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Politics and the influence of media in Chinua Achebe's anthills of the Savannah and tanure Ojaide's mathers of the moment

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UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI



FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

POLITICS AND THE INFLUENCE OF MEDIA IN CHINUA ACHEBE' S *ANTHILLS OF THE SAVANNAH* AND TANURE OJAIDE'S *MATTERS OF THE MOMENT*

By

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree **«Licence en Langue et Littérature Anglaises»**

Bujumbura, January 2017

DEDICATION

To my parents,

To my sisters and brothers,

To you who are dear to me,

I dedicate this work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this work is the result of the joint effort of many people to whom I owe gratitude.

First, thanks go to my supervisor, Mr Nganyu Dominic Nformi, who accepted to supervise this work. His criticism and suggestions were pivotal in the completion of this work.

Second, I would also like to thank all the lecturers in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Burundi for the knowledge they imparted to me.

Third, I am also grateful to my parents for their financial support during my studies.

Last but not least, I express my gratitude to my friends for their moral support.

ABSTRACT

This study treats political dictatorship and the influence of media in Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* and Tanure Ojaide's *Matters of the Moment*; by examining causes of the political failure as a result of journalistic activism in these novels. Our work is written based on the hypothesis that the role of media in Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* and Tanure Ojaide's *Matters of the Moment* is instrumental in the fight against political injustice. The study concludes that the cause of the adverse relationships between the government and agents of the media who are committed to the cause of the marginalised is because the pseudo rulers want to hide some of the ills which the men of media expose. Constructed against the New Historicism theory, this study situates the analysis of the two novels within the power struggles that characterise Nigeria after independence.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the Study

Nigeria is essentially an artificial creation which, like most other African states, is a product of colonialism. This fact is central to understanding the country's government and politics, which has been conditioned by the problem of accommodating several diversities: ethnic, linguistic, geopolitical, religious and so forth. Nigeria became politically independent on October 1, 1960, after about seven decades of colonial rule by the British.

In the pre-colonial period, a pronounced religious gulf separated the northern from the southern people. Islam had been introduced to the Hausa and other northern parts, and the southern people were devotees mainly of traditional religions who underwent increasingly contact with Europeans and Christianity. Also the uneven rates of economic and educational development between the northern and southern people persisted, with the important consequences to the government and politics. At the same time, with the creation of three regions that saw the northern region larger in size and population than the two southern regions, there was also the fear of northern domination.

Despite the periodic creation of more states during the postcolonial period, these regional feelings continued to affect national politics especially in the distribution of national resources. Another consequence of these regional and ethnic divisions was the fragmentation of the national elite. Unlike a few other African countries, Nigeria had no fully national leader at independence. Nnamdi Azikiwe, an Igbo who had the potential for becoming a national leader, was forced by regionalist pressures to become sectional leader. (Qtd

from countrystudies.us/Nigeria/67 htm). Nigeria was cast under the shadow of the intransigencies associated with ethnic politics. This perpetual challenge led to the leadership failure.

Chinua Achebe in his book *The Trouble with Nigeria* addresses Nigeria problems and inspires them to reject old habit which, inhibit Nigeria from becoming a modern and attractive country. In this famous book, he professes that the only trouble with Nigeria is failure of leadership because with good leaders, Nigeria could resolve its inherent problems of tribalism, lack of patriotism, social injustice and the cult of mediocrity, indiscipline and corruption.

The resulting effect of the failure of governing by the civilian leaders was the intervention of the military. In Nigeria, which typifies the scenario just presented, the military rule was usually seen as "a rescue operation" necessary to save the country from civilian ineptitude. Nigeria is amongst other African countries which experienced many military coups. However, in countries where the military has become almost a permanent feature of politics, the military rule is still considered as an aberration and symptomatic malfunctioning of political system, especially as the military goes with dictatorship. Worse still, the military was not expected to last so long, once the rescue operation was complete. They should return to the barracks where they belonged and leave the governing to the civilian politicians.

The nature of the Nigerian society has greatly influenced the history of the Nigerian media. In the postcolonial period, media become the instrument of well-known politicians which used to achieve political aims rather than as informants and educators of the public. That was simply because people in politics are aware that media is the tool of power as it help them during

propaganda. The attainment of Independence in 1960 coincided with the reshaping of Nigerian press (media) in the sense that most of proprietors of the then available newspapers were politicians in the colonial era and saw the presence of the press as an instrument of acquiring their different aspired office to the extent that those who did not have any print media were motivated to establish their own-and as a matter of fact there papers were serving their proprietors interests bared on the adage which says "The piper dictates the tune". This is certainly true of Nnamdi Azikiwe who was the founding editor of the "West African Pilot" in around 1937.He used his press in the propaganda to reach the power. Reuben Abati (1998) stated thus: "At every moment in Nigeria history, the press has been at the forefront, manning the barricade. The centrality to the issues of the day and lives of the people has brought the Nigerian press much prevailing from colonial time; it has been treated as a major tool of power. Opposing power centres which feel threatened by its dynamism invariably seek to control the press through several means in which politicians later result to misuse of mass media to achieve their selfish desire".

Throughout the military era, only the government owned electronic media. The workers of such outfits were usually turned into propaganda machine often against the dictate of their own conscience with demotion, stagnation and outright termination of appointment as the price for choosing to uphold one's conscience and ethics of your profession, a case of he who pays the piper dictates the 'dance" not only the "tune".

The 1980s witnessed the unprecedented proliferation of newspapers and magazines in spite of the depression. Media displayed a high level of sophistication and professionalism. It was a period that saw more of investigative and constructive journalism thanks to the training of African

journalists in Zurich, Suitzland in the 1970s. But that came at a time when corruption in the media had become brazen. It is then in an attempt to remain on competitive industry that falsehood became news.

Until the 1990s, most of all publications were government owned, but private papers like the "Nigerian Tribune", "The Punch", "Vanguard", and "The Guardian" continued to expose public and private scandals despite the governmental attempts at suppression. Journalists were arrested, detained or killed for exposing the corruption, nepotism, insecurity and brutality of the military as typified by Gen. Ibrahim Babanginda junta (qtd from doublegist.com/press-military-nigeria).Sanni Abacha is one among other military rulers who brutalized media practitioners, as well as Muhamadu Buhari, as professor Sam Oyovbaire point out it in his article "The Media and the Democratic Process in Nigeria."

In short, strong relationships exist between Nigerian politics and media with the general patriarchal character within the two. Politics attempt at banning the freedom of speech, and thus media became the target of political harassment especially during the military dictatorship.

2. Statement of the Problem

Policies in favour of the freedom of media constitute an asset for publishing and/ or broadcasting reliable information. In such a situation, the freedom of speech prevails, and then information or ideas of any kind could be searched, received, and spread without boundaries in written, oral, print or artistic form, or by any other way depending on individual's choice. Nevertheless, the freedom of the press is most of the time hindered by governmental politics, especially the military regime which is mostly characterized by dictatorship.

This is the case in Nigeria after the independence. The military dictators never allow freedom of press. They have often attempted to dictate the direction from which media has to operate. Thus, any media that contravenes this by unravelling the infelicities of the government in power is cracked down. This work therefore sets out to tackle this conflict between the politicians and the media.

3. Motivation

In the post independent Africa many media were government-owned, and served the government. As far as Burundi is concerned, some media houses are committed to praising political parties or the leaders in power. That has been observed since the first republic at the head of which was the military dictator. The creation of radio, television, or newspapers owned by private proprietors since the 1990s to date has brought about a certain change in media landscape as critics can be conducted. Currently, private media is undergoing hard times which are due to the political crisis this country is crossing. Of recent, we have seen media houses put on fire, journalists killed, some constrained into exile and others have been jailed. By referring to this situation of media in relation to politics, I am motivated to conduct this study on "Politics and the Influence of Media in Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* and Tanure Ojaide's *Matters of the Moment*." These novels reflect the situation of politics and fate of men and women of the media in our country today. The fact that I have an experience in journalism, I am motivated to explore the concept of politics and media in literature.

4. Research Questions

Some questions are outlined for the purpose of this study, and answers to these questions are attempted in the course of the study. The following are the questions that guide our research:

- What are the injustices of governments in the novels under study?
- What is the influence of the media on politics?
- What is the impact of media on politics?

5. Aim of the Study

This study examines politics and the influence of media in Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* and Tanure Ojaide's *Matters of the Moment.* It tries to reveal the causes of the political failure in post-colonial Nigeria as seen through the novels under study. This is done by examining the effects of power abuse not only on the masses but also on the military leaders. The study also explores the link between politics and the role of media by determining the causes of the adverse relationships which sometimes occur between the government and agents of the media.

6. Hypothesis

This study is written based on the hypothesis that the role of media in Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* and Tanure Ojaide's *Matters of the Moment* is instrumental in the fight against political injustice.

7. Scope of the Study

This work is centred on politics and the influence of media, using the books of Chinua Achebe and Tanure Ojaide respectively *Anthills of the Savannah*, and

Matters of the Moment. Though the attention is put on those two books, we draw inspiration from other relevant literary works of the same or other authors, and commentaries on politics and media in Nigeria.

8. Significance of the Study

This study on political malpractices and the ardent role played by the media will serve as a lesson to our readers. It will help them to make a thorough analysis of the situation of their respective countries throughout the experience of characters in *Anthills of the Savannah* and *Matters of the Moment*. As far as politicians are concerned, this study makes them be aware of some faults to avoid when one is in office. As for media men and women, this study can serve them as a lesson to stand firm and be committed in the struggle against injustice.

9. Definitions of Terms

For the good understanding of this study, it is worthy defining some key words which are politics, influence, and media. Politics refers to, according to the *Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary*, actions or activities which people use in order to achieve power in a country, society or organization; or the activities which ensure that power is used in a particular way. Politics may also be referred to as someone's beliefs about how a country ought to be governed. It is also the study of the ways in which a country is governed and how power is acquired and used in a country.

According to *The Palgrave McMillan Dictionary of Political Thought 3rd edition*, politics denotes a kind of activity associated with government. With reference to Bernard Crick's *In Defence of Politics* (1962), this dictionary

stipulates that politics is the activity by which differing interests within a given unit of rule are conciliated by giving them a share in power in proportion to their importance to the welfare and survival of the whole community.

Media is explained by *Concise Oxford Dictionary Tenth Edition* as the main means of mass communication especially radio, television, newspapers regarded collectively. The word media comes from the Latin plural of medium. The traditional view is that it should therefore be treated as a plural noun in all its sense in English. Providing a similar definition, the *Dictionary of Media and Communication* defines media as the various forms, devices, and systems that make up mass communication considering as a whole including newspapers, magazines, radio stations, television channels, and web sites.

As far as our work is concerned, the definitions mentioned above are contributory to the understanding of politics and the influence of media in post-independence Nigeria, as reflected in *Anthills of the Savannah*, and *Matters of the Moment*.

10. Biography of Authors

Chinua was born in 1930 in the village of Ogidi in Eastern Nigeria. Raised by Christian parent in the Igbo town of Ogidi in southern Nigeria, Achebe excelled at school and won scholarship for undergraduate studies. He became fascinated with world of religions and traditional Africa culture, and began writing stories as university student. After studying medicine and literature at the University of Ibadan, he went to work for the Nigerian Broadcasting Company in Lagos. He is best known for his first novel *Things Fall Apart*, which is the most widely read book in modern African literature. It has been published in 1958 and has been over eight million copies, and has been

translated into at least 45 languages. It was followed by *No Longer at Ease*, the *Arrow of God* which won the first New Statesman Jock Campbell Prize), then *A Man of the People* (a novel dealing with post-independence Nigeria) *Anthills of the Savannah* was shortlisted for the Booker McConnell Prize in 1987. Achebe has also written short stories and children's book, and *Beware Brother Soul*, a book of his poetry, won the commonwealth poetry prize in 1972. A collection of essays and literary criticism, *Hope and Impediments*, was published by Heinemann in 1988.

When the region of Biafra broke away from Nigeria in 1967, Achebe became a devoted supporter of Biafran independence, and served as ambassador for the people of the new nation. The war ravaged the population, and as starvation and violence took its toll, he appealed to the people of Europe and America for aid. When the Nigerian government retook the region in 1970, he involved himself in political parties but soon resigned because of the frustration over corruption and elitism he witnessed.

Achebe lectured at universities in Nigeria, Massachusetts and Connecticut; and among many honours he received are the award of a Fellowship of the Modern Language Association of America, and eleven honorary doctorates from universities in Britain, the USA, Canada, and Nigeria. He followed Heinrich Boll, the Nobel Prize winner, as the second recipient of Scottish Arts Council Neil Gunn Fellowship. In 1987, he was recognized in Nigeria with the Nigerian National Merit Award- the country's highest award for intellectual achievement.

Chinua Achebe lived in the USA for several years in the 1970s, teaching at Bard College; and returned to the United States in 1990 after a car accident left him partially disabled. Achebe's novels focus on the traditions of Igbo society,

the effects of Christian influences, and the clash of value during and after the colonial era. He was married and has four children. Achebe died at age 82 following a brief illness.

As far as Tanure Ojaide is concerned, he was born in 1948. Tanure was raised by his grandmother Amreghe, who taught him songs, folktales, myths and legendary of Urhobo people. He attended a catholic elementary school before attending George's Grammar in Obinomba. On completion, he went to Federal Government- College, Warri in 1966, because of political problem, in the north then. After his higher school, he attended the Universities of Ibadan where he received bachelor's degree in English, and Syracuse University, where he received both M.A in creative Writing and a PhD in English. It is where he bonds with a classmate, Niyi Osundare, now a poet of note. There, they received literary baptism from the works of legendary Leopold Sedar Senghor, J.P Clark, Wole Soyinka, and W.B Yeats, Christopher's Okigbo, Ezra Prourd, and T.S Eliot.

