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Vieux Demba Cissoko

“Socio-Political Upheaval And Its Immorality In Okey Ndibe’s *Arrows Of Rain*”

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Abstract

The amazing particularity of literature among sciences is that it is a radiography, a mirror of the human society. The creative mind of writers offers readers a society as an open book where they discover the quasi whole or a part of the history, whether remote or recent. This history may be theirs or history collected elsewhere that edifies. While flipping through *Arrows of Rain* that is symbolism, I encounter a committed writer and as well afflicted. Ndibe with his nib reveals the whole mission of a writer at the detriment of corporative enemies of Madia- Nigeria his nation. In this way, he portrays a shameful regime (for respect of Nigeria, we do not want to say ‘shameful nations’), what other could call regime of military delinquency. The article aims to depict a corrupt civilian regime and reveal the generalized inequalities that has to be overturned to make room to a new and promising political system: military regime of Abacha. Unfortunately, this experience has revealed all its weakness followed by insanities such as violence, organized rape, terror, murders, corruption, and beheading of human right activist in Nigeria known in the fictional work of Ndibe as Madia thus moral disintegration. The beginning of the book yet offers a gloomy environment with a dead body on the sands. I have applied to this article the biographical theory, on the one hand, that allows the consultation of the life of the author, his motivation for the mind ease of readers. On the other hand, I have used as approach the post colonialism referring to the historical phase and new forms of domination after the decline of colonists.

Key-works: corruption, military regime, rape, murder, human rights.

Résumé

La particularité de la littérature parmi les sciences est qu’elle est la radioscopie, le miroir de la société. C’est ainsi que l’esprit de la créativité des auteurs présente aux lecteurs une société comme un livre ouvert où ceux-ci découvrent une partie ou la quasi-totalité de leur histoire qu’elle soit lointaine ou récente. Cette histoire pourrait être leur propre histoire ou celle recueillie d’ailleurs, mais qui édifie. En parcourant les pages du roman *Arrows of Rain* (un symbolisme), nous découvrons

un écrivain engagé et à la fois éprouvé et blessé dans son âme. Ndibe, par le biais de sa plume révèle la mission d'un écrivain au détriment d'une corporation d'ennemies du Nigéria, sa nation. Dans la même perspective, Ndibe décrit un régime honteux (pour respect de la République Fédérale du Nigéria, nous nous abstenons d'utiliser le groupe de mots ' honteuse nation'), ce que d'autres pourraient appeler régime de délinquance militaire. Un régime civil précédent qualifié de corrompu et d'inégalités généralisées devait être renversé pour laisser place à un nouveau système politique plus promettant : le régime militaire du Major Abacha qui sera jusqu'après promu au rang de général. Malheureusement, l'expérience se révèle plus calamiteuse suivie des insanités telles que : la violence, le viol organisé, la terreur, les meurtres, la corruption, et la décapitation des droits de l'homme. La désagrégation des mœurs. Tout ceci se passait au Nigeria dénommé Madia dans la fiction. Le début de l'œuvre accueille très tôt avec un environnement sombre avec un corps sur le sable. Afin de mieux cerner le contenu de notre travail, nous choisissons la théorie biographique d'une part pour puiser de la vie de l'auteur, sa motivation en écrivant pour le bien des lecteurs. D'autre part choisissons-nous comme approche, le post-colonialisme pour nous référer à la phase historique et les nouvelles formes de domination après le déclin du colonisateur.

Mots-clés : Corruption, régime militaire, viol, meurtres, droits de l'homme.

Introduction

Colonization, regarding the way it has been served to the African continent and with the experience deriving from its practice in our sedate land is a curse to the whole continent. Equally important, before leaving, the colonist has transformed African society in a way that, if choice has to be made, African people could prefer to remain in their ancient world. Not only did they hand over our resources but they did also hand over our mind and from now on, we are no more who we are. That is the colonial period. For we were crying and claiming freedom and independence, some of African countries negotiated their freedom while others have fought and pay by the blood in sacrifice. The white man has accepted or constrained to leave Africa. Then, Africa seems to come back to Africans who will have their own life. A new life, a new way to do, to think and to manage. But once they have the fullness of their destiny is the palm of their hand, it raises big and most importantly question: what are we going to do now? This question apparently simple

reveals itself difficult for the new masters. This has been the first test of African political leaders. And many of them will fail and continue to fail. As they got lost in the gears of the political system, they will navigate by sight. This sight navigation has been the root of all the ills of which the black continent in particular suffers. Like a curse spell cast on those first leaders, things have become gloomy to them. What will be the next comportment?

