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The pressures of the city : materialism and immorality in cyprian Ekwensi's "Jagua Nana "

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FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

THE PRESSURES OF THE CITY: MATERIALISM AND IMMORALITY IN CYPRIAN EKWENSI'S *JAGUA NANA*

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Bujumbura, June 2012

DEDICATION

To my late parents;

To my late grand parents;

I dedicate this work.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work was completed thanks to the intervention of many people to whom I owe much gratitude.

My gratitude goes mainly to my supervisor, Mr. Nganyu Dominic Nformi, lecturer at University of Burundi for his unfailing and wise guidance from the very initial stage of this work to its completion despite his hectic schedule.

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Edith-Junior Rirarenga

ABSTRACT

This work examined the negative influences of the city and how the immigrants are trapped into coping with city lifestyle. This was captured through the artistic lens of Cyprian Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana.* We tried to show how the sophisticated and materialistic life in the city impacts on human morals. The work showed the social life in Nigeria in general and in the city of Lagos in particular. It exposed how people who come to the city with the ambitions of improving their way of life become disappointed. They become morally and physically hopeless because of the charged socio economic set up of the city. When those immigrants find it difficult to survive in the city, they choose to adopt the immoral behaviour common to many to cope up with city life. This study was therefore written on the hypothesis that hardship in the city can lure people into immorality. The Psychoanalytic and New Historicism approaches guided our investigations. With these theories, we were able to locate the novel within the postcolonial experiences in most African cities.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Before colonisation, Africans had their own ways of organising themselves politically, economically and socially. In general, they had their social values and dignity. But during colonisation, things changed dramatically. The so-called civilisers came and altered the general order of traditional societies and set up a "modern system" which according to them was the best. One of the things that changed with the arrival of the White man is the creation of cities. This phenomenon has had an impact on the African traditional setting and lifestyle. The rapid growth of the cities throughout the different countries is probably one of the most important social phenomena which are observed during the twentieth century. In Africa, it has created many social problems and revolutioned the behaviour of the African people in general and city dwellers in particular.

At the dawn of independence, Africans massively migrated to the new created cities. Many of them were doing so with the hope of getting better jobs in the cities and possibly to improve on their living conditions. In fact, many Africans considered the cities as the ideal place to live and therefore deserted the rural areas. Generally, most of these immigrants are young men and women who want to make their living by themselves. However, life in the city is discovered to be different from that of the countryside. The city lifestyle is much more demanding and requires the dwellers to adapt to it. At this period, as many inhabitants are new in the cities, they face different challenges that lead them to adapt themselves to this new life in different ways.

The establishment of new cities attracts many people. Many villagers began to immigrate to these urban centres which were thought of as places where people could forge ahead in that modern environment of civilised people. It is in this perspective that Cyprian Ekwensi conceived his novel *Jagua Nana* and even

others such as *People of the City, Beautiful Feather,* etc. to expose this phenomenon.

Cyprian Ekwensi, in his novel *Jagua Nana,* deals with the struggle to survive in the cities. Jagua Nana is a countryside woman from the traditional Ogabu village. Even though she is experiencing a family malaise due to barrenness; her rural-urban exodus is largely caused by her idealisation of Lagos city life. She hears Lagos city as an area of freedom and self-realisation. Like most other migrants, she moves to that city hoping to fulfil her dreams.

However, the migrants who go to these cities from their traditional villages acquire Western values and new ways of life. This Western environment they idealise as being an idyllic world becomes very hostile for them. They become disoriented and disappointed. So, they adopt its sinful nature. They make recourse to any means that come their way in order to survive in that materialistic world. To survive, they search for self-fulfilment through immoral ways such as: prostitution, crime, robbery and politics. The novel, *Jagua Nana,* shows how people who migrate to the city become morally deprived when they arrive in the town with the expectation of realising new dreams. Instead of becoming rich as they expect, they become more miserable than they were in countryside. They become disillusioned since they cannot get jobs given their mediocre level of education. From the lack of job opportunities and the subsequent poverty, they endure hardships and thereafter indulge into immoral acts. They use all means in order to find money: prostitution, robbery, crime, drug trafficking, etc. In addition, because of the development of new city, many people develop an immoral behaviour unwillingly.

In this novel, after all her attempts at self-fulfilment fail, she then becomes disillusioned. She thereafter becomes aware of her alienation and rejects altogether

Lagos city and its ways. She decides to return to Ogabu village, her home village, with a new vision of life.

It is against this background that one may raise some questions: What pushes people especially the young to leave their villages for the city? Why do they adopt the negative values? Are they satisfied with city life? What are some of the negative impacts the city may have on such immigrants? These among others are the questions that the researcher will try to answer in this study.

Before we proceed with the analysis, it is worthwhile defining some key concepts that we will often refer to in this work. They include "pressure, materialism and immorality". The *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* views "pressure" as an action or act of pressing, the fact or condition of being pressed, a state of trouble or embarrassment, straight, the action of anything that influences the mind or will constrain influence. *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* on its part defines the word "pressure" as a force or weight of something pressing continuously on or against something that touches.

As far as the *English World Dictionary* is concerned, pressure is defined as "the state of pressing or being pressed, the exertion of force by one body on the surface of another, a moral force that compels: to bring pressure to bear for instance, an urgent claim or demand or series of urgent claims or demands: to work under pressure for example, a burdensome condition that is hard to bear: the pressure of grief". In this study, we intend to employ the word from the perspective of the social forces of the city which induce its dwellers into different acts of evil.

For the word "materialism", The *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* defines it as the doctrine that nothing exists except nature and its movement and modification. It is a devotion to material needs or desires; a way of life, opinion or tendency based entirely upon material interests. The *Oxford Advanced Learner's*

Dictionary views "materialism" as an obsession with material possession, bodily comfort, etc. while neglecting spiritual values.

The word "Immorality" is defined in *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* as an immoral quality, character or conduct. It is an opposition of morality. *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines it as an immoral behaviour: a life of immorality. Immoral: not following accepted standard of morality not moral, not following accepted standards of sexual behaviour. We are going to conceive of this word from the perspective of those wanton acts in which people indulge against the expected social norms and behavioural patterns.

It is worthy of note to have a glimpse of the author's biography. Cyprian Odiatu Duaka Ekwensi was born at Minna in Northern Nigeria on September 26, 1921. He later lived in Onitsha in the Eastern area. He was educated at Achimota College, in lbadan, the Gold Coast, and at the Chelsea School of Pharmacy of London University. He lectured in pharmacy at Lagos and was employed as a pharmacist by the Nigerian Medical Corporation. Ekwensi married Eunice Anyiwo, and they had five children.

After favorable reception of his early writing, he joined the Nigerian Ministry for Information and had risen to be the director of that agency by the time of the first military coup in 1966. After the continuing disturbances in the Western and Northern regions in the summer of 1966, Ekwensi gave up his position and relocated his family at Enugu. He became chair of the Bureau for External Publicity in Biafra and an adviser to the head of state, Col. Odumegwu Ojukwu.

Ekwensi began his writing career as a pamphleteer, and this perhaps explains the episodic nature of his novels. This tendency is well illustrated by *People of the City* (1954), in which Ekwensi gave a vibrant portrait of life in a West African city. It was the first major novel to be published by a Nigerian. Two

novellas for children appeared in 1960; both *The Drummer Boy* and *The Passport of Mallam Ilia* were exercises in blending traditional themes with undisguised romanticism.

Ekwensi's most widely read novel, *Jagua Nana,* appeared in 1961. It was a return to the locale of *People of the City* but boasted a much more cohesive plot centered on the character of Jagua, a courtesan who had a love for the expensive. Even her name was a corruption of the expensive English auto. Her life personalized the conflict between the old traditional and modern urban Africa. Ekwensi published a sequel in 1987 titled *Jagua Nana's Daughter.*

Burning Grass (1961) is basically a collection of vignettes concerning a Fulani family. Its major contribution is the insight it presents into the life of this pastoral people. Ekwensi based the novel and the characters on a real family with whom he had previously lived. Between 1961 and 1966 Ekwensi published at least one major work every year. The most important of these were the novels, *Beautiful Feathers* (1963) and *Iska* (1966), and two collections of short stories, *Rainmaker* (1965) and *Lokotown* (1966). Ekwensi continued to publish beyond the 1960s, and among his later works are the novel *Divided We Stand* (1980), the novella *Motherless Baby* (1980), and *The Restless City and Christmas Gold* (1975), *Behind the Convent Wall* (1987), and *Gone to Mecca* (1991).

Ekwensi also published a number works for children. Under the name C. O. D. Ekwensi, he released *Ikolo the Wrestler and Other Ibo Tales* (1947) and *The Leopard's Claw* (1950). In the 1960s, he wrote *An African Night's Entertainment* (1962), *The Great Elephant-Bird* (1965), and *Trouble in Form Six* (1966). Ekwensi's later works for children include *Coal Camp Boy* (1971), *Samankwe in the Strange Forest* (1973), *Samankwe and the Highway Robbers* (1975), *Masquerade Time!* (1992), and *King Forever!* (1992). In recognition of his skills

as a writer, Ekwensi was awarded the Dag Hammarskjold International Prize for Literary Merit in 1969.

This work sets out to examine the negative influences of the city and how those who immigrate there are trapped into coping with city lifestyle. This is going to be captured through the artistic lens of Cyprian Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana.* We will equally try to show how the sophisticated and materialistic life in the city impact on moral values. The work then shows the social life in Nigeria in general and in the city of Lagos in particular. It tries to expose how people who come to the city with the ambitions of improving their way of life become disappointed.

This study is therefore written based on the hypothesis that hardship in the city can lure people into acts of immorality. It will further seek to prove that these immoral acts are committed within the circumstances of surviving measures.

This study is set within psychoanalitic and New Historicism frameworks. The psychoanalytic approach is imperative in this study. We will be more interested in applying Freudian ideas so as to come up with a good character analysis. Exponents of the psychoanalytic approach include Sigmund Freud, Carl Gustave Jung and Jacques Lacan.