A fellow in writing of the University of Iowa, his awards include the Commonwealth Prize for the African Region (1987), the All Africa Okigbo Prize for Poetry (1988, 1997), the BBC Arts and Africa Poetry Award (1988), and the Association of Nigerian Authors Poetry Award (1988, 1994, and 2003). He is also the recipient of the 2006 UNC Charlotte's First Citizen Bank Scholar Medal Award for his writing and academic accomplishments. Ojaide taught for many years at University of Maiduguri in Nigeria, and is currently professor of African- American and African studies at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, where he teaches African/Pan-African Literature and Arts.

Ojaide has written many books, including poems, fictions. He is a prolific Nigerian poet and writer. He is noted for his unique stylistic vision and for his intense criticism of imperialism, religion, and other issues. Among the poems he published, are *Children of Iroko* and other poems (1973), *Labyrinths of the Delta* (1996), *The Eagle's Vision* (1987), *The Blood of Peace* and other Poems (1991), *Invoking the Worry Spirit* (1980), *The Fate of the Vulture* (1997), *The Endless Songs* (1987), *Delta Blues and Home Songs* (1990), and When It No Longer Matters Where You Live (1999). Historical texts include Poetic Imagination in Black Africa, Essays on Africa Poetry (1996), and Poetry of Wole Soyinka (1994). Among fictional works include *Matters of the Moment* (2009), *The Dept- Collector and Other Stories*, *The Activist* (2006), *Sovereign Body* (2004), *God's Medicine Menand Other* (2004). Ojaide sabbatical leave to Whitman College, Walla, Washington, Where he was the Visiting Johnston Professor in 1989/90. After that year, he took up an appointment at the University of North Carolina, where he still teaches.

11. Theoretical Framework

The New Historicism dates back to Stephen Greenblatt's use of the term in 1982 in an introduction to an issue of the journal *Genre* devoted to the Renaissance. In general, both Greenblatt and subsequent critics identified with the New Historicism rejected that it was a theory or a doctrine. Rather they identified some persistent concerns and approaches such as the rejection of the formalist notion of aesthetic autonomy and situating literature within a broader cultural network. Louis Montrose stressed that this contextualization of literature involved a re-examination of an author's position within a linguistic system. Montrose also points out that New Historicist variously recognize the ability of literature to challenge social and political authority.

In fact, New Historicists conceive of a literary text as situated within the institutions, social practices, and discourses that dominate the culture of a particular era. New Historicists seeks to find meaning in a text by considering the prevailing ideas and assumptions of its historical era. They also concern themselves with the political function of literature and with the concept of power, the intricate means by which cultures produce and reproduce themselves.

In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe describes Nigerian postcolonial politics which was dominated by malpractices, a fact which impacted media. As far as *Matters of the Moment* is concerned, Ojaide interprets power abuse by Nigerian leaders after independence, and the position of media in relation to that misuse of power. As New Historicism is based on the idea that literature should be studied and interpreted within the context of both the history of the author and the history of the critic, we can then say that this theory is quite relevant to our study since both Chinua Achebe and Tanure Ojaide are Nigerians. As for their fictions, they reflect the external reality of what was taking place in Nigeria during the military era.

12. Literature Review

Both Chinua Achebe's and Tanure Ojaide's works have been of interest to many critics. Chidi Maduka in his essay "Chinua Achebe and the Military Dictatorship in Nigeria: A Study of *Anthills of the Savannah*" argues that Achebe deftly opens the novel with an apt dramatization of the power game which is a major concern of the work. Sam is a power seeker who ruthlessly silences the opposition in order to show that he constitutes a formidable power base capable of resisting the assault of political opponents.

In this point concerning power, Onyemaechi Udumukwu in "Social Responsibility in the Nigeria Novel" makes that in *Anthills of the Savannah*, the leaders' lack of contact with the aspiration of the ordinary people manifests an attempt of leaders to reduce national interests. This is evident in the indiscriminate scramble among the leaders for political power as a mean of attaining financial profits.

Reviewing *Anthills of the Savannah* in "Powerful People", D.A.N Jones argues that when Achebe writes about men of power- presidents, ministers, civil servants, police, chief- he knows what he is talking about. He is something like Conor Cruise O'Brien in this respect, better informed about governments than most novelists and professors; and thus, thanks to his biography: since 1954 he has worked for the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation, he held high office in one of Nigerian political parties, he has been professor in Africa and United State.

Beth Soucar in "Ideological Positioning in *Anthills of the Savannah* and *The Remains of the Day"* denounce the imposition of an oppressive leadership. He states that by the time people find themselves in maintaining responsibilities of a power structure this will help to dehumanize them. He adds that Africans are responsible for establishment and perpetuation of social and political disorders there around. He also holds the view that anyone should take his own responsibilities in the shifting structures, and not just ascribe to those currently in power.

Brandon Wilkening in "Political Life in Modern African Countries" writes that Ikem was the most convincing and sympathetic character. While he openly criticizes the regime, he is not naïve revolutionary. There is a great scene when he gives a lecture to a group of university students. While he urges them to

vigilantly pursue their conviction, he also takes a few jabs at Marxism theories of imperialism. Wilkening adds that he thought Ikem's character is probably to Achebe's own views, while he faults the west for its general neglect to Africa and frequent embrace of its authoritarian leaders, he also places much of the blame for its predicament at the feet of its own corrupt, self-interested leaders. As far as Bill Jackson was concerned with criticizing western influence to African societies, he suggests, in his "An Evocative Return to the Themes of *Things Fall Apart"*, that as in *Things Fall Apart*, the insidious influence of the west is depicted mostly indirectly. While there are no major European characters, the cynicism of western expatriates and the cruelness of the American journalists are reflected quite well in two minor characters, a British doctor who administers a local hospital and a Visiting American reporter. More often, though, the spectre of western influence hovers in the background. One sees it in the alienation of the lead characters from their roots, most vividly in Beatrice's reminisces of her village childhood and university days in Britain. He added that in the end of *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe seems not to so much to be blaming the west for African problems as pointing out the ways in which, years after independence- and even longer since things "fell apart"- African societies continue to struggle with legacy of colonialism. The villains are not Europeans but the opportunistic soldiers, politicians, and businesspersons who came to power after the departure of the colonists.

Theodora Ezeigbo in Comparing the Character of Beatrice in Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* to Ayi Kwei Armah's Maanan in *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, hold that Beatrice is "... a sensitive leader of a building group of oppressed nation" (53). While Maanan overcomes pain in order to be of good service to her people by inspiring them to be serviceable to the community: this positive portrayal of female character by male characters can be a quoted to the strength of feminism in African literature. Ezeigbo confirms

that most African male writers who had formerly relegated women's experiences to the background are now focusing to the creative sight on women.

Jason M. Smith in "The Continuing Colonialism" examines the question of leadership I *Anthills of the Savannah*. He argues that the elites who replaced the white masters taint and look down on the poor people they rule. He describes the summary public executions in the novel, and oppression which were meant to their own people, and this becomes the reminder of the imperialistic rhetoric for the oppression of the poor. He concludes that despite the change of government, the essence of white colonialist attitude remains.

Simon Gikandi in "Reading the Achebe: *Language and Ideology in Fiction"* suggests that *Anthills of the Savannah* is the presentation of the political crisis that mark the transition from the colonial system to a postcolonial situation. He also points that Achebe seems to be particularly concerned with those forms of narrative which would rewriting our history by 'creating a timeless and autonomous version of events so that they can speak to future generation'. Within the same text, John Swann remarks that Anthills of the Savannah is involved in the genesis of history, but does not follow upon the implication of his own phrase, to also understand the how genesis is not simply the beginning of history, but the first moment in the predetermined history.

As far as Tanure Ojaide is concerned, many critics have been interested in his works. Terhemba Shija, in Exile and Globalization in the Poetry of Tanure Ojaide: A Study of *When It no Longer Where You Live*, writes that Ojaide's philosophy approximates to the concept of globalization which seeks to promote ideas of universal human rights, universal order, free trade controlled by market forces, and even the universal concept of liberal democracy.

Kwameh Dawes in a book review of Ojaide's "Poetic Imagination in Black Africa", states that "Ojaide's prose is decidedly plain, direct, and almost pedantic in style. He writes his essays with a simple logic that is built upon a series of careful considered examples." Clearly, Dawes' assertion translates into the merit of Contemporary African Literature: New Approaches. Each essay shares with the reader Ojaide's fresh insight into topics that have never been covered by other critics of African Literature.

In the same vein, Uzoechi Nwagbara, in his "Political Power and Intellectual Activism in Tanure Ojaide's *The Activist*", puts that for Ojaide, works of art should accommodate socio-historical experience, mediating the goings-on in the body politic through literature. He adds Ojaide's observation on literature saying that '' Literature has to draw attention to the increasing gap between the haves and have-nots. Literature has become a weapon against the denial of basic human rights'' (1996: 42). In this same paper, Nwagbara points out that Ojaide is famous for his commitment to using poetry to bring the travails of the Niger-Delta to light. But in order to realistically portray Nigeria's post-colonial, Ojaide makes use of the novel. This is because it is the form that paints the most vivid, realistic and palpable picture of human existence. Nwagbara once again assumes that, according to Ian Watt in *The Rise of the Novel*, the distinctiveness of this genre is its implicit utilization of a realistic epistemology (1972: 13). Therefore, the novel is the most potent platform on which the societal ills of the Niger-Delta can be depicted. Uzoechi concludes that this is what determines Ojaide's choice of the novel to chronicle the present as part of the historical realities that have shaped the plights of the masses in the Delta, where the masses are in want in the midst of plenty.

Writing on "The Place of Urhobo Folklore in Tanure Ojaide's Poetry", Enajite Eseoghene Ojaruega states that within Ojaide's poetry, contemporary issues are sometimes reconstructed through similar episodes and events found in past Urhobo traditional oral history and folkloric heritage. This art of imagining back provides the writer with opportunity of using symbols, images, and techniques, as well as themes at a more public and postcolonial level. Enajite adds that Ojaide infuses his poetic writings with reference to his people's mythical and historical characters that have parallels with contemporary events. Mythical figures such as Ogiso, Ogidigbo, Aminogbe, Arhuarn, and Uvo have their modern- day equivalents in many of Ojaide's poems. He concludes that within Ojaide's poetry, whenever he examines some of the nefarious activities of some modern African leaders, Ojaide invariably finds their parallels in the character of the traditional rulers of the past. To illustrate it, Anajite tells of the Urhobo mythology which has it that in time past, the Urhobo people then dwelling among Beni people, were subjected to untold cruelty by the ruling of Ogiso dynasty.

In his paper "Aesthetic of Resistance and Sustainability: Tanure Ojaide and the Niger-Delta Questions", Uzoechi Nwagbara once again puts that, following Nigeria's mired politics and environment crisis, Ojaide has re-engineering the possibilities of his poetics so as to ensure that the leadership problem of the nation does not subsist. In his view, poetry is a functional, aesthetic, and ideological tool for environmental agitation. One defence against the meddlesomeness of poetry in the politics of the day is the urgency of the situation that it addresses. Nwagbara notes that the idea of poets in Nigeria as duty-bound to confront the political matters hacks back to the notion of poet in oral tradition as the spokesmen for the common people in the court of the powerful.

Alu Nesther A. and Suwa, Vashti Yusuf, in Tanure Ojaide: The poet- Priest of the Niger-Delta and the Land Saga, point out that Tanure Ojaide laments the deplorable condition of the Niger-Delta, using local rudimentary psyched sights of anguish, discomposure, and trepidation that streak his time and land. He paints the stench of human waste into words for the purpose of rescuing and salvaging the helpless victims of the exacting system. His sensibility to the situation makes the subject of the Delta a compact milestone in his ingenious mind as he uses it to uncover the deleterious social order in his society.

Apart from the above critics, our work analyses Achebe's and Ojaide's points of views with regard to the issues of power, and the political influence of media.

13. Structure of the Work

Apart from the general introduction, this work is divided into three chapters, and a general conclusion.

The general introduction gives an overview of the work. It is made of the background to the study, statement of the problem, motivation, research questions, aim of the study, and hypothesis. It also offers the scope and significance of the study, the definition of key terms and the biography of authors. It also provides theories applicable to the study, the review of literature; and brings out the structure of the work.

The first chapter entitled "Politics and the Influence of Media in *Anthills of the Savannah*" examines power abuses by Sam, the military ruler of Kangan. It also explores the journalistic activism of Ikem and to an extent Chris through

the "National Gazette" and how this conveys information which awakens the masses to resist the ruling system.

The second chapter entitled "Politics and the Influence of Media in *Matters of the Moment*, examines the military rule of General Ogiso by showing how this military ruler imposes socio-political and economic problems on the common man. It also analyses the state of freedom of expression and press during the military regime. It further determines the role of *The African Patriot* to which Dede Daro is an editor in fighting against Ogiso's injustice.

The third chapter entitled "Comparative Analysis" deals with the comparison of the first chapter to the second. It compares and contrasts the rule of Sam to the one of Ogiso, Ikem Osodi of the *National Gazette* to Dede Daro of *The African Patriot*. It ends up with the conclusion that the rulers in the two novels are characterised by greed and that the media in the two instances does not only awaken the people to the ills perpetrated by these dictators but also contribute to their fall.

The general conclusion synthesizes major argument raised in the work. It brings out findings and recommendations; and suggests possible areas for future researches.

CHAPTER ONE

POLITICS AND THE INFLUENCE OF MEDIA IN *ANTHILLS OF THE SAVANNAH*

1.1. Introduction

This chapter examines politics as reflected in *Anthills of the Savannah*. It discusses the political malpractices by Sam, the military ruler of Kangan. It also serves to demonstrate despotism within the military regime. The chapter further explores the political influence of media on the state as a political entity. In this sense, the chapter determines various ways Ikem Osodi, the editor of the *National Gazette*, tries to influence the public discourse. It also evaluates the impact of media on the society.

1.2. Political Malpractices

The postcolonial Nigeria experienced leaders without impressive competence in leadership. They broke the professional rules for their own benefits. As a matter of fact, corruption, injustice, negligence, and other political abuses increased. At a time the situation deteriorated, the masses remained ignorant of matters that hampered their development. However, despite that Nigerian leaders exploited their people, Nigerian writers thought otherwise. They used writings to expose improper practices which were done by their leaders.

