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MILITARY RULE IN SELECTED SUB-SAHARAN ANGLOPHONE AFRICAN NOVELS: A THEMATIC STUDY

BY

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APPROVED BY BOARD OF EXAMINERS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

The research study has four chapters. The first chapter is introductory. It discusses the aim of this research which is to show how African novels can be used as a data for investigating the socio-political aspects of the continent. Specifically, the research focuses on the thematic analysis of Nuruddin Farah's Sweet and Sour Milk (1979), Chinua Achebe's Anthills of the Savannah (1987), Aboubakar Ginba's Footprints (1998) and Moses Isegawa's Abyssinian Chronicles (2000) from the perspective of the representation of military rule in the selected novels. Therefore, the study incorporates the relationship of African literature with the continents socio-political aspect together with the problematic syndrome of military rule in Africa, the objectives and significance that this research aims to achieve and its methodology in its first chapter. Chapter two includes a review on related studies at Addis Ababa University to show as to how this research endeavors to fill the gap with respect to the representation of military rule in selected Anglophone African novels. This is followed by the presentation of theoretical issues related to military rule and its predicament in the African continent. With the aim of referring to the actual happenings of the countries that are represented in the novel, the historical background of the three post-independent African countries is also incorporated in this section of the research. The third chapter presents the analysis of military rule in the four selected Anglophone African novels in accordance with the issues that are specified in the theoretical framework. For that matter, the novels are analyzed side by side in order to show the communalities and differences of military rule in post-independent Africa. The motives behind the military *coup d'état*, the political ideologies of the military rulers and the aftermath of their reign are the outlines that make up the analysis part. The findings of the study are the similarity, despite the differences of approach, of the novels in revealing the predominant themes of military rule and its predicament in the life of the citizenry and nations of the African continent.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Africa has a rich literary tradition of its own which dates back to ancient times. In those days, African literature was oral and passed from one generation to the next through memorization and recitation. Due to the absence of literacy, very little of this literature was written down until the 20th century. However, after the coming of the Europeans, African writers started to use the language of their colonial powers. By far the most widely used European language in African Literature today is English followed by French, Portuguese and Spanish. This dynamic nature of African Literature, however, has made it very controversial and led to the problem of defining it. The persistent and controversial debate on its language is one of the issues that have overshadowed the identity of African literature.

The debate dates back to the dawn of African independence when the Nigerian critic Obi Wali' released his essay entitled as "The Dead End of African Literature". Wali as quoted by Gikandi (2003: 292) argues "the uncritical acceptance of English and French as the inevitable medium for educated African writing [was] misdirected and [had] no chance of advancing African literature and culture." Wali's position was opposed by many influential figures in African literary circles including Mphahlele and Chinua Achebe, who pointed out that English had itself become a national language in Africa, or that its use was a pragmatic response to African condition during and after colonization. The debate between the two different camps later on intensified when Ngugi Wa Thiongo decided to abandon writing in English in the 1980's as he justified this by arguing, in his book *Decolonizing the Mind* (1986), that writing in an African language restores harmony between the writer (and the reader) and their environment, while a foreign language is simply an agent of alienation.

In reconciling these two antagonistic blocks of conceptualizing African literature, Chinweizu et al. (1983: 11-12) classify African literature into two paradigms and appear to oversimplify the complex problem of defining African Literature as follows:

> It seems to us quite clear that works done for African audiences, by Africans, and in African languages, whether these works are oral or written, constitute the historically indisputable core of African literature. Works done by Africans but in non-African languages would be those for which some legitimate doubt might be

> raised about their inclusion or exclusion from the cannon of works of African literature, and it is for them that some decision procedures would have to be established.

Hence, in the light of this excerpt, there is a possibility for an operational definition of African literature. In this regard, Nadine Gordimer (1973: 320) asserts that African literature is "writing done in any language by Africans themselves and by others of whatever skin color who share with Africans the experience of having been shaped, mentally or spiritually by Africa rather than anywhere in the world." This implies that as long as any literary work is an imaginary cultural production composed of an African experience, it is part and parcel of African literature regardless of its variation in language. Therefore, African literature cannot be seen separately from its cultural, social and historical context. After comparing it with its European counterpart, Melakneh (2007:1) illustrates that "unlike Western literature, which deemphasizes the socio-historical context of cultural critique to the point of maneuvering paradigm shift, African literature is definitely inseparable from the cultural evolution of the continent." Thus, African literature can be understood as a body of art which emanates from the historical, cultural and social experience of the continent that could range from pre-colonial Africa to post-independence disillusionment.

Whenever the need arises African literature can be categorized in terms of its medium of expression. Hence African literature in English is one such category of African literature. According to Muttiso (1974:1), African literature in English refers to novels, plays, short stories, and poetry written originally in English by indigenous Africans in the countries which were parts of the British Empire in Africa. Hence, Anglophone African Novels are one of the genres that fall under the category of African literature in English.

After the downfall of colonization, African Anglophone writers are emphasizing the increasing internationalization of African English novels. This point is well brought about by Ojaide (2005:325):

> The winning of the Nobel prize for literature by Nigeria's Wole Soyinka in 1986 and Egypt's Naugib Mahfuz in 1988 and both Nadine Gordimer and J.M. Coetzee of South Africa in 1991 and 2003 respectively has dawn further attention to the nature and role of African literature on the continent of Africa and other parts of the world.

Unlike the works of fiction in the early days of independence which were characterized by themes of historical past and colonization, African writings in English after the mid 1960's tend to focus on the examination of the existing socio-political crises. Among the corpus of African Literature, literary works that portray the tragedy of the new post-independence regimes have become the very common repertoire of Post-colonial Anglophone African novels. With regard to this, Muttiso (1971: 144) claims that African writers view themselves as the visionaries who must push the post-independent governments with their tendency of authoritarianism towards a more humane course of action. In this regard, Griffith (2000: 156) states that Armah's first novel The Beautyful Ones are not Yet Born (1968) is the first to create an immediate controversy, challenging as it did the then predominant themes of celebration and recovery, and presenting instead a harsh and uncompromising picture of corruption and self interest in Nkrumah's Ghana. Such works often constitute the violent accusations and condemnations that has become the norm in many countries of the African continent. Furthermore, this indictment is very striking when one considers the increasing number of writers who choose to deal with the themes of corruption, nepotism, and the incompetence of the African politicians in power (Wauthier, 1978:318).

The *coup d'état* and military regime had become the most prevalent political phenomenon in Africa after independence. The first military putsch in Sub-Saharan Africa that took place in the Sudan in November 17, 1958 coupled with an unsuccessful attempt of assassination of president Olympio and Nkrumah of the newly independent African nations of Togo and Ghana respectively have overshadowed the prospect of peace and political stability that was expected in the early days of independence (Cook and Killingray, 1983: 45). In fact, It did not take long for the worries to unfold as "the first substantive *coup d'état* took place in Togo in 1963, during which Sylvanus Olympio, who was the then president of Togo, was assassinated as he attempted to escape into the American embassy compound" (Nudgent 2004: 204).

As it was feared, the 1960's recorded a scene of a rush of military takeovers across the continent (Decalo, 1976). In 1963, the Congolese and Dahomean Armies had presided over the overthrow of Fulbert Yulou in Brazzaville and Hubert Maga in Cotonou respectively, in both cases handling power to another set of civilian leaders only to assume again political power after a

while. In early 1964 came the mutinies that rocked Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika; and in February 1964 the Gabonese army toppled Leon Mba's Government only to have its *coup* reversed by French airborne troops sent to reinstate De Gaulle's faithful ally. The next spate of *coups* came in rapid succession as civilian regimes crumpled like horses of cards in Zaire (then Congo/Leopoldville) on (November 25, 1965), Dahomey (November 29, 1965, and again on December 22, 1965), The Central African Republic (January 1, 1966), and Upper Volta (January 3, 1966).

The fact that these first rush of successful military *coup d'état* occurred only in Francophone African countries have made it seem that British colonies were unaffected by it. However, the first military takeover in Nigeria (January 3, 1966, and again on July 29, 1966) and in Ghana (February 24, 1966) proved that the case in Anglophone African colonies is not any different (Decalo, 1976:7).

Once after these first rush of military takeover began to follow on, it has become the most prevalent political phenomenon in post-independent Africa. Twenty of the continent's forty-one independent states in 1975 were led by military and civil-military cliques (Decalo 1976: 6). This puts them to be just about 50 percent of the nations. By the 1970's and 80's, over half of the countries in Africa were either under military rule or had at one point been ruled by the military (Shillington 2005: 325). In some countries, (Nigeria, Ghana and Burkina Faso) the number of coups exceeded five. Harbeson (1987:1) describes the general picture of military rule in Africa for the thirty years after independence as follows:

> Since the first countries of the continent attained independence in the 1950's, 31 countries of 49 have experienced a total of 68 successful military *coup d'état*. In the aggregate over this 30- year period, military regimes have ruled one year out of three in independent countries. Those countries which have been subject to successful military rule have been governed by solders in the aggregate for just over 50 percent of their years of independence. Military rule, moreover, has been persistent. While military rulers have returned power to civilians in several instances, as of mid-1986 only three of the 31 African countries which have ever experienced military regimes might now said to be led by civilian governments: Sierra Leone, The Comoros, and Malagasy.

Each of the three countries, however, has experienced a military *coup* afterwards. Though it seemed that the tendency of military coups and regimes has reduced dramatically in the

second half of post-independent Africa as opposed to the first half, the change was very insignificant. According to Zack-williams et al. (2002:50):

> More than half of the African states underwent transition from military or single party regimes to civilian rule in the first half of the 1990's. However, such reforms were limited to the formalities of allowing political parties to register and stage managed elections. Even so, in eleven countries these changes result in a change of regime. However, from the mid- 1990's military coups have reversed this trends in Burundi, Sierra Lone, Niger, Congo Brazzaville, and Gambia.

This shows how much military rule still continued to persist in Africa in the 90's. Even after the turn of the century, it is not possible to say that military rule in Africa is dead and buried. The recent military *coup d'état* that took place in Guinea in 2008, Madagascar in 2009 and Niger in 2010 showed that the continent still exists under the shadow military takeovers. With regard to this, it would be better to put here the concluding remarks of an internet source as follows:

> Today, the *coup d'état* phenomenon still looms over Africa. The *coup* has not improved the African economic conditions. The *coup* has not been a source for political stability. Rather than solve African contemporary political and socio-economic problems, military *coups d'état* in Africa have tended to drive the continent into even further suffering and turmoil. And then there is that aura of insecurity and uncertainty. When and where is the next one going to be? More so now than ever before, African political systems remain unpredictable. But one thing is certain. As long as there is economic and political instability, military *coup d'état* will continue to occur; and as long as military regimes exist, counter-coups will continue to occur. The future of Africa is that bleak. (http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1985/WJ.htm)

Since these recurrent syndromes of military rule in sub-Saharan Africa are recorded by different Anglophone African writers, in the present research, the writer proposes to investigate how military rule is depicted in selected Anglophone African novels. Among the available Anglophone African literary productions the researcher selects four novels that he believes lay emphasis on military rule. These are Nuruddin Farah's Sweet and Sour Milk (1979), Chinua Achebe's Anthills of the Savannah (1987), Aboubakar Gimba's Footprints (1998) and Moses Isegawa's Abyssinian Chronicles (2000). By viewing the selected literary works as a data, this research tries to investigate the crisis of military rule in post-colonial Africa. Hence, in the review of related literature section, a detailed account of the nature of military rule in Africa will be incorporated.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In many African nations which suffered the yoke of foreign rule during the colonial period, at the dawn of political independence, there was a widespread hope and belief that the duly constituted civilian authorities in the newly formed states would be successful in building their nations. At the same time, there was also a strong optimistic feeling about the military as they were believed to have certain characteristics of professionalism, nationalism, cohesion, and austerity that impel them to move into the political arena and to rescue the state from the grip of corrupt and self seeking political-elites. Huntington as cited in Decalo (1976: 13) labels this school of thought as *organization theory*. According to him, in the early days of independence, African armies and officer corps were seen to have certain characteristics related to their special skills and their training in staff colleges abroad. They were supposed to be molded into cohesive, nontribal, disciplined, and national units. As a result of their command of sophisticated weaponry and their membership in a complex hierarchical structure, African armies were viewed as the most modern, Westernized, and efficient organizations in their societies and they were perceived as the repositories of bureaucratic and managerial skills. They were believed to have internalized in military academies abroad the values of noninterference in political matters and the supremacy of civilian authority.

Though the people backed the established civilian regimes of the early independent days, in most cases the expectation has not been met as most of the regimes turned out to be dictatorial. Gordon (1996:54) briefly describes the situation as follows:

> With some exceptions, African governments became increasingly authoritarian. This trend was marked by the concentration of power in single political parties and, in many cases, in personal rule by the national president. Centralization of power was accompanied by the elimination of competitive elections, greater reliance on administrative bureaucracies, and intolerance of dissent. These systems of rule were often unstable and subject to *coups d'état*. Stable or unstable, most have also been characterized by inefficiency, mismanagement, and corruption.

Likewise, the case was also not different in contexts where the military replaced the civilian regimes. In fact, instead of acting as expected, they aggravated the already existing problems. Empirical evidences suggest that African military regimes have rarely been cohesive, non-tribal, Westernized, or even complex organizational structures. By citing Idi Amin's state as a case in

point, Young (1982: 5) points out that "military regimes might not only fail to achieve development, but might transform the state itself into a predator upon society". Just like their civilian counterparts, these dictatorial regimes were characterized by corruption, maladministration and lack of instability. Generally, it is possible to say that this sporadic phenomenon of military dictatorship has prevailed in the leadership arena of the post-independent Africa for the past 50 years.