The foundation of Freud's contribution to modern psychology on the unconscious aspect of the human psyche designates three premises: most of the individual's mental processes are unconscious; all human behaviour is motivated ultimately by what we call sexuality and many of our desires and memories are repressed because of the powerful social taboos attached to certain impulse. From these three premises, he divided the human Psyche into three physic zones: the "id", the "ego" and the "superego". With the "id", which is the source of our psychic energy and psycho-sexual desires, we will analyse how characters are dominated or dominate in sexuality. The "ego" functions to regulate the instinctual drives of the "id" so that they may be released in non-destructive behavioural

patterns. The "superego" serves to replace or to inhibit the drives of the "id" to block off and trust back into the unconscious those impulses towards pleasure that society regards as unacceptable such as overt aggression, sexual passion and oedipal instinct. In other words, Freud's contribution emphasizes on the unconscious aspect of the human psyche. It is worth adding that it is Freud's ideas that have provided the basis for the Psychoanalytic Approach and it is his ideas that are still fundamental to it.

Carl Gustave Jung and Alfred Whose Adler's focus is on Freud's ideas concerning the working of human psyche in order to understand the individual behaviour. More recently, Jacques Lacan has received serious interest for his efforts to build on Freud's work, turning to new linguistic theories to affirm that language is essential and it shapes our consciousness and unconscious to give us an identity.

Ann B. Dobie in his book *Theory into Practice: An Introduction to Literary Criticism,* maintains that "Within Freudian theory, it is possible to discover what is not said directly, perhaps what even the author did not realise he was saying, to read between the lines" (48). From the above lines, we can conclude that the psychoanalytic approach is an important tool for reading between the lines. It helps the reader to know the intention of the author and it probes into the psyche of the characters in question, and assess why each character behaves in a particular way.

This approach fits well in this study in the sense that it will help our readers to have a good insight into the character and the society as a whole. In addition, it will be useful in knowing the writer's psychological nature through his work.

This study also needs the New Historicism Approach because history is conceived not as a set of fixed objectives or facts, but like literature, a text that is subject to interpretations. This approach equally relates literature to history and in

that regard ,we read the literary text as a product of and propagator of the consciousness of the period. New historicism is concerned with reading, writing and teaching as actions, rather than as descriptions of action.

Developed during the 1980's, this theory is largely opposed to the formalist critics who pay attention on the text only. New Historicism critics also tend to define the discipline of history more broadly than did their predecessors. The new history as a social sciences like anthropology, and sociology, whereas traditional Historicist tend to new history as literature's background and the social sciences as being properly historical.

New Historicists remind us that it is impossible to reconstruct the post as it really was rather than as we have been conditioned by our own place and time to believe that it was. Many New historicists have acknowledged a profound indebtedness to the writings of Michel Foucault a French philosophical historian, Faucault brought together incident and phenomena from areas Normally seen as unconnected, encouraging new Historicists and New cultural historicists to redefine the boundaries of historical inquiry. No historical event, according to Foucault has a single cause rather; each event is laid into a vast web of economic social and political factors.

Some New Historicists like Stephen Greenblatt, have been most heavily influenced by the British cultural critics Raymond Williams, and others, like Brook Thomas, have been more influenced by the German Marxist critics Walter Benjamin. New Historicists argue that the best framework for interpreting literature is to place it in its historical context. For example, the Novel under study Cyprian Ekwensi's Jagwa Nana is Nigerian writing of the twentieth century. The best way to understand and interpret it is to associate the novel with his contextual cultural and historical problems.

Proponents of New Historicism tend to reduce literature to history and reflect literary qualities of the work in question. But it would be impossible to get the full message of a work without placing it in its historical context. The Nigerian novel under study needs to be interpreted against this theory because it is itself related to post colonial experiences in Nigerian history. This, it would be impossible to treat it in a historical vacuum because it has a great relationship with its historical context. This theory is important in this work because New Historicism brackets literature and history, as Veeser one of the proponents of new historicism points out.

The two approaches mentioned above are complementary rather than contradictory. A person who is psychologically affected can affect the society. His/her psychological issue can push him to commit immoral or good acts depending on the historical epoch in which he/she lives

To better understand the author and his novel, and to measure our contribution to knowledge, it is important to know what other critics have written on this author and his works. Many critics have expressed much interest in the effects of the African city, on the lives of the city dwellers. To start with, Stanislav Andreski in *African Predicament: A Study in the Pathology of Modernisation* says that most Africa people who live in the cities are very poor. He proceeds that the unemployed young men live on the charity of their relatives and that a good part of them take to stealing, prostitution, or some cookery as the main occupation, while a majority of others will not hesitate to get something by such means if an opportunity comes their way. He adds that the crime rate is rising very fast. He holds that many cities, which only a few years ago, were quite idyllic, now contain strong bands of robbers, some who work in accordance with the police.

Joseph Guggler and William G. Flanagan on their part in *Urbanisation and Social Change in West Africa* maintain that underemployment is probably an even

more serious problem for the young people who come to dwell in the city. The two authors observe that when these migrants arrive in the city, most of them count on the assistance of relations. But a great number of them must fend for themselves in getting involved in prostitution, crime and its attendant risks.

Margaret Peil in *Consensus and Conflict in African society: An Introduction to Sociology* holds that the process of rapid urbanisation creates many acute social problems. She says that young men are particularly likely to get in trouble because they migrate in great number and they must face many hardships brought by social change. Peil concludes that young gangs in the city are a response to the needs for companionship support and an attempt to obtaining material goods offered by the city.

In the same profile, Jean de Dieu Ciza, in his thesis *Sociological Portrait of the African Urban Man in Meja Mwangi's Going Down River Road* states that the city, by its complexities, weakens moral and contributes to the corruption of cultures. He goes on proving that the bad living condition of the migrants leads to a formation of a class which dwells in a cycle of poverty. He ends his analysis by maintaining that this poverty is overshadowed by the psychological need to process Western commodities.

As far as Cyprian Ekwensi and his novel *Jagua Nana* is concerned, Ernest Emenyonu, in his book *Cyprian Ekwensi,* declares that Cyprian Ekwensi is a key figure in the historical development of Modern West African Writing in English. He argues that in Ekwensi, West Africa has at last found a spokesman who is not ashamed to speak with an authentic voice of the people.

In the same vein of the ideas of Povey, Vladmir Klina et al. in *Black Africa: Literature and Language,* holds that Cyprian Ekwensi's purpose in *Jagua Nana* is to expose the vices of Lagos. He tries to preserve the African moral code that is being lost in the area of vulgar materialism.

This work distances itself from the aforementioned works and others in the sense that it depicts how the people, especially the youth who migrate to the city become morally deteriorated. Because life is expensive in the city, the migrants are obliged to use all means either good or bad in order to survive. This work shows therefore that these migrants are victims of the socio-economic situation which prevails in the city based on illustrations from Cyprian Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana*.

As far as the significance of this study is concerned, it is a modest contribution to the amount of researches carried out on the effect of the city. The interested reader will find some clues in this work to enhance the understanding of the city phenomenon. This work also contributes in the realisation of the fascinating debate about city life in Africa.

The present work is made of five parts. The general introduction gives an overview of the work, states the thesis problem, aim and hypothesis, brings out the theoretical framework and literature review, defines the key terms and brings out the structure of the work.

The first chapter entitled "The Pressures of the City" depicts how urbanisation influences migrants who move from countryside to the city and how life in the city becomes more expensive for them.

The second chapter labelled "Materialism and Immorality" deals with the question of survival leads the migrants into questionable acts of immorality. This part explores different kinds of immorality that prevail in the city and how it affects the lives of the migrants.

The third chapter captioned "The Author's Vision" brings to limelight how the author views the society. It exposes the evil and danger of urban life and the subsequent social problems such as love affairs, housing condition, bribery and

crime through the prism of the novelist. The general conclusion summarises the major arguments raised in the work, brings out the findings, formulate recommendations and proposes possible areas for futures researchers.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PRESSURES OF THE CITY

During colonisation, the colonial masters created urban centres in Africa. These new cities served as centres of power and technology and thus played an important role in the development of rural as well as urban areas. These newly established cities attracted many people. Many villagers began to migrate to these urban centres, which were thought of as areas where one could forge ahead in that modern environment of civilised people.

Cyprian Ekwensi, in his novel *Jagua Nana,* deals fully with that reality. Jagua Nana is a country woman from a traditional Ogabu village. Even though she is experiencing a family malaise due to barrenness; her rural-urban exodus is more instigated by her idealisation of Lagos as an area of freedom and self-realisation. She then moves to that city hoping to realise her dream. Her major dream is to be emancipated and to have liberty. In the city, the cosmopolitan nature eradicates traditional exigencies, social constrains. Wallerstein in *Africa: The Politics of Independence,* states that

> Needless to say, this often made it possible to attract to town life precisely these people with the initiative and imagination to break with traditional, to try new ways to seek a better fortune outside the path laid out for them. (7)

The Western civilisation destabilises the rural life. In fact, toward the new life offered by the city, the African shows new desires and new attitude. The migrants who go to these cities from their traditional villages acquire Western values and a new way of life. However, life in the village is rather simple than life in the city. This western environment they idealise as being an idyllic world becomes very

hostile for them. Jennifer Segmous Whitaker in *How African can Survive* explains that

> On one hand, urban families do not need to add new hand to work communal field. And, on the other, they have to pay for what in the village seen almost free goods, rent, food, entertainment. (95)

From the quotation above, Whitaker makes it clear that necessities such as food, rent and entertainment are free in the village, but in the city, they are more expensive.

In addition, Stanislav Andreski in *The Africa Predicament* argues that

> In Africa, however, the contract between the orderly and dignified behaviour of the villagers and the wild scrapping about money, stealing, cheating, prostitution and robbing which goes on in the town is particularly striking. (45-46)

In this quotation, Andreski shows clearly that life in the village is much more enjoyable than life in the city. In fact, there is no lust for money, no lust for sex, no lust for drinks in the village, what is opposite in the city where all materialistic things are present.

As we have already seen, the city is a very hostile environment for people from the village. When they arrive there, they become disoriented and adopt its sinful nature. They make recourse to any means that come their way in order to survive in that materialistic world.