With reference to Achebe's statement in "The Role of the Writer in the New Nation", he says that he wants to use literature in order to correct people's misconception about themselves, the one enforced by the British imperialist education that has taught them that they are inferior. In the same article, Achebe mentions that "the writer's duty is to help the people regain their

dignity and self-respect, by showing what happened to them and what they lost". Achebe's concern with his society is also manifest in his different works of literature.

In fact, Achebe's novels are political. He has always dreamt to change his society using literature. That is why most of his novels satirise the political misdeeds by post independent leaders whom he accused of being the source of Nigeria problem. In his book *The Trouble with Nigeria*, Achebe points out that:

> "The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squared a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with Nigeria character, there is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or water or air or anything else" but leadership. (1983, p1)

The novel Achebe published six years after Nigeria independence in 1960 seems to have drawn the attention of some Nigerians. In that novel, one can say of disenchantment. Achebe focuses on the mess that African politicians made of nationhood once they held the political power. Abuse of power, corruption, political thug, and electoral malpractices characterized the streets in broad daylight. Achebe predicted the fall of the civilian government and the introduction of the military coups, and chaos. That vision in the novel proved altogether accurate, since, days after the book was published in 1966, a coup ended Nigerian first republic and thrust the nation into a chaos that would claim thousands of lives. Micheal M. Ogbeidi, in "Political Leadership and corruption in Nigeria since 1960: A Socio-Economic Analysis", says that "The thinking of the first republic Nigerian leadership class was based on politics for material gain, making money and living well". This situation provided the

pretext for a group of young middle- rank army officer to sack the Nigerian first republic from power through a coup d' état on 15th January 1966 on the ground of corruption. *Anthills of the Savannah* is Achebe's preoccupation to show that the military governance is a regime that aggravated rather the same insanities which characterized civilian administration.

To start portraying the political game as described by Achebe in *Anthills of the Savannah*, we have to take into account Sam's belief about the governing of Kangan. In order to manage the governance, he thought of avoiding leading as a politician (civilian), but as a soldier. Achebe put it in this way: "You all seem to forget that I am still a soldier, not a civilian" (4).This note demonstrates the extent to which Sam prepared the nation to welcome the military order. Here, Achebe tries to explore the roots of dictatorship showing Sam's pride as a dictator. Under the military rule, Nigeria became a symbol of complete authoritarianism. Sam, the military dictator of Kangan also tries to enforce strict obedience to the authority. He uses violence and militarization of operations in order to sustain himself in power. Major Johnson Ossai reflects the military junta's effort to reinforce the power. Sam employs him in the frame of performing most of the brutal and violent operations. Achebe illustrates that:

> Every single action by this bright young man from the day of his appointment has given His Excellency good cause for self-congratulations for Major J. Ossai had been his own personal choice whom he had gone ahead to appoint in the face of strong opposition from more senior officers. (p 14)

Here, Achebe shows that the security forces help the dictator to hold on to power. Indeed Ossai works in accordance with the will of his commander, but

also cannot say no to the order of his boss. The fact that the secret police is identified as Samsonite (p 162), reveals that the police are not neutral. Therefore, the police are committed to forcing submission and loyalty from the masses through the perfection of killing, torture, intimidation, terror, and violence.

In this political novel, Achebe reveals problems facing newly independent African states. The prevailing theme and the most visible of the problems is the corrupt, dictatorial rule set up in Kangan (Nigeria). Although the rulers are no longer Europeans, African leaders distance themselves from their people. In this connection, Achebe reasons with another great novelist in Africa, Ayi kwei Armah, who shows how black leaders disappoint the common people. Here is Armah's comment in *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born:* "We were ready for big and beautiful things but what we had was our own black man hugging new paunches scrambling to ask the white man to welcome into our backs." (79)

In *Anthills of the Savannah*, the first instance of this alienation is the way Sam deals with the Abazonian delegation. Instead of going out to meet them by himself, he assigns someone else to do it: "Yes, I want you to go over the reception quadrangle and receive the waiting delegation there..." (p 15) This note proves the extent to which Sam cares less about his people. This displacement of Sam from the masses, which also affects his cabinet, perpetuated the malaise of the society. Consequently, the hope of the renaissance in the political situation wore off:

> I am not thinking so much about him as about my colleagues, eleven intelligent, educated men who let this happen to them, who actually went out of their way to invite it, and who even at

> this hour have seen and learnt nothing, the cream of our society and the hope of the black race(p2)

The quote above is Chris' notice, while witnessing the incompetence of the cabinet in handling country's matters, the ruling system included. The latter has been the obstacle to the growth of the society since it never opened doors to the freedom of Kangan citizens. And this could explain in part why even members of the cabinet did not react on problems which haunted the country. Thus Kangan people do not benefit from the fruit of independence, but still undergo hardship from black leaders. Henceforth, the best of the society that they expected from independence remain an illusion.

Furthermore, Achebe shows that the mess of the president of Kangan was associated with punishment to his opponents. The case in point is the Abazonians after voting against Sam's life-presidency. At this point, Achebe writes that:

> More shifting- eyes people came and said: Because you said no to the big chief, he is very angry with you and has ordered all the water bore- holes they are digging in your area to be closed so that you will know that it means to offend the sun. You will suffer so much that in your next reincarnation you will need no one to tell you to say yes whether the matter is clear to you or not. (127)

Given this note, we realize Sam's implementation of terrorism and intimidation associated with violation of human rights. That ban of the freedom of speech places Sam at the climax of dictatorship. With such a system of governing, rulers lose the quality of leaders and then become

masters. Sam serves an example since he is not responsive to the needs of the people. Worse still, he lacks honest communication with members of the cabinet- they do not relax in the presence of His Excellency- who could give him advice depending on their abilities.

Achebe built *Anthills of the Savannah* on Abazon in order to explore the causes of leadership failure in Kangan (Nigeria). With regards to the setting of Abazon in the north of Kangan, there is an idea of the geopolitical situation of Nigeria at independence. It was composed of three regions which were created on the basis of ethnic groups- the Hausa / Fulani in the North, Yoruba in the South- West, and Igbo in the South- East. These regional and ethnic feelings affected the Nigerian politics, the leaders as well. In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe raises the question of tribalism in order to expose trends which governed Nigerian leaders. Sam's refusal to assist the Abazonians was associated with tribalism even if he wanted to masquerade it: "Why does everything bad start in Abazon province? ... . I don't want to be seen as a tribalist ...." (p18)

Moreover, during his lecture to the university students, Ikem raised the question of tribalism within Kangan leaders. He said that: "Perhaps someone can show one single issue in this country in which students as a class have risen above the low, very low national level. Tribalism? Religions? Extremism? Even electoral merchandising." (p160)

In this concept of tribalism, Achebe demonstrates how the nature of the society has been an obstacle to the leadership growth. Corrupted by divisive ideas, leaders failed to unify the nation, a fact that occasioned incessant struggles. The Nigerian secession wars, especially the Biafran war (1967-1970), illustrate the aftermath of the leaders mismanagement to escape from tribalism in

Nigeria. Besides, the Igbo who often participated in decisions making, had a lively awareness of the political system and regarded it as an instrument for achieving their own goals. In "The Prelude: Bloody Coup of January 1966", Nowa Omoigui points out what Major IBM Haruna said when referring to Nigeria Army's Official history of the civil war:

The dominance of the North in the centre were like a threat to the presumed more enlightened and better educated Southerners who believed they were the backbone of the movement for Nigeria independence but did not succeed the colonial power to run the affairs of the state. So by that background one can now lay the foundation of the perception of the military struggle in Nigeria.

This superiority belief by southerners which is revealed above, determines the colonizer's contribution in reinforcing the divisions within the Nigerian society. The education that south people inherited from western people created in them the spirit of imperialism towards the supposedly inferior (northerners). Apart from this background, we realize that most Nigerian leaders became sectional because of the corrupt ideas they learnt from the colonizer in association with ethnicity. Therefore, Sam's military coup is Achebe's way to expose how the white imperialism affected African leaders; and not the rescue activities since there is nothing good that corrupt ruler brought to the nation, but oppression towards the lower class. In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe mentioned the story of the tortoise and the leopard to show that unavoidable class struggle, by referring to the Abazonians (northerners) who were determined to struggle against the oppressor: "... My people, that is all we are doing now. Struggling. Perhaps to no purpose except that those who come after us will be able to say: True, our fathers were defeated but they tried" (p128). This continuous struggle for change shows that Kangan and then Nigeria experienced the problem of leadership. *Anthills of the Savannah*

provides us a view that the military regime behaved in the same way as the late civilian rule. Here, Achebe had to reveal that Nigeria lacked selfless, non-corrupt and committed leaders, a fact that led the country to the socio-political and economic difficult situation. Quoting Apter in his article "Leadership, Politics and Social Change", Victor Dike puts that:

> Leaders make things happen, they are wave makers. A society without talented and committed leaders will retrogress or at best remain stagnant. That has been the problem with Nigeria. A careful examination of attitude and behaviour of the leaders of postcolonial Nigeria shows that many of the civilian, as well as the military leaders were mired in the pursuit of selfish personal goals at the expense of the broader national interest or needs. (Apter 1960)

The same article provides two leaders- instrumental and societal leaders- with their distinctive features:

> An instrumental leader uses power and influence primarily in the pursuit of private goals. Community objectives are secondary. His main cancer is to know how he can use his office to achieve personal objectives. He may not be lacking in social commitments, but in practice more consideration are given to self over the interest of the society which he governs (Eulau 1963, p96).
>
> As far as a societal leader is concerned, he is a public servant first and only secondarily a private person. For him power and influence are important only if they can be used to solve human problems. While the societal leader is likely to resign

> when he is convinced that he cannot influence change to the benefit of the public, the instrumental leader would hold on power as long as his private objectives are achieved. (Kofele-Koale 1976, p82)

Given those definitions above, we deduce from it Achebe's intention to display the behaviour of some Nigerian leaders who never dream to live the power in spite of their mismanagement to serve the country. In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe points at Sam's organization of a referendum for life- presidency:
"When we were told two years ago that we should vote for the Big Chief to rule for ever ...." (p126)

He also uses names like Excellency, Minister, Chief, and General in order to underline how Nigerian rulers sustained their instrumentalism as such titles allowed them to be treated like one. As a matter of fact, Nigeria underwent leaders corrupted by power which they ended up misusing. That is why we observe the political chaos which was due to the failing use of power, and thus, the perpetual military intervention. Achebe mentions that:

> The prime failure of this government began also to take on a clear meaning for him. It can't be the massive corruption through its scale and pervasiveness are truly intolerable; it isn't the subservience to foreign manipulation, degrading as it is, it isn't even this second- class, hand-me-down capitalism, ludicrous and doomed; nor is it the damnable shooting of striking railway- workers and demonstrating students and the destruction and banning thereafter of independent unions and cooperatives. It is the failure of our rulers to re-establish vital inner links with the poor and dispossessed of this country,

> with the bruised heart that throbs painfully at the core of the nation's being. (Anthills, p141)

These passages show that the military leaders of Kangan had divorced from the suffering masses instead of finding out solutions to the problems which haunted them. Here Achebe displayed the ruthlessness of the military towards Abazon people. The arrest of 6 leaders of Abazon delegation at maximum security prison reveal how repressive was the military ruler. Thus, we see that the military occupy the position vacated by the colonist.

Moreover, Achebe demonstrates the impact of instrumental leadership on the growth of the national policies. He shows that this governance system increase impunity associated with corruption. ''The Free Dictionary'' defines impunity as the exemption from punishment or the freedom from injurious consequences of an action. It is especially common in countries that lack a tradition of the rule of law, suffer from corruption, or that have entrenched systems of patronage, or where the judiciary is weak or members of the security forces are protected by special jurisdictions or immunities. As for Nigeria which suffered from tribalism, it was difficult for leaders to take appropriate measures in respect of the law. That is why extrajudicial killing, bribery and robberies never ended in Postcolonial Nigeria. Through *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe exposes extrajudicial killings perpetrated by agents of security forces against the government opponents (Ikem and Chris). He also criticizes the government of Sam to be made of thieves and robbers as a result of impunity. He puts that: "The rumoured twenty millions spent on its refurbishment by the present administration since the over-throw of the civilians who had built it at a cost of forty-five million may still be considered irresponsibly extravagant in our circumstances..." (p73).

This shows that the military regime improved nothing concerning the fight against embezzlement even if it was on the menu of the military. In that sense, Achebe attacks the military continuation of injustice to the people, since only ordinary citizens were punished while the big thieves in the government were not. Ironically, he says:

> Was he not standing right then, full grown, in other stolen lace and terylene, in every corner of that disoriented crowd? And he and all his enumerable doubles, were they not mere emulators of others who daily stole more from us than mere lace and terylene? Leaders who openly looted our treasury, whose effrontery soiled our national soul. (p42)

Furthermore, Achebe attacks members of the governments since they let His Excellency performed imperfections (p2), even if some of them had realized the people malaise: "I have watched my colleague in question closely in the last year or so and my impression is that he does not show any joy, any enthusiasm in matters concerning this government in general and your Excellency in particular" (P23).

T.M, Aluko also criticizes intellectuals in the cabinet who said nothing while they saw misdeeds within that cabinet. He put it through Alade Moses one of the corrupt cabinet members:

> He thought he knew what was right and what was wrong. But he also knew that since he became minister of state, many things have been done by his colleagues which were not right. Sometimes done by the cabinet collectively; most often done by individual ministers (*Chief the Honourable Minister*, p61)

In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe describes the cabinet which was blind to see the importance of changing the political system. Most of them had become praise-singers of the military in order to keep their political positions. This shows that power corrupted them and then failed to stand for their quality of intellectual. According to Wikipedia, an intellectual is a person who engages in critical studies, thoughts and reflection about the reality of society, and proposes solutions for the normative problems of that society, and by such a discourse in the public sphere, he or she gains authority within the public opinion. He participates in politics, either to defend a concrete proposition, or to denounce injustice usually by extending an ideology, and by defending a system of values. Therefore, the lack objectivity within cabinet members, in *Anthills of the Savannah*, led them to deviation. The Attorney General proved it as he started up telling lies:

> The reason is not far to seek. Two of you were after-all classmates at Lord Lugard College. He looks back to those days and sees you as the boy next door. He cannot understand how this same boy with whom he played all the boyish pranks, how he can today become this nation's Man of Destiny. (p23)

This false impression presented by a man of law to the oppressive military dictator is heavy. It is as if the Attorney General was warning Sam from the danger which might result from the grudge Chris held against him. He used the metaphor of Jesus trouble to show Sam that he might also risk the death just like it happened to Jesus. (p23). Here Achebe demonstrates that corrupt politicians can also shed blood of innocents in order to protect their positions. As far as the military dictator is concerned he uses all possible means in order to get rid of his enemy.

