

**POLITICAL CORRUPTION AND SYMBOLISM IN ADICHIE
CHIMAMANDA NGOZI'S *HALF OF A YELLOW SUN* AND OKEY
NDIBE'S *ARROWS OF RAIN***

BY

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ENG/2007/086**

**A RESEARCH PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH,
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APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis has been approved as meeting the requirements in partial fulfillment for the award of Bachelor of Arts in English of Caritas University.

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Date

External Examiner

Date

DEDICATION

This project work is dedicated to the Almighty God for his infinite mercy upon me.

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My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor Maxwell Ugwuanyi who diligently through his tireless effort and guidance made these work successful.

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May the Almighty God bless you all.

ABSTRACT

This project work is on political corruption and symbolism. This project work brings out the corrupt practices by politicians and military rulers. To also brings out the symbols used in the novels. Chapter one is an introduction on political corruption in Nigeria and the way the military took over and ruled Nigeria. Chapter two is on the related literature review, chapter three is on political corruption and symbolism in Adichie Chumamanda Ngozi Half of a yellow Sun. Chapter four is on the political corruption and symbolism in Okey Ndibe's Arrows of Rain chapter five of this project work is the conclusion. This project research concludes that though the coming of the British to colonise us brought civilization and also divisions among the ethnic groups which led to war. War leads to destruction of lives and properties, it should therefore be avoided.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Political corruption is the use of power by government officials for illegitimate private gain. Misuse of government power for other purposes such as repression of political opponents and general police brutality is considered political corruption. Most economic political and social problems in under developed societies like Nigeria emanate from corruption. Some of these problems include lack of accountability, diversion of public resources to private ownership, different types of discriminations, ethnicity. Lack of competence, inefficiency etc.

There are many causes of political corruption such as ineffective political processes, ineffective political financing, and poverty. Ethnic and religious difference.

A lot of secrecy still pervades government document and this underlies the need for the passage of the freedom of information bill presently before Nigeria's National Assembly, also law public participation in Government to mention a few.

The pervasive corrupt practices have been blamed on the colonial masters. According to this view, the nation's colonial history may have restricted any early influences in an ethical revolution.

Throughout the colonial period most Nigerians were struck in Ignorance and poverty.

The level of corruption raised serious alarm that attracted the concern of both Nigerians and international community which rated Nigeria as one of the most corrupt countries.

Although, the government embarked upon anti-corruption measures but were not sincerely and properly implemented such that the expected objective and goal were not achieved. The problem was rather aggravated. Since then, corruption has continued to militate against national development.

In Nigeria corruption is a problem that has to be rooted out.

Owusi (2002), however in his book, *The Root Causes of Corruption in West Africa*, was of the view that;

Corruption is made up of opportunist manipulation or branches of existing laws and regulation for advantages.

He emphasized that;

Our inordinate desire for wealth, power prestige and high status and its desirous consumption of scarce, expensive and prestigious import commodities is no doubt one of the roads to corruption in the society”.

Over the years, the country has seen its wealth withered with little to show in living conditions of the average people.

As with many other African nations, Nigeria was an artificial structure initiated by former colonial powers which had neglected to consider religious linguistic and ethnic differences.

The causes of Nigeria Civil War were diverse although, in his memoir, journalist Alex Mitchell blames involvement of the British, Dutch, French and Italian oil companies whose battles for the rich Nigerian oil fields started the Civil War and kept it going.

Nigerian's political problems also started from the manner in which the British took over power, administered and abandoned government and people of Nigeria. The British administrators did not make effort to weld the country together and unite the heterogenous group of people. Though many technologies we have today are due to their enlightenment.

Northern leaders however, fear that independence would mean political and economic domination by the more westernized elites in the south, preferred the perpetuation of British rule. As a condition for accepting independence, they demanded that the country continue to be divided into three regions with the North having a clear majority.

On January 15, 1966, major Kaduna Nzeogwu and other junior Army officers (mostly majors and captains) attempted a coup d'état. It was generally speculated that the coup had been initiated by the Igbo and for their own primary benefit, because of the ethnicity of those that were killed. The two major political leaders of the North, the Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and the Premier of the Northern region, Sir Ahmadu Bello was executed by major Nzeogwu. Also murdered was Sir Ahmadu Bello's wife

The coup was not only generally carried out in the Northern region, it was most successful there. The fact that the officer, Lieutenant Connell. Arthur Umegbe was killed can be attributed to the more fact that the officers in charge of implementing Nzeogwu's plans in the East were incompetent. The coup, also referred to as the coup of the five majors, has been described in some quarters as Nigeria's only revolutionary coup. This was the first coup in the short life of Nigeria's nascent democracy. Claims of electoral fraud was one of the reasons given by the coup plotters. This coup resulted in General Johnson Aguyi-Ironsi, an Igbo and Head of the Nigerian Army, taking power as General becoming the first Military Head of State in Nigeria.