When the destination of voyage is known and plan is well traced, there is no way to miss the target. In the case of our new masters (brothers) animating the post-colonial period, either do they not have direction to reach nor plans to follow. The simple reason is the fact that they have not prepared for the job. Some have used the power they hold to siphon the public resources, fill their pockets and run away, abandoning behind a dying country. Other categories choose not only to siphon the resources but also multiply acts of violence where the intellectual well-informed minority that could criticize them are forced to exile, thrown into jail under nervous conditions or executed. It is the case of our focus novel, *Arrows of Rain* by Ndibe Okey where the poet, journalist and writer portrays a shameful atmosphere and interrogates readership.

Ndibe uses his talent of writer with his paper to trace a regime, a man, a behaviour, but also a nation. A military junta that overturns a civilian regime incriminated for its way to rule Madia, the fictional nation that represents Nigeria is a regime of terror out of qualification. Militaries that come to worsen the socio-political environment. This man, the most powerful of his epoch, Sani Abacha under the veil of the Major Bello was rapidly bombed general after taking power by coup d'état. The following is not a mere story to tell because of moral deviance that makes room to the disillusion. What are we combating? What do we have now?

It is in this spoilt environment that Ndibe offers his life to contribute to the balance of his society by denouncing and by defending his nation through this novel. The reason why we need to conduct this paper through the topic: "Socio-Political Upheaval and Its Immorality in Okey Ndibe's *Arrows of Rain*" is situated at two fundamental levels. First, to recognize the merit of such a talented, courageous and pragmatic writer with his easiness to deal

with the texture of his book. The second aspect of my choice is to use *Arrows of Rain* to widen the combat of the writer by deepening the analysis which enables me to denounce and criticize the military junta immorality to rectifying the faked vision other people have on African. Power corrupts.

To reach my goal in this paper, I have consulted many sources such as articles, essays, dissertations and websites. One approach finds its way in the research: the post-colonial. We have also used the bibliographical theory to reveal the nature of the author in the context we have chosen. The paper is subdivided into three parts. The first part deals with the “Military regime governance”. The second part is concerned with “Immoralities of the military junta”. The last one is devoted to “Journalism: A Weapon of Nation’s Blooming”.

1. Military Regime Governance

To analyse this part of the paper, it sounds convenient to clarify the notion of governance. I intend to use three different versions of definition. Firstly, according to *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, governance is “the activity of governing a country or controlling a company or an organization; the way in which a country is governed or a company or institution is controlled”.

Secondly, *Oxford Dictionary* defines governance as “the process, or the power of governing; government or administration. It is the specific system by which a political system is ruled”.

Thirdly, the last definition of governance is a compilation of ideas of four different authors in an essay entitled “Pour une meilleure gouvernance, un nouveau cadre d’analyse et d’action¹”. Pertain to them, governance is a large concept : « elle désigne la qualité globale de la relation entre le gouvernement et les citoyens : sensibilité aux aspirations de la population, efficacité, probité et équité ». (David de Ferranti, et al, 8.) David et al, continue by asserting

¹ *How to Improve Governance: Analysis and Action*, original title, translated from English into French by Monique Berry.

that : «la manière dont les fonctionnaires du gouvernement et les institutions publiques acquièrent et exercent leur autorité pour déterminer la politique nationale et assurer ressources et services aux citoyens » (*idem*, 10).

By doing a crosscheck of these definitions, we could assert that the one by given by *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* is traditional, old-fashioned, then silent and lacks pertinence. The last two versions seem to fit for the paper under study. But I prefer the one of David de Ferranti et. al that conceives governance as a global quality of relationship between the government (people who are responsible for leading-controlling a country or a state) and citizens.

But what do we read in *Arrows of Rain*? Does the way military regime behave and threat citizens in Madia actually signify Nigeria? The answer is no. In his garment of a poet, critics, journalist, novelist, and cameraman, Okey Ndibe uses this novel to question political leaders not only in the case of Nigeria, but also in the whole countries of Africa where one uses power as a means to revenge, to steal, to smother, and to decapitate social values with one destination: to grow rich by siphoning the wealth of the nation. It is in this perspective that Joy M. Etiowo declares in “Narrative Innovations in Okey Ndibe’s *Arrows of Rain*” that “in *Arrows of Rain*, Okey Ndibe raises questions that must be answered, issues that must be addressed and calls that must be heeded, in Nigeria’s political, judicial, and social environment” (Etiowo, 61).