Another character portrayed by Achebe as deviant because of corruptive feelings, is Rev. Reginald Okong. He devoted himself to the spying for the military regime. This religious character represents Nigeria religious who have been involved in politics serving the rulers from their region in general, and the religion in particular. This policy based on exclusion in Nigeria constituted the wound of the national politics since there has been none to speech for the truth. Okong failed to support the ideas of Ikem even if they were realistic. In one hand, it is because he was, like other members of the cabinet, afraid to lose his confidence towards the military dictator. In the other hand, one may take into account Okong's religion which diverged from Ikem's origin (north). As a matter of fact, Okong plotted to destroy Ikem, as Achebe shows it through Okong's talk to his Excellency:

> Well, Your Excellency, I have been debating within myself what my path of duty should be. Whether to alert you, I mean your Excellency, on your relationship with Honourable Commissioner for Information and also the Editor of the Gazette (p19)

Here Achebe exposes the extent to which Nigeria politics is associated with religion. It is in case the Nigerian religious believes have constituted an obstacle to the peaceful Nigeria since then to date. The northern people who are composed of Muslims are often in conflict with the southern people dominated by the Christians. Henceforth, religious were mostly attached to ruler from their region; and this fact led them to deviation. In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Rev. Okong did not perfect faith which is the basis of religion, but put forward political knowledge he never used to build Kangan.

1.3.The Influence of Media

Media constitute essential means to convey information to a larger number of people. In times of crisis, media contribute to inform the population about that crisis. Media information also aims at shaping the public opinion. In Nigeria where political crisis has been observed since its independence, media played the role of political accountability. Newspapers, radio and television kept an eye on government officials, and policies. Edeani (1988, p173) supports the ideas that as a watch dog, the press is supposed to be locked in perpetual friction with the government, with the press always seeking to expose government failings and the government always striving to put a leach on the press.

Professor Sam Oyovbaire in "The Media and the Democratic process in Nigeria" says that, the press or media joined the enterprise of forging the country's democratic process. Thus they became a force to be dealt with by the government, while the media perceived and related the government as an embodiment of oppression of people especially in the post- independence political process as a consequence of the military dictatorship , which akin to colonial rule.

In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe frames abazonians to illuminate the influence media had on the society. He also shows that Kangan leaders recognized that media were the important force in the government. This could be the reason why Nigerian governments drew much attention from media. Actually, media have been the powerful instrument to take power either for civilian politicians or the military in Nigeria. The editorial of the *Daily Times* Newspaper of January 16, 1966 argues that:

> With the transfer of authority of the Federal Government to the Army Forces, we reached a turning point in our national life. The old order has changed, yielding place to a new one… For a long time, instead of setting down to minister to people's needs, the politicians were busy performing series of seven day wonders, as if the act of government was some circus show… Still we groped along as citizens watched politicians scorn the base by which they did ascend… (*Daily Times*, 1966)

The argument above proves the huge support media paid to the military intervention. In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe also shows that Ikem and Chris, the former editors of the *National Gazette*, helped Sam in toppling the corrupt regime of civilian politicians.

In the course of the novel, Achebe shows that Ikem divorced from Sam once he realized the military leader worsened the situation of the country. Achebe further demonstrates the government dealings with the media by capturing the freedom of speech within Kangan media. The military dictator of Kangan never tolerated the freedom of speech, not only to the masses as it happened to the abazonians, but also to the press. Achebe focuses on the official media in order to expose how media ownership has impacted negatively news coverage in post- independence Nigeria. Most of them had changed into the mouth-piece of the military: "Remember, he owns all the words in this country- newspapers, radio and television stations…" (p5). This shows that media has to work in accordance with the will of the regulator. Consequently, the lack of adequate information is unavoidable, and this victimizes the populace which remains ignorant in country's matters.

Moreover, the corruptive aspect of Nigerian media caused the latter to make much effort to avoid reprisal. This has also been mentioned in *Anthills of the Savannah*, while Achebe attempts at exposing how the political influence on media occasioned censorship. Censorship is defined according to Wikipedia as the suppression of speech, public communication or other information which may be considered objectionable, harmful, sensitive, politically incorrect or inconvenient as determined by the government, media outlets, authorities or other groups or institutions. In all its forms, censorship is often unjustifiable and is used simply to stop truth or ideas emerge which draw attention to powerful people or governments, or undermine ideology. Therefore, the announcement of Ikem's fatal wound by a gunshot (p169) is Achebe's evidence on the practice of censorship in Nigerian official media, especially under the military dictatorship. In addition to that, Achebe mentions that Ikem's editorials were judged too dirty records to play on air because they were revolutionary and inconvenient to the government; thus, not to be broadcast (p 60).

Furthermore, Achebe explains the military eye close to media by referring to the power which is in the pen profession. This is because media are capable of portraying and reflecting the society in which they operate; and consequently, could destroy the military by revealing his imperfections. Mahatma Ghandi accepts the existence of power in the press when he said that "The press is a great power but as an unchained torrent submerges the whole country sides and devastates crops, even so, an uncontrolled pen serves but destroys".

In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe puts the military awareness of the pen power with reference to the sergeant declaration: "Oh no. The pen is mightier

than the sword. With one sentence of your sharp pen you can demolish anybody. Hahahahaha. I respect your pen, sir..." (p131)

These lines above show that media capabilities exceed the military's, a fact that become the preoccupation of the military dictator. That is why we are told in *Anthills of the Savannah* the military use of repressive measures in order to face that awkward force. The most regrettable target of the military oppression is Ikem Osodi, the editor of the "National Gazette" who succumbed to that oppression because of standing up for the truth: "In the scuffle that ensued between Mr Osodi and his guards in the moving vehicle, Mr Osodi was fatally wounded by a gunshot." (p169)

This cruelty that Achebe describes in *Anthills of the Savannah* reflects the military dictatorship in Nigeria that never tolerated journalists who exposes the government misdeeds. Either Gen. Muhammadu Buhari (1983-1985) or Gen. Ibrahim Badamosi Babanginda (1985-1993) and Gen Sanni Abacha (1994-1999), imprisoned, arrested and tortured journalists who exposed corruption, nepotism, insecurity and brutality of the military regime. Despite the military regime little tolerance for dissenting voices, committed journalists consider it as question (topic) to be treated. In this sense, media have been involved in the democratic process by disseminating politically relevant information to a great number of citizens thanks to the watchdog role they performed. Also, the democratic press engaged in being the voice of the voiceless as Ikem in Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* did while speaking in the behalf of Abazonians: "I am only a mouthpiece- you will hear the words directly from him after the national anthem shall have been played backwards. Until then, beloved dear countrymen roast in peace." (p28). Bound to serve the public, Ikem spoke out the actions and the behaviour of Kangan leaders in order to awaken the masses on home affairs particularly the injustice that was being

practiced by the government. With regards to Ikem's zeal to work in an undemocratic environment, we can deduce from it professionalism especially as best journalists are professional who cannot be dictated.

In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe shows that Ikem centres his activities on the failing Kangan leadership. This is the information that citizens needs in order that they could understand the plight of the country. The image Ikem gave to the cabinet (a circus show: p118) is a metaphor of an entertainment company. This implies that the cabinet has forgotten what it owed the populace, and thus, buckled down to sing the praises to their master.

Ikem invested in political journalism to make use of his political ideologies of changing the military regime. Courage and determination helped him to show the community of Kangan his position about their political situation because he was aware of the victimization that they faced. This allows us to perceive Ikem's pity and concern for the suffering of Abazonians, in contrary to the ruthless president who flaunted the drought which caused the death of many Abazonians.

The time when much disorder is observed, is also an appropriate moment for an intellectual to make his intellect acts. Ikem uses his poetic art to criticize the military default and the blind followers of the military junta, but also to require the masses on their responsibilities for correcting it:

> The Sun in April is an enemy though the weatherman on television reciting mechanically the word of his foreign mentor tells you it will be fine over the country... No my dear countrymen you will not be fine until you can overthrow the Wild Sun of April (p27-28)

This note confirms the radical advocacy to change the system through revolution. Actually, April is a month when it rains in Sub-Sahara Africa, and it is very strange to have the sun rage. Once this happens, people must suffer from the drought because no one expects the sun in that rainy month. It is at this point that the sun becomes the enemy to the human being.

In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe uses the sun of April to make an analogy to the exploitation Nigerians were undergoing while it was a time for enjoying independence. We can say that Ikem's recourse on revolution and not reform is due to the fact that the military dictator was not willing to leave the power. Besides, reform could bring incomplete change; and thus, let the undemocratic government hold on to power.

Moreover, Ikem's composition of a Hymn to the Sun is Achebe's way to show the importance of critical journalism. This can be justified by the content of that hymn which is made of accusation intended to Sam:

> Undying Eye of God! You will not relent; we know it, from compassion for us. Relent then for your own sake; for that bulging eye of madness that may be blinded by soaring motes of an incinerated world. Single Eye of God, will you put yourself out merely that men may stumble in your darkness. Remember: Single Eye, one- wall- neighbour-to-blindness, Remember! (p30)

This allegorical Ikem's editorials aimed at revealing Sam's hidden responsibilities for Abazonians sufferance. He uses irony to make readers think deeply about what they already know and then put emphasis to the

central idea, and realize the difference between what is said and what they know.

The messages carried by Ikem were exciting, and placed him to the intense point of the extremism for struggle. He was also aware that change is a risky engagement because the military could not tolerate such a rebellion movement. Nevertheless, Achebe does not give much importance to the failure that could come up, but traces. To illustrate it, we can capture Ikem's story of the leopard and the tortoise at their meeting across the road: "Why are you here? Asked the puzzled leopard. The tortoise replied: because even after I am dead I would want anyone passing by this spot to say, yes, a fellow and his march struggled here" (p128). Here, Achebe shows that Ikem's words persuade successfully the populace to struggle for change. By evoking traces, we realize that Ikem and then Achebe knew that change may also cost lives of people. To have the masses undertook to undergo such pains proves the power of media. We can also see that Achebe puts the accent to the significance of memorials. He shows that they can track on the struggle left behind in the history by inspiring next generations to what happened to their ancestors.

Achebe also shows the involvement of students in politics. This is because politicians wish to win young dynamic people who can help them during propaganda. In other words, students can be the promoters of political ideologies. As far as democracy is concerned, these future leaders make the first move to understand how it works. That is why in different countries we learnt about students standing together to raise their voices against policies which affect them, social injustice and political malpractices.

In Nigeria, at the news of the Dimka-led military coup attempt of February 13, 1976, which led to the assassination of the then Head of State of Nigeria, Gen.

Murtala Ramat Mohammad, the Nigerian students, led by students of the University of Ibadan, were on the streets in a peaceful demonstration to protest and condemn the dastardly act, long before the coup was aborted. It is important to mention here that this activeness of student in politics was built up through students unions. The latter can be referred to as the leadership nurseries they facilitate debates between students who in turn learn to be tolerant in time of divergences.

In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe shows that the late editor of the National Gazette was a leading political scientist. Ikem has been clear in his analysis of the situation of Kangan differently from the way of Professor Reginald Okong. Achebe draws up these lines below to illustrate it:

> Mr Chairman, Sir... he said, bowing mock- differentially to the professor who had just been eulogized by the Students Union president as a popular academic admired by all and sundry for his clarity and Marxist orientation who, as the youngest professor in Kangan, had ably redirected political science from the bourgeois tendencies under professor Reginald Okong to new heights of scientists materialism. (p153)

Here we note that Ikem extended his political ideologies over universities. Achebe himself presents it when capturing the Bassa University students who invited Ikem to hold a lecture at university after his suspension. We can also learn about the students' close following up the country politics as they could differentiate negative ideologies from the positive ones. To have students sharing the same view with Ikem on the political meditation- the imperative of struggle (153)-is a symbol of their responsibilities to look after the welfare of

the citizens. Through the novel, Achebe shows that Ikem's mobilizing of Bassa University students resulted in demonstration against the government misdeeds in Bassa the capital city of Kangan.

Achebe further demonstrates that students have been more practical in the struggle for change initiated by Ikem as they carried on that struggle even after the murder of Ikem (189). Therefore, we can count much on the strength of Ikem's words which convinced a monde of intellectuals, and come up with the conclusion that media have boundless influence.

1.4.Conclusion

It has been observed in this chapter that the military leaders abuse power for selfish reasons. The military greed for power, the divisive ideologies initiated by the ruler, and repressive measures set by the military dictator of Kangan worsened the political situation of the country. It has also been noticed that the military's intransigence constitutes the origin of the political crisis of Kangan, since the oppressed and disenchanted masses decided to free themselves from military junta. As far as media are concerned, they play the role of facilitator of the political change. Through the information he spread, and his mobilizing of group of people, Ikem enabled the formation of activism.

CHAPTER TWO

POLITICS AND THE INFLUENCE OF MEDIA IN *MATTERS OF THE MOMENT*

2.1.Introduction

This chapter examines politics as reflected in *Matters of the Moment*. It evaluates leaders in terms of their political actions. The chapter explores political abuses during the military rule of General Ogiso. It discusses the soldier's mismanagement of socio-political and economic problems of Nigeria. This chapter also examines the correlation between politics and media. It determines the way politics affects media; and the impact media have on politics and government. The chapter focuses on *The African Patriot*, the independent newspaper which is engaged in a contest to fight the military dictatorship. It also demonstrates ways in which Dede Daro, *The African Patriot* editor, challenges the government of Ogiso through reports.