By the late 1960s the literature of disillusionment was taking form as a reflection of the widespread violent conflict and political corruption which had begun to take hold throughout African societies. Such conflicts inevitably threw the nationalist project into turmoil: how can one speak of a nation or even Pan-African identity when a national is at war with itself? In terms of the novel as genre, Gikandi states that in the mid-1960s the form and function of the novel changed almost overnight, moving the reader away from the sometimes celebratory and utopian tone of earlier novels to a grim critique of the narrative of cultural nationalism. This was a generation of writers who are consciously distancing themselves from the project of cultural nationalism.

This interventionist reading of the contemporary problems regarding ethnic conflict in Africa is one that is shared by writers as diverse as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Ngugi Wa Thion'o. Discussing Nigeria Adichie takes the view that the idea of the tribe has, its roots in colonialism as people did not consciously identify themselves as Igbo, Yoruba or Hausa until the involvement of the British.

The British governed Nigeria indirectly through their traditional rulers, as a result the true leader of the masses were hamstrung and held down. Just because Africans were given authority to rule over her own

people. They saw it as means to maltreat those that have more than them and sell his or her brother and sister, mother to gain favour from the superior leaders. The British (Adewale Ademoyeya:*why we Struck*).

These actions by the local and foreign leaders made the people to seek for independence. Many of them were not thinking straight anymore. The present leadership blame the colonial masters and fore runners of independence for their actions for not doing what is expected of them and also for the embezzlement and stealing of public fund. The political elicits in other to become rich and influential in the society, steal and blame it on the economy and leaders. No one takes responsibility for his own crime and actions.

The politicians and military rulers blame one another for a bad government no one agrees that the other is better than himself.

Emeka Nwabueze is of the opinion that, the question is not weather we should wage war against corruption or not, my quarrel is that the fight should be waged within the context of the constitution.

Several opinions hold that Nigerian political and economic underdevelopment since independence has been as a result of pervasive

corrupt practices in both private and public fields: *Nepotism* which means favouritism granted in politics or business to relatives regardless of merit.

Bribery which is an act of giving money or gift giving that alters the behaviour of the recipient.

Political Scandal is a kind of political corruption that is exposed and becomes a scandal, in which politicians or government officials are accused of engaging in various illegal, corrupt or unethical practices.

Electoral Fraud is the illegal interference with the process of an election. Acts of fraud affect vote counts to bring about an election result whether by increasing the vote share of the rival candidates, or both. Embezzlement, abuse of office etc.

Arnold saw corruption as receiving or offering of money or other advantages in return for contract, acquiring an opportunity, unqualified favor, pervasion of Justice, leading ahead of a queue and the likes. He saw corruption as poverty in juxtaposition to great wealth and luxury or crook in order to live big.

A symbol is an object that represents, stands for or suggests an idea, belief, action, or material entity. Symbols take the form of words, sounds gestures or visual images and are used to convey ideas and beliefs.

It's also a sign, shape or object which is used to represent something else.

Symbol is seen in every culture, religion and society. This makes symbol universally acceptable in the sense that it does not exist in one society and is absent in another. There are cultural and religious symbols. Cultural symbols are seen in language, traditional attire, and tribal marks, sacred objects of ancestral qualities; like "ofò" in Igbo culture as the communion of the ancestors. In Igbo culture, grey hair is a symbol of old age and should attain contesy and respect, proverb also in Igbo society are symbolic because they are embodiment of wisdom and tradition.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Political corruption is the abuse of political powers by the government leaders to extract and accumulate for private gain.

Corruption has eaten deep into the system and has destroyed lives and communities and undermines countries and institutions.

The legacy and practices of corruption in different level of ethnic groups leads to war which leaves painful memory behind.

The attempt to create a common understanding has led to the research of this project work.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this paper is to identify the cause of political corruption, its consequences, find a way to prevent it and effect a change. There are also issues were readers find it difficult to identify the presence of symbols in Nigerian fiction and also to understand its meaning the study of this work is to emphasis more on its way out.

SCOPE OF STUDY

The project is the study of political corruption and symbolism and it is mainly focused on two novels: *Half of a Yellow Sun* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and *Arrows of Rain* by Okey Ndibe and other relevant literary work of some other Nigerian and African writers and commentaries on corruption and symbolism.

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

This research paper will help inform readers who have interest in political corruption and symbolism with the help of using *Half of a Yellow Sun* by Adichie Chimamanda and Okey Ndibe's *Arrows of Rain*.

This work will expose how the governments corrupt the society, what happened before, during and after the Biafran War and military rule and how it affected the live of the masses.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The main sources of this project are the factual analysis of the two novels *Half of a Yellow Sun*_by Chimamanda Adichie and *Arrows of Rain* by Okey Ndibe.

Other sources of research are from the library, texts, the internet, Journal and reviews of related texts.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

It is over forty years now since the Civil War in Nigeria ended, yet its ugly scars on the Nigerian mind and soul remain visible and glaring. The defective bearing process of the wounds on the Nigerian psyche from the war has resulted in an extensive gulf between the people of the deunct Biafra and Nigeria, the parties in the war that lasted from 1967 to 1970 and the implication of the war are manifested in diverse ways and degrees in the contemporary Nigeria body politics.