The conductor, director and instigator of this unrest that has affected all the sectors in Nigeria is the military junta under the command of the major who miraculously becomes General after the coup d’état; the General Isa Palat Bello who will assume the title of Life-President of the Federal Republic of Madia. That regime is a regime of fear and terror, a regime of lie that trains soldiers to be in its pay.

The big problem of this military junta is its improvisation for power management. Their incompetence has led them to develop aggressive comportments to terrify the potential political challengers. A junta that takes power by violence without any programme of governance could not offer

anything to its citizen. As a consequence, they multiply acts of delinquency, physical violence, and imprisonment. The targets are political opponents, academics, journalists, and the intellectual sphere that could be an impediment for them. The failure of the Nigerian leadership makes room to brutality and anarchy. Everything in Madia gets lost and life is impossible to live. It is this historical and cultural loss that Niyi Akingbe underlines when dealing with silence in “*Defying armies: Protesting military oppression in Arrows of Rain*”:

Ogugua’s decision to break out the silence of self-censorship clearly evaluates the power of narrating the brutality of the military in its assault on the collective sensibility of Nigerians. His memory is a motif of interrogating Nigeria’s chequered history in its struggle against military decapitation of its social and political values. In some sense, Ogugua in his nightmarish retelling of the past presents himself as a bridge between the past and the present of Nigeria’s history; he feels his disrupted history will provide the missing link in the life of Adero, who becomes a victim of controversial parentage, orchestrated by the military culture of gratuitous repression (Akingbe. 2).

Akingbe shows through this quotation the necessity of reconstruction of identity and values that oppressors have destroyed. Ogugua here is the true name of Bukuru the police has qualified as a mentally ill person. In fact, Bukuru has witnessed the murder of the woman found dead on the sands. A group of soldiers, after finishing their game of sexual pleasure with her, have left her half-alive, half dead. The army manoeuvre has upset the social atmosphere in Madia.

As they embody the political arena, they have succeeded in corrupting the judiciary that is, by nature, a free power into the service of equity. The judicial power is unbiased. Everybody fears for his life and is prone to accept bribery. But here is a case where the principle of innocence of the presumption is violently violated. The following passage is an instance:

Count one: That you, the accused, on 1 January 1988 at approximately 7 a.m., contributed, by acts of omission or commission, to the death by drowning at B. Beach of a human female, age ... thereby committing a crime punishable pursuant to

the provisions of the penal code number 6, sections 4 and 5 (as amended) by death or up to a lifetime in jail... (AR, 21)²

There is the destiny of an innocent man who is the victim of a military plot because their boss loves the same woman the suspect loves and who is yet his girlfriend. Because they know that he is aware of the truth, they will drown him. The judge will show now his implication:

In all my years as a judge I have never before seen such a blatant display of malicious contempt as took place today. My first instinct was to sentence you to jail for eternity – lock you up and throw the key into the Atlantic! – as a lesson that you cannot come to court and scandalize the good name and immaculate reputation of His Excellency (40).

This affirmation may carry two meanings: whether the judge is ignorant like many other people who see in Bello the angel they are expecting to quote Helon Habila, or he is playing the game of the power by fear or because of bribery. By examining all those military maladjustments, anything good could not come to Madians (Nigerians). With the rule of Bello, we witness another form of colonization stained with blood. An internal colonization more dangerous because the closer the offender is, the more painful the offence is. This is what justifies the use of Post colonialism approach. People expect change, but a new form of colonization is rising.

Moreover, the title of the book even carries suspense with the choice of the metaphor by the author: *Arrows of Rain*. I take arrows for an inspiration of fear, blood, violence, symbol of military force. Rain symbolizes blessing, fullness, jubilation. But why put together violence and blessing? This is surely an oxymoron which consists in putting together two things diametrically opposed. Maybe rain here seen as liquid is the red rain, blood. It is a symbol of desolation and disillusion.