Denouncing this, African authors have produced a large amount of literature on the issue. In so doing, they have gone through many hardships. "More than in any other region, African writers have been imprisoned or had their work banned for speaking out against the oppressive regimes" (O' Reilly 2001: 32). Harlow (1987) categorizes such kind of works as a corpus of literary productions that make up resistance literature. According to Harlow (1987), resistance literature is literature dedicated to instructing the masses and calling for their participation in the struggle against oppression.

Having realized that this issue of military rule as one of the dominant themes of post-colonial African fiction, the researcher tries to investigate how it is portrayed in four different Anglophone African novels by different authors. Moreover, in Addis Ababa University, only a few research studies have been conducted on the issue of African military rule. A comparative study of how different Anglophone African novels portrayed military rule has not been focused. It is hoped that this study will contribute towards narrowing the gap.

1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to investigate the crisis of military rule in Africa by using four Anglophone sub-Saharan African novels i.e. Sweet and Sour Milk (1979), Anthills of the Savannah (1987), Footprints (1998) and Abyssinian Chronicles (2000) as a data. For that matter, Military Juntas, their officials, their political ideologies and their period of political reign as portrayed in the novels under investigation will be examined. Within this in mind, the researcher states the specific objectives of the study as follows:

- Finding out whether the theory of African military rule is applicable to investigate the representation of military rule in the selected Anglophone African novels.

- Identifying and describing the themes of military rule in Africa as reflected in the four novels under analysis.

- Showing the communalities and differences of the four novels with regard to how they represented the issue of military rule in Africa.

- Describing and analyzing the situation in which the various stereotype characters find themselves as a result of the practice of military rule, with extracts from each of the novels.

1.4 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study is delimited to literary critical analyses of Nuruddin Farah's novel Sweet and Sour Milk (1979), Chinua Achebe's Anthills of the Savanna (1987), Aboubeker Gimba's Footprints (1998) and Moses Isegawa's novel Abyssinian Chronicles (2000) from the perspective of how the crisis of military rule is reflected in the novels. The fact that each of the novels gives a lot of space for military rule motivated the researcher to select the novels. Therefore, the study does not include works by other authors as well as other novels of the authors in question. Furthermore, emphasis will be laid on the fictional characters and themes pertinent to the issue under consideration. Thus the analyses mainly focus on characterization and thematic analysis to clearly depict the issues in relation to military rule.

1.5 METHODS AND PROCEDURES

At the heart of post-colonial literary theory rests the issue of using indigenous critical theories for European theories can not deal with the complexities and varied cultural provenance of post colonial writing. To put it in Ashcroft et al.'s own words—who are among the founders of the theory:

> European theories themselves emerge from particular cultural traditions which are hidden by false notions of 'the universal'. Theories of style and genre, assumptions about the universal features of language, epistemologies and value systems are all radically questioned by the practices of postcolonial writing. Post-colonial theory has proceeded from the need to address this different practice. Indigenous theories have developed to accommodate the differences within the various cultural traditions as well as the desire to describe in a comparative way the features shared across those traditions (1989: 11).

For this matter, a theoretical framework based on empirical research studies of military rule in Africa will be evolved for this study. To achieve the objective of this research, textual analysis based on relevant conceptual tools from studies on military rule in Africa will be conducted. For this purpose, both primary and secondary sources will be consulted in the process. All these will depend on sources from the library and the internet. The novels under investigation are selected based on their in-depth treatment of military regimes. Each of the novels give a wide coverage for different types of military regime and this makes it conducive to see the practice of military rule as reflected in the novels.

The study consists of five chapters. The first chapter is introductory. This is followed by the second chapter which includes literature review followed by a theoretical frame work on the nature of military rule in Africa. The third chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of the four novels under study by using the theoretical framework evolved for this purpose. The final chapter of the study will be the conclusion of the research.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The researcher believes that making a comparative literary analysis on the crisis of military rule in Africa by taking Nuruddin Farah's novel Sweet and Sour Milk (1979), Chinua Achebe's Anthills of the Savanna (1987), Aboubeker Gimba's Footprints (1998) and Moses Isegawa's Abyssinian Chronicles (2000) has the following significance:

1. The study reveals how these prominent African writers have represented the predicament of military rule in their novels from a comparative perspective. It tries to reveal the "why, what and how" of military rule in Africa as depicted in the selected Anglophone African novels.
2. As the study presents the failure of the African military regimes with evidences and extracts drawn from the novels, it demonstrates how Anglophone African novels in particular and African literature in general can be used as a data for studying the political, social and economical aspects of the continent.
3. The study can serve as a springboard for feature researchers working on related topics. In addition, it will also be useful for students engaged in the study of the authors and the novels under investigation.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Fisseha Tesfu (2005) in his thesis 'Ideological structure and its representation of socio-political realities in Nuruddin Farah's first trilogy' examines the relationship between ideology, socio-political realities and literature in Farah's first triology. In his findings, he establishes Farah's first trilogy as a work of art which clearly represents the ideological system of the Siad Barrie's regime in Somalia. In other words, the dictatorial regime and the socio-political realities of the then Somalia as depicted in the novel are clearly analyzed in his thesis.

Furthermore, in his Ph.D. dissertation 'Ideology in selected East African Novels: A Comparative Study of Post-colonial Experience' (2009), Fisseha treats six Anglophone African novels i.e. Farah's first trilogy, together with Ngugi's Petals of Blood, Mwangi's Kill Me Quick and Serumaga's Return to the Shadow from the stance of how ideology is represented in the novels under investigation. He begins by stating that the study of ideology in the African context is basically related to African history because African history is a history of domination beginning from the pre-colonial period to the post colonial era. In relation to this, he also states that a work of art of whatever genre (i.e. prose, poetry or drama) unmasks the dialectical relationship among literature, society and ideology. Hence, by treating East African Anglophone African Novels, Fisseha tries to conceptualize this in the African context.

Melakneh Mengistu in his Ph.D. dissertation 'Post-Colonialism and Mainstream Anglophone African Novels [Ca. 1970-2000]: A comparative approach' (2007) explores thematic and stylistic intertextuality in six Anglophone African Novels by using the critical models of post-colonial theory. Melakneh's comparative approach concludes that all the novels in question except Disgrace (1999) happen to reveal thematic and stylistic intertextuality as an expression of political resistance and cultural renaissance.

Each of these studies encompasses the representation of military rule in one way or another. Hence, they are very helpful in giving a picture as to how military rule is depicted in Anglophone

African novels. However, this thesis differs from the above studies in two fundamental ways. Firstly, it proposes to study military rule under a microscopic lens. Therefore, unlike the aforementioned researches which treat military rule together with other elements, this research gives more emphasis to it. Secondly, it provides an opportunity to look the representation of military rule from a different perspective i.e. by using the theory of African military rule which is formulated from empirical studies of different military regimes. I believe this would provide an interesting and fresh look and will add to the existing research done in the area.

2.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.2.1 INTRODUCTION

As a result of numerous occurrences of military rule in post-independent Africa, considerable amounts of reviews have been made. The spotlights of these studies include:

> Why military coups have occurred and the circumstances under which they might be expected to occur. How military regimes while in power have addressed basic political and economic challenges that confronted their civilian predecessors. What skills and resources, what liabilities, and what perspectives have military men brought to the problems of political and economic development that have distinguished them from civilian politicians? How have these differences, if any enhanced and detracted the effectiveness of military officers as political leaders? (Hearbson, 1987:1)

Therefore, an attempt is made below to discuss some of the issues which are relevant for the analysis of the novels in focus, in terms of the nature of military rule in the African context.

2.2 DEFINING MILITARY RULE

The African world after independence is characterized by a variety of dictatorial and oppressive systems (Kubayanda, 1990:5). The regimes of Idi Amin, Jean- Bedal Bokassa, Macias Nguema, and Sayd Barre, among others are classic examples of military hegemonic administrations in postcolonial Africa. Similarly, the regimes of Sekou Toure, Milton Obote, and Hastings Banda are striking instances of civilian dictatorship. Therefore, based on what happened in the post-independent Africa, it is possible to classify African dictators as civilian and military one. Phillips (1984:133) have defined military rule as a form of government by military personnel who both acquire the power to rule by a *coup d'état* and who maintain their military

identification while ruling. However, Finer and Stanley (2009: 164) emphasizes that classifying military regimes based on their militaristic origin does not help to establish military regimes as an independent entity because not all regimes of military provenance are military regimes although in practice most of them are. A regime of military provenance according to Finer and Stanley (2009) is any regime that has owed its establishment to some military intervention. Finer and Stanley (Ibid) concludes that for a regime to be a 'military regime' there must be evidence that the government is in the hands of the armed forces or that it acts entirely or predominantly at their command.

Under military rule the top officials in the government may be designated by some title that reflects his military role as, for example, Chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council (Ethiopia), Head of the Supreme Military Council (Ghana, 1975-79), President of the Supreme Military Council (Niger), or Head of the Federal Military Government (Nigeria 1966-79). Others may attempt to cover the military connection by such titles as Head of the People's Redemption Council (Liberia) or President of the Supreme Revolutionary Council (Madagascar). Still others hide the military connection altogether and use the simple title of President, such as in: Algeria, Burundi, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Mali, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Uganda (1971-79), Upper Volta and Zaire. Whereas, in Libya, Colonel Qaddafy calls himself Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council.

Military rule might sound that military men are the ultimate makers of government policy and the military personnel hold every important office. However, this is not the case always. Phillips (1984:133) illustrates the situation as follows:

> Although military officers may serve as ministers of government and be appointed to head parastatals (such as government owned railroads), universities, or special commissions, the more common pattern is for the military rulers to appoint civil servants to run most government offices and to select ex-politicians to head offices that entail intimate contact with the general population. By these means, military rulers seek to gain popular acquiescence or even support for their rule.

Military rulers come to power through military *coup d'état*. *Coups* have happened around the continent on many occasions. In the book entitled Oxford: The Concise Dictionary of Politics a military *coup d'état* is defined as follows:

> The sudden, forcible and illegal removal of government usually by the military or some part thereof, often precipitated by more immediate grievances bearing directly on the military. The *coup* may be the prelude to some form of military rule with the greater or lesser degree of civilian collaboration perhaps requiring the collaboration of the civil service and members of the professional and middle classes, or involving the cooperation of sympathetic politicians and parties and occupational groups such as peasants and union leaders (Mclean and McMillan, 2005: 39).

2.3 CAUSES FOR MILITARY COUPS

With the recurrent occurrence of military intervention in post-independent African politics, determining the causes of military *coups* became the main concern of political analysts. Different reasons can be attributed to the emergence of *coups* in Africa and all over the world. According to a global study by O'kane as cited in Deng and Zartman (1991: 172), *coups* are most likely to occur in countries which have undergone previous *coups*, which have been independent for some years, which are divided by social cleavages, and suffer from poor economic conditions. However, the empirical studies of African *coups* made by other scholars demonstrate the relevance of many other additional factors. Consequently, different reasons have been attributed to the emergence of military *coups* in Africa. And, in practice, most *coups* involve a mixture of these factors.

Huntington as cited in Decalo (1976: 7) discloses two schools of thought regarding the causes of military takeovers in Africa. According to him, the first one tends to stress societal and structural weaknesses—institutional fragility, systematic flaws, and low levels of political culture—which acts as a sort of magnet to pull the armed forces into the power and legitimacy vacuum. In contrast, the second one relies on the organization theory which attributes to African hierarchies certain characteristics of professionalism, nationalism, cohesion, and austerity that impel them to move into the political arena and to rescue the state from the grip of corrupt and self-seeking political elites. Both of these versions of the occurrence of the military *coups* in Africa are two sides of the same coin. Besides, when the analytical perspectives are applied to a specific *coup*, the distinction between the approaches tends to blur. Hence, Decalo (1976: 12) states that there is a consensus among most scholars about a broad syndrome of destabilizing strains and stresses in African societies that provoke the armed forces to overthrow civilian regimes. Other scholars also seem to agree with this hypothesis. For instance, Zolberg and Welch Jr. as cited in Decalo

(ibid) claim that military intervention in the political realm is viewed as a function of chronic systematic disequilibrium of the society and of the alleged professional characteristics of armies, the precise dimensions of which may differ from country to country.

The disequilibrium may be primarily economic in nature. In justifying this, Nelkin (1970: 231) States that "in every country, the issues which best account for the ease of military access to power relate to economic circumstances and their social consequences. For that matter, the army may feel forced to intervene in order to bring the desired change. The disequilibrium may also emanate out of instability which could also be the highly disruptive consequence of overly ambitious social mobilization drives that unleash demands and unrests as populations are torn from traditional moorings (Decalo, 1976:12).

Societal problems could also be attributed to unfavorable political factors. The unfavorable political conditions could be caused as a result of the fragmentation of civilian elites. The political unrest between different groups who are competing for power has led for *coups* of arbitration in some occasions.

> For instant, the 1963 coups of Dahomey and Congo/ Brazzaville against president Maga and Youlou respectively were classic arbitration actions in which minuscule armies, still led by former colonial officers, presided over extralegal reshuffles of civilian elites (Decalo, 1976:231).

Bebler (1975: 103) also agrees with Decalo as he claims that the broad anti-colonial movement coalitions were already varied in strength and fragmentation by the time when political independence was attained and this has already increased the susceptibility of civilian regimes to military *coups*. Regional and ethnic cleavages are the other factors that lead the society in to chaos and pave the way for a military *coup*. By citing the first Nigerian Military takeover, Boahen et al. (1987:159) make the following observation:

> The first Nigerian coup was not, however, simply or even mainly a reform coup. Self interest and Power rivalry were at least as important factors as the desire to reform Nigeria. Most of the coup makers were Igbo, a few were Yoruba and non where northerners. Many of them were UPGA supporters anxious to overthrow the northern-dominated federal government which had used questionable methods to defeat the UPGA alliance in the recent federal and western regional elections.