The apparent bitterness and discontent of the people of Biafra about the way they were treated, and the total waste that the Nigerian Biafra was portended, come alive in the fiction on the war. Nigerian fiction on the war, written mostly by scholars and intellectuals from Eastern Nigeria, specifically the Igbo, who directly suffered and still bear the pains of the war, reveals that it was avoidable. The symbols within which the stories are couched are profound. They indicate a close affinity between the Nigerian Civil War and madness. The symbols underscore the people's recrimination of their Igbo leaders, on the one hand, who plunged into a war for which they were ill-prepared and ill-equipped.

Achebe in “the madman” skillfully configures a symbolic dimension into the whole corpus of discourse of madness. The symbolism can be decoded through the formula of the civil war in Nigeria, the actual madman represents Nigeria.

Corruption in public life is the most common political theme in West Africa literature in English from Achebe’s *A Man of The People* through Armah’s *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* and Nkem Nwankwo *My Mercedes is Bigger than yours* to the novels of Ben Okri in which politics and its repercussions are always hovering. One of the consequences of corruption in public life is the immorality of politicians.

In a world of social injustice, economic inequality environment degradation, coupled with human right violations, people are asking more clearly than ever before what are the roles of the leaders in bringing about justice and peace in the nation.

Achebe in his book *The Trouble with Nigeria*, stressed that nothing was basically wrong with the Nigerian character, but that Nigeria’s problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to their responsibilities.

Achebe maintains the opinion that Nigerians are corrupt because the system makes corruption easy, profitable and they will cease to be corrupt

when corruption is made difficult and inconvenient. In debunking the phrase “average Nigerian” on the grounds that such Nigerians hardly exist in such social space with limited opportunities for corruption. Achebe emphasize that corruption goes with power, which the average Nigerians does not posses. He believe that corruption is the sole preserver of the powerful and the rich.

In the same vain, Wole Soyinka attacks political intimidation and repression in Nigeria’s second republican government using his autobiography: *Ake* The campaign for freedom, equality and justice continues in post colonial societies (8). Also Wole Soyinka while in Ghana during his exile used his editorship of the journal transition to attack Africa’s military dictatorship. In 1978, after the latest Nigerian military government refused permission for the staging of his Opera *Wonyosi*; (1981) in Lagos, he used his newly formed university of Ife Guerrilla Theatre unit to improvise revenue performances in market places and parking lot for trucks exposing and excoriating the racketeering political murders and army outrage that were the hallmarks of the second Nigerian Republic under President Alhaji Shehu Shagari from 1976 until retirement in 1985 Soyinka was Professor of comparative literature and dramatic arts at the university of Ife.

Furthermore, Wole Soyinka adopts a militant stance in asking for radical changes with his vision; a writer is inclined to paint a picture of doom that would befall the society if care is not taken. This, the writer becomes a prophet of doom. It has been observed that Achebe attained this social vision with the publication of his novel, *A Man of the People* just like Wole Soyinka, Achebe has predicted a military take-over following a chief insight into the political development in his fictional society.

Apparently, the publication of this novel coincided with Nigeria's first military coup.

There are other novels whose action ends in a military coup such as Chief Aluko's *The Honourable Minister* and Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. The novels indeed proffer a change but more often than not these admonitory works do not reach their target coming off with a lot of deliriously committed political statements. He sees the artist and therefore sees himself as a man leads the army of the revolution into the Promised Land.

The artists are conscious of the fact that, the growth and modernization in Africa are impeded and stamped by bad leadership. The artistler writers create caricature of African leaders, exposing their slavish mentality, lack of organizing ability business acumen and concern for the

governed. In ‘Paths of Thunder; equally Wole Soyinka writes Kongi’s Harvest to establish a hall of shame for plot of President Kamuzu Banda of Malawi. He draws a more dreadful, barbaric portrait of the best and brute force in African leaders in *The Play of Giant*, they are masters of terror and censorship, draining the national wealth and improving the masses. Ayi Kwei Armah like Wole Soyinka in his novels focus on the question of how one should live purely in an impure society. Armah’s first novel *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) had missed reception in African, as did his later novels. The objective in Africa, commentators to Armah’s novels center on his pessimism, which extend to both his political vision and the terms in which he renders real decay and metaphorical corruption yet, paradoxically, these words are Armah’s strength. His emphasis on physical decay makes one see more clearly the depth of which the society we live in is corrupt- corrupt like the decayed waste on the road side waiting for vultures and maggot to feed on.

Emeka Nwabueze in his play *A Parliament of Vulture* attempts to expose the effects of corruption in Nigeria’s social religious, moral, economic and most especially in the state holders in Nigerian Politics, He takes on the contemporary Nigerian Political elite, criticizing and making the people see and feel the weaker activities of their hypocritical leader. It

also paints a vivid image of the goings on the nation's political arena, especially as it concerns law makers, who were elected to respect their different constituencies in the states and national assembly.

In Nigeria, right from the colonial administration to Obasanjo's administration to the present day, Nigeria cannot be said to be free from corruption.

The *House of Hunger*, Dambudzo Marechera 1979, transforms prostitution to a stylistic play of exposing the mutilation social environment of deprivation Kenya, sexual obscenity is socially imposed by impoverished existence and it is a copollary of an odious body – politic. It is a reflection of the social and political prostitution of neo-colonial African leaders. Not forgetting the poems of Richard Ntiru, Jared Angira and Oswald Mtshali treat the themes of hunger and dereliction.