2.2.Political Abuses

The independence of Nigeria in 1960 brought little change to the welfare of Nigerians. Local leaders were not committed to resolving problems of the population, but to achieving personal goals. John Cartwright in his *Political Leadership in Africa* says that:

> If we look across the state of Africa two decades after independence explosion, it is clear that most rulers do not have this popular support, nor do most of them even try to rule in the interest of the people of their state. The predominant form of rule today in Africa has aptly been

> called ''personal rule'', a system whereby the head of state and his immediate hangers-on pursue only their own private good, while ignoring the interests and concerns of the great mass of the population. (2)

The note above shows that leaders use the political power to enhance their reputation. Thus, the populace remains subjected to enslavement, and economic exploitation.

Bassy Ude in "Form of Political Consciousness in the Poetry of Tanure Ojaide: A Study of *The Endless Song* and *When It No Longer Matter Where You Live"*, quotes Osofisan in "Press Freedom and its Enemies" blaming the illegitimate accession to power by Nigerian leaders. He writes that ever since Nigeria became a nation:

> First by the fiat of colonial masters, then under the post independence local rulers, we have had no other experience of governance but unfortunate leadership. Virtually all our governments have been illegitimate... either it is a government of civilians who have rigged themselves into power... or it is the a government of soldiers who have shot themselves into power (47-48)

This is to say that independent Nigerians have continued to undergo hardship from their fellow countrymen. As far as the military leadership is concerned, it is a regime which worsened the political situation of Nigeria since the military rulers were repressive, corrupt and undemocratic. It also drew the attention of many writers, like Tanure Ojaide who criticizes the atrocious regime of Gen. Muhammadu Buhari, Gen. Ibrahim B. Babanginda, and Gen. Sanni Abacha.

In *Matters of the Moment*, Ojaide shows that the military coups have been continual. He illustrates it when talking about another announcement of an army takeover of government after six and a half years (p31). This continuation of undemocratic governments over Nigeria caused the political disorder which further affects the masses. Ojaide contends that the military abused the power, violating human rights particularly to hold on to power. Alka Jauhari in "Colonial and Postcolonial Human Rights Violation in Nigeria" writes that:

> After independence the right of self-determination was granted to the Nigerian citizens through the independence constitution and by the subsequent constitution adopted in 1979 and 1993.But the military rule in Nigeria, which can also be called the rule by military decrees violated the constitution time and again and thus, violated the people ''right to self-determination. The military decrees were the orders issued by the military leaders upon assumption of power which would suspend the constitution and therefore violate the constitutional provisions. (The International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences. Vol.1 No 5, May 2011)

This quotation shows that the quick change of constitution by the military aimed at establishing the rule that might permit them to keep power. Ojaide illustrates that prolongation of the military ruling period as following:

> The gods of fear must be appeased before the president went to bed so as to have sweet dreams of being not only the richest

> man in the world but also the longest surviving president in Africa, which held that record in the world.(p32)

This note shows that the military rescue activities was the soldiers' trick to reach power since we see that soldiers were far from the idea of relinquishing power quickly. Ojaide adds here another important thing concerning richness. We observe that material profits are among other reasons which push the military to hold on to power. As the military become greedy for power and personal desire, the misuse of power is also compelling in order that the military accomplish his desire. In such a situation, the ruler sets up an unfortunate government to the populace. In *Matters of the Moment,* Ojaide captures the population's feelings about the junta:

> Tobore had never hidden his distaste for army boys running the governments. He continued to remind the military junta that the army was established to defend the country from foreign aggression and not meant to meddle in politics. He emphasized that whenever they have intervened in politics the consequence had been disastrous. He could see tyranny, rape, stealing and torture with impunity in military government. (p70)

The above passage proves that the military acts were terrible. It is at this point that Ojaide sheds light on the military political implementation of these acts to insure that none could harm the regime. Tyranny is according to "Cambridge English Dictionary", a government by a ruler or a small group of people who have unlimited power over the people in their country or State, and use it unfairly and cruelly. This definition is relevant to General Ogiso in *Matters of*

the Moment. The names he attributed to himself show his celebration of his total domination over the country. Ojaide states that:

> The General took the praise- names of Leopard and Cock. The leopard was the general of the forest. The cock ushered in dawn. He also called himself Agbraran! Lightning burns anything on its path. Still he called on his diviners for every phenomenon that threatened his assumed power to control everything. (p32- 33)

Still on this notion of names, Ojaide paint the cunning animals to reflect the tyrant's cunningness towards his opponents. He also draws up the pride of General Ogiso's experience in cruel dealings:

> An experienced general did not hurry into war. He took time to plan and to surprise his enemy. A surprise attack from nowhere always helped. He possessed the patience of the crocodile. He would wait for the opportune time and even weep profuse tears like the crocodile, after swallowing its victim. (p141)

This quotation reflects the conclusion Dede Daro came up with after the government reaction on the death of Ena Tobore, the publisher and editor of the *African Patriot.* Ojaide says that:

> The following morning, a special government bulletin that was read on the radio and television conveyed sympathies to the family of Dr Ena Tobore on his violent death, as it described it. It spoke of his heroic contribution to the cause of journalism

> in the country and that his place in the history of the press in the country would be difficult to fill. Dede knew this was a typical crocodile shedding tears; whoever killed Ena Tobore must be a part of the government, he believes. (p150)

Power abuse and misuse result from a well-organized tyrannical system. In other words, the success of tyranny requires a methodology which enables autocracy and oppression. John Roland in "Principles of Tyranny" talked about the methodology of tyranny. He sets up a series of methods to establish a tyranny in which the public information and opinion are controlled. This begins with withholding information, and leads to putting out false or misleading information. A government can develop ministries of propaganda under many guises. They typically call it "public information or marketing". Another method that Roland suggested is the militarization of law enforcement, that is, declaring a "war on crime" become a "war on liberties"; and the preparation of military forces for internal policing duties. In addition to that, he puts the infiltration and subversion of citizens groups that could be forces for reform- internal spying and surveillance is the beginning, and a sign is prosecutions of their leaders. Roland mentioned also the suppression of investigators and whistleblowers. He explained that when people who try to uncover high level wrongdoings are threatened, that is a sign that the system is not only riddled with corruption, but that the corruption has passed threshold into active tyranny.

As for a tyrant like Ogiso, he uses power to dissolve opponents. The establishment of the State Security Service is an asset for him to fulfil the tyrant principles. *Matters of the Moment* denounces the involvement of the State Security Service (SSS) in brutal repression of the political opposition. In his article "Matters of the Moment", Dede writes that "the government shot at

peaceful demonstrators in Niger-Delta" (140).He also shows that the SSS is responsible for widespread violation of human rights- Under Ogiso's military regime, the state security agents arrested individuals who had the courage to criticize the government policies. Some were threatened to death, and others underwent harassment and intimidation.

Through the novel, Ojaide demonstrates Ogiso's force to push back the current ideas which embarrassed him. He stages the State Security agents' operations during the hunt for the government opponents. The narrator states that:

> They were kept in detention cells without toilets and smelling of urine. The agents played loud music all night and gave stale bread to eat. The few hours they were told to go to sleep, they had to stand by the cold wall of their cells or sit on the damp floor. This time the SSS men wanted these two men to understand the gravity of what they were doing with their writing. If they undermined the nation's good image again, they would taste what would be too bitter for them to report, the agents warned in cryptic terms. (p74)

The lines above show that the torture conducted by the security agents against the journalists of *The African Patriot* can be analysed in terms of Dede Daro and Ena Tobore's self-realization. It is clear that painful and degrading acts were inflicted on them.

Furthermore, Ojaide points out that the security agent extended the inhuman activities to the family members of suspected troublemakers. He uses the example of the Daros to reveal terrible acts perpetrated by those government's agents. Ojaide narrates what happened to Daro's wife:

> It really happened. One day she was abducted by a group of soldiers looking for Dede. It appeared they had gone to his office and did not find him there. They pushed her into their van and took her away. There she struggle unsuccessfully from being violated by two of the abductors, after which she was driven back and left in the house. (p18)

Here, we see that soldiers can also overawe innocent people. As far as the women are concerned, we notice the women oppression connected to gender issues in Nigeria, but also the soldier habit of imposing what to do. Besides, we can also think about the animosity security agents drew from their master, Ogiso, since he also crossed borders and raped other men's wives. Ojaide writes that:

> President Ogiso took over some people's wives to increase his harem; others he raped and sent back to their husbands. Nobody told the sorrow of many of his ministers whose wives he asked to visit him and they did it in order to save their husbands from unimagined danger. (p32)

Continuing to portray the moral decay that characterized the security agents during the dictatorial regime in Nigeria, Ojaide underlines extrajudicial killing. This is simply the euphemism of murder that was intended against lawful activists' movements. In *Matters of the Moment*, Ojaide shows that the assassination of Ena Tobore (p148) by a secret agent of the government in uniform which could not be ascribed was the junta's method to disguise its responsibilities for criminalities against the opposition. To pose that discrepancy, Ojaide presents Dede's information about the murder. He says that: "Dede learned that a dispatch rider on a motorcycle wearing a helmet and

a sort of uniform that could not be ascribed to any of the armed forces or security services had come to deliver a parcel" (p149).

In *Matters of the Moment*, Ojaide also talks about the killing of detainees after being tortured in jail. He accuses the government of being responsible for those killings. The reason he advances is that the government did not allow autopsies to discover the cause of the death. Ojaide also asserts that the abduction of the government opponents results in unexplained disappearance. This is the means by which the military government concealed its footprints during the murder. By here, Ojaide explains that: "Now the agents were getting more creative, sophisticated, and sinister in their method of eliminating the junta's opponents without being directly seen as responsible." (p150)

In this same connection, Ojaide tells the world that the security agents engaged in highly complex notorious works when assaulting writers who criticized the political malpractices by African leaders after independence. He gives the example of Kimuyu Nanga of Nairobi, Chimondo Zewa of Zomba, Ndolo of Kinshansa, journalists who disappeared because they raised voices against tyranny and corrupt government (p34).

By referring to this frequency of unexplained disappearances, we can think about the lack of crime control in many African countries because the leaders partook in those criminalities. As far as Nigeria is concerned, Ojaide shows that military dictator was the van of many crimes against humanity that were perpetrated in the country. Consequently, impunity settled in the country, and Ojaide proves it by showing no line in *Matters of the Moment* which talks about prosecution concerning security agent blunders during the internal security policing.

Apart from the moral vices committed by the military, Ojaide shows that impunity imposed socio-economic problems on the masses. This was due to the theft of public funds which was done by members of the government who never been tried. Ojaide also shows that such theft as represented in *Matters of the Moment* had a double goal- economic and political. He explains that, after overthrowing the civilian politicians, the military showed little interest in the welfare of the nation, like their predecessors did it. The former came up with the great desire to get rich as soon as possible, as Ojaide instantiates it when criticizing President Ogiso's ambition (p32). He further demonstrated that such an ambition misled the military as it caused his attempt to appropriate the national patrimony. In this connection, Ojaide holds the same opinion with Armah, who also satirises the theft perpetrated by African leaders. To illustrate it, Ayi Kwei paints some of Koomson's words: "But money is not the difficult thing. After all, the Commercial Banks are ours, and we can do anything." (*The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, 136) Here we see that the leaders that Africa had after independence mismanaged public funds, especially as most of them considered government funds as their properties.

In *Matters of the Moment*, Ojaide paints president Ogiso when exposing the national Oku to Franka Udi. There, he shows that Ogiso's intention was to prove that he was the owner and manager of the national funds. To illustrate it, Ojaide says that:

> He used another tunnel to take her to the house of gold where the nation's gold reserve was kept, according to her escort. It glittered and he smiled profuse and beat his chest and said, ''All this is ours...''. She did not hesitate to take wads of the large denomination into her roomy handbag when the president asked her to have a bite of the national cake, which

> she understood to mean that she should take as much of money she could carry away. (p137- 132)

The lines above make us glance at Ojaide's attack of the embezzlement of public funds which would have been used to improve the life of Nigerians who were starving. He further reveals that pretext became the cover of the leaders' stealing of public fund. In *Matters of the Moment*, Ojaide opines that the cunning military regime deceived the masses deliberately with grandiose plans committed to nothing, but the accumulation of fortune. Here, Ojaide illustrates Ogiso's deceitful plan:

> Now he headed a task force on rehabilitation of educational buildings. It was a vague portfolio committed to nothing. The government budgeted to the office millions of naira that he did not have to account for how and what spent. He knew in the generous spirit of the junta that General Ogiso expected him to do nothing and he did nothing. (p107)

In these lines, Ojaide criticizes the president for being the head of embezzler as he released money more than is strictly necessary. He further demonstrates that such a mismanagement of the national economy is associated with nepotism and manipulation. Through the novel, Ojaide shows that the amount was delivered to Brigadier Eugene Otu. The latter has been appointed the task of rehabilitating public infrastructures because of his closeness with General Ogiso, who wanted him not to accomplish it, but to taste the national cake. Thus, we see that nepotism has also been an obstacle to the development of Nigeria.

In fact, the grating of favours to the government supporters results in embezzlement. Ojaide depicts the governor of the Federal Bank award of a contract to Franka which resulted in releasing ten million Naira for a futile duty like to print calendars, as the contractor himself knew that the printing of calendars with artwork could engage only 500000 Naira (127). Here, Ojaide tells the world about methods embezzlers use in their dirty deal. He shows that they falsify records in order to conceal the activity. In addition to that, Ojaide sheds light on the link between embezzlement and corruption when capturing the contractor accepting to give back 40% of the contract which have to go in the pocket of an individual.