Clearly taken in such a context, I could not talk about governance since no trait of governance is noticed under the rule of Bello the totalitarian, the despot. Governance is a relation between government and its citizens. It is efficiency, honesty, and equity. It implies a sincere complicity between

² *Arrows of Rain* will be abbreviated as “AR” through the paper.

political leaders who are supposed to know what governance is, and the populations who have aspirations to satisfy without violence. Governance implies transparency and accountancy.

In this dynamism, in *Pour une meilleure gouvernance*, Kofi Annan, the late Secretary General of the United Nations asserted : « une bonne gouvernance constitue peut-être le facteur le plus important pour l'éradication de la pauvreté et la promotion du développement » (12). Governance is the consequence of the moral, political, economic, and intellectual efforts of political leaders in front of the aspirations of the populations who are like a baby that needs only one thing: carefulness. That is where the military regime has dismally failed.

In an attempt to define political power in “Political Power of Women in Helon Habila’s *Waiting for an Angel*”, Lena Ahlin concludes: “Political power is therefore not only in the hands of those with a political title but belongs to anyone who is able to influence someone connected to these matters”. (Lena, 2). So, to have power and to maintain it, the will of the political leaders is not enough. The experience has been a monumental failure for the militaries. All these said above, I could examine the military’s immorality as occurred in *Arrows of Rain*.

2. Immorality of the Military Junta

Power is not bad, what is bad is the way some politicians use it and what they choose to do with it and through it. Consequently, coming in power does not automatically mean to become a liar or a wicked person. It is those who exercise power who are naturally liars and wicked. The case of Bello is an exception to the rule.

Unfortunately, immorality is the choice of the military junta. It is characterized by corruption, alcohol, violence, rape, murders, imprisonment and torture. So, from the first line of *Arrows of Rain* up to the last page, there is a clear manifestation of the cry of a tearing heart which is waiting for a rescue.

The first act of immorality I am going to discuss is rape. Can be qualified as rape any human act that consists in forcing a person for sexual intercourse without his or her consent. According to Makama, “Rape is defined in a gender-specific manner, as’ carnal knowledge’s or sexual intercourse with a woman or a girl without her consent or under duress” (Makama, 126).³

This definition does not exclude the male rape, but this paper chooses the case of women as portrayed in this book. Besides, the result of the rape is the consumption of the act, the sex against the free consent of the victim. This implies that, in this situation of rape, we have two persons: the rapist (consumer) in position of force and the raped (the victim) in position of weakness.

She stands out the three legal elements, *viz* material elements (carnal knowledge), the intentional element (the will for the rapist to commit the crime), and the legal element (provisions of an act). In the context of this paper, the rapists are military. Here is an illustration “Isa Palat Bello is also a rapist and murder...The Head of State. He raped a woman I knew. Her name was Iyese. Later he killed her. She, too, was a prostitute.” (AR,57)

Before coming to the core of the aforementioned declarations, let us examine two words or group of words which may wake us up. The first sentence. “Isa Palat Bello is also rapists and murder.” Our focus here is the adverb “also”. Dealing with the semantic aspect, “also” means in addition to or too, or as well, besides. The adverb puts Bello to the same degree with the others. It means that there is no difference between warders, subalterns, and the boss. It raises a problem of lack of role models or leadership. There is no dividing line between a chief and his subordinates. They are in the same basket of immorality. It is the starting point of conscience crumbling in his position.

The second aspect is in the second sentence as quoted above: “The Head of State”. It must make sense. The “Head” is supposed to be an example, a ladder to reach a goal. A “head” is a pathfinder, a way maker who needs respect,

³ Makama, Godiya Allanana. “*Patriarchy and Gender Inequality in Nigeria: The way forward*”, European Scientific Journal, edition vol. 9; N °17 ISSN: 1857–7881, June 2013.

esteem, and desire. Being a “head” is symbolic, for the image of the human physical head tells more. Being the “head” is a responsibility. On the head, there is a nose to breathe, ears to hear, a mouth to talk, to eat, and to drink, etc. If the head with such immense responsibilities fails, what will happen to the other parts of the body? Worst, the head of State, a father on whom the entire nation counts. “He too, killed her.” Our concern here is not the class or category of the victim. She is a prostitute. Anyway, she is a human being with her rights to respect. The question is if a Head of a nation, a President in today context could behave as Bello does? The behaviour raises a great unquiet.

Here, I can notice Isa, Head of State, in the demonstration:

Isa? I said in dread.
He came with three men. They had daggers.
My blood ran cold. What happened?
The men pinned me to the bed. Then Isa stabbed my vagina with a
dagger. I started bleeding. That’s when he entered me with his penis
(166).