Ndibe examines Nigeria from the perspective of the Kaleidoscope of political upheavals that it has undergone. Though Nigeria attained independence in 1960, its journey towards the attainment of self – development has been tortuous it is a trajectory strewn with economic mismanagement, ethnicity, cultural devaluation, moral decrepitude and political potholes which have claimed hundreds of lives.

The 1980's and the 1990s witnessed an unprecedented surge in writing about issues of power prison and incarceration and political resistance and confrontation with military regimes in Nigeria. As the Nigeria political landscape becomes more and more desperate, so also does it breed as strident reaction grounded in protest literature from a younger generation of writers, among whom is Ndibe

Disillusioned by the pretentious benevolence associated with the military regime and its corresponding notoriety for human abuses, Ndibe employs varied imagination techniques of satire, faction and political discourse to narrate Nigeria in relations to its military rulers. In these texts Africa generally and Nigeria in particular, have been portrayed simultaneously as a failed continent and a failed country, betrayed by rulers who have mismanaged its economy and destroyed its political ethos. In their bid to cling on to power at all cost. This has been vividly captured by Kenneth W. Harrow:

*The nation state in African today is in crisis
misrule and corruption have danced across
the land provoking widespread skepticism
towards the mechanisms of government and
a sense of resignation over the inevitable
indifference of the wealthy and powerful
to the enormous social problems at hand.*

Globalization and Aids has spread their pandemic effects, war and anomy have gained the terrain, so that walking downtown or driving at night have become risky undertakings in many areas one has merely to mention the words southern Sudan or Eastern Congo to elicit a shrug of despair (33).

According to Achebe, the consequences of the loss of predictable political power in a community is one thing; at the national level, they are quite different. He turns to this latter issue. In his fourth novel. *A Man of the People* which is set in the post colonial period in an unnamed independent African country. The governance of the country is nominally, in the hands of the people. The quality of the leadership and the response of the people to that leadership are the central theme.

There is neither collective will in the people nor responsible leadership. Moreover a collective voice at the community level, through which agreement is articulated in *Things Fall Apart, Arrow of God_ and No Longer at Ease.*

Tanure Ojaide uses his novel *The Activist* to enlighten the people of what is happening in the Niger Delta areas. He says those that claim to be literate in the society are the chief criminals sabotaging one another.

Everybody in the country is in one way or the other suffering from the harms political corruption brought, we are psychosocially disordered.

In Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* he depicts the challenges posed to African societies by modernism and western influence and also the corrupt practices of the politicians. Achebe seems not so much to be blaming the west for African's problems as pointing out the ways in which, years after independence and even longer since things first "fell Apart"..... African societies continue to struggle with the legacy of colonialism. The villain are not Europeans but the opportunistic soldiers, politicians and business persons who came to power after the departure of the colonists.

Achebe perceptiveness and skillful sketches of characters make this an important work a period piece as representative of contemporary post – independence Africa.

CHAPTER THREE

THE POLITICAL CORRUPTION AND SYMBOLISM IN CHIMAMNANDA NGOZI ADICHIE *HALF OF A YELLOW SUN*

The novel captures a Nigeria swept up in the turbulence of the period following the end of colonial rule, the country plunges into a Civil War when Biafrans, struggle to establish independent sovereign nation with the support of Britain and the United States, Northern Nigeria engages in a brutal crackdown of Biafrans. Many Biafrans were slaughtered and forced to flee from their homes. Adichie captures the horror of these events through a perspective of three characters, Ugwu a thirteen years old house boy, the intellectual Odenigbo, Olanna, Odenigbo's lover and later wife, Richard the British expat who has come to Nigeria to study the arts and fall in-love, with Kainene Olanna's twin sister.

The novel explains things about politics and geography of Nigeria. The important thing to understand is that the nation of Biafra was founded when one of Nigeria ethnic groups the Igbo attempts to secede from Nigeria and establish their own country.

The novel squarely confronts Nigeria's political history in order to explode presumably stable notions such as nationalism, race, ethnic identity, truth, heroism and betrayal, and bloody wrangling over who

controls the military, the Civil Service, the Oil; The Civil War was, fundamentally, an ethnically motivated war against those identified as "Igba", one of the predominant ethnic groups. Years of political unrest resulted in outbreaks of violence towards the Igbo people, eventually resulting in massacres and starvation.

Adichie contextualizes the politics of the period leading into the war by portraying the frequent gatherings of academics at the house of Odenigbo a physics professor at Nsukka University. Those debates are usually seen from the narrative perspective of Ugwu, the houseboy, who refers to Odenigbo as his master.

Odenigbo's latter point about being Igbo functions as an ominous statement of context for the events that will follow, as the tribal definition within Nigeria will serve as the basis for the people to be divided by War. This notion of pre-colonial identity is interesting within the context of the novel.

The war brought about pain and suffering in the life of Nigerians. This is not strictly a North/South revolt but rather the conflict is based on tribal disputes. The Igbo do not trust anymore the Northern tribes called the Hausa.

Although the Igbo's hearts are in favor of the revolution and ultimate independence, the Igbo people are not as well prepared, or equipped, people suffer tremendous losses.