The theme of the city has preoccupied a good number of African writers like Cyprian Ekwensi in *Jagua Nana, Beautiful Fathers,* Meja Mwange in *Kill me Quick* and *Going Down River Road,* Oculi Okolo in *The Prostitute,* Malick Fale in

The Wound. All these authors try to show the true image of the city to the experienced people who long for going there or who are already there.

As far as *JaguaNana* is concerned, Cyprian Ekwensi depicts the fate of migrants in the cities as it was already demonstrated. Once in Lagos, Jagua Nana adopts city lifestyle and its evil ways. She does so because life in the city is very hard. Everything is money while Nana is not rich. Then, she plunges in prostitution to earn a livelihood. She indulges in various evil because of the social and economic hardship which has a pressure on her.

In *Jagua Nana,* Ekwensi highlights the seamy side of the city. He describes Lagos as a city of sin and chaos. He denounces the city as a destroyer of human values. He attempts to conform his city to its evil. The picture is one of squalor, prostitution, corruption and criminality. In his personal interview recorded by Ernest Emenyonu in his work *Cyprian Ekwensi,* Ekwensi says :

> The city is a terribly corrupting influence, a den of Ali Baba where forty thieves have stored all their gold and anyone who has the magic world can go and help himself. And sometimes greed traps the sesame and the thieves come back and stab the intruder to death as they did to Ali Baba's brother. (29)

In this extract, Ekwensi tries to shows us what the city really is: an illusion, a magnetic force that brandishes from its excitement, gaiety and transient glitter luring people either to destruction or to downfall.

The young, with their aspirations and dreams are the first allured by the city and consequently are ones who endure hardships the most. In fact, when they arrive in the city, most of them become prostitutes or thieves. They opt for this as a way of earning their living because everything in the city is money. In this respect, Magamou Seck, the protagonist in Malick Fall's *The Wound* leaves his

home with his head full of dreams and illusions for the city. He is the victim of an accident when the lorry on which he's travelling crashes and he sustains a fatal injury on his leg which becomes infected. Hence, he has escaped from the mental imprisonment of his village which he was so out of step. He becomes now the prisoner of his own body and ultimately of his society. Having rejected the despised life of mendacity imposed by the routine of Koranic school, he is now reduced to a permanent beggar in order to satisfy his bared needs. Having left his village because of lack blossoming with aspiration of harvesting more in town, he finally ends up in the lowest depths of existence. At last he complains:

> When I reached the town, I was nothing but a striking bundle of rags, unkempt, haggard. Too late. I was perfectly aware of the state I was in... I became increasingly disgust with myself. I had left my village in the quest of self-fulfilment and here I was reduced to finding enough to eat from day to day, to satisfy my purely animal needs. I had looked out on paradise and I was destined to become more emancipated and slowly wither away. It was more than a living death. (25-26)

This quotation illustrates well that people from countryside are vulnerable to all the influence of the city. Being unaware of the dangers of the city, they blindly follow the example of the other people. It is then too late when they realise that they have been trapped.

As far as girls are concerned, most of them migrate to the city with the hope of improving their lives. Ekwensi in his novel *People of the City,* comments that:

> I have asked why do girls leave their happy home and come here on their own. No brothers, No knowledge of anything,

> No hope… they just come to the city, hoping that some man will pick them up and make them into something. (118)

These lines show that many girls who come from the countryside meet in the city many problems and then they become unfaithful and are not responsible.

While reading Ekwensi's novels, one may realise that most of the characters are involved in all kinds of evil which prevail in the city. Ernest Emenyonu, a critic of Cyprian Ekwensi, comments :

> Ekwensi's characters evolve and grow. They find themselves into this cold foreign, alien atmosphere, alone and rejected, yet they stay so sick from this barren wasteland – where businessmen are dishonest, where politicians are corrupted, where neighbours are enemies and friends convincing-life and self-fulfilment. They meet few people with whom they can commune or truly say they love. Instead, they daily confronted by wretched filth, decadence, hopelessness and prevarication. The greedy, the ambitions, the licentious surround their every movement. (*Cyprian Ekwensi*, 30)

The quotation above shows us how the migrants become alienated and rejected on their arrival to the city where everybody is indifferent. In spite, that young boys and girls think that the city is a place of strong emotion, a paradise, the promised land. Papa Guey Ndiaye citing Bernard B. in *Littérature Africaine* illustrates that: "Le jeune est fasciné par la cité, c'est la belle vie, les noces, les bals jusqu'à l'aube, les beaux complets tous raides et flamboyant neufs" / "The young is fascinated by town, it is good life, weddings, feasts until morning, nice suits all straight and brand new" (115).

According to the people coming to the city from the countryside, at first sight, the city is a good place to live in. They think of the city as a place of refuge whenever they feel bored in the country. They escape from the routine work in the village where the work is not remunerative. They do not get enough money from it to offer themselves with all the luxurious they want.

Another reason which pushes the people to come to the city is the social malaise. Jagua Nana marries Coal City man, a man she does not love because of the pressure of her parents. Consequently, their marriage becomes a failure. Jaguar and her husband are two contradictory figures. The former is a woman who is fond of enjoying life. But the latter is a serious man. He is always busy working and has a little time to take his wife to night clubs. Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana* illustrates it in the following terms: *"He never took her to parties, and would not dress well, for fear the money would leak away. In no way did his ideas of living attract her" (167).* We see that they do not share the same ideas regarding the way of life they have to live together as husband and wife. It is obvious that they do not love each other. That is why Jagua runs away from him in order to be free and enjoy her life.

In this novel also, Ekwensi, the author of *Jagua Nana* describes another reason which pushes her to abandon her husband and leave for Lagos. There is tension between Jagua Nana and her husband. The wife is blamed by her husband for her childlessness and she suffers from this misunderstanding. She is sad because she has no child. But what grieves her most is the way her husband treats her, he does not sympathise with her. Coal Cityman's relatives advise him to marry another girl. The latter knows that her husband goes to his parents' home with a purpose of choosing another spouse. All this make her to become angry with her husband and reacts accordingly:

> She stopped taking treatment from the doctor who was giving her something to make her pregnant. Her husband found out and when they quarrelled she was glad. She

> waited for him to leave for the filling station. He had not been on speaking terms for two whole days. She caught the train and it was too slow for her mood, taking three days to drop her into Lagos. (168)

The above quotation shows that Jagua Nana, like other women, comes to town because of the family malaise. She runs away because of her husband's ill-treatment.

In the same line of thought, *Lokotown and other Stories,* Ekwensi depicts Nana as a heroine, who has problems with her husband and who runs away because her husband is a drunkard. Every evening, he comes back home smelling a drunken breath. He starts insulting her and beats her seriously. Nana is worried about his situation that she cannot stand to go on living with him. Finally, she decides to leave her home without telling her husband and goes through Accra.

Although these young people escape from their family malaise and decide to migrate to city, they become disappointed. Indeed, life in the village is rather simple than in the city, where everything is money. When the migrants arrive in the city, they face many problems.

The big problem is related to housing facilities; most urban centres are overcrowded and thus city dwellers are faced with the accommodation problem especially migrants who are new comers. Most of those who leave the countryside in order to settle in the cities have no money to rent a house or even a room. And others are faced with a much high cost of living in the town as the rent is very high.

Cyprian Ekwensi highlights this issue in *Jagua Nana* through his protagonist, Rosa, a young girl from the Eastern Nigerian. In Lagos city, she experiences very serious housing conditions. As soon as she arrives, she realises that there is no place all over Lagos city to stay in: "She said she has come to

Lagos, from the East. She had nowhere to stay in Lagos" (109). As a matter of fact, she spends a whole week wandering in Lagos streets without finding any room or someone to shelter her. This is partly due to the fact that in these urban centres there are likely not well developed kinship relations as it is the case in traditional village settings. She does not get where she can sleep till after a week as we see it in this novel. According to the author "After one week, Rosa was still trekking the streets and searching for lodging." (115) From this excerpt, we realise that in the city, no one can sympathise with someone else. No one cares about another's problem, you have to assume yourself.

In addition, migrants in town are faced with the shortage of labour. As life in the town is mostly based on casheconomy, the citizens must earn money through all means in order to survive. Likely, people may resort to prostitution and crime as the only alternative in order to alleviate their economic problems. For example when Jagua Nana arrives in Lagos city from her Ogabu village, she is received and housed by a band leader. As she does not have money to settle on or find a job in that new environment where money is the master, she resorts to prostitution for survival.

The first lover she encounters is an English man, John Martel who comes from England. This man rents a room for her and furnishes it and keeps it until his return to his homeland. With the money she gets, she starts trade business and opts for female articles. We read that, "With the allowance he gave her, she travelled by mammy wago to Accra [...] she returned to Lagos loaded with a pile of wax prints and kente cloth which she sold at a profit" (170). Here, Jagua tries to use the money she earns from prostitution in order to overcome the economic pressure of the city.

Among the reasons which push the young to move from countryside to the city is also the search for jobs. When they arrive in the city and do not find the

jobs, then they may resort to fraud, robbery and murders as a way out of their bad living conditions.

Cyprian Ekwensi highlights how Dennis is a victim of circumstances. This young man is a leader of a gang in Obanla quarter. And when Jagua Nana visits him in Obanla, she discovers through his assertion that he has become a criminal against his goodwill. Rather, it was his only survival alternative that was at his disposal. In fact, Dennis wants an 'honest' job to earn his living. So, he goes to apply for some job but they require that he pays some bribe in exchange for the work he needs. Thus, he hands that money but, they take it and refuse to employ him in return. Cyprian Ekwensi puts it:

> Dennis, I wan' to tell you somthin'. Dis kind of life dat you follow, you think is a good life. Dennis siled. "What you wan' me to do? To go an' be clerk? A wright! I already try to find work. Dem ask to bring bribe-money. I give one man ten pound, and he shop de money and he no fin' work for me. How I go do? I mus' chop. (123)

Here, we notice that Dennis resorts to thievery as his last source of livelihood because they refuse to employ him although he has bribed them.