This passage makes feel cold and interrogates the common sense. It is despicable; and when such behaviour comes from the first citizen of the nation, when this insanity comes from a first responsible for a nation, the only thing that may sound convenient is to keep silent. This name is desolation, deception, animosity. It is so clear that this junta is not there to serve Madians, but to satisfy the selfish and inhuman interests. They multiply all sorts of immorality. Bello is in the same line with Chief Nanga in Chinua Achebe’s *A Man of the People*⁴. For a question of love affairs, he is ready to play all the cards with the life of Odili. And Elsie is the bone of contention, a Minister of culture.

⁴ Achebe, Chinua. *A Man of the People*, Heinemann, London Ibadan Nairobi Lusaka, 1966.

Don't be childish, Odili!

After all she is not your wife. What is all this nonsense? She told me there is nothing between you and she, and you told me the same thing...

But anyway, I am sorry if you are offended; the mistake is mine. I tender unreserved apology. If you like I can bring you six girls this evening. You go do the, thing today you say you no want again. Ha, ha, ha, ha (Achebe, 78).

Measuring this behaviour and comparing it to Bello's, the difference is nowhere. Bello is like Nanga when he is a major in the army, before being parachuted and being promoted general without any address.

What is this game for an old person, a supposed great personality of State to discuss a girl with a young boy like Odili who might take Nanga as a role model to follow? What does the youth learn from that person? He even suggests six other girls in compensation to Odili. Elsie becomes a bone of contention to them. A bit down, our Chief, Minister of culture, Nanga is ready to punch Odili, his son because of sex: "If you insult me again, I will show you pepper..." (Ibid.)

Akingbe in his quoted article describes a bit Bello as follows: "Ogugua's narrative of self-isolation aligns its silence with narratives of Iyese's repeated rape by Bello as a systemic violence, which by extension reverberates a narration of subjugation of the state by the military" (4).

So, this explains that Bello's conduct to rape is not once upon the time. Kouakou N'guessan in "*Military Delinquency*" comes back to the same character for more details:

Ndibe's narrator starts recording rapes by the medium of flashbacks. Indeed, twenty years back Isa Palat Bello, the now powerful head of state has raped and later killed Iyese. Major Bello meets Maria, a former teacher now turned to prostitute and renamed Iyese for the sake of prostitution in his youth. The first night remains unforgettable for Iyese who undergoes Bello's sexual assaults. In lieu of love, Bello who seriously drunk, rapes her twice. Yet, following the rapes, he initiates a sex-based relationship with her. Despite the numerous

- Yelian Constant Aguessy -

presents that he provides her with, she does not love him because in addition to being a raw man, he views her as a spare wheel that is only useful when a tyre is flat (Akingbe,19).

There are many cases of rape. The target is prostitutes. When they finish sucking their thighs, they kill them; maybe they have their hidden secrets by doing so. Bello could not refrain from drinking alcohol, even if he is a Muslim, a son of an Emir. A Muslim does not feed violence. A Muslim does not drink alcohol. We mean the true Muslim because religious education is against violence but only peace. Rape is a means of distraction for Isa Bello and other militaries.

Other acts of immorality could be listed while flipping through the book. Corruption is their method of functioning to encapsulate their preys. They create ministries empty of sense just to satisfy friends. The government organizes parties regularly among members and friends in the thighs of women. But in the same time, children are dying of starvation and from nutritional diseases. Once upon the time, the Stockholm-based Hunger Institute issued its annual World Food Picture, a report about food supply to life expectancy, Madia has been on the list of those countries to visit. But the dear Dr Titus Bato, Honourable Minister of National Planning and Economic Development will show all his arrogance and incompetence before the National Assembly when they ask him questions about the prevailing situation. The conversation between the Speaker of the House and Dr Bato as follows shows how insensitive a Minister on duty is towards the alarming situation of his country. He must express his thought about the report of the Hunter Institute: “It’s either useless and untrue or, if true, it’s good news, replied the minister. On the whole, I think it is the most incoherent and meaningless economic report I have ever read. And I have read quite a few (188)”.