The novel reveals some vivid and harrowing descriptions of the suffering of the Biafran people how children were dying of starvation how people were murdered and abused, homes and property being destroyed. There is a memorable scene, where Olanna is sitting next to a woman on a train who is holding a calabash contain in it the severed head of her daughter (149).

There are a lot of violence, little children are used as soldiers, the situation in the refugee camp is hopeless, people dying of starvation no food or medicine Olanna fears the conscription of Ugwu so much that she does the outside errands herself and admonishes Ugwu to stay indoors lest he joins the group of conscripted children. Ugwu disobeys this order and is conscripted. Consequently Olanna pays some bribe and Ugwu is released to her such issues are common.

Mothers have suffered most: trying to protect their husbands and children; begging at relief centres for essential commodities, absence of which often results in malnutrition in families.

The war could affect one's good nature a bar-tender is gang-raped by a group of soldiers including Ugwu who takes part for fear.

The Abagana miracle where the Biafran soldiers bay ambush and set fire to a column of one hundred vehicle, trucks and armored cars of the federal government cannot be forgotten because;

“To save Biafra for the free world is a task that must be done!

This particular episode and others like it make it Impossible for Nigeria to vaporize Biafran in a “three hour police station” which eventually becomes a “three year war” of attrition at the end of which General Gowon announces ”No victor, No vanquished”. It has been a test of might against the determined iron will of a people fighting for survival against the mighty arsenals of western powers.

After the war the Igbo's who ran for their lives during the pogrom and war returned to find their positions had been taken over; as seen in the life of Olanna's parents, the government did not feel any need to re-instate them, preferring to regard them as having resigned. This reasoning is also extended to Igbo owned properties and houses. People from other regions were quick to take over any owned properties and houses by an Igbo especially in the Port Harcourt area. The government justified these by terming such properties abandoned. This, however has led to a feeling of

injustice as the Nigeria government policies were seen as further economically disabling the Igbo's even long after the war.

Further feelings of injustice were caused by Nigeria changing its currency so that Biafran supplies of pre-war Nigerian currency were no longer honoured at the end of the war, only ₦20 is given to any easterner despite whatever amount of money he or she had in the bank as a result of these Olanna lost all the money she had in the bank. This is applied irrespective of their banking in pre-war. Nigerian currency or Biafran currency. This is seen as a deliberate policy to hold back the Igbo middle class, leaving them with little wealth to expand their business interest.

SYMBOLS IN CHIMAMANDA ADICHIE'S *HALF OF A*

YELLOW SUN

In Adichie's novel, there are various symbols, starting from the title of the novel; *Half of a Yellow Sun* represents the Biafran flag: a Yellow Sun, which is not fully risen, thus not enough for maximum illumination a half Sun. This symbolizes the short lived Biafran war. The Biafrans were not fully ready for that which made it impossible for them to match the Nigeria side, despite their bravery.

Red was the blood of the siblings massacred in the North, black was for mourning them, green was for the prosperity Biafran would have and finally the half of a yellow Sun stood for the glorious future (281).

However, breaking the title of the novel, word by word and phrase by phrase could put a clear understanding.

Half Sun

Half sun cannot provide total illumination Biafran came unprepared, they believed that the rising sun in their national flag would one day rise fully. The Biafran represents the half sun and the half sun represents the Biafran. Their incompetence made them fail. The Biafrans fought-just for hope of freedom and vengeance. They were not prepared for war; signs of these include untrained and inexperienced young boys with Mock guns.

Kainene tells Richard; Madu told me that the army has:

Nothing, absolutely nothing, The thought Ojukwu had arms piled up somewhere, given the way he has been talking. "No power in Black Africa can defeat us! So some of the officers who came back from the North went to tell him that we have no arms no mobilization of troops and that our men are training with wooden gun, ... (8).

Yellow Sun

When sun emerges yellow in the morning it suggests doom. But the doom in the morning was yellow Sun- which Biafrans believed was an emblem of hope. Hence it was a mark which left most Biafrans with unforgettable reminiscences of war hunger, blood loss and death.

Baby as a Symbol

Baby, Odenigbo's child by Amala, is a symbolic character she is a symbol of Biafran. She represents the newly born Biafran. Perhaps, that was why Adichie created a female character as Baby. The Biafran were called the rebels by the Nigerians, meaning that the state did not come from due process-they were going against the nation or breaking the peace of the nation. Thus, the Nigerian government declared Biafra illegal and therefore not recognized.

In these novels, Baby came through an intercourse between Odenigbo and Amala, a village girl whom Odenigbo's mother brought for him to marry. Baby came out of wedlock, a serious mistake, and her coming brought distrust between Odenigbo and Olanna. The coming of Biafran also brought mistrust among the high rank soldiers. The non recognition of Biafra as an independent state by Nigeria suggests its illegitimacy. Baby had no name; Olanna did not give her any name

because she did not come through her and Odenigbo. Baby having no name and Biafra not being recognized by Nigeria made baby a symbolic character, representing Biafra. Any thing that affects Biafra also affects Baby. In the climax of the war Baby began to have lice and tuft in her hair. This was the general deficiency that struck Biafra. At the end of the war Baby's hair grew black-with Adichie writes:

*The weeks passed and the butterflies were black
in the fount yard and baby's hair grew jet-back (432)*

Ugwu as a Symbol

Ugwu is another symbolic character. He symbolizes a change. Despite the fact that he is brought from a remote village, and tense of the way of life of the new world, he gradually blends into the family of Odenigbo and becomes one of them.