Furthermore, Ojaide reveals that the government members' desire to be economically accepted impacted negatively their political career. President Ogiso, who owned the treasure of the country, poisoned them by political positions, but also money he granted to them in order to win their loyalty. We can then say that Ogiso conceived richness as a favourable means to keep power. Here, we see that Ojaide tries, to some extent, to relate his ideas to Karl Marx thought of examining a situation in relation to the social, political, and economic realities. When analysing the historical materialism in his preface to *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859), Marx wrote that the hypothesis that had served him as the basis for his analysis of society could be briefly formulated as follow:

> In the social production that men carry on, they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material forces of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real

> foundation on which raises a legal and political superstructure, and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and intellectual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men which determines their existence; it is on the contrary their social existence which determines their consciousness.

For Ogiso his economic power has enabled him to exercise imperialism on Nigeria. The material treasure became his power base. Thus, he could manipulate the government and simply politics.

In *Matters of the Moment*, Ojaide tries to show the role of Ogiso's richness in implementing his policies. He shows that Ogiso intoxicated the forces of order with money, and that was the efficient way to handle them in his hand. Here is Ojaide's report: "He would pay as many people as possible to spy for him and also pay others to spy on the spies." (p31). With this linear appointment of spies to infiltrate and subvert the president's enemies, we see that the government has to release an important amount of money.

In this novel, Ojaide also reveals that leaders corrupt their promises, duties, and responsibilities. Corrupt leaders deceive their own people with grandiose promises in order to get popular. Ogiso also used powerful words to win the populace. Ojaide reports that:

> He would lead the people from suffering to salvation, he would clear the whole country of thorns, he would lead his fellow citizens to the rainbow's end and seize the diamond from the

> mouth of the cobra guarding it. The country would be rich, and they would have a foretaste of heaven before they die. (p31)

The report above reveals that in Nigeria, failed promises intended by the military had become a custom. This was usually realized during the military's first address to the nation, when he had to insure the population that things are going to be better than before. He primarily deceived the population when acquitting the act that ushered him to power- the coup d' état- as a rescue activity. Bashir Usman in "General Buhari and Nigerian Politics", quoted Buhari's inauguration speech on January 1st, 1984, when Buhari addressed the nation, saying that:

> ...In pursuance of the primary objective of saving our great country from total collapse, I, General Muhammadu Buhari of the Nigerian Army, have, after due consultation among the services of Armed Forces, been formally vested with the authority of the Head of State of the Federal Military Government and Commander –in – Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The change became necessary in order to put an end to the serious economic predicament and crisis confidence now afflicting our nation.

Ibrahim Babanginda was also aware that sugary words bring about the public acceptance of the regime. Max Siollum in "Babanginda: His Life and Times" presents Babanginda when explaining that: "When you stage a coup, you have to tell people what they want to hear, so you can get accepted."

In *Matters of the Moment*, Ojaide portrays General Ogiso's first days as more seductive (31). He recaps this reality on the military regime in Nigeria in

order to beware Nigerians of the military tricks. It is important to note that the more the military corrupted his responsibilities, the more he became corrupt. Ojaide also shows that the masses are victims of corrupt leadership.

2.3.Media and the Military Rule

Media play a crucial role in shaping the course of politics. The position from which media act during news coverage reveals that media behave as partner in progress with government policies or not.

In *Matters of the Moment*, Ojaide says that the military dictator won the support from certain media. They were committed to increasing the positive profile of the government. To illustrate it, Ojaide tells the story about the traveller's observation, saying that: "He always wanted to read all the papers, but he knew that many were not worth the time because they only printed military decrees and so-called achievements."(39). Here, Ojaide discloses citizens' confusion on this withholding of information which would mislead the populace.

Moreover, Ojaide demonstrates the scale of freedom and liberty of expression banning. He shows that the military dictator plots to silence dissent voices by all means. Reuben Abati (1998) also affirms that the military dictatorship has always been harmful to the opinion. He states that "the Nigerian press has faced several challenges since 1895 but no challenge has been more of a problem than the threats of military rule; and threats to the freedom of the press, and the capacity of the press to fulfil its mission as the voice of voiceless and the defender of the oppressed". Through the novel, Ojaide demonstrates the Ogisos' infiltration in public gatherings. He captures the suspicious presence of spies throughout Dede's lecture at the university. He writes that:

> The lecturers and administrative worker therefore avoided any gatherings and lectures that appeared or could be seen as hostile to the military regime. They knew there must be spies in the campus gathering to report to the military government what transpired at the lecture. (p109)

Here, we see that the military's paid agents threaten dissent. This also shows that journalists who prove to be the dictator's antagonist have not the right to talk to the public.

Through the novel, Ojaide makes a retrospective look at the state of affairs within media in what he calls "golden age" comparatively to the military era. He also suggests the cause of failure of many papers during the tyrannical regime. Ojaide explains it with reference to Ena Tobore, the old editor who knows the situation of media before the rule of soldiers. He puts that:

> He was the editor of several papers in the golden age of the press in the country. Many older people looked back with nostalgia to the day of the Ena Tobore as a regular columnist when the press stood up for the interest of the people. How things had changed! There were now so many bad eggs in the press with many accepting large brown envelopes stuffed with money from military leaders for positive coverage of tyrannical regime. In any case, all the papers Ena Tobore once edited and wrote for had either folded up or been proscribed by the military; hence he founded a new outfit, The African Patriot. (p70)

These lines show that the military did not need the intervention of other forces to divert the fragile media from the public interest, but offering. Here, Ojaide attacks media corruption in Nigeria. The bad eggs he is talking about are dishonest and unreliable journalists because of the brown envelop. The latter is a practice whereby monetary inducement is to be given to journalists to make them write positive stories, or kill negative stories. The name is derived from cash inducements hidden in brown envelopes and given to journalists during press briefings. That practice was common to Nigeria, and it was unethical.

In fact, media corruption causes people to be deprived of their right to information. This is because media act as the mouth-piece of the government. In *Matters of the Moment*, Ojaide satirizes corrupt media inefficiency:

> *The Daily News*, president Ogiso's mouth-piece, ran a three-day piece on African art. The newspaper encouraged heads of departments to decorate their offices with products of Chief (Ms) Franka Udi's art shop, praised as the mast visible source of genuine African art in the world. (p127)

When we analyse the lines above, we notice that *The Daily News* became unable to distinguish news editions from free write-up. Otherwise, we can say that it was no longer concerned with news editions but marketing. The worst is that this marketing was not meant to the public interest, but a small group made of the government officials.

In spite of many newspapers' irresponsibility, *The African Patriot* dares expose the vices of the military dictator, thanks to the enthusiasm of its editor-Dede Daro and Ena Tobore- for that cause. Ojaide affirms that:

> So much has been written on the military presidents and their unformed officers without shaking them out of power. Power had gone into their head of dictator, who issued decrees upon decrees after suspending their nation's constitutions. I had not sunk into their heads that they were an aberration. (p69)

This note explains that this paper was always ahead of other papers in its vision and creativity, and its staff wanted to maintain that lead. Ena Tobore testifies that: "The federal military government had branded *The African Patriot* the most hostile paper in the land but its publisher was not intimidated" (p70).

Matters of the Moment demonstrates the success of *The African Patriot* in front of the atrocious regime of Ogiso as resulting from the choice of its editors and publishers during the recruitment. Ojaide indicates that qualified people entered the newspaper (p18). We are told in the novel of Dede Daro who has an MA in public communication and specialization in print media (p17) and Ena Tobore, a University of Leeds Doctor of Letters (p70). Here we see that best journalists are those prepared for the profession.

However, the more media take a stand against the military ruler, the more rigorous measures are set against those media. In *Matters of the Moment*, Ojaide writes that General Ogiso closes all independent newspapers (p151). This also shows that independent media challenge governments the most.

2.4.Role of the Media

Ojaide emphasizes on *The African Patriot*, in order to examine media social responsibilities, and the activism led by that private media. He puts accent on

the editorial board members who resisted the military manipulation in order to preserve the profession ethics. Hence, conflicts rose between the government and such radical press as it exposed the military undemocratic governance. It is this engagement in critical issues that determines the role media plays in the democratic process. Meanwhile, Ojaide indicates that risk taking journalists could run such a challenging issue. In *Matters of the Moment*, he illustrates that Dede went through General Ogiso's bitter treatment, but carried on the struggle: "The arrest serves as a tonic to Dede's desire to further embarrass the president" (p 74)

Actually, Dede was motivated to succeed despite the consequences and the reality of the situation in which was the country. We can also deduce from this assertion the importance of determination that Ojaide explores in his emphasizing the character of Dede who wanted change to happen. As he wanted to tackle the military regime, he also believed that creative journalism could make the fight more successful. Thus, thanks to the intellectual ability to make discoveries, Dede generated possibilities useful to the military dictator. Here, we have to recourse to the strategies with which we are provided by the novel.

In *Matters of the Moment*, Ojaide crosses Nigeria borders to describe countries which have a stable democracy. By his attributing the task to his character Dede Daro, an activist journalist, he demonstrates the importance of news coverage outside the country. Thus, Dede covered Ghana in order to show Nigerians what they missed by having an [undemocratic] military dictatorship, since they get a representing experience of Ghana. Here, Ojaide quotes some statements of Dede's report from Ghana:

> I have gone to Ghana to feel the new Ghana shorn of sirens, shorn of curfews, shorn of brigand boots and guns, and decrees that swell the head of generals. I have gone the new Ghana, and after two weeks examination, pronounce her healthy and pride to us all. Unlike the impotent giants, the tribally fragmented, backward looking states that proliferate the continent, there is a true model Africa State in Ghana. (p73)

Aware of the abuses of power in Nigeria, Dede tried to uncover the truth leaning investigative journalism, and that would help him to achieve his reporting on the matters of the moment (94). To succeed this challenging issue requires a series of research techniques. The latter guides the journalist during his collecting of information and data that help him to make decision on what he has to write. In other words, we can say that an investigator ought to visit the targeted spot to witness the happenings there himself in order that he could come up with reliable information. That is the same to Dede Daro's process when running his investigation on country matters of the moment. The novel talks about his introduction in different sectors of public service:

> "He did not want to be recognized as Dede Daro, the journalist; that would impede his investigation. He wanted to introduce himself, if asked during the process, as a teacher, office worker, transporter, or trader" (p94).

Unlike Dede's descent to ground, he would have peddled rumours based on his surrounding opinions. This could also stain his professional address, *The African Patriot*, which could become the voice of rumours.

Investigative journalist usually tells story that someone tries to hide. In this same connection, Achebe affirms in *Anthills of the Savannah* the journalist's ability to uncover concealed reality. Beatrice, when narrating his conversation with Chris, said that:

> In those first days he would very often startle me with insights about little things like colours or food or behaviour I liked or didn't like and I would ask: But how did you know? And he would smile and say: I am a journalist; remember it is my business to find out. (p89)

Through *Matters of the Moment*, Ojaide explains however the military feelings about investigative journalism. General Ogiso viewed investigative journalists as the source of annoyance and trouble, especially because they broadcasted what he did not want to hear- his imperfections. The comparison of the journalist to the thorn in his flesh by General Ogiso shows the military imperative to assault on the radical press. The thorn is a stiff, sharp-pointed woody projection, which causes distress once it drills the skin. Nobody can let it be his/her friend, hence, Ogiso's plan to get rid of the thorn.

Ojaide further criticizes the lack of unity within Nigerian media. The novel talks about many newspapers on the land, and only one was being destroyed while other newspapers prove their insensitivity to the incident. Thus, Ojaide creates foreign media intervention to shield Dede publishing of the investigative report titled "The African Cannibal Clique" (34). The hand *Time Magazine* gave to Dede Daro is the author way to show the importance of media synergy- the missing ingredient within Nigerian media.

In *Matters of the Moment*, Ojaide shows that Dede's reports aimed at facilitating change since they revealed social injustice and exploitation from the power. The Notion of Power (139-141) is Dede's article which informed Nigerian citizens on issues which affected their lives. Here, Ojaide represents typically his homeland, Niger-Delta, which was being devastated by multinational oil companies, while the Deltans did not benefit even from compensation. We realize here that Niger Delta people problems were associated with social injustice led by greed and selfish leaders.

Victor E. Dike in "Niger-Delta Crisis and the Nigerian Economy", gives explanation on the meaning of social injustice. He says that, according to experts, the same contribution equals the same benefit. A person's benefit equals his or her contribution. And no community should be given more when it contributes less or be given less when nit contributes more! That is the crux of matters in Niger Delta crisis! The Niger Delta is contributing much to the economic wellbeing of Nigeria and it is getting nothing, but destruction in return. Dike concludes that without social justice, there will not be peace in the Niger Delta and socioeconomic development will continue to elude the region. This poser is very realistic regarding the Niger delta economic development. It is against what one should expect from that land which produces billions of petroleum dollars, but still the poorest region of Nigeria. We can note that the Nigerian Government is complicit in this degradation of Niger Delta sine it is aware of the region plight, but fails to regulate the problem because of the leaders' and multinationals' selfish economic benefits from the region. Onyema in "Jungle and Oil: Currents of Environmental Discourse in four upland Niger Delta s from Boom to Doom: Protest and Conflicts Resolution in the Literature of Niger Delta" (2011), criticizes this official complicity, saying that The unethical practice of the multinational oil companies, destructive flares of (s) hell fire, and the complicity of the Nigerian government, become

snatches of discourse presented as vignettes of experiences that occur and recur in this gory tale of crude doom in an oil boom era. (p198)

2.5. Impact of Media

Ojaide invested in media in order to show how they provide a significant stimulus. Through *Matters of the Moment*, we observe that the response to that stimulus depends upon its interpretation. The military dictator saw in media an opposing force which huddles up against his authority on word. In fact, words are powerful since they leave a huge impact and create a lasting memory either good or bad. Therefore, the military wish to build up his power through authoritative statements. However, Dede's acceleration of words through his editorials broke *The African Patriot* relationships with the dictator. Nevertheless, that radical press still impacted the military government because the masses welcome that media. The way Dede expressed himself hold up his career in front of the masses as he proved to be sharing with them the pains from the military dictator. He says that: "The least we can demand of the powerful is for them to use power to benefit all humans. Let all victims of power come out and mourn our plight. Today we are all victims" (p141).