In the same respect, Cyprian Ekwensi's *People of the city,* depicts the same phenomenon. A woman of twenty-five is murdered together with her child in a bush by a gang of drunkards in order to get her gramophone. We read :

> She was lying on the floor, dead. They had killed her and her child too [...] the old man shot back. What is a gramophone that they kill someone for? Of course they were drunk. But does that mean they should kill her? For our thing? (19)

This passage depicts a dreadful scene that characterises the cities. As we have stated it, many jobless people may resort to murder as a way of overcoming their bad living conditions because in the city everything is money. So, in the city, men use all means in order to get money, either bad or good. Then do not care about the way they get it but their preoccupation is to get what they need. People move from countryside to the city with the illusion that they are going to have a good life but in vain. When they arrive there, they face problems about the lack of rent, food, etc. The situation of Rosa and Nana for instance is a good illustration to this.

Another problem that the migrants face in the town is in connection with their reintegration process. In fact, a new comer in town is considered as a stranger. He encounters challenges of integrating himself into the new environment and society. But these newly established urban centres, owing to European presence in Africa have developed rapidly that there are hardly any arrangement and management conditions already set up for the reception of the migrants. These cities have emerged so quickly that it been difficult to set up appropriate organisation and management systems. Then, migrants are left on their own without any support. Philip Mayer, in *Townsmen or Tribesmen: Conservation and the Process of Urbanisation in South African city,* puts it in the following terms:

> The migrant does not drop into a predetermined complex of cultural patterns or institution in which each single factor seems to be logically entailed by the others. He does not do this anymore that he drops straight into a structural rich with a complement of logically entailed network relations. Instead, he is confronted by an institutional diversity which imposes on the constant need to pick and choose. He must build up his own synthesis of the habits and institution from

> a wide available society just as he must build up his own network of relations. (15)

From the quotation above, we notice that a new comer in the town makes his own way on his own; starting a new life quite different from the one he has been living before in the countryside.

In the countryside, a person is surrounded by his kinsmen, friends or elders who have been responsible for his socialisation from his birth and who have been shaping his personality. On the contrary, in town, there is no such social support. Salah El-Shakks and Robert Obudho, in *Urbanisation, National Development and Regional Planning in Africa,* posit that

> In a context in which most of the traditional social supports the extended family, kinsmen, age group organisation of people with the same rural background as the migrant, are no longer relevant or operative the failure of urban centres to provide substitutes creates an expected problem of mental stress, personal disorientation, and social disorganisation for many people. (23)

In this perspective, Cyprian Ekwensi has also depicted such a reality in his book *Jagua Nana* when Rosa spends a week in Lagos streets trying to find lodging. In fact, the town does not have any organisation for welcoming the migrants; there is no near or distant kin who can sympathise with her and provide her with social support.

In the city, everyone minds his own business, and does not care about his fellows' fate. In case there is such a concern about someone's condition, it is superficial and profit oriented due to the materialistic spirit which is prevailing in all works of social life. Thus, a favour is granted on condition. This is what happens to Rosa when she lacks a place to stay in Lagos city.

Usually, people in town do not help you because they sympathise with you but because they have or expect profits from you. An instance about this is shown in Cyprian Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana.* He writes that

> Jagua took pity on her and promised rashly; to do something [...] she quickly dismissed Rosa from he mind, but later that evening it flashed through her consciousness that be her companion, in Freddie's absence. Lagos then, might have a new meaning. Rosa could pay something toward the rent, help with the cooking, washing and cleaning. The idea was worth considering. (109-110)

From this quotation, we see that Jagua Nana is deeply touched by her awkward living conditions and promises her a room. But we notice later that she dismisses this good idea from her mind. It is not until when she realises that the housing of Rosa should field fruitful result on her behalf that she makes up her mind to offer her a room. In fact, she discovers that Rosa could be useful in the sense that she can compensate for her loneliness at the time that her steady lover, Freddie Namme is in England for his law studies. She can also alleviate her burden in connection with her payment of the rent and can help in her household chores.

Similarly, once Jagua Nana is in Lagos city from her traditional Ogabu village, she finds out that she has nowhere to stay, and that she knows no one. Everyone is new and strange to her and there is no kin to house her. Fortunately, she is eventually received and sheltered by a strange young bandleader. She says: "She knew no one and was glad when a young bandleader picked her up and housed her for a time" (168). But the so-called favour she benefits from the bandleader is not granted to her as a sign of his sympathy toward her misfortune. Rather, he decides to house her for some reason: "... this bandleader must be keeping her for some reasons, but not for her smartness" (168). As there are no well-established social relations based on kinship and descent in those urban

centres, the migrant is the architect of his intimate social environment which will help to mould him into an urbanised man.

If we consider the relations of a domestic or social order, the factor of personal choice is in full operation. The migrant is free to choose his own town associates or domestic circle. His personal freedom of choice is not strictly limited by structural ascription. He is free to decide who will be in closest personal relation to himself. Network of relation is structurally predetermined. These relations are not entailed by any urban social structure. He may make up his mind to live with his wife (or without her), or with a mistress, or with a friend, or he may form a one-man domestic unit of his own.

It is worth mentioning also that even if the population in the town is so dense and people live close to one another, the simple fact of living in a very close neighbourhood does not force individuals to enter into a sociable or friendly relation. These town networks of relations are far different from those formed in the countryside where the individual is automatically ascribed to a domestic circle consisting of his close kin. Normally, the fact of living close to one another should compel people to exchange hospitality with neighbours as it is the case in the traditional settings. In the countryside, solidarity, hospitality, generosity and mutual help are the most valued ideals as far as interpersonal relations are concerned. They establish inseparable bonds among members of a given community. They are held on higher level of consideration; they provide a sense of unity while in the city they mind business. John N. Pardon and Eduard W. Soja support in the following terms this idea in their book *The African Experience:*

> In traditional African society, an individual would not be likely to seek such isolation from institutionalised personal relationships, and certainly the approval and support of the

> society would be with help from any member who did wish to pursue a solitary o individualistic occupation... (41)

One notices in this quotation that no one has an island in that community with well institutionalised personal interactions. But with the creation of the city, this western individualistic spirit that is destroying altruistic values is existent in traditional Africa. Personal interests prevail over common ones while before the creation of city africans were oriented towards their fellows. John N. Pardon and Eduard W. Soja highlight it in the following terms:

> Africans as individual actors in their traditional society are strongly oriented to their fellow actors, not to some abstract notion of conscience or superego – certainly not to one in which the ma-god relation pervades or intervenes among the man-man relationships. African morality stresses the man-man relationship and individual matters of conscience stem from this fact. (40)

In traditional Nigeria, interpersonal relationship is at the centre of social life. Everyone acts in accordance with the ideal standard of values. In Cyprian Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana,* we see how Jagua Nana is delighted by her mother's hospitality and friendliness toward Rosa. Rosa and Jagua Nana are friends. They know each other during their wandering in the evil ways of Lagos city. They indulge themselves mainly in prostitution as their survival means in such a materialistic world. When they become disillusioned, they manage a return to their homeland. Jagua returns to her Ogabu village and Rosa pays her a visit. When Jagua Nana introduces her friend to her mother, the latter welcomes her very warmly. Cyprian Ekwensi says:

> Nana, we have one who has come. Jagua said when her mother comes in. her name is Rosa. In Lagos I knew her. Welcome Rosa. You come well? She turned to Jagua. She

> has eaten. Quick now. Give her food. Jaguar smiled and pinched Rosa. My mother likes you. She whispered. (183)

From this quotation, we see how Jagua's mother shows great love and affection to Rosa even though she is not of the kinsmen or villagers. She displays a deep concern about the journey she has made and her well-being. Besides her warm welcome, she commands Jagua Nana to take care of her by giving her food as she has been informed that Rosa has not eaten. All the reactions of Jagua's mother show how Africans pay much attention to interpersonal relationships as the centre of social life.

Achebe in his novel, *Things Fall Apart,* highlights this African solidarity and love during hard times. When Okwonkwo is exiled with his family to Mbata; during a great funeral, Okwonkwo's gun explodes accidentally and small pieces of iron kills a young boy of his clan. Thus, his mother's kinsmen sympathise with him and help him start a new life full of hope in Mbata village. The author says:

> Okwonkwo was given a plot of ground on which to build his compound and two or three pieces of land on which to farm during the coming of planting season with help of his mother's huts for his wives. He then installed his kinsmen he built himself an Obi and three huts for his wives. He then installed his personal god and the symbols of his departed fathers. Each of Uchendu's five sons contributed three hundred seed, yams to enable their cousin to plant a farm as soon as the first rain came. (191)

The festivals that are organised for the whole village are a sign of solidarity. We realise to which extent Okonkwo cousins show solidarity in times of need. Not only the in- law family avails a piece of land for him, but also seeds.

In the same light, when Jagua's father Obi David dies from a stroke, all members of his family attend his burial. Jagua and her brothers have already gone away for a long time. As matter of fact, Jagua's parents live in Ogabu village; they have no child close to them, who could attend to their every day needs. When their father is about to die, Jagua's brother, Fonso comes to Lagos city to inform her about his ill health and Nana takes it serious. As soon as she arrives in Ogabu village, she finds out that all her brothers are already present at the funeral and she also finds a huge crowd of people who are present to mourn the death of her father – Obi David. Cyprian Ekwensi says: "Her mother was standing in the middle of a group, head bowed, the women silent and drifting about like smoked ghost" (176). Here, we notice that communication concerns a whole community. Then, the funeral of Jagua's father is more than a family concern. Communalism is also witnessed during times of trouble. If there is any bad event that occurs in a family, all people and neighbours give their support and express their deep concern over the bereaved family or individuals. This fact strengthens their unity and mutual help. People are bound by strong bonds.