In many instances, there was a particular political reason behind the staging of the *coup d'état*. By citing First and Riggs, Decalo (1976:12) points out that politicization of ethnic cleavages and

intraelite strife in governmental structures may result in political and administrative paralysis, corruption, nepotism, governmental inefficiency, and this could tip the legitimacy pendulum away from discredited civilian elites to allegedly apolitical, untainted military hierarchies that may be trusted to provide competent national leadership. After looking at the coups after independence, Nudgent (2004:205) states that the typical pattern was of the cases where the unpopularity of the incumbent regime provided the backdrop against which the soldiers felt empowered to act. Charges of corruption against the former disposed regimes are the most repeated ways of accusations against the incumbent regimes while justifying military takeovers in Africa. According to a survey by Wiking as cited in Deng and Zartman (1991:285) in twenty nine *coups* that occurred in Sub-Saharan African countries between 1958 and 1980, corruption was cited as a justification for the *coups* in 40 percent of the cases.

However, this basic contention that *coups* occur as a result of systematic deficiencies grossly lacks in explanatory value. In this connection, Decalo (1976:13) argues as follows:

> The core analytic flaw is the confusion of the very real and existing systematic tensions in African states (which are, however, the universal *backdrop* of all political life in the continent) with other factors, often the *prime* reasons for a military upheaval, logged in the internal dynamics of the officer corps. It is both simplistic and empirically erroneous to relegate *coups* in Africa to the status of a dependent variable, a function of the political weakness and structural fragility of African states and the failing of African civilian elites.

Hence issues within the military can be traced as causes for most military takeovers in Africa. Actually, whatever fragile organizational unity African armies may have originally possessed has usually been rapidly eroded by the politicization of their internal cleavages after independence and the sharpening of personal jealousies and power struggles (ibid: 14). Hence, causes of *coup d'état* within the army could range from communal alliances to personal aggrandizement. Various scholars have underlined corporate identity with in the army as a driving force behind most military *coups*. Nordilinger (1977:78), for example, argues that the great majority of coups are partly, primarily, or entirely motivated by the defense or enactment of the military's corporate interests. Similarly, Needler (1987:59) maintains that the military typically intervenes in politics from a combination of motives in which defense of the institutional interests of the military itself

predominates, although those interests are frequently construed so as to be complementary to the economic interests of the economic elite.

The accompanying ideologies of the military academies of the European countries are among the communal interest that led to the rise of military *coup d'état*. At the beginning of independence, the presence of small numbers of soldiers in the army of the nations triggered the expansion and strengthening of the military. For that matter a considerable amount of personnel were sent for training to the military academies of the former colonial powers. Here they were encouraged to take a pride in their status as professionals. When they returned to their native countries, they expected to be well-remunerated, to be treated with respect and they also expected to carry out their allotted function without undue interference from politicians. In fact, these accompanying corporate identities have led to the rise of a number of putsches. The first African military *coup d'état* in Togo in 1963 and the army mutinies in the former British colonies of East Africa in 1967 best illustrate such motives (Decalo, 1976:15).

Furthermore, differential recruitment and promotion patterns cause tensions that reinforce other lines of army division based on rank, age, tribe, and education. After independence many of the top officers in African armies were rapidly promoted from the ranks or the officer corps in the drive to achieve Africanization of the army commands. However, their recruitment tends to favor groups who had greater access to colonial education. At the same time, the officers of nations like Ghana and Nigeria, who were trained at Sandhurst, formed friendship based on ethnicity (Nudgent, 2004: 209). For example, one comparative study in the 1960's found that only a third of African armies were ethnically balanced (Nordlinger, 1970:37).

A significant number of coups in Africa have also been carried out by the lower members of the army. Kandeh (2004: 1) labels this faction of the military as '*subaltern ranks of the militariat*'. According to him, they occupy a class position in the army that is analogues to the working class in society. The military *coup d'état* in Ghana (1979) and (1981), Liberia (1980), Burkina Faso (1983), Sierra Leone (1968, 1992, 1997), and Gambia (1994) exemplify, to a varying degrees, this pattern of military *coup d'état* from below (Ibid).

In the same way as communal army interests, personal factors of specific key officers in the army could also be attributed as the causes of military coups in Africa. The variants of this

motive include a combination of personal animosities, personal fears and personal ambitions. The 1965 coup in the Central African Republic which brought Colonel Bokkassa to power and Idi Amin's takeover in Uganda in 1971, are among those which could be mentioned as examples of this (Decalo, 1976: 17-18). The fact that there are cases in which there were no better alternatives other than the military rule should also be underlined. Decalo (1976: 238) mentions the situation of the former Dahomey as a case in point follows:

> Dahomey's abysmal record of military rule should not cloud the fact that once the triumvirate was shunted from the political arena in 1965 (by Sogolo's first coup of the year) there was no viable leader who could have taken charge of the splintered society and calmed the interethnic strife that had just erupted.

Generally, it is possible to say that the military intervenes in politics for a variety of manifest and concealed reasons. At the same time, the *coups* are attributed not only to a single specific factor but also to arrays of different combined reasons.

2.4 TYPES OF MILITARY RULE IN AFRICA

Giving to the fact that there were different forms of military regimes in Africa, the need to put them under their respective categories is necessary. Significant differences have been observed in the manner in which military leaders have attempted to cope with the various problems confronting their countries and the systematic effects of military rule on the armed forces and political development. Decalo labels the sum total of these general approaches and orientations towards political issues, power and the role of the army in society as the *military style in office.* For differentiating military style more sharply from the somewhat similar concept of political style, it is also possible to talk about the *modalities of military rule* which refer to the principal systematically relevant features of military behavior in office. Furthermore, Decalo states that there are other perspectives of forming the typologies of military rule in Africa. One dimension can be based on the prime characteristics of African military rule and these include:

> the corporate status of the armed forces, the permeability of civil military boundaries, the degree of personalist concentration of decision–making authority and coercive power, the satisfaction or non-satisfaction of non-military group demands, the relative immunity of the regime from personality cleavages leading to praetorian assaults, and the active-combative or passive-reconciliationist approaches of the regime to societal issues (1976: 242).

Based on this six suggested variables, Decalo illustrates three distinct modalities of military rule namely *Praetorian modality of rule, Personal dictatorship or Personalities* and *Managerial brokerage.* Decalo also forwards the apparent permanence of military rule as the other possible criterion of distinguishing military regimes. Based on this, military leadership can be categorized as the *bureaucratic modality* or *the operation modality*.

Political ideology can also be taken as the other method of categorizing military regimes in Africa. Martin as quoted in Flood and Bell (1997: 1)defines political ideology as 'sets of ideas by which men [and women] posit, explain, and justify ends and means of organized social action and specifically political action, irrespective of whether such action aims to preserve, amend, uproot or rebuild a given social order'. By claiming that military regimes differ in their stated goals and political practices just like politicians have come in different ideological guises and disguises, Nudgent (2004:211-259) categorizes the military rulers in Africa as *caretakers, reformers and redeemers (corrective regimes)*, *usurpers in uniform* and *praetorian Marxists*.

Nudgent mentions that the *caretaker* category is perhaps the simplest to grasp. As its name indicates, it only represents a temporary holding action on the part of the military. To put it in Nudgent's words:

> Caretaker regimes were those which continued to accept the premise that the military did not really belong in politics. But as part of their obligations to defend the interests of the nation, they claimed an obligation to remove civilian politicians who were driving the country to rack and ruin (Nudgent, 2004: 210).

The first military coups in Togo and Benin can be examples of such kind of military *coup d'état*. In addition, the first military coup d'état of Ghana which took place on February 24th, 1966 can best illustrate caretaker military regime.

Those military rulers who want to govern for as long as they deemed necessary can be categorized under the second type of military regimes as *redeemers and reformers*. Their typical rationale was that national unity could not otherwise be maintained and/or that the military alone possessed the marginal competence to put the country back on track. Under corrective regimes civil servants are tended to be relied heavily on. Traditional rulers are also approached for their moral support. On the contrary, politicians are relegated to the background. The soldiers tended

to insist not merely on heading the various ministries, but also sitting at the head of corporations. Ghana and Nigeria can provide us with the best example of such kind of military regimes.

Under the third category come *usurpers in uniform*. Unlike caretaker regimes which generally promise a speedy withdrawal and corrective regimes which may be a more prolonged withdrawal, usurpers has the nerve to declare themselves as presidents and in one case emperor for life. Even though, in most cases military usurpers cloaked themselves in civilian garb and founded political parties which enjoyed monopoly privileges, their real power lay within the instruments of violence. On some occasions- like the regimes of Idi Amin in Uganda and Jean-Bedal Bokassa in the Central African Republic, *usurper regimes* are some of the best examples of personal rule. In other cases such as Zaire under Mobutu and Togo under Eyadema, there was a much more elaborate attempt to legitimize and institutionalize the usurpation of power by means of combination of civilian co-operation and the installation of a hegemonic single party.

As far as the fourth category is concerned- *praetorian Marxism*-, one may wonder how regimes which come to power through *coups d'état* should have been drawn to Marxism especially since the armed forces are the least likely candidate for a radical agenda given its nationally apolitical and strictly hierarchical character. However, in the view of the permeability of the African military, and in the frailty of its command structures, this cannot be taken for granted. In fact soldiers especially the rank-and-file in Africa have been ideologically suggestive. But there is another agenda for Marxism to prove seductive in countries like Congo Brazzaville, Benin, Ethiopia, Somalia and to a lesser extent Ghana and Burkina Faso. It is because military leaders had to try harder to justify their usurpations and were consequently driven further to the ideological extremes (Nudgent, 2004: 243).

Despite this and other stated frameworks of categorizing military rule in Africa, it is obvious that particular regimes could bear the imprint of more than one of these. (Nudgent, 2004: 210) claims that the aim of such categorization is only in light of seeking to convey some sense of the variation of military regimes which emerged after independence.

2.5 THE AFTERMATH OF MILITARY RULE

In the early days of post-independence, there were two conflicting images of military rule. The first one was derived from the experience of Latin America which suggested very strongly that rule by the armed forces or individual military men (known as caudillos) almost certainly guaranteed corrupt and inefficient government (Deng and Zartman, 1991:285). But that experience was rejected by the theorists because of the belief that African armies are quite the opposite of the militaries in Latin America which were organized along traditional lines and projected an image of administrative incompetence. On the other hand, there was a new school of political theory which emerged in the newly decolonized areas of the third world. By quoting Pye, Deng and Zartman states that this new theory is based on the assumption:

> that the armed forces in the newly third world states were believed to possess a dynamic and self- scarifying military leadership committed to progress and the task of modernizing traditional societies that have been subverted by the corrupt practices of the politicians (1991:286).

However, much of this debate about the alleged modernizing propensities of African military regimes has taken place within an empirical vacuum: It has been hindered by the non availability or non-compatibility of data on military performance in office and clouded by the kinds of erroneous underlying assumptions about the optimistic motives (Decalo 1976:23).

The crux of the matter is that the military regimes in the post-independent era have amply demonstrated that the Latin American experience was indeed relevant. Hence, from the mid 1960's afterwards, the idealized image of African military rule began to slowly swing in the opposite direction. Once after the first military rule occurred, it is witnessed that army rule has not been necessarily free of corruption or conducive to economic and political development rather than civilian rule.

Although it is certainly true that the small African armies, lacking in a number of skills, would have great difficulty in reordering their countries' priorities and initiating vast socio-economic change, this should not obscure the fact that the conceptual models of African armies as dedicated, nationalist, and cohesive hierarchies committed to change are simply not valid. In fact, the military regimes are in a more widespread state of corruption, economic crisis and political instability than their civilian counterparts. Corruption, political instability and economic

crisis are the three points that are discussed below in an attempt of giving an account on the failure of military rule in Africa due to these features.

2.5.1. CORRUPTION

Various meanings have been given to the term corruption since time immemorial. For Aristotle, the deviation or corruption of kingship is called tyranny. According to him, both kingship and tyranny are forms of government by a single person; they were different because the tyrant studies only his own advantage whereas the king looks to that of his subject (Hiedenhiemer et al. 1989:1). By capitalizing on Aristotle's concept, Frederic formulates a core meaning from where both applications of kingship and tyranny are derived which is a deviant behavior associated with a particular motivation, namely that of "private gain at public expense" (Ibid). However, this definition still makes the issue a lot more complex because it does not explicitly state as to how the behavior is deviant from which norms. Hence, for the sake of making it less arguable, Frederic (as cited in Hiedenhiemer et al. 1989:2) states that:

> Corruption exists whenever a power holder who is in charge of doing certain things, that is a responsible functionary or office holder, is by monetary or other rewards such as the expectation of the job in the future, induced to take actions which favor whoever provides the reward and therefore damage the group or organization to which the functionary belongs, more specifically the government.

According to wikipedia, the online encyclopedia, there are several types of corruption that occur in a government. Some are forms of corruption pertaining to money and these include *bribery*, *extortion*, *embezzlement* and *graft* which are very common in local government systems. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corruption_in_local_government).