He does not want to recognize the situation. He chooses to camouflage the revelation of the report on his country where nothing goes well but smother the citizens who become voiceless and forceless in front of a power that emasculates them. Everything is good and goes well. Military junta succeeds where the previous Minister Askia Amin fails. He, Dr Bato needs to sell the

good image of his country and of the government he belongs to. This alarming situation, this disaster to him is good news.

Furthermore, considering that he is on his line of camouflage of the reality or the truth, the Chief Willy Wakka, the Senate President with his lawyer's tongue, decides to lead him straight into his own wall where he gets lost:

Honourable Minister, you have averred that in the event that the report under consideration is an accurate reflection of the facts you would regard as good news. May I invite you to explain this rather startling view (189)

It is not hard to understand. The Hunger Institute claims that the food crisis will lead to a dramatic rise in the death rate in Madia. It also claims that there has been an explosion in the birth rate in recent years. The total picture is therefore that the death rate will cancel out the birth rate, thus preserving the standard of living. Even children who understand simple arithmetic can follow that logic. It is simple Malthusian economics. I am putting forward the view that death is nature's way of preserving stable quality of life in any given society (ibid).

He makes the choice to play with the words without approaching the real issue. But the Chief Wakka will get him when he declares: "I am putting forward the view that death is nature's way of preserving stable quality of life in any given society" (op.cit). Never could a leader affirm that. So, if death is natural (not wrong, indeed), a government has his partition to prevent it, especially the death of children because of lack of care, of measures to avoid it. And what is interesting is that this death rate is the consequence of starvation. The problem of the Median government is that they do not have any projects of development. They do not prepare anything, any political orientation. Everything they know is just to siphon the funds of the state, to empty the cashbox of the state and to live for their families only. And for the ministers to make a good impression to the head of the state. That is the way the military regime has ruled the Madia.

The lawyer Wakka, in exercise of the power vested in him as Speaker of the House of Representatives and Chairman of the Joint Conference qualifies Dr

- Yelian Constant Aguessy -

Bato's behaviour of insult and when he demands that the Honourable Minister tender an immediate apology to the Parliament and to the good people of this country, this later will crash fire on them all: "I'm not apologizing for anything I've said here today. I reaffirm my comments. Nor do I intend to resign. I was not appointed by Parliament and I don't believe I hold my office at your behest (190)".

This happens under the rule of Askia Amin. Such declaration is indeed an insult to the nation and for the country's dignity, Bato must resign or the government he belongs to, must dismiss him. But all of a sudden, the Prime Minister Askia goes on television to polish Bato's image and demonstrates how it is a chance for Madians to have such a Minister.

The following day, university students and labour unions called for nationwide strikes and daily demonstrations until the Minister was fired. Instead, Prime Minister Askia Amin went on national television and described Dr Bato as a national asset, a man respected by the centres of world finance from New York to Paris. The Prime Minister then warned that further demonstrations and disturbances of the peace would be severely dealt with (190).

This is the way political leaders rule Nigeria at that time. Instead of pacifying citizens, he chooses to set on fire the situation. All things considered; it is from now on clear that those people do not like their population. They do not know the real sense of leadership and governance. When one comes to power by accident, there is nothing to expect but grotesque deception.

3. Journalism, A Weapon of Nation's Blooming

Among those organs that play the role of a watchdog in a nation, one count the journalism. To the dictionary *in-us*, journalism is the activity or profession of being a journalist. It is as well and to go deep the style of writing characteristic of material in periodical print publications and broadcast news media, consisting of direct presentation of facts or events with an attempt to minimize analysis or interpretation. The types of journalism are not my

concern in this paper but its implication for the freedom and defence of citizens in the case study.

According to Mark Hunter, in *Le journalisme d'investigation*, it is the Watergate affair (1972–1974) that is the milestones in the history of journalism in general and the one of journalism of investigation in particular (3). Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, both Washington Post investigators have an important role by forcing the President Richard Nixon to resign. The case of tainted blood confirms in 1991–1992 the emergency and the power of the journalism of investigators in France. Hunter defines journalism and the role of a journalist (investigative journalist) as follows:

L'idée selon laquelle le journalisme est un combat permanent pour la vérité a pris un nouveau sens : la vérité que défendait le journaliste ne sera plus celle des dirigeants « légitimes » de la société, mais la sienne, fondée sur sa propre connaissance des faits. Le journalisme a longtemps lutté pour devenir un métier ; soudainement, il devenait une mission (Hunter, 23).