Although life in the city is individualistic in general, communalism can be observed during some times bereavement. Ekwensi highlights these issues when Freddie Namme is killed by his rival OP1. We see that Freddie's wife was surrounded by weeping women who have come to sympathise with her. Cyprian Ekwensi says: "Nancy was sitting on the bare cement floor surrounded by weeping women. Her eyes were red, and there was still a look of doubt, of hopeful disbelief on her face" (155). We notice that even in the city, communalism is not a matter of a whole community; we see that during the hard moment for example during funeral moment, people are sensible and try to sympathise with the family which experiences a given misfortune.

Furthermore, people from countryside also encounter many problems when they arrive in the city. The problems are caused by the lack of money and work.

So, they are obliged to participate in politics in order to survive. Thus, they use to enter in political parties in order to get some money because in town everything is money. So, Jagua Nana prefers to enter in Uncle Taiwo's political party because he pays the rent for her. Cyprian Ekwensi comments :

> Yes, is Uncle Taiwo keepin' me and payin, the rent for me. Is very strong party man and he get plenty money for spend. I don' see how you fit to win from him. I goin' to help him because me and you not me person anymore. Kin you spen' money like him (136).

From this quotation, we see that Jagua does not join Uncle Taiwo's Party because she likes politics but because she can get money from him.

In traditional Nigeria, there is no political parties creation. Since the dawn of human history, men set up a system that will facilitate their interpersonal relationship. Hence, indigenous people of Africa in general and those of Nigeria in particular live for centuries in villages. Each village group in Nigeria is maintained in its interpersonal and day-to-day life, as it will be shown in forthcoming sections, by a network of kinship and discrete relationship. Kinship pertains the relations of affinity. Thus, it plays a greater role in all spheres of life as well as in day-to-day dealing. In their way of political organisation, they have feelings of brotherhood and relation of affiliation among members of the society. They are against creating political party which rather unify people from the same society instead of dividing them.

John's Mbiti in *African Religion and Philosophy* illustrates that in the following terms:

> The deep sense of kinship, with all it implies has been one of the strongest forces in traditional African life. Kinship is reckoned through blood and betrayed engagement and

> marriage. It's kinship which controls social relationship between people in a given community: it governs marital customs and regulations; it determines the behaviour of one individual toward another one [...] Each individual is a brother, or a sister, father or mother, grandmother of grandfather, or cousin... (73)

The above-mentioned passage highlights the extent to which the kinship is a determining factor in relations. On the contrary, in town, people must run after political parties in order to govern whereas in the village, it is the kinship which establishes law which governs the society.

To sum up, this chapter has highlighted that the city, especially the African city is a place which disillusions the people from countryside. The city environment is a hostile place for the migrants from countryside because the city life is very hard, everything is money. It is a place where everybody sees his own interests. City dwellers care less about the neighbour's needs. Thenceforth, the migrants encounter many problems in all domains of life such as social, political, and economic. They have to use all means that come their way in order to get money because life becomes hard for them. In *Jagua Nana,* Ekwensi condemns the city because its environment dehumanises man. He sees the city as place of chaos. In general, social discrimination, racial tension, violence and corruption are everlasting problems which are harassing the African modern cities today.

CHAPTER TWO

MATERIALISM AND IMMORALITY IN THE CITY

Like other countries, Nigeria experienced a massive rural exodus immediately after independence. This movement from countryside to the city was due to the socio economic situation prevailing in rural area at the time. People in general and the younger generation in particular wanted to run away to escape poverty or familial malaise which menaced the villages. They moved because they expected to improve their standard of living in these cities.

When they arrived in the city, things turned out contrary to their expectations. Hence, they tried to adapt to the environment and in the process lose the essence of their culture and moral values. The loss of culture is due to the fact that they encounter many challenges in the city. They do not get what they had expected and life becomes hostile to them. So, they become alienated and immoral in order to survive. Indeed, the morality of a person who grows up in the countryside in most cases is different from that of an urban dweller. Thus, the dignified behaviour found in the rural area is rare in the city. Therefore, when they see that they cannot realise their dream, they begin to degrade themselves by doing what should not do in order to get money. In doing what they are not supposed to do, people are usually struggling for survival. They lose their morality because of necessity.

The main motivation that lags behind people's movement from countryside to the city is the hope that they are going to change their situation of misery and be successful in life. Once they reach the 'ideal place' (the city), they find themselves in a situation they cannot extricate. Contrary to their expectations, they become very poor than they were. In this chapter, we explore how the migrants struggle for survival and become immoral or deprived. Cyprian Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana* and related critics will help our readers to understand the morality crisis in question

through typical characters. The author depicts human deprivation which is exemplified by the act of prostitution, cruelty, fraud or robbery and corruption. All these aspects are deviations from the norms.

The policy of excessive urbanisation has produced bitter fruits. The lack of jobs, accommodation and means of livelihood make cities as overcrowded dustbins. Because of these problems, cities contribute to the number of national culture and deterioration of humankind. P.C. Lloyd in *African Social Change* argues that,

> In those societies where divorce is comparatively rare and stigma attaches to the divorce woman, impeding her remarriage, she will today go to the town to earn a living, perhaps by trade, perhaps by prostitution. (117)

Lloyd shows us above that a woman, instead of staying at home and try to maintain her household prefers to go to the city and she does not care about the norms.

In fact, morality is based on reasonable cultural beliefs and claims on ethical considerations which have to be vindicated. Indeed, the morality crisis under analysis in *Jagua Nana* is relative. Lagos city where Jagua Nana lives is not a place for people with high sense of morality. The ethic of good evil depends on how life is in the city. Life in the city of Lagos as well as in other cities life is very hard. No one can ignore that the city has things which attract new comers from the rural area. Very often, they know nobody who can help them once they arrive there. They just go hoping that providence will take care of them. They belittle the pieces of advice given by their parents about the dangers they might face in the city.

In Onalick Fall's *The Wound*, the mother tries to prevent her son, Magamou, from going to Dakar. But Magamou does not care about the mother's advice. He

ultimately says: "Bubaskets packet mother, what about all those trunks full of clothes, all those *d* with strange things to eat, and those metals based those tables. No mother, I will go to town" (14). Here, we see how when the parents find that their children still stick to their decisions, they let them do what they want but try to provide them with all advice which can help them not to fall in the city's trap.

In Mange Ruheni's *The Minister's Daughter,* Jane Njeri, the heroine leaves her home for Nairobi. Her father, Bwana Absalom warns her: "Be careful in Nairobi, that place is full of temptation; you will be tempted to do a lot of unchristian things which could ruin your life. Keep away from these temptations" *(71).* These lines show parents as experienced and wise enough. That is why they have to warn their children about the city. Bwana Absalom tells her daughter to stand away from the temptations which are plenty in Nairobi. For instance, she may become pregnant before getting married and because of that, never get married in her whole life.

However, what these young ignore is that living in the city requires some means especially financial. When they come to the city they are still poor, the situation becomes rather worse than when they were in the village. They cannot have even any educational qualification. Therefore, they do whatever they can, be it good or wrong to gain daily bread. They struggle at all cost to meet up with their basic needs.

In *Jagua Nana,* Jagua Nana, the heroine of the novel is a prostitute in Lagos. She knows her job and she loves it as well. She may be professional prostitute. When she arrives in the city, she is very attracted by the beauty of Lagos. She then launches herself into prostitution. Like in any other trade, she runs after customers so that she serves as many as possible. Although she has a boyfriend called Freddie Namme, she runs after rich men because Freddie, as a teacher in secondary school, cannot provide her with all the luxury she needs. Freddie

complains about this bad behaviour and tells Nancy that Jagua Nana is restless when she fails to get a man in her bed. He says that: "She got dis 'habitof running' after men with money. Now if she sleeps with one man everyday she never feels happy" (39) Moreover, the conversation between Jagua and Dennis Odoma reveals a lot:

"Jagua: Where U goin'! you don' know my man is in bed?

Dennis: Always some man in de bed! Some man in de bed! You will die with some man in de bed one day." *(127)*

The conversation above shows that Jagua is not likely to miss any client. She behaves in a qualified prostitute: she tries to put on clothes which attract the eyes of her clients; she needs garments which allow her to expose her thighs, buttocks, breasts, navel and shoulders. She exposes what must be concealed and conceals what must be exposed. For instance, she puts on a skirt which is split because she wants her marvellous thighs to attract the eyes of men. Then, she walks elegantly so that everyone can see her. She is aware that her skirt hardly hides her thighs. She is very pleased to see men's eyes following greedily the movement of her smooth legs. Ekwensi comments :

> Jaguar was wearing a very tight skirt and when she got out group of jobless boys whistled. Some shouted, "Jagua"... she always wore blouses which showed the skin of her breasts and her arms and shoulders because she knew her best paints. Her skirt was split half way up the left thighs, so that when she walked, much of her leg shaved. (158)

Jagua Nana knows that all men admire the way she dresses. She is very proud of her body. She is almost naked but she does not care. She knows what she is aiming at: seduction. When her lover complains about her way of dressing, she does not tell him the truth but she lies to him saying that it is the fashion though Freddie knows that she is lying.

Ekwensi describes the same situation as far as prostitution is concerned in his novel *People of the City.* In this novel, we find characters such as Aina, Beatrice the First, who are also prostitutes. Aina is a famous young prostitute in Lagos who tries to do her best dressing in order to arouse men's sexual instinct. She resembles Jagua in her way of dressing. Ekwensi describes her in this way:

> Plum velvet it was, bordered with white lace sewn in the latest style. The blouse showed off the roundness of her arms, and the skirt, a long piece of material artfully tied around the waist, showed off just so much tantalising thigh and no more. (84)

From this quotation, we see that Aina's way of dressing is not different from that of Jagua. She uses all means so that her boyfriend, Amusa Songo can take interest in her. She wants to provoke him.