In the middle of the novel, we see Ugwu as a teacher and later, towards the end of the novel, we see him as a soldier and then a writer. He followed other soldiers to commit various evils, raping of young women and so on the suggestion here is that the war made some innocent and good people to change and everything become, ugly and evil, because it was a kind of necessity.

Professor Ezeaka as a Symbol

Professor Ezeaka represents those Biafran professors who fought the war because of the dividend; the war made them wealthy and some, wealthier and even excessively rich. Ezeaka represents those professors who were appointed directors at various directorates and who worked hand in hand with the business men to make sure that some good amount of what was meant for the hungry masses were diverted to their private homes and pockets. Ezeaka and his wife believe that Biafra was used as means of enrichment, thus they still have their Nigerian passports: Hear Mrs. Ezeaka.

*We will fly to Gabon. And then unto
England on Our Nigerian passport, of
course? British have refused to recognize
Biafra!*

Mbaezi as a Symbol

Mbaezi, Olanna's uncle represents the Ndigbo in the North. He believes that the Igbos will survive oppressions from the North and later build a school. However, when war began him and his family were the first to be recorded and seen in the novel as Olanna saw them slaughtered in the

street (147) Mbaezi as the major Igbo character in Kano is used to represent the whole Igbo victims of Kano massacre. The helpless Igbo's who were trapped in the North at the outbreak of the war.

Nature Symbol

Another level of symbol is the symbol seen in nature. This is portrayed through air raids which obstructed Olanna and Odenigbo's wedding reception. Adichie described the condition by writing thus:

The sky was overcast. The wet smell of the coming rain mixed with the smoky smell of burning (203).

With the above sentence, it is very easy to draw a relationship between Biafra and Sky. Biafra attempted to be stable but could not, as Nigeria put constant hazard and ruin on it the coming rain suggest falling bombs from the Nigerian aircrafts which torment the Biafrans the smoky smell of burning is the destruction which these air raids would have Biafra in total disorder.

Adichie draws another symbol through comparison She writes

Olanna
continued to sit
no the ground
holding baby, the
camouflage-print

*army shirt
 wrapped around
 her wedding
 dress. (203)*

The camouflage-print her which is the soldier's costume, covered Olanna who has baby on her arms and she wore her wedding dress. This camouflage shirt also represents war which is covering purity; the wedding dress. Which represents the innocent Biafrans, and Baby: the newly born state was being covered by camouflage; the war. The suggestion is that the air raid has caused disaster for Biafran civilians and baby in the hand of Olanna suggests Biafrans being subdued by the Nigeria.

SKULL AND BONE SYMBOL

Another symbol which operates under object is the skull and bones barge next to the half of a yellow sun in the Biafran army uniform. It represents danger which means that Biafra was in ruin and danger of Nigerian troop.

KITE SYMBOL

The kite is traditionally known as a destroyer and a devourer. Adichie use the kite, thus to suggest destruction and devouring. First she uses it to represent Amala, the village girl who goes in with Odenigbo when Olanna traveled to Lagos. The hen which the kite took away its chick is Olanna and the chick represents Odenigbo as the kite was Amala.

Another suggestion here is the kite being the bomber plane which took away the lives of the Biafrans who are the chicks. It is also the sudden killings of the Igbo's in the North and the hen which was shouting and running after the kite represents Ojukwu, the Biafran Head of State who stood to defend them.

RICHARD AND KAINENE

Despite Richard's determination to become and remain an "insider", the doomed relationship of Richard and Kainene symbolically mirrors the doomed state of Biafra: Whilst Richard pledges allegiance to the Biafran's cause, his life as a Biafran is ultimately concluded when Kainene disappears. Like the state itself, their relationship cannot survive the divisive order of ethnic division, in times of conflict; no hybrid state can be allowed to exist.

CHAPTER FOUR
THE POLITICAL CORRUPTION AND SYMBOLISM IN OKEY
NDIBE *ARROWS OF RAIN*

The novel is about a very corrupt civilian democracy (in the case of Nigeria, government by looters) or an equally corrupt military regime.

The novel is of three stages, the present, a flash back (recollection of the past) (memories) and the return of the present situation, which now concludes the novel. It's set in the fictional African state of Madia, suffering under its despotic ruler general Issa Palat Bello.

Arrows of Rain is imbued with the capacity to remember what has happened, which in itself is a form of protest given the fact that what is being remembered is subversive of the existing order. Negotiated history and defiant protest coalesce in the experiences of the central character Ogugua, whose occupation as a journalist enables him to straddle both.

Ogugua's narrative in *Arrows of Rain* echoes not only the ambivalence of a post-colonial Nigeria and the politics of remembering, but also the process of narrating and organizing memories and thus evaluating the role of the military in national development.