Bribery is the offering of something which is most often money but can also be goods or services in order to gain an unfair advantage. Common advantages can be to sway a person's opinion, action or decision, reduce amounts of fees collected, speed up a government grants, or change outcomes of legal processes. *Extortion* is threatening or inflicting harm to a person, their reputation, or their property in order to unjustly obtain money, actions, services, or other goods from that person. Blackmail is a form of extortion. *Embezzlement* is the illegal taking or appropriation of money or property that has been entrusted to a person but is actually owned by another. In political terms this is called *graft* which is when a political office holder unlawfully

uses public funds for personal purposes. Other forms of political corruption are *nepotism* and *patronage systems* (Ibid). *Nepotism* is the practice or inclination to favor a group or person who is a relative when giving promotions, jobs, salary raises, and other benefits to employees. This is often based on the concept of *familism* which is believing that a person must always respect and favor family in all situations including those pertaining to politics and business. This leads some political officials to give privileges and positions of authority to relatives based on relationships and regardless of their actual abilities. *Patronage* is a kind of corruption that consists of the granting favors, contracts, or appointments to positions by a local public office holder or candidate for a political office in return for political support. Many times patronage is used to gain support and votes in elections or in passing legislation. Patronage systems disregard the formal rules of a local government and use personal instead of formalized channels to gain an advantage.

Corruption is one of the most repeatedly used justifications of military takeovers in Africa. In strengthening this claim Anassi (2004: 234) states that many people in Africa believe corruption to be the main reason behind *coups* for many military governments that have seized power give corruption and bad governance as their main reason. While military men could be justified in their quest for good governance and corrupt free societies, it turned out that these military men became more corrupt than previous civilian regimes. The best examples are the past military regimes in Nigeria and Zaire. These regimes amassed so much wealth and nearly depleted their national treasures. All that wealth was taken offshore, where it could not benefit their countries (Ibid). In some cases corruption worsened than it used to be putting the military regimes as the number one enemy of the society. Therefore, corrupt behavior appears to be the main characteristic of military regimes in Africa and corruption remains a fact of life in almost all cases of military regimes in Africa. The common picture is that military regimes are not any different in terms of corruption than their civilian counterparts. If there is any variation, it is that corruption has worsened more during a military era.

2.5.2 POLITICAL INSTABILITY

Different meanings have been attributed to the term political instability (PI). According to Lipset (as quoted in Siermann, 1998:28), a country is politically stable if it has been either 25 years a liberal democracy or dictatorship. Countries that have changed from democratic to authoritarian

rule and *vice versa* are said to be politically unstable. According to this definition, PI is measured based on the number of years a country stays under a certain political system. If a country witnessed a shift of political leadership from one extreme to the other within a certain period of year, then the country will be identified as politically unstable. Hence, Lipset's definition of political stability is based on the persistence or continuity of certain types of political systems. But this definition of PI seems too outdated and it has evolved into another definition of political instability which is based on the legitimacy of the reigning political system. Accordingly Political Instability is said to be directly related to a lack of legitimacy of a present political system in the eyes of the public (Ibid).

PI has been a feature of the military regimes in Africa. The instability under military regimes was reflected in the form of purges, disappearances, mutinies, attempted assassinations, countercoups, intense interpersonal frictions and intraelite strifes (Decalo, 1976: 237). Because military cliques frequently promise to deliver a return to civilian rule, but invariably breach this promise, the consequence was political instability in a number of cases. That is why political development, which is defined narrowly as the bridging of mass-elite gaps through the institutionalization of politics and political structures, has also failed to be the prime achievement of military regimes (Ibid).

When the military assumes political power, it is frequently not able to provide an efficient, nationally-oriented and stable administration, not only because of the immensity of the systematic loads assumed, but also as a result of its own internal cleavages and competitions. In fact, in cases where the latter are especially intense, military regimes may devote considerably more time and effort to consolidating their power and warding off alternate challenges to their authority than to providing the country with purposeful leadership. The *de facto* center of military regimes together with the dissipation of considerable time and effort on merely maintaining the military regime in power has led to governmental paralysis on a number of occasions (Decalo, 1976:244). More or less, the outcome of military coups has been lifeless paper structures or changes only in the name of previously existing organs and administrative units. Furthermore, their constitutions have been a statement more of ideals than of objective reality. Instead, they were characterized by political violence which can be taken as one guise of political instability. Phillips (1984: 134) explains political violence as an action by an individual,

a group, or a government that inflicts damage on people for political purposes. According to him, the methods of political violence include assassination, massacre, torture, destruction of property, incarceration, terror, riots, rebellion, strikes, *coups d'état*, civil wars, and *revolutions*. Political violence is used by individuals and groups in order to influence and/or control government, and by governments in order to maintain control.

2.5.3 ECONOMIC CRISIS

One of the most universal pledges made by new military juntas when they come to power is to provide honest and efficient administration in promoting economic development. Yet, almost all of the regimes were characterized by weak economies. Empirical studies based on different military regimes in Africa show that the regimes promote their own interests in disregard of the socio-economic limitation of their states (Decalo, 1976:24). In comparison to their civilian counterparts, military regimes have registered a weak increase of economic development. Besides, in cases of economic growth under military regimes, the upswings are frequently not directly attributable to the military cliques in power. In supporting this, Nordlinger (1970: 37) states that if the economy improves, it is often in spite of the military rule in power. Therefore, the economic expansion of a few countries under military rule—usually cited as attesting to the abilities of the junta to spur economic growth—cannot be traced to any specific, domestic or foreign policies espoused by military administrations.

By citing certain cases in the following extract, Decalo calls for the assessment of certain intervening external variables before establishing correlations between military rule and economic development.

> The sharp rise in world cocoa and diamond prices, for example, merely coincided with the advent of the military regimes of Ankrah, Eyadema, and Bokassa in Ghana, Togo, and the Central African Republic, respectively. The economic improvement of these countries at that time was really related to the upward fluctuation of the world commodity prices. Likewise, elements of the Togolese economic "success story" under General Eyadema—expanding phosphate exports and German financial largesse to its former *Musterkolonie* (showcase colony)—were present long before the military came to power in 1967. Had President the incumbent president—president Grunitzky— managed to remain in power for one more year he might have been credited with the economic upturn. Zaire's economic potentials would have been exploited no matter what regime was in power (a start was made under Moise Tshombe) as long as it could assure social tranquility (1976: 25).

According to Bebler (1976), instead of economic development, the most significant outcome of military rule in the large majority of cases are a change in political style, a redistribution of political and economic power among elites (with the army assuring itself of the lion's share), and the satisfaction of the personal and group grievances of the dominant officer cliques.

In the ensuing section, an attempt is made to correlate these characteristics of military regimes to the historical facts of the African nations represented in the four selected novels.

2.6. MILITARY RULE IN SOMALIA, NIGERIA AND UGANDA

Literary texts are entwined with historical phenomena, and criticism is increasingly being integrated into a broad cultural critique of the world. According to (Kubayanda, 1990:5) Post-colonial dictatorship in Africa concerns itself with the repression which, in effect, means the arrest, exile, execution, or consistent harassment of dissident voices. This definition seems simple enough, but it points to a social and political reality and to a general visceral sentiment that forms the background for a large corpus of imaginative writing from Africa. Therefore, in light of this, an attempt is made here to discuss the military regimes of the nations that are represented in the novels.

2.6.1. SOMALIA 1960-1990

Somalia was officially established as a nation on July 1, 1960 when the Italian Somalia and the British Somaliland joined together to form the newly independent Somali Republic. Apart from the unification, there was also a strong hope for democracy in the nation because the Independence Constitution of 1961 gave parties the freedom to organize and to compete for political office. Opponents to government policies were free as well to publish their criticisms, and regular elections assured opponents the opportunity to turn incumbents out of office (Laitin and Samatar, 1987:69).

However, it did not take long for everything to turn around into a bad scenario. In fact, independence turned out to be a bitter harvest. Northerners were suspicious about the newly drafted Constitution and as early as December 1961, there was an attempted military *coup* in the north, with the officers hoping to break up the union. The Constitution was ideal and it even provided an excuse for political maneuver and intrigue which were based on clan fissions and fissures derived from the traditional Somali politics. Through the passage of time, the clan

cleavages persisted to exist like never before and it reaches at its climax when President Shermaarke was assassinated by a soldier Seven months after the 1969 election. According to Laitin and Samatar:

> the soldier came from a Majeerteen sub clan that was a rival of the president's, and Shermaarke's murder was supposedly a "payment" for the sufferings of the soldier's sub clan in the pre election violence (1987: 78).

After Shermaarke's assassination the already existing tense atmosphere moved in to a new stage only days later power to be seized by a military group, led by Major General Mohamed Siad Barre. Following the coup, the National Assembly was abolished and Major-General Mohammed Said Barre was entitled to lead the so called Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC). In its early announcements the SRC focused on the corruption of the old regime by drawing on an onomatopoeic expression from the poetry of the great nationalist figure in Somali history, Sayyid Mahammad 'Abdille Hassan, whose poetry was greatly extolled by Somalis and the use of these colloquial political expressions lent a populist aura to the military junta's image (Ibid: 79). Equally popular was the new-regime's anti- Americanism, even if the source of it was equally external. Laitin and Samatar (1987) describe the involvement of the Soviet Union from the very beginning as follows:

> The Soviet Union's role was signaled from an early broadcast on Radio Mogadishu. Before the coup, the radio station announced itself as the "voice of the Somali Republic", but within days, it was the voice of the Somali Democratic Republic, a clear signal of alignment with the Soviets (Ibid).

In the post coup regime, Siad Barre was the unquestioned leader. He chaired the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC), which had the power to inform new laws, repeal old ones, and to direct ministers on questions of administration. In 1970 Barre declared Somalia a socialist state, and in the following years most of the modern economy of the country was nationalized.

Despite certain reforms following the decree of scientific socialism, Somalia under the rule of Said Barrie found itself troubled than it used to be. Freedom of speech and the right to oppose state was curtailed as the SRC established the National Security Service (NSS). The NSS, heavily aided by specialists from the German Democratic Republic, was responsible to hire agents with in every sub clan in Somalia. The SRC was therefore able to get reliable information about dissidents, and it was able to intimidate the population, making most citizens afraid to voice their opinions to anyone but their closest kin. The SRC in conjunction with the army created an ideological apparatus to socialize the entire elite in to committed and loyal socialists.

Young women and men, in the early revolutionary years, were recruited into a paramilitary organization called Victory Pioneers and they engaged in public marches as well as organized self-help projects. In virtually every urban neighborhood citizens are encouraged to attend weekly orientation meetings in which socialist rhetoric is espoused and community action for socialist advance is planned. This extensive ideological apparatus has helped to inculcate, if not to legitimate, the socialist ideology of the military leaders (Laitin and Samatar, 1987: 81).

The drought in 1974 and 1975 and the defeat by Ethiopia in the 1977 war over the adjacent region of Ogden did increase the regimes unpopularity. In a desperate attempt of coping with increasing protest, the regime made a move to the West and secures both a humanitarian and military aid from the United States by granting the use of a previously Soviet naval base at Berbera.

Opposition to Barre's rule began to strengthen in 1981 after Barre chose members of his own Marehan clan for government positions while excluding members of the Mijertyn and Isaq clans. Consequently, Insurgent groups from those clans initiated clashes with government troops beginning in 1982. Though a peace accord ended hostilities with Ethiopia in 1988, the civil war intensified. By 1989 only Mogadishu and portions of Hargeysa and Berbera were firmly in government control. In 1990 the clans opposing Barre formed a united front to fight the war. Barre was forced to flee the capital in January 1991, and was eventually accepted for asylum in Lagos, Nigeria, where he died of a heart attack in 1995.

2.6.2 NIGERIA 1960-1998

Nigeria formally achieved independence as a Federation on October 1, 1960, although it did not become a full republic until 1963 when Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe took office as the Republic's first President. On January 15, 1966, junior army officers revolted and killed several other politicians, including the prime ministers of the Northern and Western regions. Major General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, the commander of the army and an Igbo, emerged as the country's new leader. Although this first Nigerian coup in January 1966 was to some extent a reform coup, there are also other additional factors like self interest and power rivalry that can be attributed to it (Boahen et al. 1987:159).

Not after long, Nigeria faced its second military coup in July 29, 1966. On that day, northern backed army officers staged a coup, assassinating Ironsi and replacing him with Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon. The coup was followed by the massacre of thousands of Igbo in

northern cities. Most of the surviving Igbo sought refugee in their crowded eastern homelands and this incident led to the outbreak of the Biafran war on May 27, 1967. According to Boahen et al. (Ibid), the second coup of Nigeria was a clear example of a coup motivated by factors of self interest and regional power rivalry. In addition, it was partly a revenge coup, directed against Igbo officers, because northern soldiers came to regard the January coup, rightly or wrongly, as an Igbo coup, and wanted to avenge the killing of northern officers and politicians in January. The July coup was also an attempt by northern junior officers and NCO's to resist threatened southern domination of the army and politics.

The third, forth, and fifth Nigerian coups were all reform coups. Birgader-General Murtala Muhammed overthrew General Gowon in a bloodless coup in July 1975. The web site (http://allafrica.com/stories/200008240352.html) describes his short lived stay in power as follows:

> While attending a summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity in Addis Ababa, General Gowon is overthrown in a bloodless coup by Brigadier General Murtala Muhammed. He promises a return to civilian and constitutional rule. Seven more states are created to give minority groups more say in national politics. He begins an aggressive program of reform, targeting the civil service in particular, but less than six months later is assassinated while stuck in a Lagos "go slow" or traffic jam.

Following Murtala Muhammed's assassination, there was public outrage in the history of Nigeria. Student protestors took to the streets. Reluctantly, Murtala Muhammed's deputy, General Olusegun Obasanjo, held the reins of government and promptly executed over thirty of the coup plotters. Over the next three years a new constitution was drafted with separation of powers provisions and establishing a U.S. style presidency. Local governments were given greater autonomy

Elections resulted in a civilian government and Obasanjo became the first modern African military ruler to voluntarily hand over power to an elected government. Alhaji Shehu Shagari, a northerner, became president with questions about his presidency. Although Shagari won a clear majority with 34 per cent of the vote, he failed to meet the constitutional requirement that a candidate get at least 25 percent of the vote for each of Nigeria's 19 states. Public disenchantment prevailed quickly as politicians helped themselves to the spoils of office. Politics

and the winning of contracts became inextricably entwined Consequently, elections in 1983 were considered by many to be rigged.