In the same novel, we have another woman Beatrice the First. When she arrives in the city she marries a British engineer called Grunnings. But she realises after her plans. She immediately drops him and becomes a prostitute. Her desire is to have many lovers in order to earn more. She struggles much to have many customers especially the rich ones. The author comments that:

> Beatrice thought was a much more useful house than one she shared with Grunnings on Rokiya Hill. But where in all this scheme did she fit in? She decided not to accept a room her, if Lagide gave her one. She might as well be Zamil's mistress. (*People of the City,* 51)

The lines above show us that Beatrice the First has a great desire for money. And in order to get it, she must cooperate with rich men as Lagide. She is fond of flirting with rich men not because she loves them but because they pay her well. For instance, she is sure that Lagide is capable to provide her with all needs. But

she refuses the room Lagide offer her because she thinks that this would prevent her movement with other men. Beatrice is like Jagua Nana. Jaguar Nana runs after rich men on the condition that they give her a lot of money. She considers her body as something which is very expensive. To buy it, one must be rich enough. When Dennis Oduma asks her to be her mistress, she replies :

> You like me so? You like Jagua-woman, Jagua-woman cos' plenty money. You be only small pickin of yesterday. Jagua-woman is for men in de senior service for contractor and politician [...] Dem don't like Jagua-woman with seet-mouth-I already got one boy who talk sweet-mouth. You just come late, so you must bring somethin'. (*Jagua Nana,* 112)

This quotation shows clearly that Jagua knows that her body is very expensive. She knows that her body is not for any man and she is proud of it. But above all, she is highly materialistic. She uses her body in order to get money, to get material things.

In other ways, the case of immorality is not only observed in Ekwensi's novel but also in other books for instance in *Trial of Didam Kimathi.* In this play, Ngugi tries to expose the immoral things the school headmaster wants to do with ladies. Since people were evicted from their lands, they were also obliged to send their children to work elsewhere. At work, Ngugi says that ladies are subjugated to heavy tasks and punishment. Outside their home – in the city, they are raped by men. Ngugi puts it in *Trial of Didam Kimathi* when the "girl" says that:

> ... I ran away from school because the headmaster wanted to do wicked things with me. Always: you remain behind. You take the wood to my house. You take this chalk and book to the office. Then he would follow me and all he

> wanted to touch my breast. So, I left school. I wanted to stay home and teach myself how sew or do something with my life. But my father would have nothing of it. He called me an idler and sent me to pick tea leaves for that cruel settler, Mr. Jones. How he used to abuse and punish us. I had to run from home, from my father, from Mr. Jones... in the city. It was the boys. Always harassing me... And yet I did not want to starve! I lost my virginity while trying to run away from losing it. How else could I live? (41)

From this quotation, we see how people are obliged to do immoral things because of poverty and because of the moral decay introduced by colonisation. Actually, the traditional African society does not know behaviour like that. Again, in ancient society, work was given according to age. Be with colonialism, man has to do whatever comes his way either bad or good in order to survive.

Furthermore, in former times, ladies could not have sex before getting married and the virginity of a lady was a sign of good education and dignity. However, with the intrusion of colonialism and cash based economy, things change drastically. Ladies start having sex out of their will, and even with men that they do not love. This occurs because of an excessive drive to get money and to fulfil their needs. In this perspective, people find it as a way of getting rich a relatively short time.

In African traditional societies, people have their own criteria to be taken into consideration while selecting their political leaders. The would-be a leader is considered trustworthy according to his moral standards which are obvious in all the walks of life. His wisdom and fair judgement in the interpersonal deals are a fundamental criterion. In the management of the state's resources, his main concern and priority is the pursuit of collective and corporate welfare rather than his individual interests. But in the post-independence era, things turn otherwise.

There is a great reversal of values in the political leaders' priorities and vision with regard to their leadership. Capitalism and individualism erode aspects of traditional social norms.

Besides, the introduction of money based economic create new ambitions and new individuals deprived of any corporate interests and traditional values. The basic needs of the population begin to be subordinated to the imperative of personal advancement. There are also deep changes in the areas of morality, law and aesthetics. Because of this materialistic world, money becomes the only powerful means for self-advancement; political leaders become too concerned with money-seeking that they become blind to their people's welfare.

In addition, the new African elites involve themselves in politics and compete strongly in order to be elected into power. One can ask himself why there is a great rush into politics today. The reason is clear: they want to possess much power which in return will enable them to use their position in order to gain more materially.

As it will be shown later, the contemporary politicians are able to use their position in order to enrich themselves, through a variety of corrupt means by defrauding the state. They exhibit the lack of understanding of the real people which undergo their country and those of their people while they advance their political aspiration and interests.

Cyprian Ekwensi, in his novel *Jagua Nana,* criticises his contemporary Nigerian political leaders. He is very sensitive to the political immoralities which prevail at his time. The elites struggle to be elected into power. They try to tell lies to the population in order to get votes from them so that they can use their power to enrich themselves. They do not remember the population who vote them.

In Cyprian Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana,* Uncle Taiwo is the prototype of Nigerian corrupt leaders. He is a representative of a political party, and he is competing to win the Obanla constituency. In fact, Obanla people want to elect one political leader who will represent their views. Unfortunately, the politicians who are struggling to win the constituency are too corrupt, if voted into power, to be able to understand the needs and interests of people and assume their responsibilities. Uncle Taiwo's motive behind his earnest desire to be appointed at the head of Obanla is to get a high position which yields much power. And hence, he will be unable to use his authority in order to defraud the state for his own ends. Ekwensi, shows it in the following terms:

> For him, so much developed on his election. If he won, he would become a councillor, able to use his influence the way others had done before him. His position would be very much higher in the city. (159)

From this quotation, we get some insight into a well pre-established system of corrupt leadership. All Nigerian leaders are all the same. They follow the way requested by their former counterparts. And this way is the use of power they got in order to advance their personal respect and to illicitly enrich themselves from public treasury. Thus, Uncle Taiwo cannot be one who can be isolated from this political trend.

Besides, Uncle Taiwo's mistress Jagua Nana is aware of the paramount impact of power. She thinks that, when Uncle Taiwo comes to power in Obanla, she too will become exalted in high social circle because she will be a mistress of an important man. She thinks that she will benefit from that position because he will use his influence to establish her as a merchant princess. And thereafter, she will forsake her present dishonest livelihood. Cyprian Ekwensi writes that

> She too, would benefit as a result: she would be mistress of a counsellor. He would use his influence to establish her as

> a merchant princess. She would have to give up his present style of living be loyal to him alone. (159)

Uncle Taiwo tries to convince Jagua Nana to enter in his party. He thinks that her participation in Nigerian politics would be sensitive and persuades the women to vote for him . His cunning and persuasion is to remind her of materialistic trend of Nigerian politics.

Freddie also, like Uncle Taiwo, wants to be voted into power in order to represent people's concerns and interests to the council. But his main ambition is not to represent the masses' interest but his personal enrichment. Freddie Namme is very obsessed by the idea that politicians make much money very quickly. He considers that the only way he can earn money as soon as possible is to enter in politics. When Jagua Nana encounters Freddie Namme just after his return from England, she advises him to leave the field of politics arguing that Lagos' politicians are "smelly and dirty" and therefore politics unfit a gentleman like him. He seems to have lost all his moral sense because he is mesmerised by money. Jagua tries to advise Freddie to leave politics but in vain. In Cyprian Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana* we read :

> You're gentleman an' proud. Politics be game for dog. And in dis Lagos, is a rough game. De roughest game in the whole work'. Is smelly an' duty an' you too clean an' sweet [...] In hear rumour dat OP2 wan' to kill me man from your party. (137)

From this quotation, Jagua does not want to do politics because she sees politics like a dirty thing. But Freddie does not care about Jagua's advice because he has an excessive desire to get money quickly. He says that: "*I wan' money quick. Quick; an' politics is de only hope*" (137).

Contemporary African politicians, especially the Nigerian political leaders have a number of corrupt characteristics which they can use during the electioneering campaigns. During this crucial period, politicians are mendacious in all their deeds and speeches. They do whatever they can in order to attract more people into voting them on Election Day. Hence, a number of tactics are at their disposal. Firstly, political parties bribe voters by giving them much money, giving them dress or other things in order to make their rival candidates stand down.

The typical example is Uncle Taiwo. The latter's electioneering pros is conducted by means of the large scale bribery of voters. When Jagua Nana has accompanied Uncle Taiwo to electioneering complain, she suddenly sets him after a very striking and emotional message mounting the nostrum and thrusting upon masses who are attending handful of ten shilling notes. Cyprian Ekwensi comments:

> Then he opened his black bag and down moved among the people, scattering handful of ten shilling notes, like rice grain on bribe. The election ground had become a rigger round with the printed notes as the ball. Later, Jagua asked him where the money come from and he said: Is party money. I give dem de money like dat, so them kin taste what we goin' to do for them, if they vote us into power. (138)

From this quotation, we see how the OP2 candidate tries to corrupt people by giving them the money in order to trust in him. That bribe can make them believe that he will fulfil promises. This distribution of money among the voters has a great impact on their mind. It turns their intention and blurs their vision. They are therefore compelled to vote for their worthwhile future leaders according to the amount of money and material things they receive from them. In these

circumstances, the leadership talents and moral standards are far from consideration.

In the same novel, we see how Uncle Taiwo spendng most of his time with the people with the purpose to discover their views and thoughts about his party. He wastes a lot of money upon the masses. He pays fine in a court for any person held guilt. He also distributes cooking sores in the village and gives exercise books to school children; both cooking sores and exercise books go with the dissemination of his portrait. Jaguar Nana reveals it to Freddie when she meets him. She says:

> Election in Lagos! Jagua told him were not won by wearing smart clothes and appearing distant from their people. You had to show them you could do for them, before you won. You must associate with everyone, particularly the freedom of your time and thought your car and your room in such a manner only would you learn how they taught and acted. Uncle was disturbing money, presents to the people. She told him what happened only last week. She went with him to the court in Obanla and when anyone was fined, Uncle Taiwo promptly paid up the fine. Those men would surely vote for Uncle Taiwo when the time came. (136)

Jagua Nana reveals to Freddie how Uncle Taiwo uses many tactics of corruption during the campaign period.

Furthermore, during the electioneering campaigns the politician uses many tactics. During this period this politician uses the tactic of election promises. But these promises are far-fetched as they are intended to turn the whole world into the El Dorado. What is regrettable is the fact that they are likely to believe them as true, and hence vote them into power.