These lines show the coalition media-masses, a sign of media impact on the masses. Now that Dede was showing them the way out of the pain, there is no objection to say that, Dede is behind all manoeuvres of the population against the military government of Ogiso. To precise it, Ojaide portrays the sequence of Dede's acceptance to preside the National Association of Disabled: "In the city centre, the earliest people to come out boldly to protest were disabled." (p172). This affirmation illustrates the protest and presents the opposition led by the activist. We can also say that Dede was the organizer of demonstrations against the totalitarian regime. Then, now that the population came en masses to protest the military social injustice and exploitative malpractices, this was

the first score for *The African Patriot* journalist. It became more meaningful at the end of the novel, when Ojaide portrays the fall of the military dictatorship, and the people reaction to this end. Here is Ojaide's report:

> The government was without a leader, but nobody wanted to be the head without the authority of the people. Several ambitious army officers briefly contemplated to stepping into the void created to assert leadership, but when they saw the huge crowd they restrained themselves. All the people in the nation capital appeared to be out in the streets. The officers knew that whoever seized power for selfish ends would have no peace. (p177)

These lines reveal the complement of the democratic process which was accompanied by the press. We see that the supreme power is conferred to the people as they were the ones who had to decide their leader.

Thus, In *Matters of the Moment*, Ojaide shows that democracy has been instigated through media activities. Its achievement proves that the power of media has exceeded the military one.

2.6.Conclusion

It has been observed in this chapter that the military regime does not respond to any nation's needs. Instead, the military dictator commits many mistakes when following his interests to hold power eternally. General Ogiso uses oppression, and is corrupt. He also embezzles funds which could help Nigeria citizens. The chapter also shows that Nigerians demonstrate against the government, in response to the military leaders' abuses. Our analysis proves

that media are responsible for citizens' agitation against political injustice. *The African Patriot* spread messages which influence the public opinion by making the public aware of the government misdeeds. Also, *The African Patriot* editor, Dede Daro, mobilizes the masses to struggle for change.

CHAPTER THREE

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

3.1.Introduction

This chapter is set to compare and contrast *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987) to *Matters of the Moment* (2009) in Politics and the influence of media framework. It determines similarities and differences between the two novels; and evaluates Chinua Achebe's and Tanure Ojaide's views on the military dictatorship and the role and power of media. The chapter also analyses the narrative structure and the characterization in the two novels in relation to the political situation of Nigeria. It also determines the authors' message through *Anthills of the Savannah* and *Matters of the Moment*.

3.2. Politics

3.2. a. Similarities

Politics and media as reflected in *Anthills of the Savannah* and *Matters of the Moment* present a struggle for power between the military and the activist journalists. The military besieged the power undemocratically, with a series of political malpractices aiming at sustaining the military dictatorship. As for media, they are viewed by Achebe and Ojaide as the instrument for political propaganda and the medium for civilian agitations.

In *Anthills of the Savannah,* the struggle for power began with the military that ended up toppling the civilians' government through a coup d'état. Ojaide also describes in *Matters of the Moment* a military government led by General Ogiso, after overthrowing Shehu, the civilian president of Nigeria: "In the face

of the cancellation of normal radio and television program was an announcement of an army takeover of the government." (p31)

With regards to the military accession to power, as portrayed by Achebe and Ojaide, it is obvious that the military could have the same belief about the governance, as the military principles are likely to occasion dictatorship. However, dictatorship is not symbiotic to all citizens. Kubayanda (1990:5) notes that "postcolonial dictatorship in Africa concerns itself with repression, which in effect means the arrest, exile, execution, or consistent harassment of dissent voices. The general result of dictatorship is an atmosphere of fear, hate, and humiliation". It gives complete political power to the dictator who, as it has been described by Achebe and Ojaide, often employs oppressive methods in order to maintain power. In such a situation, the two authors agree on the soldiers' violation of human rights through the militarization of operations intended to the opposition.

In *Anthills of the Savannah* and *Matters of the Moment*, the two Nigerian authors show that Sam and Ogiso governing systems, respectively in the two novels, are totalitarian. And such regimes treat opponents as criminals. Ikem Osodi and the abazonians, Ena Tobore, and Dede Daro serve as a sample of the fallout from the military dictatorship. The abazonians have been repelled by the Kangan president, Ikem has been killed by the Sam's men (169); Ena Tobore and Dede Daro underwent a persecution from General Ogiso, which ended up carrying off the life of Tobore. Here, we see that either Achebe or Ojaide portrays the military as an evil dictator, as he blindly pursued power at the expense of the citizens.

Furthermore, Achebe and Ojaide demonstrate that the interference of the military in politics provides a part of the reality on their incompetence in

leadership. They came to power unprepared and inexperienced, and this permit to notice the corruptive aspect of power in Sam and Ogiso respectively in *Anthills of the Savannah* and *Matters of the Moment*. The two Nigerian military presidents seated in the position of absolute power, and they let it go in their heads. Consequently they ignored that with power comes responsibility, and then careless about the needs of their people. Therefore, both Achebe and Ojaide would like to show that power is intoxicating towards autocrats. William Pitt the elder, Earl of Chatham and British prime minister from 1766 to 1778, in the speech to the United Kingdom House of Lords in 1770, said that unlimited power is apt to corrupt the minds of those who possess it. In the same connection, the French republican poet and politician Alphonse Marie Louis de Prat de Lamartine in *France and England: A Vision of the Future* (English translation of the essay published in London in 1848), includes this text:

> It is not only the slave or serf who is ameliorated in becoming free...the master himself did not gain less in every point of view... for absolute power corrupts the best natures. [It has been translated by an anonymous translator]

This quotation by Lamartine shows that some rulers consider power as freedom and profited from it to do everything they want. Thus we can come up with the conclusion based on Lord Acton maxim saying that "absolute power corrupt absolutely".

As for Achebe and Ojaide, they illustrate that Sam and Ogiso were corrupted by power. They also explain through *Anthills of the Savannah* and *Matters of the Moment*, the danger of pursuing power for power sake as did the two military dictators; and the impact of the dictator on the population. The two

authors show that at the end of the course, there has been the abuse of power which plunges the populace into severe suffering. Achebe and Ojaide demonstrate that such a privation stems from different causes which are associated with corruption. Here, a glance at Lord Acton's maxim mentioned above supports these ideas of these Nigerian writers.

Christopher Marlowe in *Doctor Faustus*, says that corruption of the best become the worst. Here, Marlowe wanted to show that if leaders are themselves corrupt, there is no way corruption can be fought, instead, corrupt leaders intensify it. Also, if corruption starts at the top, the bottom cannot be spared from its spread. In *Anthills of the Savannah* and *Matters of the Moment*, Achebe and Ojaide come to the same conclusion that corruption was unavoidable in the country governed by corrupt leaders. The military enters politics not because of the good conscience of it, but speculations.

In fact, the military dictators sought ways in which they could gain the sympathy of people to sustain his power. Achebe and Ojaide are on one mind on that point, and view favouritism as one among other means the military dictators use. The president of Kangan did lots of favour to the people who support him. For example, he gave Major Johnson Ossai the directorate of the State Research Council (14) in order that he could help the dictator to force submission and loyalty from the masses. This is also the same to president Ogiso's favour to Tori, a non-qualified administrative officer (15) who was easy for General Ogiso to manipulate.

Moreover, the soldiers' interference in politics was due to the covetousness. They felt that power could bring them the material comfort and then, lived in luxury. Chinua Achebe is at one with Tanure Ojaide on the assertion that the uncertainty of how long the power will be hold on, caused the military ruler to

use all possible means to become rich as soon as possible. This can be the cause of the public funds embezzlement as it has been described in *Anthills of the Savannah* and *Matters of the Moment.* It has also been described in these two novels that the more the military dictators accumulate much wealth, the more they use it to poison many people's mind. Some intellectuals have also been trapped in the wealth and the power of the military.

In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe talks about the cabinet members who realized that things did not walk in the right way, but were unable to find solution to that issue; because they feared to lose their positions (5). In *Matters of the Moment*, Ojaide presents Franka Udi as an intellectual who was corrupted by money. He depicts her while singing praises for the power which facilitated her to achieve her ambitions (124). We can therefore say that Achebe and Ojaide hold the same opinion that the desire to become rich attracted many people to politics. This is the same to Cyprian Ekwensi view on politics in *Jagua Nana*, when Freddie was explaining Jagua why he joined politics. He says that: "I wan' money quick- quick; an' politics is de only hope" (137).This shows that politics is equivalent to wealth, may be not because politicians have good salary, but because there are many shortcuts in politics that help them to get money. Here we can think about dishonest ways such as embezzlement, theft, and bribery.

Corruption has negative impact to the population. Aluko says that corruption has economic, social, and political effects on a nation. In the economic realm, corruption depletes a nation's wealth, and increases the cost of goods and services. Socially, corruption discourages people to work together for a common good, and encourages frustration and general apathy among the people; and it also widens the gap between the rich and the poor. On the political side, corruption impedes democracy and the rule of law. It also results

in cynicism, reduced interest in political participation, and political instability (Aluko, 2014).

3.2. b. Differences

Anthills of the Savannah differs from *Matters of the Moment* in terms of the denouement of the struggle for change. In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe shows that the democratic process which was initiated by Ikem has been aborted. At the end of the novel, Achebe writes that Sam's regime has been ended by another military coup by the chief of army staff (219). In contrary, *Matters of the Moment* ended in the success of democracy which was initiated by Dede Daro. Ojaide shows that, after Ogiso's death, an interim administration was established to run the affairs of the country and conduct free elections (177).

We can also determine differences in Achebe's and Ojaide's novel with reference to the authors' conception of corruption in *Anthills of the Savannah* and *Matters of the Moment* respectively. Despite that the two authors get along on some aspects of corruption which are closely related to the military's greed, a fact which led him to an unfettered desire for money and power; with no regards to moral boundaries, the no sense of working in public service, the lack of courage to denounce corrupt behaviour and situations conductive to corruption, and so on, Achebe goes further into exploring the aspect of corruption by considering the nature of the Nigerian society, a fact which is not Ojaide's emphasis.

In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe shows that the military dictator became corrupt not only by the internal causes mentioned above, but also the external

influences he derived from the society. We can say that corruption within Nigerian leaders is the product of their society which was corrupt.

Achebe brings up the question of tribalism in order to show that the Nigerian politics was influenced by ethnicity and regionalism. This can then permit us to evaluate the reasons for the internal causes of corruption.

Sam, the president of Kangan, gave privileges to the people who would have a regional or tribalistic connection to his own. Through the novel, Achebe writes that after overthrowing the civilian politicians, he first of all promoted Chris, who was not from Abazon, to the commissioner for information in the president's cabinet. Concerning punishments, Chinua reveals that the northerners were Sam's target. In addition to that, he shows that religion influenced the national policies. Achebe depicts Reverend Okong's working as the government advisor and chaplain.

With regard to the ethnic, regional, and religious influences on the Nigerian politics, Achebe wanted to reveal the root cause of corruption. The British colonizers who are said to be the authors of such divisions-divide and impera- were also corrupted. It is then clear that the African leaders who has been in contact with such corrupt colonizers by the material comfort, are in turn corrupt. In addition to that, Sam was making use of corruption because he was surrounded by corrupt people.

As for Ojaide, he does not ignore how close to politics the Nigerian religion is. But, he does not directly mention religious acting in politics. He only shows Christians churches sometimes behave like political actors. He cites Dede's threats from the Pentecostal churches that prayed God for his destruction (98-99). He adds the Catholic Church (11) which was described by Dede Daro as an imperial power. Ojaide also do not talk much about ethnicity and regionalism.

3.3. Media

3.3.a. Similarities

In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe shows that Ikem was a man of the people. He led a crusade against the military government which abused power and victimized the masses. Launching the journalism for democracy, he wanted the voices of the people to be heard by the leaders. He knew that people on the throne must look at his editorials in order to see what is being published; and for other citizens, to be aware of things which did not walk within the leadership. In other words, Ikem wanted to awaken the population, as well as warning the government from the aftermath of their selfishness. Achebe further shows that the assault Ikem made on his boss, the dictator, placed him under severe punishment though his writings were realistic. Through the novel, Achebe shows that Ikem has been finally suspended: "They all sat back in grim-faced silence to watch. Ikem's suspension was the first headline." (p150)

This penalty meant to Ikem further became an asset for this journalist who felt like to know much about the living conditions of the citizens of Kangan. Achebe captured Ikem profiting from his suspension to contact as many people as possible. He paints his interacting with ordinary people in order to learn more about the plight within his fellow citizens. Thus, Ikem suspension was an appropriate moment to conduct much investigation.

Moreover, Ikem took an interest in exchanging with the youth. He saw in the youth the power that could back him up in this struggle for change. This was the matter of sensitization of young people on matters of the moment in order to prevent them from falling in the trap of the corrupt military government. Ikem's focus on university aimed at creating young intellectuals who could

operate unlike the mischievous behaviour of the supposedly intellectuals in the cabinet.

In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe shows that Ikem fulfilled his mission of informing and educating the public whenever and wherever. He also talked about the success of Ikem's approaches since Ikem's ideologies have been welcome to a huge number of people. It is as if he has found a civilian society in order to run people needs. Ikem had therefore the political power over the population's way of thinking. Through his view on change in either the societal or political system, Ikem experienced a queue of Kangan's followers. This is because his profile towards the masses was different from the dictator's- Ikem preferred to come near the populace while the military dictator moved away from them.

The character of Ikem in *Anthills of the Savannah* was the same to the Dede's in *Matters of the Moment*. The similarities between them can be analyzed by taking into account the political ideologies of Dede comparatively to the Ikem's mentioned above. In *Matters of the Moment*, Dede attempted to expose to the public the attitude of the military dictatorship through General Ogiso. He thought that from that exposure the masses would react as now aware of the military's wrongdoings. Here, Dede proved to be democratic as he let the masses decide what to do, unlike the military who dictates. This contradiction between Dede and General Ogiso marked the start of the misunderstanding. Dede hated the military dictators because he was selfish (31); and Ogiso hated the journalist, Dede, because he spoke out the military malpractices. This was also the reason for the struggle between the two radical individuals, the military struggling for holding on to power while the activist journalist made forceful efforts to get free from the military government which has never been symbiotic to all citizens.