On 31 December 1983 Major-General Buhari took over power from the civilian president of Shagari with what assumed to be the same aim of tackling severe problems arising from corruption and mismanagement, this time not only in administration and the economy but also in the form of massive electoral fraud in the federal elections in August that year. However, continuing economic mismanagement and decline in the standard of living led to Nigeria's fifth coup in August 1985 when Major- General Babangida took over from Buhari. Under Babangida the Nigerian economy continues its decline. The institution of structural adjustment programme (SAP) brings hardships on the majority of Nigerian citizens, and the supposed long term benefits of the SAP do not materialize (Falola, et. al., 2008).

In early 1989, in preparation for a transfer to democracy, Babangida approved a new constitution that introduced only minor changes to the 1979 constitution. Despite lifting the ban on political organizations in May that year, he refused to recognize any of the new parties, instead channeling politics into the government-created Social Democratic Party (SDP) and National Republic Convention (NRC). Federal legislative elections were finally held in July 1992, with the SDP winning a majority in both houses of the legislature.

The presidential elections were delayed but were finally held in June 1993. However, when initial election results indicated that SDP candidate and wealthy publisher Moshood Abiola's lead, the military annulled and won by a large majority. Babangida, however, claimed he still supported a transition to democracy and in August transferred power to an interim government. The new government lasted only for three months before General Sani Abacha, the powerful secretary of defense, overthrew it and assumed control. Among Abacha's first acts was the termination of all political activity. Soon Abacha dismissed almost every political appointment and government structure created under Babangida. He called on the unions to return to work immediately and promised to establish a constitutional conference.

As the population pressured to have Abiola form a government, he was arrested and charged with sedition. Pro-democracy rallies resulted in more than 100 deaths. Afterwards, Abacha began ruling with an iron fist as he continued to imprison opponents like General Olusengun Obasanjo

and Beko Ransome-Kuti, leader of the prodemocracy movement as well as Abiola and numerous journalists, lawyers and other intellectuals. However, the most notorious was the hanging of Ken Saro Wiwa and eight other activists in 1995 (Falola, et. al., 2008). Saro-Wiwa and his fellow dissidents were critics of the oil industry, which had brought a range of environmental ills to their Ogoni homeland in the Niger Delta. The government dubiously accused the activists of murdering government supporters, gave them a hasty, unfair trial, and executed them. Though Nigeria had extracted over $200 billion in oil at the time, per capita income did not rise. It remained at $300. The execution and imprisonment of opponents and other violations of human rights intensified international pressure on Abacha and resulted in Nigeria's suspension from the British Commonwealth of Nations.

Internally, Abacha managed to maintain support from some segments of the population, especially among his Hausa-Fulani compatriots. In 1995 a constitutional commission presented a draft constitution. Abacha promised to implement the constitution and return the country to civilian rule following presidential elections in October 1998. He was widely expected to be declared the winner of the elections, as all five officially sanctioned political parties had nominated him in April 1998. However, in June 1998 Abacha died suddenly of a heart attack.

2.6.3 UGANDA 1962- 1979

Uganda became independent in October 1962 with unexpected marriage of convenience that was formed between the Uganda People's Congress (UPC)—headed by Milton Obote and the Kabaka Yeka (Legget, 2001: 19). Milton Obote formed the UPC in 1960 by joining northern branches of the Ugandan National Congress (UNC) and representatives, mainly from western Uganda. On the other hand, Kabaka Yekka (KY—meaning king only) was an ethnic party formed to protect the interests of the Buganada. The Buganda are the largest ethnic group in Uganda and they were the privileged during the British colonial era. One year after independence, Uganda became a republic with the Kabaka as ceremonial president. The UPC used its control over the state bureaucracy to bestow favors on its followers and to lure members of the Democratic Party (DP)—a party formed by Grand Catholic Chiefs and educated urban professionals in 1954—to its side. However, it never consolidated its control over its own factions, and in 1966 UPC cabinet members from southern Uganda tried to force Obote out of office. Obote had the cabinet members arrested and claimed the Kabaka was part of the plot. He

suspended the 1962 constitution and forced an interim constitution through parliament in which Obote replaced the Kabaka as president. The Buganda government responded by threatening to secede. Obote ordered the army, under the command of newly appointed Army Chief of Staff Idi Amin, to take control over the Buganda government. The army defeated the small force defending the Kabaka, who fled in disguise into exile. In 1967 Obote's government adopted a new constitution that abolished all four kingdoms and eliminated federal powers. In a futile effort to expand his support, Obote adopted radical policies that expanded state control over the economy. In 1969, following an assassination attempt on Obote, the DP and other minor parties were banned. The UPC remained the only existing party, though the constitution was not amended to prohibit the formation of other parties.

Obote's control over the army grew more uncertain as Amin consolidated his power. In an attempt to diminish Amin's control over troops, Obote placed allies in senior military posts. However, On 25 January 1971, Major General Idi Amin, Commander of the Uganda Armed Forces, took power from Milton Obote in a military coup, and made an impressive broadcast to the nation. He was greeted with applause by many people in Uganda, and promptly recognized by a number of foreign governments, including those of Great Britain and Israel for avoiding the fear of communism that was unleashed by the Obote regime (Kiyimba, 1999: 19).

Amin overthrew the civilian government in 1971, relying on members of the Nubian ethnic group within the army. Though both Amin and Obote were northerners, Amin was a Nubian and a Muslim, while Obote was a Langi and a Protestant. On taking power, Amin made the politics of gun to be the dominant politics of Uganda. He soon also authorized attacks on civilians and ignored killings by his followers. Eventually, he was also responsible for the murder of several of his cabinet ministers, the chief justice, and the Protestant archbishop. Several hundred thousand people may have been killed and thousands more fled the country. No groups were spared, though the educated were singled out by the uneducated ruling group, and the ethnic Acholi and Langi also were singled out, because Obote was thought to have derived support from those groups.

Amin spurred the shift by several African states to align with Islamic nations rather than with the Jewish state of Israel in the Middle East conflict over possession of the historic region of Palestine. After receiving aid from Libya in 1972, Amin expelled all Israelis from Uganda. Later

that year he also expelled almost all Indians, who had controlled almost the entire commercial sector. At first these bold strokes made Amin popular among Ugandans, especially among those who were given control of the Indian businesses. As the economy contracted, however, shortages occurred, foreign exchange disappeared, and inflation increased, and Amin lost most of his popular support. Though condemned by much of the international community, Amin received military assistance from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and Libya during most of his regime. In addition, both the United States and the British governments facilitated sales of military equipment by private businesses and arranged training for Ugandan "police agents" (even after the United States broke diplomatic relations and closed its embassy in Uganda in 1973). The military aid, business opportunities from the departed Indian communities, and money siphoned from state funds helped Amin buy the loyalty of his military. Nevertheless, he faced several attempted *coups*.

As a principled opponent of military rule, Julius Nyerere, the president of neighboring Tanzania, denounced Amin's seizure of power and permitted Obote and other opponents of Amin to reside in Tanzania and, initially, to train guerrillas there. In 1978 several divisions of the Ugandan army mutinied against Amin's rule. To distract the nation's attention from his weakening grip on power, Amin ordered loyal troops to invade the Kagera region of Tanzania on Uganda's southern border. The Tanzanian government equipped a large army that, together with two small Ugandan contingents (one loyal to Obote, the other to guerrilla leader Yoweri Museveni), quickly drove the invaders out of Tanzania. This military force then invaded Uganda and ousted the Amin government, forcing Amin to flee to Libya in 1979. The war lasted less than six months, but the looting by Ugandans and Tanzanians during that period caused as much damage to Uganda's economy as Amin's policies had over the preceding eight years.

CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE NOVELS

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This part of the research deals with the analysis of four Anglophone African novels viz., Sweet and Sour Milk (1979), Anthills of the Savannah (1987), Footprints (1998) and Abyssinian Chronicles (2000) in relation to the different issues of military rule in Africa that are discussed in the previous chapters. In so doing, the novels will be analyzed side by side to show the commonalities and differences of African military regimes with respect to their motives behind a coup, their political ideologies and their aftermath. But this will be preceded by the synopses of the four novels.

3.2. SYNOPSIS OF THE FOUR NOVELS

3.2.1 *SWEET AND SOUR MILK*

Sweet and Sour Milk is a novel consisting of fourteen chapters spread in two hundred and thirty seven pages. Set in the 1970's post-independent Somalia, the novel gives us a clear account of life in the then Socialist Somalia. The story begins amidst the worry of a family about the illness of their family member which eventually leads to his death. Soyaan Keynaan, who works in the government service as the Economic advisor to the Presidency dies because of an illness which started as a minor stomach complaint. It seems that Soyaan has died of an incurable disease. But the fact is that he is poisoned by the security agents of the government for opposing and being defiant of the Siad Barre's regime. In the absence of a post-mortem examination, the reason behind his death becomes a mystery. Yet this is not the case for his twin brother Loyaan because he is suspicious that the government has something to do with his brother's death. After the death of his twin brother, Looyan promises himself to investigate the cause for his brother's death and finish what he has started. Though Loyaan and Soyaan are twins, they have completely different personal dispositions. While Soyan is a man of politics, Loyaan is weary of politics and he does not want to get himself involved in the muddle of politics. However, the death of his brother changes everything. As he starts digging into the mysteries of his brother's death, he finds himself as the main opponent of the government. As what they did to Soyaan, members of the regime cannot also tolerate Loyaan. Especially after he criticizes the government in public at

the Rendezvous of the Brooms—a mass cleaning campaign because the General is visiting their village in the following day—they take him to an underground prison. Even if it seems he is meeting the fate of his twin brother, his is completely different and more complicated. The regime releases him on a condition that he must replace Soyaan's post as a councilor in the former Yugoslavia. The novel ends on the seventh day after the death of Soyaan when his family stages a massive feast of a get-together according to the Somali-custom as Loyaan is preparing himself for the trip. Hence, in the course of the novel, we see the challenges Loyaan Keynaan faces in his attempt to struggle against the oppressive regime of General Said Barre.

3.2.2 *ANTHILLS OF THE SAVANNAH*

Anthills of the Savannah is a fictional work that clearly reveals the practice of military rule in post-independent Africa. Set in the fictional West African nation of Kangan, the story tells us about the life of authorities of the reigning military regime. The head of state- his Excellency- Sam is a Sandhurst-trained officer who comes to power through a military *coup d'état.* Having no idea of how to lead, he calls his erstwhile friends for help. Consequently, Christopher Oriko, who used to be editor of the government owned *National Gazette* during the time of the incumbent regime, is elevated to the position of commissioner for information. His editorial position is filled by Ikem Osodi, who was among the prominent critics of the incumbent regime and a columnist at the *National Gazette.* However, as the novel unfolds, Sam turns out to be a ruthless dictator. Witnessing this, Chris regrets the day he became member of the military government. Yet, he still continues to be one of the eleven acting commissioners of the regime. On the contrary, Ikem becomes a fierce opponent of the regime. He criticizes the regime openly in the gazette. This annoys Sam very much. Hence he proposes Chris to fire Ikem from his position. But Chris, who has been unable to confront Sam's despotism hitherto, becomes unwilling to meet Sam's demand. When Sam threatens Chris to fire him from office and at the same time, investigate his collaboration with Ikem in conspiring to topple his regime, Chris resigns his position. Meanwhile, Ikem's suspension from the *National Gazette* has made him even more popular. At the height of his recognition, Ikem is invited to make a speech for the students of Bassa University. And this becomes a perfect excuse for the State Research Council (SRC) to make a move towards his disposal. This is revealed when his girl friend Elwa together with his friends Chris and Beatrice goes to his house to know his whereabouts only to find his

property in wreck. When the head of state himself announced that Ikem is shot and seriously injured while he is trying to hold a gun from one of his escorts, Chris hides himself with the urgency of protecting himself and unveiling the curtains behind Ikem's death. The story continues to unwrap its mystery as a *military coup d'état* toppled the regime of Sam and claimed his life. Mean while Chris is murdered in the Abazon region of Northern Kangan as he is trying to save a young girl from being raped by a drunkard soldier who was celebrating the *coup*. The novel ends with a non-traditional naming ceremony for Elewa and Ikem's month old daughter, organized by Beatrice.