Focusing on this position of Mark Hunter, one finds all the satisfaction and discovers from now on who is a journalist and who is not, on the one hand, and what is the expectation of the citizen and political leader or any else; but also, on the other hand, if journalism is an activity or a mission.

Firstly, journalism is a combat but a permanent combat for the truth – it is important to mention it since it is the core of the “job”, and its defence.

Secondly, the truth that determines the combat of the journalist will cease to be a truth handed by a leader or any person who commands, to be a truth of him (the journalist) nourished on the proper knowledge of facts by the journalist himself. It is of paramount importance.

Thirdly, journalism has been for ages considered as a profession, but all of a sudden is changing to be a mission.

It is what journalism must be if one considers the journalist as a watchdog. When journalism does not abandon the route of the profession to take the one of mission, anything good could not happen for the society and peace and development of a nation will always be utopian. When one understands

journalism as a mission, the journalist will not fear anything; he will run after the truth and honesty. The mission of journalists is a risk to take because being a journalist has nothing different from a soldier. The two watch for the welfare of their nation. The only thing that tries to separate them but fails is that a soldier uses the gun but the journalist (here writer) uses his nib. Both the gun and the nib are weapons of defence and destruction. The gun could sound once and stop. But the nib carries out the sound of messages for unborn generations. Being a journalist is then a question of commitment, dynamism and leadership (the CDL). He is the voice of the oppressed and in the same dynamism the voice that tears oppressors' eyes.

Arrows of Rain depicts the treatment of men of the press on the behalf of military power and Bukuru is the one who pays the great price because of what he writes about Bello on the rape:

I know. And you know what? A conspiratorial glint was in his eye. Most believe your story. It's the topic of conversation everywhere: here in this city, through the country, even overseas. The reports by the foreign media are what Bello's most concerned about: he's been trying to spruce up his regime's image. That's why you're in trouble. You can't publicize dirty secrets about the Life President and hope to sleep peacefully (73).

This passage shows how menacing the journalist is to the political leaders, especially those leaders who mislead. Any power cannot accept critics especially when it does wrong. Bello here considering all his attributes that make him a leviathan becomes mad when he realizes that journalists interfere into his life and in the life of his government. His image must be clean. So, anybody who dares sabotage his management will pay the price. It is what the audacity of Bukuru-Ogugua costs to him. They accuse him of the murder of the woman found on the sands at the beach. Dr Mandi confesses the plot: "I have received clear orders from His Excellency's office to report that you're a madman. I was compelled to sign a paper to that effect (74).

Helon Habila is the one who the most succeeds in depicting the combat of journalism as a weapon of the nation's blooming with Lomba the main character. And what surprises and almost interests is that the book is about Abacha dictatorship regime. Journalists' tracking starts and finishes the

novels. It is even easy to avert that *Waiting for an Angel* consecrates itself to the plights of journalists, the commitment to pull out the nation from the claws of those birds of prey: the politicians. So, the socio-political context is the same, with the same staff. The same political vultures on duty.

Thus, early, on the first page of *Waiting for an Angel*, readers encounter Lomba, the round character who cries in the prison. Here it is again what the two novels have in common. *Arrows of rain* opens its pages on a lugubrious situation, a death and Helon too, opens his first page with the prison. Analysing the fact, one thinks or concludes that Sani Abacha's regime results into imprisonment, violence, cry, murder, intimidation, and other abuses. Even in prison, Lomba gets access to pencil and paper. All show the commitment of the man to fulfil his mission: defend and liberate his society at any price. He expresses his commitment:

Today I begin a diary, to say all the things I want to say, to myself, because here in prison there is no one to listen. I express myself. It stops me from standing in the centre of this narrow cell and screaming at the top of my voice. It stops me from jumping up suddenly and bashing my head repeatedly against the wall ... I express myself. I let my mind soar above these walls to bring back distant, exotic bricks which I seek to build a more endurable cell within this cell...

I write of my state in words of derision, aiming thereby to reduce the weight of these walls on my shoulders, to rediscover my nullified individuality. Her in prison loss of self is often expressed as anger (Habila, 9).