Contemporary political leaders are very demagogical in the delivery of their messages. They have some little knowledge of each audience they want to address and therefore they prepare the messages which fit each category of people and according to the problems that are haunting them at a given moment.

In addition, politicians are willing to behave in a barbarous and savage way toward their rival in order to get the position they eagerly need. They strive to eliminate any rival organisation as well. They do not care about human life. Their advantages are at the forefront and human life comes after. For instance Uncle Taiwo killed Freddie Namme because the latter is a political challenger.

The political leaders' tactics vary from good to bad and even to worse. In *Jagua Nana*, we see how Uncle Taiwo uses inhuman tactics so as to win over Freddie. In this regard, he exhibits a total lack of moral scruples in all his actions. Both Freddie Namme and Uncle Taiwo use thugs to threaten and beat up, if the opportunity arises. They give thugs to their members in order to protect their leaders in case there is any assault organised against them. Rather, the people who use these thugs must be strong enough and healthy to counter any rival assault. Ekwensi states a physical description of Freddie's thugs: "*Theses youths had the chiselled bodies of fighters. They wore brief shorts and briefer shirts. They were all biceps and calves. They had bull necks*" (139). They are also ready to commit a murder. Hence, in the campaign, we see how Freddie is badly beaten up by the supporters of OP2 and shortly dies afterwards. Jaguar is horrified at this death. We read that,

> How ordinary people she know become transformed by this strange devil they call politics. When so transformed a man placed no value on human life. All that mattered was power, the winning of seats, the Front-page appearance in the daily

> papers, the name read in the news-bulletins of Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation.

The quotation above shows us how Jagua Nana is disappointed by the so-called politics. After the election, she discovers that Freddie has been murdered by Uncle Taiwo's members for breaking faith with the party and failing to win a seat. This deal teaches Jagua Nana that politics is a dirty profession and only the dirtiest professionals remain eager to continue in it. V.S Naipaul in the *Mimic Men* says that: "Politics forms are a do-or-die, once for all-change" (94). These lines illustrate very well how politics is a dangerous game. They find it as a best source of getting rich easily and rapidly. But do not care about what may happen often.

As far as fraud and robbery are concerned, many people find it as another way of getting rich easily. In *Jagua Nana,* three characters are examples. There is Dennis Oduma, a taxi-driver and Jagua Nana. Through the characters, the author highlights how fraud is done in Lagos city. Ekwensi describes it in the following lines:

> The taxi-driver was the first to come up into room and hand over a small packet to Dennis who handed it over to Jagua with a smile... Jagua tore away the wrapping the gold strinkets sparked even more elaborately than those Dennis had given her the other night. (118-119)

We see Jagua making her interest in the business afterward: "*If is so, den when you go gold like dis one, you kin ring and we kin do business...*" (113) Generally fraud must go side by side with banditry and killing. Dennis Oduma wounds the policeman who shortly dies in hospital. He is hanged in turn because of that criminal act.

In *People of the City,* Aina the girlfriend of Amusa Song becomes victim of fraud. In fact, she steals a cloth and consequently is imprisoned: "You girl of

nowadays, you are too proud. You won't learn something useful, you won't marry, and you're proud. I'll teach you sense to the station!" (11). These lines show us how these delinquent young people like Bayo, Dennis Oduma and Aina face many problems in city. In the city, many people do not follow the norms of the society. They put away the values of the society in order to survive. In so doing, they use all means that come to their way, bad or good.

Materialism has been one of the widely debated issues in African postcolonial literature. For instance Ayi Kwei Armah's *Fragment,* the materialistic behaviour is due to the fact that modern Africa is suffering from poverty. Hence, wherever there is an opportunity to get money, one must profit from it. It means that nobody cares about the means to reach one's aim. What is important is the end, the success. Money is very important; it is the new god because everything is possible with it. In other words, without money there is no status. The idea that man's position is determined by his wealth is not something new. It has existed a long time before. However, the conceptualisation of the phenomenon differs now and in former times. Armah in his work *Fragment* states:

> A man's position in society was usually determined by his wealth. All the four titles in my village were taken-not-given and each had its own price. In those days wealth meant the strength of your arm. No one become rich by swindling the community or stealing government money. (5)

From this passage, Armah admits that high social position goes together with material possession. What he admires in the traditional way of life is that in order to be rich, one must work hard for it whereas in modern Africa, some individuals steal, misuse public funds or use any other dishonest way to get money. In the same way, Armah is thus commenting on the degree to which acquisitiveness and unrestrained corruption have much affected the sense of justice, the spirituality of

traditional Ghana which are replaced by social injustice and domination; the same situation applies in the Nigerian setting.

Coming back to Cypian Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana,* Jagua is highly materialistic. Like other people moving from the village to settle in the city, Jagua Nana falls in an abyss; they cannot extricate themselves. They ultimately realise that the facilities they were hoping in the city are so restricted. The number of jobs is limited for them because they are not qualified. Therefore, they become waste of the city, they become poorer and alienated.

Subsequently, from the alienation which is the feeling of being powerless to commit crimes; sell one's body or steal; etc. the socio-economic situation which characterises the city reduces them to mere brutes and immoral. They are living in world which is not theirs. As such, they are bound to survive through any means which come their way.

In a nutshell, this chapter has debunked the materialistic aspect lagging behind life in the city. From the prostitutes symbolised by Jagua Nana to the politicians represented Uncle Taiwo, we realise to which extent life in the city is material based. In fact, when people come to the city, they surely encounter many problems related to poverty. So, being in contact with those problems caused by socio-politico-economic system; these people are obliged to overcome those problems by searching a way out. They become greedy, liars and tricksters. They create political parties formally to serve the people but they are actually searching their own interest. They pursue this interest by whatever means. Instead of being "the men of the people they become the men of themselves" to use the expression of Chinua Achebe.

CHAPTER THREE

THE AUTHOR'S VISION

This chapter examines the motive behind the artist's creative process. It also seeks to evaluate the contribution of the African writer in changing the pervasive contemporary African society. In fact a writer must have a vision about his society. He does not sit and spend his time to produce a work of art, especially a novel without a purpose in mind. He has an objective to attain or a message to convey. The reader's role is then to unravel this vision or to read the message between the lines and discover what the writer wants to say exactly. In this part, our task is to highlight Cyprian Ekwensi's vision in of the society through the prism of *Jagua Nana*- the most read novel of all Cyprian Ekwensi's works of art.

Indeed, any novelist is committed to a role in his society. In the case of Cyprian Ekwensi, his role is revealed by Arthur Smith in his article labelled "Exploring the Breath, Range, Character, Scope and Reception of Cyprian Ekwensi's Writings". In the interview recorded Lewis Nkosi *Jagua Nana*'s author posits that,

> I think I am a writer who regards himself as a writer for the masses. I don't think of myself as literary stylist: if my style comes, that's just incidental, but I am more interested in getting at the heart of the truth which the man in the street can recognise than in just spinning words.(2)

In this extract, we realise that the author's concern is not that of a bureaucrat, he seeks to be as realistic as possible.

In fact, Cyprian Ekwensi sets Jagua Nana in a city- Lagos. The population of the city is an amalgamation of many people who differ very much from one another, depending on several facts: origin, profession, level of education... At the dawn of independence, African cities are occupied by both the colonisers and the Africans. In such an urban setting we also find many cultures and traditions. In this perspective, Frantz Fanon explains:

> A national culture under colonial domination is a contested culture whose destruction is sought in systematic fashion. It very quickly becomes a culture condemned to secrecy. This idea of a clandestine culture is immediately seen in the reaction of the occupying power which interprets attachment to traditions as faithfulness to the spirit of the national and as a refusal to submit colonial discourse. (46)

From the passage above, Fanon shows how culture is against domination in all means conduct to the fragment of the society it wants to dominate.

Cyprian Ekwensi in *Jagua Nana* uses this opportunity to show the threats of the city. According to the author, the city is cold, alien and barren wasteland. It is a place where people are dishonest, politicians are corrupt and neighbors are at hostilities. It is such a hostile world that the émigrés from the rural area are thrust into as prey. In contrast to the beauty and innocence of the country, here they are "daily confronted by wretched filth, decadence, hopelessness, and prevarication." Thus despite the superficial lustre they might see in the city their hopes of self-fulfillment are always beset with stifling setbacks, For the city has a formidable influence, a magnetic force that brandishes from a distance only its excitement, gaiety, and transient glitter, luring people to either destruction or downfall.

Cyprian Ekwensi depicts scenery of how women dress in Lagos, a symbol of moral decadence. We read :

> All the women wore dresses which were definitely under size, so that buttocks and breasts jutted grotesquely above the general contours of the bodies. At the same time the midriffs shrunk to suffocation. A dress succeeded if it made men's eyes ogle hungrily in this modern super sex-market. The dancers occupied a tiny floor, unlighted, so that they became silhouetted bodies without faces and the most un-athletic man could be drawn out to attempt the improvisation which went by the name High-life. (13)

In this extract, the writer paints a picture of a corrupt city. What is depicted here is not different from a market of prostitutes, one of the several effects of the city on the new migrants.

The city is found to cherish Jagua Nana with values diametrically opposed to those of her village. There "girls were glassy, worked in offices like men, danced, smoked, wore high-heeled shoes and narrow slacks and were free and fast with their favours." There no one stands in judgment over another for failure to fulfill any responsibility. In effect, Jagua feels relieved, for she cannot be held down to account for her failure to fulfill her responsibility as a woman and a wife as has been the case back home. She thus falls into the open but pernicious arms of the city. She keeps moving from one situation of desperation to self-satisfaction. At the Tropicana, a favorite night spot for the Lagosians, she entertains varying species of men. With the make-believe lustre of this degenerate world, its dim lighting making her look even more seductive and beautiful than usual.