3.2.3 *FOOTPRINTS*

Footprints is a novel of three hundred and seven pages divided in to ten chapters. In the novel, the author uses historical name Songhai to refer the current Nigeria. He also uses the name New Timbuktu to refer to the city that is the main setting for almost every sequence of action in the novel. Obviously, the name is a kind of replica for the then Capital city of the historical Songhaian empire- Tomboucto. In Footprints, through the eyes and experiences of two families, Aboubeker Gimba dissects contemporary state of affairs in Nigeria, contrasting social existence and political practices under civilian and military regimes. Jibran Akram and Muthar Sameer used to be very close friends in their undergraduate days. After their graduation, Jibran becomes a teacher, whereas Muthar a civil servant. However, Jibran's activism in the Songhaian Union of Teachers (SUT) against military dictatorship dissatisfies the education administrator, Muthar. Jibran continues to participate in the union activities and rapidly raises to the position of a leader. However, after Jibran's downfall from the SUT because of a disagreement on ways of tackling the military regime, Muthar avenges Jibran for sympathizing with dissidents of the regime by sabotaging Jibran's early exit from his teaching career. Even though Muthar succeeds in making Jibran lose his job, he is the eventual looser in their competition to win the love of Jibran's wife Nashaa. Angered by this, Muthar seeks vengeance on the Jibran family. The love affair between his son Major Bakri and Jibran's daughter Farah provides him with a suitable opportunity. When Bakri and Farah are going to get married, Muthar tries to avenge Jibran by breaking up the relationship between his son Bakri and Jibran's daughter Farah. Besides, Jibran is twice detained by the security service of the military junta because of Halliyfah's— his youngest son—political activities. Meanwhile, Halliyfah, while still a school boy, leads a protest march of fellow pupils

opposing the military government only to be wounded to death and finds himself in a hospital bed. Towards the end of the novel, Jibran and Mhutar bury the hatchet as Jibran's younger son, Halliyfah, is set on a journey to marry Muthar's youngest daughter, Jameelah. However, the story ends yet again with another coup to everybody's surprise. Sadly, a more vibrant and assertive younger generation remains as confused and with much less of a vision and direction as the older ones. To put it in Gimba's own word, "it is the nature of bequeathal we have left our children" –-an issue the title emphasizes.

3.2.4 ABYSSINIAN CHRONICLES

Abyssinian Chronicles is a novel consisting of seven different parts that give an account of the life in post-independent Uganda since early independence days. Abyssinia refers here not to the historical nation of Ethiopia but to the post- independent Uganda for it is the land of endless abysses that never stops from unleashing misery on its people. The entire tale is handled by the first person narrator Mugezi, who witnesses and suffers from the hardships and mishaps that his country has gone through. The novel begins with an illustration of his early life at his Grandpa's village. At the fit of independence, his father, Serenity is wedded to his wife Nakkazi -- also known as Virgin, St. Peter, or, finally, Padlock. Being a former nun, who was disrobed because she got carried away in punishing some children and hurting seven badly, Padlock dislikes her marriage and tries to take it out on her children by unleashing unbearable pain and suffering. Though Serenity has fathered a girl before marrying, a half-sister of Mugezi's, who reappears dramatically late in the narrative, Mugezi is the eldest of twelve children and he suffers a lot from Padlock's mistreatment beginning from his days at his Grandpa's village. Serenity's appointment in the city comes to his rescue as the couple move out of his Grandpa's village and leave Mugezi with his grandfather in the countryside. It is perhaps the happiest time in his life, as he goes as his grandmother's assistant when she performs her job as midwife. However, the January 25, 1971 military *coup* by Idi Amin turns the chapter of his life upside down as it is also the night of his Grandma's death and the cause for his departure to the city.

For Mugezi life under Serenity's roof is as bizarre as life for Uganda under its leader Amin is. Life becomes a nightmare for Mugozi as Padlock forces him to do all the dirty work including taking care of the ever-growing number of siblings. Thanks to Padlock's despotism, Mugezi does not give any of their names, except referring to them simply as the "shitters". Unable to withstand his mother's oppression, he involves himself in a little coup of disposing her from his

home only to get himself sent away to a seminary. Yet the worst is still to come since the seminary is full of even more unspeakable and arbitrary terror, both from other students and the teachers. The pandemics of Amin's Uganda which include the north-south spilt, the religious cleavages and the expulsion of the Indians are also among those that are part of Mugezi's experience. Acts of brutality persist to occur even after the overthrow of Amin's regime. Among the worst is Mugezi's rape by female soldiers of the liberation army. By the time Mugezi leaves the seminary the country has been almost completely corrupted. He cannot get a place at the university to study law—his grandfather's dream for him. Mugezi eventually becomes a teacher, painting a dismal picture of that profession in Uganda. The pay is so low that no teacher can live on that salary alone. Mugezi is able to supplement his income with a booming home brewery business. With the rise of Obote II regime as another period of tyranny and oppression, a guerrilla war is waged and continues to haunt ordinary Ugandans. This leads to an attack and wreckage of Mugezi's home village, destroying it -- or, as Mugezi puts it: "Thus the village of my birth was consigned to the caustic dust of oblivion." AIDS also claims victims, affecting Mugezi's family as well as many others. The novel ends with a final chapter entitled as "Ghettoblaster" which shows the life of Ugandans abroad, after Mugezi immigrates to the Netherlands and began to lead an immigrant life.

3.3 MILITARY RULE AS REFLECTED IN THE NOVELS

3.3.1 THE MOTIVES BEHIND THE MILITARY COUP D'ETAT

In Sweet and Sour Milk (1979) only little space is given to the way how Said Biarre's regime came to power since most of the novel focuses on the early phase of the time after the military regime comes to power. Even though it is mentioned only once, it shows the protagonist regretting the day the regime came to power. Loyaan regrets as he is marching to the office of the Minister to the Presidency:

> That dawn in October 1969 when power (a mistress of wicked ways) slept manless, unloved, when she was given reason to believe she wasn't the most beautiful of mistresses, when chaos reigned and the men of the sixties (Margarritta's thesis about Africa's post-independence liberal governments preceding the seventies of military power and torture returned to his memory) couldn't agree to whom the hand should go. Anyway you shuffled, the cards remained non-trumps. The queen, nobody was quick enough to realize, had slept alone for a good fortnight; the courtiers had been undecided all this time; they were themselves as sleepless as she was: but never mind. Came a suitor, that

> dawn in October, came a General the month would, a year to the day later, garland with a revolutionary wreath and fervour: who arrived demonstrating an ace (that of "popular will"). He eloped with her and loved her secretly and tended her with whispery kisses and charm. That dawn in October, the twenty first of the month to be precise, four days after the other October, and nearly coinciding with Numeiry's. Viva October-power! (Ibid, 171)

As it can be seen from the extract above, General Said Barre's regime comes to the leadership arena after the vacuum of political power in Somalia. The regime has got the support of the mass by the time it came to power. But in what has been disclosed throughout the narrative, the people's expectations have not been met. As it has been discussed in the theoretical framework, the factor that led to the rise of the General's regime to power is the political vacuum that was created as a result of the assassination of president Shermaarke by a soldier who came from a Majeerteen sub clan seeking vengeance for the sufferings of his sub clan in the pre election violence. In the same way as the incumbent regimes were, Siad Barre's regime in the novel is being portrayed as being a tribalist regime. This can lead to the proposition that the military coup d'état could have been driven by the need for tribal domination. Similarly, it is stated in the theoretical framework that the Soviet Union was backing the military regime beginning from its onset. In strengthening this claim the Soviets are portrayed in the novel as being the right hand of the General's regime. This gives rise to a belief that the Soviet Union is intimately involved in staging the military *coup*. Hence, based on the stated accounts, the motive behind the military *coup* of General Said Barre can be attributed to tribal disposition and foreign influence that are camouflaged by the prevailing political instability.

In Anthills of the Savannah (1987) emphasis is given as to how the military regime practices its rule as opposed to how the reign of Sam's military dictatorship comes to power. We learn about the military regimes rise to power when Christopher Oriko, who holds the position of Commissioner for Information in the regime, recalls Sam's rise to power as follows:

> His Excellency came to power without any preparation for political leadership—a fact which he being a very intelligent person knew perfectly well and which, furthermore, should not have surprised any one. Sandhurst after all did not set about training officers to take over her Majesty's throne but rather in the high tradition of proud aloofness from politics and public affairs. Therefore when our civilian politicians finally got what they had coming to them and landed unloved and unmourned on the rubbish heap and the young Army Commander was invited by the even younger coup makers to become His Excellency the Head of State he

> had pretty few ideas about what to do. And so, like an intelligent man, he called his friends together and said: 'what shall I do?' (Ibid: 12).

As it can be seen from this passage, Sam's military regime comes to power replacing an unpopular civilian regime. Sam finds himself in a position of leadership unexpectedly after he is invited by the junior *coup* makers. Trained at Sandhurst, which is a British Military Academy, he has no idea as how to accomplish his new destiny of leading Kangan. One can not help from asking why the younger *coup* makers had invited Sam to the most powerful position in Kangan. The fact that Sam is invited by the junior *coup* makers to be His Excellency the Head of State reveals the high expectation the military shouldered on him for he is a Sandhurst alumnus. In addition to the unpopularity of the incumbent regime, this can hint the corporate interest within the army as the other hidden motive of the military putsch. But as the novel unfolds, we see Sam trying to make himself president for life—leading Kangan yet to another dire situation.

As opposed to the two novels mentioned above, the rise of military regime to power has been given more coverage in Abubakar Gimba's Footprints (1998). The novel begins in the middle of political unrest that looms over Songhai. Due to the strike in the service industry that brought the nation's capital New Tymbuktu in to a standstill, Nashaa's younger child Halliyfah is going to school alone with nobody accompanying him and this troubles her very much. Adding to her worries, her husband Jibran had not returned home since he left on the previous night in search of fuel. Though her son is curious about his dad's whereabouts, she couldn't explain it to him as she herself could not quite understand why politics should affect the flow of petrol at the petrol station (Ibid: 8). All this is happening because of the strike called *operation python* that was waged by the Songhai Labor Front (SLF) with the intention of making the president resign from his position. Based on the vote of no confidence that was passed by the national assembly, the president is asked to resign from his presidency. On the contrary, the president accuses the national assembly that they are trying to get rid of him unconstitutionally. But as the following extract shows, it is the ordinary who are caught in the middle when the fight between the two different groups intensifies.

> *Operation Python* lived up to its name in the nation's capital. It wrecks hardship on the city, just as a python constricts its prey to gradual death. Each week brought an additional new misery, a new wave of constriction on the city's service. So did the architect's of *operation Python* want it to be: to gradually strangle vibrancy out of the city's life, the country's life. Make the country

> languid and eventually lifeless. When in the twelfth week, the last week of the final constriction of the python, the utilities' individual unions were asked to join the strike, water and electricity were cut off, the city was thrown in to such misery and confusion, which could hardly been surpassed by even a war blockade. It was like a spasm of death throes: the desired repercussions the Front wanted to see. And its members were jubilant, with crows of victory (Ibid: 39).

It would not be hard to imagine how difficult it could be to live without the necessary basic needs being fulfilled. Yet, this could not make the president resign. Though the SLF has predicted that it would achieve its aim of the president's stepping down before it is too long, things turned out the other way round. And this standoff between the president and his opponents provides a perfect excuse for the soldiers to stage a military *coup d'état*.

> It was not till noon that the radio advised its listeners to wait for a special announcement. Then came the national anthem, and what everybody was waiting for began. A speech from the military, delivered by their boss himself, the Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff. He began by stating the expected: that the events of the last several weeks had forced the military to intervene in the affairs of the governance of the country yet again. He said it was a patriotic duty that they had sworn to. To continue to sit and watch things drift in to greater chaos would be a betrayal of the military's role of defending the country. They had to act to defend the constitution (Ibid: 65).

In the above extract, it is clearly indicated that the state of anarchy in which Songhai was trapped provided the perfect excuse for a military takeover once more. The intra-elite strife among the politicians paves the way for the military takeover. As the regime reveals its plan of handling power to an elected civilian government, the Songhaian population hopes to get an elusive political oath more than ever. However, the cleavage among the members of the military junta at the time of handing over power to an elected civilian regime shows that the junior members of the *coup* makers have their own hidden agenda for staging the *coup*. Despite the chairman's defiance to the prospect of returning to a military government, the junior military members return to power and start to lead indefinitely. Although the senior military officers were backing the chairman for establishing an elected civilian government, they could not act because they were disappointed by what the politicians did. The junior military men justify their return to power by claiming the incapability of the politicians after their contention following the display of the election results. In spite of this, the military regime continues to stay in power for long until it is toppled by another military *coup d'état*. This demonstrates how much corporate interest with in the junior members of the army is equally traceable with the prevailing intra-elite strife as

a cause for military regime's rise to power in Footprints. In other words, the military *coup d'état* occurs in the context of political instability in Songhai while concealing the corporate interest among the junior military members.

Since Idi Amin's tyrannical rule is one of the concerns of Moses Isegawa's Abyssinian Chronicles (2000), Amin's rise to power is incorporated in the novel. The day Amin comes to power is one of the days in which the life of the main character Mugezi is turned upside down because, as it can be seen from the following excerpt, in exactly the same day, he has lost his beloved Grandma who was attacked and burned to death while she was sleeping in her hut.

> It was then a total turnaround when politics seemed to come hard on Grandma. On the night of January 25, 1971, General Idi Amin, helped by the British and Israeli friends, seized power in a military coup. He overthrew his former benefactor, Milton Obote, the prime minister who had led the country to independence and had gone to suspend the constitution. General Amin gave eighteen reasons for the coup, among them corruption, detention without trial, lack of freedom of speech and economic mismanagement of the country (Ibid: 85).

As it can be seen from the above quotation, most of the reasons for the Amin *coup* seem to be attributed to the inability of the incumbent regime. On top of this, the Israeli and British involvement could be seen as a means of preserving their national interests which is avoiding the threat of communism in Uganda. However, there are also other factors originating with in the army it self. For example, the following extract from the novel shows the existence of religious and ethnic strife in Ugandan society immediately after independence. Following the conversion of his aunt Tiida and her husband Dr. Ssali from Protestanism to Islam, the narrator of the novel-Mugezi gives the following comment:

> In the sixities, this was considered downward mobility, because in the political scheme of things, the Christians were on top, with the protestant having the lion's share of the cake, the Chatolics the hyena's, and the Muslims the vulture's scrawny pickings (Ibid:12).

As it has been stated in the theoretical frame work, Amin overthrew the civillian government relying on members of the Nubian ethnic group with in the army. Though both Amin and Obote were northerners, Amin was a Nubian and a Muslim, while Obote was a Langi and a Protestant. Thus, ethnic and religious conflicts have also a part to play in the 1961 military *coup*. This is

justified in the novel by the practice of Aminism and the assassinations large number of Liangi and Acholi troops after the coming of Amin to power.