The novel is a fascinating satirical allegory that reveals in gory details the terrible effect of military rule in a country named Madia in the

novel, but which is infact, a thinly disguised Nigeria. The book opens in captivating fashion with the story of the dead body of a woman sprawled on the sandy shore of B. Beach on New Year day.

The novel's opening pages exposes poigently detail story of oppression, corruption, brutal corruptions, egregious human right abuses, brutal killings and other ills visited on the Madian populace by the higher echelon of the military. After reading it, one is left with nightmares of the total evil called militarism in Nigeria and government in general.

The novel offers an all too familiar canvas of corruption and massive looting by politicians which occasion military regime offers lots of promises that keep the expectant populace relieved and happy. However the military soon becomes dictatorial, triggering once again in yearning for the corrupt elected politicians. Elected but rather corrupt civilians, who squandered the wealth of Madia in a most reckless manner, are at first media's rulers. The elected president, Askia Amin, both clueless and indulges excessively in sexual liaison with women as well as hedonistic consumption of alcohol. The massive looting and lavish lifestyle of these elected officials lead to the country being ranked as sixth on the list of countries ranked as "disasters in waiting" by a world organization.

Dr. Bato, a brash Ivy League economist who heads Madia's Economic and planning ministry, dismisses the report as "misleading" and actually puts a spin by calling the rating as "good news". In total disregard to the true state of Madia, Dr. Bato swears that nobody in the country is dying of hunger. He also justifies needless death in Madia, arguing in Malthusian terms that people need to die and be replaced by new borns. Dr Bato is summoned by Madia's legislators to explain his statement, he talks down to the law-makers; his insolent manner triggers a huge parliamentary row. University students takes to the streets to demand the firing of Dr. Bato instead, security agents slaughter more and wider protests.

The disruptive atmosphere enables General Isa Palat Bello, an Emir son to sack the elected government and assume office. When general Issa Palat Bello becomes President, Bukuru fears that his days as one who knows too much about the new military ruler are numbered his terror gets worse when two men show up at the newspaper were he was a member of the editorial staff, and demand o see him. The fear of Issa Palat Bello literally drives him to the brink. He calls off work, and then starts a long but sad journey that sees him take refuge on B. Beach. In the end he makes a home on the beach and it is there, years later that he witnesses more violent rapes and the killing of prostitutes by Issa Palat Bello's soldiers.

Bukuru becomes the victim of a conspiracy featuring a corrupt high court judge, dishonest policy officers and a terrified psychiatrist. The machinery of state power is mobilized to provide false testimonies implicating Bukuru for the murder, since Bukuru's truth is all too frightening the judiciary as well as other officials conspire to portray him as a mad man and to depict his own indictment of General Bello and soldiers as figments of his deranged imagination.

The novel depiction of Ogugua's inability to recall and analyze certain parts of his past while deliberately shying away from others suggests that narrating the past also recalls violence which could disrupt the present. The end of the novel submits that the exploitation of memory to recall the past is susceptible to the dispensation of violence by those who oppose such re-telling of the past for the purpose of avoiding indictment hence towards the end of the novel, Ogugua hangs himself to avoid being sentenced to life imprisonment by General Bello's intrusion into the court trial whose entire processes have been arranged with the compromise of Justice Kayode. Justice Kayode as an agent of the state has to carry out the script of the military. Kayode as a justice knows that what Bukuru testifies in court is the truth, but he had to find another way to "corrupt the truth". He says to Bukuru.

“listen to me, Mr. man of No Name! you must understand and respect due process in this court. This is a court of law, not a civics class. I’m sure that every body in this room-he pointed to a pregnant woman among the spectators everybody, including the baby in that woman’s womb knows that General I.P. Bello is the president and commander-in-chief of the Madian armed forces your question is grossly improper. It is a blatant and willful show of disrespect to the person and office of his Excellency, the life president of the sovereign republic of media. Let me sound a strong warning, once and for all; this court will not sit idly by and allow you to use the name of the Excellency in vain! I have already tolerated too much of your madness” (38).

The above statement shows that even the court of law is not exempted from the military oppression, corruption, control of the government. While the justice Kayode is giving his final judgment he asked the journalist not to report where the name of General Isa Palat Bello is maliciously smeared according to him and whoever dare report or who flouts this order which he has given will be summarily dealt with.

The novel aligns with Ougua’s need to talk about the rape, killing, torture, and dehumanization of the generality of the citizenry by the military under the command of Bello, in order to portray the military as an

institution which distils and perpetrates violence on its people in third world countries. Ogugua wishes to keep his delay in holding the advice of his grandmother that “stories never forgive silence”. His prolonged silence had created a lot of damage and his regret knows no bounds:

My silence has no hope of redemption. It is too late in the day for me to look for grand insights. What I know are simple truths. I know that the fabric of memory is reinforced by stories, rent by silences. I know that memory outlasts power's viciousness (248).

Ogugua's decision to take his own life is sufficient to save him from being traumatized afterwards by the nemesis of narrating the past when the relevance of such a narrative has become some what belated. His death is an affirmation of the consequences of his choice to recall and narrate his politically-disrupted past. Ogugua's narrative signifies that in some situation, the need for retelling the past leaves in its wake its own kind of forgetting, not so much of violence perpetrated or an individual or community in the past, but of the violence that continues into the present.