Nevertheless, the above described perception is just an illusion. Far from, the Tropicana, real life is lived otherwise. In *Jagua Nana,* the writer gives a clear picture of the room where Rosa was staying. We read:

> Jagua looked at the degradation. Bare floor which came off in powdery puffs if you rubbed you foot too hard. The bed was in the same room, wooden with a mattress stuffed with the kind grass cut off by prisoners at the racecourse. Rosa had become- like many women who came to Lagos, like Jagua herself- imprisoned, entangled in the city, unable to extricate herself from its clutches. The lowest and the most degraded standards were to her preferable to a quiet and dignified in her own home where she would not be free. How am I better? Jagua thought. She ought to have remained in Onishta with brother Fonso and tried to become a merchant princess. Or better still she ought to have married Chief Ofubara. (165)

In the above, we realize how miserable Rosa and Jagua are living in Lagos. The housing condition is worse and Jagua Nana regrets why she has come in the city. We observe with sympathy how she wonders what she is doing in Lagos. She is full of anxiety, and she suffers from homesickness.

In *Jagua Nana*, prostitutes are presented generally as victims of the city drifting along with it. The young prostitutes go to the Tropicana daily expecting something to happen that could put an end to their poverty and starvation. Lagos therefore is where many others are practically strangers in a town where everyone there has come to make fast money by faster means. Its bright lights, its noise, its suffocation, have in time become her friends. It is against this environment that she decides to go back home, in her village.

Once there, the full effect of her corruption by the city is fully realized when the villagers of Ogabu ridicule her values and her standards:

> The women fixed their eyes on the painted eyebrows and one child called out in Ibo 'Mama! Her lips are running blood!...' Jagua heard another woman say, 'She walks as if her bottom will drop off. I cannot understand what the girl has become.' (179)

Jagua's abandonment to the excesses of city life only leads to her drifting away from true self-knowledge. She thus escapes by living momentarily, intensely, desperately, without use for social conventions. But upon realizing that the Tropicana was a mere illusion which she must quickly renounce to attain a new life, the big change begins in her life.

So far, we have made a description how the city affects negatively the life of new migrants. Cyprian Ekwensi presents Jagua Nana- the main character of the novel as a symbol. Though this character, the author denounces all the excesses, the corruption, alienation, and brainwash that the city imposes to the new immigrants. At start, the latter have a false image of the city, they think of it as a paradise, a place of sweet events, and all the happiness. However, the pleasure of the city is quickly shadowed by the disillusion. The city becomes the hardest place to be; and the author wants his audience to be aware of this reality.

In his novel *Jagua Nana,* Ekwensi depicts at length how far the African traditional way of life is undermined and destroyed by Western ideology. In so doing, he tries to show a full picture of Africa before colonisation. Africans live in brotherhood environment. They are bound to one another. Unity, ethical values, friendship, hospitality and communalism are their guidelines. An instance from Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana* shows it when Rosa visits Jagua:

> Mama, we have one who has come, Jagua said when her mother came in. "Her name is Rosa. In Lagos I knew her". Welcome, Rosa. You come well? She turned to Jagua. "She has eaten? Quick now give her food." (183)

This quotation shows that Africans are full of love. Unfortunately, things change so quickly with the introduction of Western values bring about a new turn in African traditional way of life. Socio-politico-economic evil gains the ground: sexual, promiscuity, social inequality, violence, murder, corrupt politics, individualism, materialism, etc. those are characteristics which determined Africa during colonisation till nowadays. Ekwensi's wants to make an appeal to moral perspective in his description. He wants Africans to be aware of the dangerous situation in which they are and cope with it successfully.

Through Cyprian Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana*, we discover that the author tries to produce politically committed literature, though he must have known that his primary interest lying in intimacy would suffer. Hence, he exposes the vices that occur in the political spheres. The politicians pretend to be involved in the public interest but actually they are seeking their own comfort. Thus, instead of making a real political competition, they intoxicate the youth with false ideologies and dress them against each other. This results in constant fights and clashes. In Jagua Nana we read that,

> She hurried to the hospital, but was told that Freddie had merely been treated for minor injuries. It was true he had been attacked. He and his group of rascals had been flying the banners of OP1 round the town and shouting their election slogans when a small bus bearing an equal number of wild ones shouting slogans of OP2 made straight for them and deliberately rammed into them. (140)

From the passage above, the youth involved in politics are working for their bosses. They do not have any vision of their society, they have been filled with ideologies and they are so violent.

Violence is politics is so obvious in Cyprian Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana*. In some cases, this physical violence strained by a harsh political competition attains its apex and leads to murder of opposite challengers. As a vivid illustration, Uncle Taiwo shoots Freddy dead because the latter is a political rival. The author puts it in the following terms:

> The body of Freddie Namme lay on the bed, behind the mosquito netting. They said he had died in that long drive to the hospital. They had dressed it up in black with white socks and white gloves. The head was bandaged with cottonwool. (155)

In the above, it is clear that Freddie is dead. He has succumbed to the injuries he has got after men wearing the badges of his party have called him out of the Tropicana. Uncle Taiwo does the talk. Before this sad event he had said : "*You call 'm my man? Everythin'finish between we too. If I see road for kill Freddie, I kin do it*" (141). Uncle Taiwo said this in a conversation with Jagua Nana.

In fact, Cyprian Ekwensi is described as a city novelist in an interview given by himself in *Conversation with African Writers* edited by Lee Nichols. He says justifies they call him so: "The reason I have been called an urban novelist is that the bigger novels tend to deal with life in the cities where I have lived" (43). Ekwensi has a real understanding of the city and its people: "He is capable of describing them genuinely, without phonily inflated, operatic-type emotions" (124). Ekwensi constantly criticises the city for greed, impersonality, the lust and the corruption which he sees there. But his feelings are divided, for he loves the city as his liveliest writing is of life in the city Lagos.

Definitely, one must say that Lagos is almost the only setting he uses. Some critics such as A.B. Adnibigbe and J.F ADE Ajayi in *Lagos: The Development of an African City* believes that Ekwensi only achieves his goal when his novel is set in Lagos. They state:

> There is no doubt that Cyprian Ekwensi's best novel *Jagua Nana* owes its success to his sensitive response to his most productive milieu Lagos. For Ekwensi appears to be at his most convincing best when setting is Lagos. (220)

This extract clearly highlights the real responsibility of a writer- to bring a response to the vices of his society.

In *Jagua Nana,* Ekwensi shows the seamy side of the city. He describes Lagos as a city of sin and chaos. He gives the true picture of the city. He tries to confront his society (city) with its evils. The picture is one of the squalor, prostitution, corruption and criminality. Ekwensi, in his urban writing exhibits what the city in reality is: an illusion, a magnetic force that brandishes from its excitement, gaiety and transient glitter hurrying people either to destruction or to downfall. Yet, he has lived in Lagos for three decades; he is a great admirer of Lagos. His vision therefore is not the one of 'blackening' the city. Rather, in his literary rediscoveries of the changing dimensions of Lagos, he endeavours to preserve the African moral code that was being lost in the era of vulgar materialism. Far from the abstractions, Ekwensi bases his writings on true- to-life experience and epitomises it in all aspects of life in the city.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This work set out to show the immoral behaviour generated by the creation of the city and poverty which is undergone the Africans. In the course of our analysis, we discovered that some people leave the country and go to the city because they are poor. They are not happy with their misery and they decide to leave their villages which are seen as the source and cause of their misfortunes.

In addition, we discovered the evil ways of the city with its hardships. We realised that the creation of the city caused the destruction of African norms. The African behaviour is replaced by the Western ones. The city destroys more than it builds the lives of Africans. African people move from countryside to the city expecting to change their way of life but in vain because the city becomes hostile to them. Worse of all, it has been shown that the city is a place where individualism and the pursuit of material wealth override all consideration a place where people come to make fast money by faster means. These words can be found in Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana*. In the city, people do not care about the moral norms. In fact, the city weakens moral and contributes to the destruction of norms because of its inhuman surroundings. Ekwensi, like other urban writers, puts out the moral depravities of the city. In his work, he tries to show city's corruption, prostitution on the character of Jagua Nana and Uncle Taiwo are depicted.

In *Jagua Nana*, Ekwensi has shown Lagos as a city of sin, evil and chaos. The research shows that Ekwensi's city is not necessarily a place of financiers, liberty and happiness, but rather as a place the poor and destitute people whose problems are unrelated to passionate longings for the sensual in woman and the exotic in life.

The research has equally shown that Lagos is everywhere in Nigeria as in other African cities; which means that what happen in Lagos can also be happen in other African cities.

Moreover, in this research, we found out that there is no place for the traditional values in the city. As we have seen in Ekwensi's *Jagua Nana* we realize that life in the city is very harder than life in the village where life is very simple.

Furthermore, the research shows that even through there is a negative impact of the city, the young African people leave their villages for the city expecting to improve their standards of living. Here, we focused our attention on the effects of poverty on the lives of the young who migrate to the city. It has been shown that when these young people arrive in the city they find themselves in poverty and alienated because of the existing socio-economic system which prevail in the city.

This work showed how from poverty and alienation, the immoral acts like: prostitution, killing, corruption, etc can replace the moral ones. All these immoral acts prove the immigrants adopting such immoral behaviour in order to struggle for survival. They use all means come to their way because they have no choice.

This study equally explained how immigrants, being rude-awakened by the city life, come to redeem themselves. They become aware of their situation. Instead of becoming wealthy as they expected it, the city becomes a complete failure to them. So, they realise that their ambitions are not achieved. So, they finally decide to go back to their villages where they will try a new life and perhaps be successful.

Though his books, one is surprised to see how he treats some bad characters and makes them change into good people. In his work, he does not want to ridicule his characters but he wants them to be conscious of what they do to open their eyes and overcome the evilness of the city.

This work explained Ekwensi's critics and with socio-politico-economical problems that modern Nigeria is confronted with in day-to-day life. And these

problems are generally common all over Africa. We believe that a change for the better would take place if pressure of the rotten socio-economic system is redressed. Otherwise as Senkoro says:

> There will still be millions of Jagua's in the capitalistic world who still continue suffering the humiliation of selling themselves if nothing is done about the system that breeds the casual conditions. (*Prostitution*, 49)

Finally, we cannot say that this work is an exhaustive study about our Africans'new nation are undergoing these problems as western values are gaining the ground in all works of life. We hope that other interested scholars will extend the topic with open, wide and so contribute to the improvement of African literature.

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