In general, the weakness of the incumbent regimes has acted as a driving force of the military takeovers in each of the four novels. However, there are other determinant factors which are clearly indicative of their concealed motives and this is disclosed in each of the narrative by giving an account on the military leaders' stay in office.

3.3.2 POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES

As far as the political ideologies of the military rulers that are reflected in each of the story are concerned, all the four different political ideologies that are forwarded by Nudgent (2004) are reflected. In Sweet and Sour Milk we see Said Barre's regime as *pretorian marxist*. Both Amin's military regime in Abyssinian Chronicles and Sam's military regime in Anthills of the Savannah are *usurpers in uniform*. Where as the military regime in Footprints switches from a *caretaker* to a *reformist* typology.

3.3.2.1 PRETOREAN MARXISM

Military regimes that stick themselves to Marxist- Leninist ideology are called *Praetorian Marxists* (Nudgent, 2004). In Sweet and Sour Milk (1979), the regime declares itself as a Marxist-Leninist a year after the *coup* (Ibid: 172). The ideology however turns out to be an empty rhetoric. Actually, the regime uses the ideology as a strategy for consolidating its power and covering its repressive actions. By stating that a Revolutionary Government honors those who die serving her honorably, which is one of the guiding principles of Marxist-Leninist ideology, the regime praises Soyaan, who is a victim of the regime's act of liquidation, as a Revolutionary martyr:

> "A carrier of the Revolutionary Torch; the Standard- bearer of Scientific Socialism; an advocate of Justice and Social Equality, a Believer in the General's interpretation of the country's needs: Soyaan Keynaan, Allah bless him, died two days ago. He died a premature death. He died serving the Revolution. He died, and his last words were respectful of the General's policies: 'Labour is honour and there is no General but our General.' (Ibid, 99)

In reality, Soyaan opposed the General's regime by whatever means possible and he was a victim of the regime's repressive action. He lost his life while he was opposing the General's

regime, yet the regime falsifies his death for echoing its false ideology. By using the media, the regime addresses the nation's population that it has already decided to name a street after Soyaan, and to inscribe his tomb with words "God is honour and there is no General but one General" written in gold (Ibid). This is another fabrication of lie by the regime. By mixing up those lies with the ideology that the regime claims is practicing, it tries to win the society's acceptance. Again this is what Loyaan finds out when he goes to the office which registered the dead of the city and when he is confused as Xassen, the official there, explains him that Soyaan has become a state property:

> "They are writing your family's history, Soyaan's and the whole lot. Like the Russians rewrote Lenin's, Stalin's or that of any of the heroes their system created to survive subversion from within or without. They will need your co-operation, I am sure" (Ibid: 108).

It seems the general's regime is quoting and misquoting Lenin in order to stay in power. Therefore, it is possible to say that the regime is simply using the Marxist-Leninist ideology for its own sake rather than for the benefit of the nation.

3.3.2.2 USURPURS IN UNIFFORM

Both the military regimes in Anthills of the Savannah and Abyssinian chronicles are usurpers in uniform. In Anthills of the Savannah (1987) Sam's military dictatorship is a usurper in uniform for it comes to power without right and does everything to remain in power. Just like most military usurpers cloaked themselves in civilian grabs (Nugent, 2004: 224), we also see the military dictator Sam doing the same. While the President and his cabinet meet at the beginning of the novel, Christopher Oriko – who is the commissioner for information under the military junta – describes his Excellency's attire as follows:

> He is in mufti as he now tends to be more and more within the precincts of the Presidential Palace: a white *dashiki* tastefully embroidered in gold, and its matching trousers (Ibid: 4).

This is one way in which Sam tries to identify his rule with a civilian regime. In chapter two of the novel, it is also stated that His Excellency Sam retires all military members of the cabinet and replaces them with civilians after he stayed some time in power (Ibid: 14). Rather than characterizing his government as a civilian regime, Sam also takes a number of actions to legitimize his reign of usurpation. The act of declaring himself as a president for life is one of these acts. Apart from this, Sam also heavily relies on his security organization called the State

Research Council (SRC) to squash any kind of opposition movement against his regime. The following announcement by a newscaster can show how the SRC was using a coercive means of silencing government opponents.

> Yes, in another development, according to this smug newscaster dispensing national anguish in carefully measured milligrammes, six leaders from Abazon who were involved in a recent illegal march on the Presidential Palace without police permit as required by decree had been arrested. And (in the same development) the office of the Director of SRC had informed the Crime Correspondent of KTV (Kangan Television) that the six men who had made useful statements were being held in BMSP (Bassa Maximum Security Prison) (Ibid: 151).

The above extract is indicative of how Sam's military regime is forcefully frustrating anyone who is jeopardizing its stay in power. The regime even do not spare from taking measures on its own cabinet members for proposing an end to the rule of Sam's military dictatorship. When Sam fires the editor in chief of the national gazette—Chris for criticizing the regime, Ikem resigns from his position of minister for information in an act of protestation. However this act by the military regime has increased the popularity of Chris throughout the nation. After his political speech for students of Bassa University, the SRC abducts him from his home and since then he is nowhere to be found. After they killed him for protesting and inciting others to revolt, they announce in the media that Chris is responsible for his own death. But this is unacceptable for Ikem who knows the regime from the inside. He promises himself to get to the bottom of the matter and reveal the misdeeds of Sam's military regime by meeting different Medias including the BBC. However, Ikem finds himself in a hunt as the SRC is searching him to silence him like Chris. In the end, Chris makes a journey to the north in an attempt of hiding himself from the chase by the SRC. Based on the stated points so far, we can say that Sam's military regime manipulates the SRC as a watch dog for his stay in power.

Moses Isegawa's novel Abyssinian Chronicles (2000) fittingly discloses the reign of Idi- Amin of Uganda (1971-1979). Before he metamorphosed into one of the most brutal dictator to be recorded in the African continent, his reign began with measures of winning the hearts and minds of his fellow Ugandans as a means of consolidating his stay in power and this is imaginatively incorporated in Isegawa's novel Abyssinian Chronicles (2000).

The expulsion of Indians from Uganda is one of the measures that won Amin the support of ordinary Ugandans. In the novel, even Grandpa -- the grandfather of the protagonist Mugezi –, who has been pessimist about the modern state of Uganda since independence, is supports this move:

> For once, he allowed the bag of optimism to bite him, and he believed Amin's vow to return to the barracks after putting the country back on its feet. Grandpa started going out to drink. There was too much electricity in the air to stay home and moan about the past when the future was looming on the horizon. People sang Amin's praise. He could see the mighty padlocks on Indian businesses falling away like rusty trinkets, opening the way for Africans to storm the bastions of economic power. Voices of apprehension were gobbled by the noises of jubilation. No one wanted their euphoria poisoned by doubt; they had waited so long that they wanted to imbibe in its purest form (Ibid: 124).

By this move, Amin has managed to win the support of ordinary Ugandan's. But this decision has also put Amin in an antagonistic position with Britain who was an active collaborator of his Putsch. This has brought Amin some sympathy from the ordinary citizenrys like Grandpa—Mugezi's Grandfather.

> Grandpa felt happy that the British could, this time, not escape the boomerang of race which Amin was sending them. He was putting thousands of Indians on their doorsteps, many of whom had been kept out of Britain by the immigration quota system. The irony was that British officers had promoted Amin, and Britain had had a hand in his coup, and now the bastard was paying them back. British officers had certainly passed over many more deserving African officers when they were grooming this Hydra, and now it was too late to start chopping of its multifarious heads. What had indeed come on the wings of racism and piracy was flying home on the same (Ibid: 25 and 26).

It also did not take much long for Amin to start using excessive force and violence as a means of consolidating his power. According to Decalo as cited in Nugent (2004: 228) it is estimated that as many as 10,000 people had been liquidated by the end of 1971-- the same year he came to power. This is hinted in the novel when Mugezi—the main character of the novel, is thinking about a way of avenging his parents —his father Serenity and his mother Padlock—for the suffering and oppression they are causing him. As he was passing by the taxi park on his way home from his school on one of the days after the January 25, 1971 coup, he figures about using either a rat poison or a cobra to kill his own mother. However, as soon as he sees one of Amin's soldiers, he changes his mind and thinks about walking up to the soldier on patrol and informing

him that Padlock and Serenity were Obote – the incumbent regime – sympathizers because they could be taken in to custody and tortured and even killed by Amin's Intelligence Bureau (Ibid: 117) . He then contemplates how things could change if he becomes a member of the State Research Bureau.

> I could, if I wanted, join the State Research Bureau, the organization charged with keeping an eye on things, monitoring the enemies of the state, both actual and potential. I could get the bureaus red identity card, and no one would dare to touch me again. I could flash the card at teachers, Serenity, Padlock or anyone else who stood in my way. Armed with that card, I could strike fear into the depth of padlock's heart and make her know what it felt like to be at the sharp end of tyranny (Ibid).

Therefore, just like the military regime in Achebe's Anthills of the Savannah (1987), Idi Amin's regime in Uganda as shown in Isagewa's Abyssinian Chronicles (2000) is a usurper in uniform. (126)

3.3.2.3 CARETAKERS-REFORMERS

In Footprints (1998) the military regime comes to power under the guise of a caretaker government. The incessant and desperate fight between the president and his opponents provided a perfect excuse for the military to take hold of the state. Refering to the speech made by the Chairman on the day the coup was staged, Gimba gives the following illustration:

> The chairman accused the politicians of deliberately leading the country walking backwards with their eyes blindfolded, and vowed that he and his colleague in the military would not allow the retrogression to continue. They would not allow the anarchy to continue. They were committed to defending the country under a democracy that guaranteed for the people a deserved bliss, but would not allow the country to be put under blitz in the name of democracy (Ibid: 65).

While declaring such kinds of amendments, the solders in khaki did not give a specific date when the military would return the state to a democratically elected civilian regime. And after one hundred days of the regime, the silence is broken when the media began reminding the new rulers that they needed to fix an exact day for their departure. Consequently, the regime is forced to plan its exit time.

> A few journalists were detained, and some politicians cautioned. But the regime knew that these steps were no panacea for its problems. The noise only grew louder. In its eighth month therefore, the military announced that its life span

> would be no more than twenty-four months. Commissions were set up to review the constitution and the political party structure. The commissions had three months to complete their assignments which were to be approved by the ruling eleven members National Salvation Council, NSC, headed by the head of state. After that, an Election Commission which was also set up would then organize election for caretaker government. The care taker government would run a transitional, experimental civilian administration. The military would hand-over to the transitional government, which could then organize full-blown elections for the country's return to the normal political democracy. The elections of the caretaker government was to be not later than six months after the Constitutional Review Commission's Report was approved by the NSC. And the life span of the caretaker government would be just six months (Ibid: 90- 91).

And with this time table winds of optimism began to blow in Songhai. However, obstacles that hinder the military's return to the barrack began to happen soon. This is first witnessed in the election of members for the care taker government.

> The manner of campaigns for the election of the members [of the care taker government] had all the ingredients of the cardinal sins of politicians which had provided the perfect excuse for the military to interfere with elected governments. Dirty campaign utterances, corruption, physical attack on opponents, threats of assassination, and even a couple of deaths associated with the electioneering campaigns, all took place (Ibid: 99).

Despite this, the so called National Salvation Council (NSC) is determined to pursue the process of relinquishing power to a democratically elected civilian government. And to this end, a new caretaker government came to be as planned (Ibid: 99). However, this incident has created a rift within the military. While the former Chairman of the defunct NSC was totally committed to the return of the military to the barracks, the younger military officers have a different view:

> The younger military officers were determined to step into stem what they termed another bungling by the politicians. The younger officers had sought the blessings of the former NSC boss. He had refused. In this he had the support of his colleagues of Brigadier-General and above. The threat of a violent intervention by the younger officers did not deter the senior ones from sticking to their guns. And fearing that the military would be divided, and the country probably torn apart in to a civil war, the younger once relented and allowed the general elections to be held as scheduled by the defunct NSC's baby, the caretaker government (Ibid:113).

But it does not get any better during the time of the general election. In fact it even worsened. This has surprised every party and it even bewildered the senior military officers, the

protagonists of a quick return to elected government. But it has paved the way for the military to get back to power once again as redeemers and reformers of the Songhaian nation:

> By the third week of October, two weeks after the results were announced, the junior military officers saw that the time was ripe, and they announced their return. The caretaker government was relieved of its assignments, and a Redemption Council, RC, set up. The senior military officer is remained quite indifferent this time because they felt let down by the politicians. Only the former chairman of the defunct NSC remained firmly opposed to the return of his junior colleagues. And he was promptly put into, what the RC called, protective custody (Ibid: 114).

Therefore the military regime in Footprints (1998) manifests both caretaker and reformer (redeemer) typology of military rule as far as its political ideology is concerned. When they first came to power, the military rulers pledge to bring stability in Songhai. They even confirmed their exit time and the exact day when they would return power to an elected civilian regime. However, after the proposed election of a civilian government failed, they announced their return and their plan of ruling indefinitely.

