*.

### IV. WORKS CITED

#### 4.1 American Literature –Ayn Rand

1. *We the Living*. New York: New American Library, 1936.
2. *The Night of January 16th*. New York: New American Library, 1936.
3. *Anthem*. New York: New American Library, 1946.
4. *The Fountainhead*. New York: New American Library, 1943.
5. *Atlas Shrugged*. New York: New American Library, 1957.
6. *The Virtue of Selfishness: A New Concept of Egoism*. New York: New American Library, 1964.
7. *Capitalism, the Unknown Ideal*. New York: New American Library, 1967.
8. *For the New Intellectual*. New York: New American Library, 1961.
9. *Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology*. New York: New American Library, 1979.
10. *Philosophy: Who needs it?* New York: New American Library, 1984.

#### 4.2 African Literature –Chinua Achebe

1. Things Fall Apart. New Delhi: Heinemann, 1975.
2. No Longer at Ease. London: Heinemann, 1960.
3. Arrow of God. London: Heinemann, 1977.
4. A Man of the People. London: Heinemann, 1966.
5. Anthills of the Savannah. London: Heinemann, 1987.
6. Girls at War and Other Stories. London: Heinemann, 1972.
7. Morning Yet on Creation Day. London: Heinemann, 1970.
8. The Trouble with Nigeria. London: Heinemann, 1987.

(\* All textual quotes are taken from these editions)

#### V. REFERENCES

- [1] Branden, Barbara. The Passion of Ayn Rand. New York: Doubleday, 1986:12
- [2] Branden, 1986:357.
- [3] Pruette, Loraine, "Battle Against Evil." New York Times Book Review. 16thMay, (1943):7-9.
- [4] Peikoff, Leonard.Ed.The Early Ayn Rand: A Selection from her Unpublished Fiction. New York: New American Library, 1984:136
- [5] O'Neil, William F. With Charity Towards None. New York: Philosophical Library, 1971:43
- [6] Peikoff, Leonard. Ed. The Early Ayn Rand: A Selection from her Unpublished Fiction. New York: New American Library, 1984:140
- [7] Branden, Barbara. The Passion of Ayn Rand. New York: Doubleday, 1986:211.
- [8] Peikoff, Leonard. Ed. The Early Ayn Rand: A Selection from her Unpublished Fiction. New York: New American Library, 1984:142.
- [9] Hegel, B.W.F. Phenomenology of the Mind. Trans. J.B. Baillie. New York: Harper & Rowe, 1967.
- [10] Rand, Ayn. Capitalism, the Unknown Ideal. New York: New American Library, 1967:54.
- [11] Branden, Barbara. The Passion of Ayn Rand. New York: Doubleday, 1986:21.
- [12] Ibidem: 197
- [13] Marx, Karl .Early Writings: A Collection. Trans. Rodney Living Stone & Gregory Benton. Middlesex: Penguin & New Left Review, 1975: 323-324.
- [14] Fromm, Erich. The Sane Society. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956:24.
- [15] Branden, Barbara. The Passion of Ayn Rand. New York: Doubleday, 1986: 214
- [16] Gladstein, Mimi. The Ayn Rand Companion: An Analysis of her Fiction. New York: New American Library, 1982:18
- [17] Branden, Barbara. The Passion of Ayn Rand. New York: Doubleday, 1986: 261.
- [18] Horney, Karen. Neurosis and Human Growth. London: Routledge and New York: Kegan Paul, 1951: 47.
- [19] Irele, Afiolo. "The Tragic Conflict in the Novels of Chinua Achebe" Introduction to African Literature: An Anthology of Critical Writings from Black Orpheus. Ed. Ulli Bier. London: Longmans, 1967:12.
- [20] Ibidem: 16.
- [21] Killiam, G.D. Ed. The Novels of Chinua Achebe London: HEB, 1969:64.
- [22] Ibidem: 66.
- [23] Hastings, Adrian. African Christianity: An Essay in Interpretation. London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1976:17.
- [24] Ibidem: 18.
- [25] Taylor, John V. The Primal Vision: Christian Presence amid African Religion. London: SCM Press Ltd., 1963:72.
- [26] Larson, Charles. The Emergence of Nigerian of African Fiction. London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1978: 12-15.
- [27] Ibidem: 18.
- [28] 28.. Barbar, H."Image of the African in Transition." African Quarterly vii.1 (April-June 1967): 29-40.
- [29] Carroll, David. Chinua Achebe, New York: Twayne, 1980:49.
- [30] Ngara, Emmanuel. Art and Ideology in African Novel. London: Heinemann, 1985:22
- [31] Wilson, Colin. The Outsider. London: Pen Books Ltd., 1970.
- [32] Eliot, T.S. Selected Prose. Ed. J. Hayword, "Journey of the Magi" 1955.The Faber Book of Modern Verse. London: Faber and Faber, 1965.
- [33] Jones, D.A.N. "The Writings of Wole Soyinka." New Statesman. 28 January 1966: 132-133.
- [34] Lindfors, Bernth.Ed.Critical Perspectives on Nigerian Literature, London: HEB, 1979:130-133
- [35] Colmer, Rosemary. "The Development of Moral Values in A Man of the People". Kunapipi. Vol. XII. 2 (1990): 89
- [36] Carroll, David. Chinua Achebe, New York: Twayne, 1980:124
- [37] Hubert, Bonner, Psychology of Personality Series, (9781258215262), Whitefish, MT,1961, United States, Paperback, 15 Oct, 2011,89 Literary Licensing LLC
- [38] Pruette, Lorine, "Battle against Evil." New York Times Book Review. 16thMay, 1943: 9.