Lomba is a reporter taken as a political prisoner, punished and held in a dark cell for three days, living in nervous conditions to quote Tsitsi Dangarembga. They accuse him of having organized a demonstration. Like Ogugua in *Arrows of Rain*, Lomba uses his nib to claim, to denounce power deviance, to better the life of his population facing all the risks related to his profession. He chooses to oppose injustice as claimed by Martin Luther King as cited by Bola a nib colleague of Lomba: "It is a duty of every citizen to oppose unjust authority..." (41)

The journalist being, first of all, a citizen has to oppose the unjust authority. That is why he needs more knowledge, more information, training and

expertise in the news's treatment. Politicians do not love or like them at all. A real journalist is a threat for the power and friends for the sake of his society. Journalists must be honest and enjoy credibility of his public otherwise politicians who are perfect analysts and calculators could easily pocket them. Alan Knight is the debate, "Who is a journalist?" clarifies:

It's said that journalists need to be trusted and should have credibility, in the public interest. But there are many reasons why journalists' credibility is undermined by public distrust. These may include:

. — Journalists' mainstream agendas, as opposed to community interests. Chomsky called this a symbiotic relationship between the powerful and the press...

Journalists may see themselves as watch dogs but they may be seen to behave as lap dogs.

.— A touching faith in government sources (Knight 1).

Alan calls the journalists' attention to the traps of their profession and shows the behaviour to adopt in order to be a true journalist. Being a journalist, it is for the sake of the public interest. Lomba knows this as mission and shows it for the welfare of the Poverty Street. Joshua will assert this role of blooming in the office of James before claiming the help of Lomba "I came because of a feature article you wrote on Morgan Street two years ago – about our abject condition. It was a good piece; it gave a lot of us hope. I still have it. I came in the hope that you would want to write something like that again." (Habila, 145)

That is what the society expects from a journalist. That is the only weapon the journalist possesses to defend and change his environment. Morgan Street, also known as Poverty Street, is a place where abject poverty carefully perforates the hearts of the oppressed that are voiceless like their fellows in *Arrows of Rain*. Far from all doubt, Lomba maybe this Angel they are waiting for the saviour.

By coming down flipping through lines of Habila, James the Dean of Lomba gives lessons "You see, every oppressor knows that wherever one word is joined to another word to form a sentence, there'll be a revolt. That is our

work, the media: to refuse to be silenced, to encourage legitimate criticism wherever we find it. Do you now understand?" (Habila,150)

It is this commitment that could lead the nation to read development. James, in his garment of ancient and expert, demonstrates one by one how the journalist is a menace to those who hack to pieces their nation and decapitate the state revenue. As a reward for this corporation of journalists, defenders of human rights and their society welfare, power have arrested some and thrown into jail, some executed when James's office and materials are burnt by arson. In their article entitled "Social and Power Relations in Achebe's *Anthills of The Savannah*", Aguessy, et. al, as quoted (p. 31), show something similar to the question of silence that is a betrayal from those who adopt it: "Those who mismanage our affairs would silence our criticism by pretending they have facts not available for the rest of us." (Achebe, 1987:38). The role of a journalist is very important in maintaining the citizen watch.

Conclusion

Arrows of Rain is the most shameful novel we have ever read because of the fabulous environment as depicted by Okey Ndibe. If it was a film (possible to be), it would be strictly forbidden to the children under eighteen. The colonists have left and Africans themselves who were accusing them of dangerous, exploiters, oppressors, unfair, and leech replaced them. But the experience reveals itself horribly. Isa Palat Bello has overturned the Prime Minister Askia Amin promising paradise. Everybody welcomed him and he has set up his team and this team, this government becomes the worst that multiplies immorality such as corruption, rape, violence, imprisonment, sexual abuses, murders... This book is just a dedication to military delinquency to quote Kouakou N'guessan. What surprises above all is that the Head of the State the General Bello is chief orchestra and commander of the crimes. Innocent girls and women have suffered his cruelty. Therefore, I can state that *Arrows of Rain* is a report of a journalist who decides not to be guilty of silence. Above all, the research unveils the political convent and its hidden secrets. It is a diatribe towards political leaders.

The political moroseness is a grovelling behaviour in the quasi-African societies. The post-colonial period is quite a disillusion making room for moral disaggregation in Africa. Maybe Habila is not wrong while writing *Waiting for an Angel*. The intention is that the first politicians who have taken power after the decline of the white man are ‘Angels’ for their societies. But actually, this is a mirage. Unfortunately, they are worse. Besides, reading *Arrows of Rain* is a discovery, an adventure in a world often opaque. Dictatorship does never build a nation. In fact, does this experience not make room for democracy?

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