SYMBOLS

The title of the novel: *Arrows of Rain* creates an ambivalent image of the military. Rain can perform two paradoxical roles of being a sustainer of the earth's plenitude, it brings life to things and people, but its arrows

can also create such problems as floods and death. Similarly the military is capable of ousting a corrupt civilian administration with ease, but also has the tendency to unleash unlimited terror and grief on the public. The mythological contextualization of rain underscores the Images of the military in *Arrows of Rain*, using a narrative framework drawn from the Igbo oral tradition.

GENERAL ISA PALAT BELLO

Issa Palat Bello is a very powerful and dreaded military ruler of Madia who represents General Sani Abacha one time Nigeria military dictator a vicious psychotic military ruler whose preoccupation with brutality and repression leads inevitably to the killing of intellectuals, journalist and other watchdogs of society in the fictionalized country known as Madia.

Ndibe also examines the role of the military in Nigerian politics and nation-building.

BUKURU

The central character of the novel, who suffers internal alienation when he disguises himself as a madman and lives on the beach during the repressive regime of General Bello. Bukuru's madness represents everyone's madness in the society people who are silent, who cannot come

up to speak the truth for fear of death. The madness is a mask and behind that mask is a universe of freedom, even indemnity, hardly ever available to the “normal” person. Bukuru’s madness is not just a personal affliction; it is a mirror in which the images of a supposedly sane society tend to swap consciousness and it’s left to the observer to decide who is actually mad.

FEMI

He is the symbol of the future. Femi was that new baby Emilia had for Ogugua, whom Isa Bello attempted to kill. Femi is the future voice, who will speak up, Femi also is coincidentally a victim of circumstance Bukuru’s first meeting in his jail cell in the terrible, isolated prison to which he has been consigned as an awaiting trial prisoner. He tells Femi: “I was weak: I never wanted to be touched by anything that quickened the heart or made the soul suit at “(48-49). Now when it’s almost too late, he wants Femi to be his “voice”. For, as he now understands, he “can only throw his story...a feeble weapon” against the power of the state.

OGUGUA’S BLIND GRANDMOTHER

These old women is a symbol of truth in the novel and also represent those who spoke the truth she is stoical, clairvoyant and stunningly wise. Ogugua’s first visit to his ancient grandmother. Even though she is blind

and very old and has always lived in rural isolation. This woman is a powerful and insightful social commentator profoundly sensitive to the currents of both family life and public affairs, she rebukes his new city-bred ignorance and condescension because you've traveled too far from your health", she admonishes him, "you have forgotten the language of your soil (89). His grandmother's words to him on this occasion-the last time he will see her alive-emphasis that he comes "from a line of speakers" his grandmother says she wishes him to maintain: "Remember, this: a story that must be told never forgives science". She adds to thus"... speech is the mouth's debt to a story" (97).

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Novels such as *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Arrows of Rain* suggest that contemporary African writing is becoming increasingly reminiscent of the literature of disillusionment from the late 1960s. Not only do writers such as Adichie and Ndibe share an ambiguity towards national stability in their work, but the rejection of redemptive conclusions in their narratives is also a return to the disillusioned novels of the 1960s onwards. The twenty-first century African novel is already a stark contrast to the ‘magical realist’, playful techniques of the novels of 1990s.

By situating ethnic conflict at the heart of their narratives, Adichie and Ndibe are part of a new generation of writers who are willing to address some of the difficulties in Africa’s recent history. They look beyond the colonial era, not just for literary material but also for ways in which to critically respond to it. These writers are giving voice to those issues that have directly affected the people of their home nations

Okey Ndibe has exposed Military oppression in *Arrows of Rain* the way civilians suffer and are oppressed by the military and it shows its condemnation through the fate of Ogugua (Bukuru) Iyese, and Tay. Repression in the text is a signification of a wave of the political

apocalypse which engulfed Nigeria's social political landscape between 1994 and 1998, greedily fuelled by the military's power.

What is of memorable and accomplished about *Half of A Yellow Sun* is that political events are never dryly recite, rather they are felt through the medium of lived lives, of actual aching sensitive experiences, pictures of starving children, children suffering the effects of severe hunger and malnutrition as a result of the blockade.

The war for Biafra's independence, was born out of highly complex Nigerian and international political circumstances, provides the essential context for the struggle of the civilian Igbo population. Her depiction of the horrors of the war the starvation and destruction is realistic.

Okey Ndibe examines the erosion of moral insight in both public and private life drawing out the complex factors behind the near-collapse of a nation. Ndibe's Nigeria where "Speaking Truth" has often led to exile, imprisonment or execution.

Education and prosperity are the goodies that European colonizers claimed they brought to the colonized but what result is Civil War, death and destruction. Should another war erupt there should be referendum. Let the people be consulted. Shooting war never settles any problem amicably. Only the ballot box and the round table do it.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Okey Ndibe and other novelists on the Nigeria-Biafra War have given the nation and the world lasting legacies that should nudge the consciences of men that War, no matter how small is a great evil that should be avoided at all costs.

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