Ojaide also mentions that the radical journalist has always been subjected to arduous punishments from the military. Through the novel, he shows that Dede has been jailed by Ogiso in order to distance him from the editorial board. Nevertheless, Ojaide puts that Dede's imprisonment came to nurture his project of speaking out the military's misuse of power, and its impact to the prisoners (74). Talking about the closure of all independent newspapers (151), Ojaide writes that it drove Dede to meet people who further supported him. The activist's success was thanks to his educational talk to the university students, and his serious speech that aim at awakening the masses. Therefore, the speech of Dede was politically weighty as it manages to mark out the route of low class citizens to politics.

Furthermore, Dede's can be said to be a civilian society militant. He gathered people from different classes, in order to combine their effort to fight together against the military. He tries to be more inclusive as he welcome whoever wanted to partake in that struggle for change. Therefore, the political ideologies of Ikem and Dede stem from their watchdog on the political situation worsened by the military leaders. They have been useful to the country because they seemed to alert every citizen on the matters of the country. Ikem's and Dede's words stimulate the population to abolish the bad leadership of the military. Here, we can also conclude that these activist journalists had political power which they gain in the way Ojaide explains in *The Activist*:

> He had his eyes set on controlling a segment of the media to influence or affect the public opinion. He had seen how the concerns of the Niger Delta people had gone unreported. If he controlled a media house, that would not happen. The people

> needed allies in the media and he would provide one for them in whatever he chose to invest... (267)

Either *Anthills of the Savannah* or *Matters of the Moment* shows that Ikem and Dede respectively in the two novels serve as the public watchdog on the political plight of the country. We can conclude that no matter the ownership, media professionals work in the same way. This is thanks to moral principles which are common to professional journalists. Here, we may simply talk about the ethics of journalism which is widely known to journalists as their professional code. The latter includes the principles of truthfulness, accuracy, and objectivity. With regard to Ikem's and Dede's editorials, we can affirm that they were accurate. First of all, their editorials contained the Nigerians experience on the military dictatorship, the two journalists included. In addition to that, Ikem and Dede were not influenced by personal feelings or opinions in considering or presenting facts, but the will to inform and educating their fellow citizens on the national politics. For that reasons, the journalists portrayed in Achebe's 1987 novel and Ojaide's 2009 novel tried to accumulate facts, asked questions as they all proceeded with lecturing. They also cultivated sources by contacting people who were involved in the circle of power abuse, the victims of military polity. It is important to note that the ethics of journalism is the mere thing which can measure the media deviation. It is in case official media are said to support the government while private media are said to intend criticism to the government.

It has also been described in *Anthills of the Savannah* and *Matters of the Moment* that media influence democracy, but also political influences on media have been observed. In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe talks about the governmental order on what to be broadcast or not (61). This is to show that politics caused censorship in the state owned media. As a matter of fact, wrong

news became news. The announcement of Ikem's death (169) illustrates the aftermath of the political influence on media.

In addition to that, Ikem's resistance to the political manipulation of media shows that the more politics interfere in the activities of media, the more the rebellion against the polity accrues.

Comparatively to *Anthills of the Savannah*, Ojaide, in *Matters of the Moment*, agrees with Achebe on the practice of censorship in media. Both of them show that in Nigeria, many newspapers, the national radio and television say nothing else, but the government achievements. The two authors also reveal that the radical press also has that practice since it orientates its coverage in the negative side of the government. In the "National Gazette", Ikem wrote only negative news, which was sometimes inflammatory. Ojaide also talks about the self-censorship which was done by Dede and Ena Tobore. He captures Dede saying that:

> "He usually took the opposite end from Ena Tobore, who sometimes joked that the two ends of the table were one mind because they had to agree unanimously on what they would publish." (p149)

The note mentioned above shows that there was a part of news which was likely not to be published in case of disagreement. Also, there was the information that was not released because it does not correspond to what Dede and Tobore wanted to tell the population. We realize that *The African Patriot* news coverage was biased. As for that media, good news (government achievements) equals no news; hence, breaking news was preferably to be published. But good news could serve as a model of good leadership. Here, the fact is that trends in news coverage often give rise to censorship, and this is bad in all its forms.

Another thing media have in common is that they face a certain official antagonism. This is because the military dictators, in both *Anthills of the Savannah* and *Matters of the Moment*, make anti-press decisions. In this Achebe's novel, Sam is the author of censorship which was observed in official media. He also set hostile measure against Ikem since that editor tries to unearth the truth. In Ojaide's *Matters of the Moment*, Ogiso arrests the editors to *The African Patriot*. He also orders the closing of all independent newspapers.

3.3.b.Differences

Anthills of the Savannah and *Matters of the Moment* differ in that the "National Gazette", to which Ikem was an editor, is an official newspaper; while *The African Patriot* is an independent newspaper. Another difference is that Ikem has a support from some members of the government such as Chris, the commissioner for information, and the president's cabinet member; and Beatrice Okoh, the Senior Assistant Secretary to the ministry of finance. But Dede has no support from any government member.

3.4. The narrative structure and characters

Achebe and Ojaide use the language in order to accomplish their meanings and literary effects of their works. *Anthills of the Savannah* is written in the first person point of view depending on which character is speaking. If the chapter is about Chris Oriko, he spoke in the first person, if it is about Ikem, he also spoke in the first person, and if the chapter is about Beatrice, it is Beatrice herself who had to speak. This point of view used by Achebe allows us to get the reality of what happened in Kangan during the military era. This is because the story was told by participants in or witnesses of the military government.

Moreover, we can affirm that Achebe used this intimate point of view in order to introduce his own feelings into the narration. In *Anthills of the Savannah*, Ikem seems to have spoken in the behalf of Achebe. The later uses Ikem in order to reveal his concerns about the socio-political problems newly independent African country faced. Ikem undertook to use writings in order to awaken the masses changing the governing system dominated by the military. As Ikem, Achebe uses also his writings in order to find out solutions to the problems of the country by showing people who are they, and what they can do.

With regard to the characterization of Ikem, he shares it with Achebe. Ikem was an editor, a lecturer, a poet and a political thinker. His complex description also evolved into the conflict he encountered. For instance, he became a lecturer after being suspended at the "National Gazette". Thus, Ikem is literary a round character. Through the novel, we can also say that most of Achebe's male protagonists were round characters. They changed over times because of the political conflicts that persisted in Kangan.

The change in Sam's character developed into the advice from the praise-singer cabinet members, advice which caused Sam to become cruel. Achebe shows that when His Excellency got to know, through these other "colleagues", that his childhood friends were jealous of him (23) because they think they were the one who should have been occupying his current position as Head of State, he decided to assert himself and put them in their places. Meanwhile, Achebe portrays that Sam never failed in anything since his school days. But he also demonstrates that his flat characters' -cabinet members- support to Sam turned him into a fragile tyrant. Then, Sam failed to manage leadership.

The characterization in *Matters of the moment* allows us to understand the nature of Ojaide's characters more than we can do it in ordinary life. As a stock character, Ogiso help us to paint the culture that dominated the military era in Nigeria. Ojaide also shows that Dede was a more complex character. He used that kind of character in order to satisfy his purposes. Before, Dede was a civil servant in the government of Ogiso. After discovering that the position helped him with nothing to fulfil his dreams, he jumped to the private sector. Ojaide also shows through the novel that he ended up joining the radical opposition that was determined to overthrow the military regime. As for Ojaide's female protagonist, she proved to be complex. Ojaide uses her in order to shape perspectives on which women can evolve.

By telling the story about his characters, Ojaide relates their action in the third person. That third person narration is bases on the assumption that the narrator is omniscient, that is, he knows thoughts and feelings of his characters. That is why in *Matters of the Moment*, Ojaide tries to bring to life the entire world of characters because he knows everything about Ogiso, Dede, Franka, or his minor characters. However, Ojaide involved events which have no apparent cause. He shows that the victory of activist movement coincided with the unexpected death of General Ogiso. Here we can understand that chance and coincidence have intervened to propel the sequence of the events of the novel.

3.5. Authors' message

Achebe and Ojaide are of one mind that the regime which is based on corruption is likely to collapse. The military junta's power abuse and misuse led the country to the political chaos. Dissenters from the masses increased as longer as they discovered what they lost because of the undemocratic regime. *Anthills of the Savannah* and *Matters of the Moment* are novels which call on

the masses to struggle in order to turn back justice now that they were aware of the plight. These ideas of Achebe and Ojaide are related to Marx's view on Struggle in the *Communist Manifesto*. Marx says that when people have become aware of their loss, of their alienation, as a universal nonhuman situation, it will be possible for them to proceed to a radical transformation of their situation by a revolution. As reflected in *Anthills of the Savannah* and *Matters of the Moment,* we see that the two Nigerian authors adopted the permanent revolution. This is conceived by Marx as a revolution which involves a provisional coalition between the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie rebelling against a capitalism that is only superficially united. Once a majority has been won to the coalition, an unofficial proletarian authority constitutes itself alongside the revolutionary bourgeois authority. Its mission is the political education of the proletariat, gradually assuring the transfer of legal power from the revolutionary bourgeoisie to the revolutionary proletariat.

3.6. Conclusion

Anthills of the Savannah and *Matters of the Moment* are political novels. They reflect an existing society, and criticize realistic events. We have discovered that the military dictators are corrupt, selfish, and repressive. In these two novels, Achebe and Ojaide reveal that the military dictators use power for bad purpose. Sam and Ogiso increase injustice, oppression, and neglect the populace. The two authors also prove that media are political, and sometimes play the role of direct political actor. The *National Gazette* and *The African Patriot* reveal political actions which have impact on the political scene. With regards to Ikem and Dede, they also generate political ideas which result in the masses protest against the military leaders. Also, the information disseminated by media results in the fall of the military leaders, except that in *Anthills of the*

Savannah, it is a soldier who takes over the direction after Sam's death while in *Matters of the Moment*, the death of Ogiso markes the end of the military dictatorship.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This work set to proving the operation of power by the military leaders in Nigeria, and the attitude of media on the military polity. In the course of our analysis, we discovered that the military intervention in politics was political rather than military. As a matter of fact we noted not a positive change, but a political instability which was due to the frequent military interventions. We also evaluated the weaknesses of the military regime in Nigeria. We discovered that it was incompetent, because of the lack of administrative and political experience to govern. Consequently, we observed that the military government was characterized by dictatorship, corruption, violation of human rights, and no tolerance to criticism. Through our analysis we also realized that media played a crucial role in developing the Nigerian politics. Media had effects on the political learning, especially to the ignorant population which developed the political knowledge afterwards. They also served as the catalyst of changing the governing system.

Anthills of the Savannah portrays the impact of the British colonizer on Nigerian leaders. Through our analysis of the political context of Kangan, the fictionalized Nigeria, we discovered that the British attitude remained in the minds of African leaders after the departure of the white. The government which was dominated by the military increased the oppression to the poor African people. We also observed that the military leaders exploited their own people. We realized that such a totalitarian leadership by the military dictators was the imperialist rhetoric, and it also equals the white colonizers. In addition to that, we realized that the new leaders were the product of the European culture and education. This connection of cultures affected Kangan elites.

We observed that Sam admired his European predecessors, and thus, maintained the white philosophy of parting from the ordinary people. The comment of the attorney general to Sam (24) proved that gap maintained

between the government by western educated military and the common people. Moreover, we realized that the author summarized the political chaos in Kangan through the murder of the three male protagonists. The assassination of Ikem and Chris proved that the military had killed democracy in the country. The assassination of Sam proved that people did not digest the British style of totalitarianism. But also, that murder was the writer's prophecy of the incessant military coups in Nigeria

In *Matters of the Moment,* Ojaide attempted to tell the story about the political happenings in his land over ten years ago. We observed that he was deploring the military government which he described as unwelcome to the Nigerian citizen. Instead of establishing the system which could allow the population to acquire fruit of independence, the military tended to struggle to preserve power forever. It has also been observed that the military dictator in Nigeria as represented through the character of Ogiso, abused power in order to achieve personal goals. We further discovered that corruption was the core of all political malpractices which marked the regime of Ogiso. We also realized that activist movements led by journalists took many options to change the governing system. Dede's editorials, his organizing and participating in demonstrations against the military dictator proved the journalist commitment to strengthening human rights.

This work insisted on the political disorder which was due to the military leaders in Nigeria. It also concentrated on the power clashes between the military dictators and the activist movements at the head of which was the press. We discovered that in times of political crisis, media get involved in politics. In addition to that, we realized that the struggle was unavoidable as long as people are aware of their oppression. Moreover, we realised that the language was the best resource to expose and combat the political injustice of

the military. With regards to the narrative structure, we discovered that storytelling was the authors' method for political communication. It permitted them to frame the story about the military regime in Nigeria. As for Ikem and Dede, they also employed the persuasive speaking and writing to inform their audience. At this stage, we discovered that media influenced the society in different ways. They played the scout of change though the information they spread. In this work, we noted that Ikem and Dede became the conscience and the voice of the people, and thus, gained the positive profile in the general public. As their supporting strength shore up, they provided the community with greater believable activities. We concluded that media carried the messages which enhanced the democratic system. However, we realized that it was not easy for media to optimize its role in the military dictatorship which banned the freedom of expression and the freedom of the press. Only the virile press succeeded in keeping its accountability to the public.

As far as recommendations are concerned, measures should be taken to prevent the military intervention. Firstly, such an intervention should be outlawed. Secondly, there should be free and fair elections. Thirdly, there should be the good leadership on the part of elected politicians. Concerning media, it is important that journalists be committed since there are sacrifices that must be made in journalists' personal life at times in order to get the work done.

By way of contribution to literature, this work is among few works on the political influence of media, with the emphasis on *Anthills of the Savannah* and *Matters of the Moment.* It also furthers the discussion on democracy and the inclusive politics. However, we believe that our exploration of the two novels is not fully comprehensive, but it serves as the basis for further

research. Researchers interested in this domain could investigate on the role of a woman in *Matters of the Moment*.

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