3.3.3 AFTERMATH OF MILITARY RULE

3.3.3.1 CORUPTION

In Sweet and Sour Milk (1979) various forms of corruption by the military regime are dealt widely throughout the narrative. Rather than tackling and fighting corruption, the regime itself practices corruption. For instance, on numerous occasions, the military regime bribes Keynaan, who could be one of its potential opponents, by offering cash. On returning home after bringing his brother's death certificate, Loyaan finds his mother Qumaan and his sister Ladaan counting a large amount of money that Keynaan received from an unknown man for Soyaan's funeral ceramony. Though Keynaan did not tell them who the man was, Loyaan suspects that he was an official from the regime (Farah, 1979: 78). As the novel unfolds, Loyaan's suspicion that their father is receiving money in cash from the General's regime becomes real as the following extract from the novel discloses:

> Keynaan had with him the money the family received from neighbour's contributions, relatives and a large unspecified amount from the Minister to the Presidency given straight to Keynaan for the seventh day ceremony of Soyaan (Ibid, 205).

From the above extract, we can see that much of the expense for Soyaan's funeral ceremony comes from the money that Keynaan received from the General's regime.

In fact, this fat gratuity the Minister provided him has introduced him to a younger girl (Ibid, 219). The young girl is to be Keynaan's third wife after Qumman, his first wife, and Beydan, his second wife. He cannot afford to support three different wives if it is not for the money that he is receiving from the government. On his way to his step mother's house in Afgoi, Loyaan figures out that his father is silent towards the misdeeds of the General's regime because the General's regime is giving him bribes and guaranteeing him a job (Ibid:145).

Hence, it is possible to observe that Keynaan takes the actions of the military regime for granted because of the bribes he receives from the General's regime. He is blindfolded to the misdeeds of the General's regime because of the lucrative financial gratification from the military regime. Even when he is fired from the army, he thinks that he has retired from his job just because the regime is providing him with monthly pension payments. However, while they are chatting, Loyaan tries to make Keynaan understand that he is being used by the regime:

> "One of your cases died under torture, father. The story leaked. One of the junior officers who had worked the man told on you all. It created a scandal. The General feared it would end in a tribal mutiny, that the tribe from which the dead man hailed would take revenge on this government of tribal Hegemony. To prove that his own tribesmen were innocent, the General had all accusing fingers point at you and the other two, all three of you in the service of his hegemony. Having exposed you, he was left with no choice but to sack you. Pension, what pension? A mean sum to unlock your rheumatised tongue and make your rusty jaws function so you can praise him" (Ibid: 88).

Whatever Loyaan has done to explain his father about the obscurity of the regimes hidden agenda, Keynaan never accepts it. This shows how much the Generals regime has effectively exploited Keynaan's desire for money and authority for hiding the truth.

Furthermore, the society that is tribally related to the general receives a lot of benefits at the expense of the ordinary population. The housing structure of the village of Howl-wadag—the village of Loyaan's family— shows this very clearly:

> Amidst the look of poverty and clouds of dust, walls which blinded one with their recent whitewashing glamour, walls which belonged to the upgraded tribals- those close to the general and his clique dot the village (Ibid:77).

The reason behind the scene is the tribalist nature of the General's regime. The general's regime finances those who are member of his tribes. Other than financing his own tribe, the general's regime also appoints his tribesmen to the civil service. Consider this passage.

> On his way to the office which registers the dead of the city, Loyaan meets and teases Ali about Soyaan's praise by the General's regime. Ali is a tribal upstart appointed by the General to replace a well- qualified university administrator, when he, Ali, had never even set foot in any institution of higher learning (Ibid: 103).

Similarly, when the Minister to the Presidency attends at Soyaan's funeral ceremony, Loyann reminds himself that he was a captain in the navy or something about a year or so ago (Ibid :46) and now the benefit he got for being a member of the General's tribe. Beyond this, the General's regime also hires civil servants on the basis of their loyalty to the regime. Unless one proves to be a faithful devotee of the regime there is no way that one can be government employee.

Therefore, in Sweet and Sour Milk (1978), Nurrudin Farah clearly shows that Said Barre's regime is both full of corrupt officials and practices corruption as a means of consolidating its repressive rule.

Anthills of the Savannah (1987) also provides us with a number of instances where Sam's military regime is in a very deplorable state of corruption. The politicians in Sam's military regime are recruited based on different criteria which are unrelated to qualifications. Even His Excellency Sam himself attains the position of the head of state after he is invited by junior military officers who overthrew the incumbent regime (Ibid: 12). This shows that his Excellency Sam has come to power without any preparation for political leadership. Coming to power undeservedly without any preparation, he calls his erstwhile friends for help. Christopher Oriko – the Commissioner for Information - expresses his surprise at the time the offer was made for him as follows:

> I had known him then for close on twenty-five years, from that day long ago when we first met as new boys of thirteen or fourteen at Lord Lugard Collage. And so I found myself advising 'a whole Head of State' who was in addition quite frankly terrified of his new job (Ibid).

This shows how much Sam's regime is using unfair methods of recruiting officials in the state. Instead of people with successful skills of leadership, companionship is the only thing that

comes to Sam's mind while nominating his officials. This could be taken as a practice of nepotism at the expense of the nation. In the theoretical framework a cursory review is made on nepotism as the showing of favoritism for relatives or friends, based up on relationship rather than on an objective evaluation of ability. As a testimony for the widespread practice of nepotism during Sam's military regime, we see a number of other officials of the military regime who do not deserve to be members of the State of Kangan. A case in point is the Honourable Commissioner for Home affairs - Professor Reginald Okong.

Rather than his interest to serve, it is his personal ambition that motivates Professor Okong to seek authority in the first place. Okong cultivates his personal interest at the expense of others, starting even long before his state hood days. When Okong was a primary school teacher, he attracted the attention of American Baptist Missionaries from Ohio who were engaged in belated obdurate evangelism in his district (Ibid: 10). However, Okong becomes member of their church not because he is fond of serving the church but because he is ambitious about purusing his future dream which is to graduate from one of the prestigious campuses in the United States. That is the main reason why he ditches his Ohio patrons and enrolls himself in one of the secular campuses of southern Black collage in the United States of America to be back to Kangan four years later with his Ph.D. degree(Ibid: 11).

Similarly, it is Okong's mere personal ambition and desire for power that makes him the respected Honourable Commissioner for Home Affairs of Kangan. His desire for authority and power has made him exploit the different positions he had been previously. After Okong was employed as the weekend current affair columnist at the *National Gazette* during the reign of the incumbent regime, his column entitled as 'String Along with Reggie Okong' becomes very popular in Kangan (Ibid). But Okong's popularity arises not because he has identified the best needs of Kangan that should be addressed i.e. the inability of its political leaders, but because of his ability to attract the attention of readers by using his good writing skills. This is clearly shown when Chris is recounting as the background of Professor Reginald Okong. Look at the passage below.

> No one pretended that he dispended any spectacular insights, wisdom or originality but his ability to turn a phrase in a way to delight our ordinary readers was remarkable. He was full of cliché, but then a cliché is not a cliché if you have never heard it before; and our ordinary reader clearly had not and so was ready to

> greet each one with the same ecstasy it must have produced when it was first coined. For cliché is but pauperized ecstasy (Ibid).

Yet, the moment the politicians were disposed, Okong automatically transformed himself into a superb analyst of their faults. He was a silent servant of the incumbent regime, however as soon as they are overthrown he starts identifying himself with the new military regime. And it is with this sanity – at least in the eyes of the military regime that he is chosen for his current position. We learn this when Chris memorizes the early days of Sam's military regime as it can be shown in the following extract:

> Apparently Okong had scored another hit by describing the overthrow of the civilian regime as 'a historic fall from grace to grass!' After that I doffed my cap to him. And when his Excellency asked me to suggest half-a-dozen names for his Cabinet Professor Okong was top of my list (Ibid: 12).

Therefore, it can be said that Sam's military regime is full of corrupt officials who do not deserve to lead Kangan. This is also well justified by the regimes spending of excessive amount of money on the renovation of the presidential castle from the drawers of Kangan's budget—money which had not been passed through the normal Ministry of Finance procedures. We learn this while Beatrice Okoh is narrating her voyage on the invitation by His Excellency at the presidents Guest House besides Abichi Lake:

> We got to Abichi village and then the lake at about seven thirty. Although I had been to the presidential Retreat twice before it was both in daytime. Going up to it now with the great shimmering expanse of the artificial lake waters stretching eastwards in to the advancing darkness on to your left and the brightly lit avenue taking you slowly skywards in gigantic circles round and up the hill, on top of which the presidential Retreat perches like a lighthouse, was a movingly beautiful experience even to a mood as frayed and soured as mine that evening. The rumoured twenty million spent on its refurbishment by the present administration since the overthrow of the civilians who had built it at a cost of forty-five million may still be considered irresponsibly extravagant in our circumstances but . . . But what? (Ibid: 73)

Though Sam's military regime comes to power in the place of a corrupt civilian regime, it does not get any better. Rather than allocate the budget of the country in to solving its socio-economic malaise. Sam wastes it by unnecessary spending which does not bring any good. Such spending does not make Sam's military regime by any means less corrupt.

Footprints (1998) also delineates another scenario where the military regime that has come after toppling a civilian government is not any better in terms of corruption. In the first two chapters of the novel, it is clearly stated that corruption is at its highest peak during the time of the former civilian regime. The country is in the midst of political crisis because of the disagreement between the President and the National Assembly as to who is responsible for the bungling of the national budget by the government (Ibid: 134). Without any clearcut solution, the country has already gone three months into the fiscal year (Ibid). In the end this political cleavage between the President and the National Assembly has plunged the country into a crisis. This crisis, in turn, has deeply divided the Songhaian citizenry. Among those that support the resignation of the president, the Songhaian Labour Front (SLF) calls for a nationwide strike until the president resigns. All this is happening because of the alleged missing of money from the yearly national budget. This shows how much the state is in a worst state of corruption.

Apart from this there are also certain indicators of corrupted government officials. For example, in the early days of the strike when the oil workers walked out and this created shortage of oil in the capital New Timbuktu, glaring contrasts are seen between Muthar—a government official and Jibran—a retired teacher. We can observe this in the little incident of brawl between two of their younger children—Jameelah and Halliyfah respectively—at the school compound of Azania International School (AIS). Their quarrel starts as Halliyfah is angry with Jameelah because he thought that the *chauffeur* driving Jameelah has deliberately splashed water on him while he was walking to school in the morning. As their quarrel intensifies they start to insult each other's fathers as it can be shown in the following dialogue:

> "Look, Jameelah, you are insulting me!" he said, his voice shaking with rage, and he pushed her. "Your father is a small rat!" he added.
>
> Jameelah staggered to the ground, as the push threw her off balance.
>
> "You are insulting my father," she said, nearly in tears. "Don't insult my father," she added.
>
> "Your father is a small rat!" repeated Halliyfah sounding bullish, confident that this was a brawl he could win easily. There was an obvious fright in his opponent's eye's that seemed to urge him on.
>
> "My father is not a small rat," countered Jameelah as she picked herself up. "It is your father that is a big goat!" she added in spiteful defiance.

> "You… you calling my father a goat?" Halliyfah growled further, inflamed by the girl's insult. He dropped his umbrella and the lunch-box, and began to remove his school bag from his shoulder.
>
> "Yes. You called my father a rat. Your father is not better than my father…!"
>
> Jameelah was interrupted by Halliyfah's punch to her left shoulder. She swung her school bag at Halliyfah in a fruitless self- defence. He was not hit.
>
> "Never insult my father again," said Halliyfah with an air of a victorious pugilist.
>
> "But you insulted my father first," returned Jameelah, who seemed suddenly emboldened by the apparent insolence of her tormentor. "Your father," she continued "is not better than my father."
>
> "My father," said Halliyfah, as he tried to throw yet another punch at the girl's shoulder, "is better than your father."
>
> "Your father? No. My father is better than your father."
>
> "My father is a thousand times better than your father, that is why you came to school today on foot. My father has many cars and yours…"
>
> Halliyfah interrupted her with a slap on her face. He was shaking with fury.
>
> "Your father has many cars. He stole them. Your father is a thief!"(Ibid: 16)

Obviously, Halliyfah's reference to Jameelah's father—Mhutar as a thief explains that there might have some connection between Mhutar's wealth and his being a government official. Albeit the National Assembly has made the president responsible for the bungling of the National budget, we see government officials like Mhutar who are involved in a wide-spread forms of corruption. This in turn could show how much government officials like Mhutar are involved in graft – to unlawfully use public funds for personal purposes.

On that day, Halliyfah went to school alone because his father could not drive him to school for he was out looking for fuel since the previous night. The fact that Halliyfah was going to school alone with nobody accompanying him has troubled his mother Nasaah very much. This shows how much ordinary Sohghaians like the Jibran's family are severely affected by the strike. Quite contrastingly, Jameelah was driven by her chauffeur to her school on that same day. Despite the scarcity of fuel in New Timbuktu, her family has managed to send her to school in a car. It seems the work stoppage does not mean anything for government officials like Muthar and they are not troubled by it at all. In fact, as the strike escalates and begins to deteriorate, the ordinary

Songhaian's like the Jibran family are the one who are paying the price. Consider the following passage below.

> She [Nashaa- Jibran's wife] now had to contend with all forms of shortages. The night vigil of the first week of the strike when the oil workers downed tools now looked like a child's play. Fuel, cooking gas, food stuff were all in short supply. And worst of all, water and electricity had been turned off. Before the eleventh week of *operation python*, one could obtain most of the things from individual hawkers at exorbitant prices. But when the bank's industrial unions joined the strike, most of the urban middle class elite like the Jibran family became hard hit: neither those with money in their accounts nor those who were even in need of overdraft accommodation could have access to bank's help. Nashaa needed the banks badly, and so her fury grew (Ibid: 39).

But for government officials like Muthar, corruption is a means of getting out of the way. This is vividly shown with what happens to Jameelah and Halliyfah, when the Azania International School (AIS) teachers joined the strike. While Jameelah leaves to join a private school in London to attend her disrupted education, Halliyfah remained at his house without any school (Ibid: 51). All of the above incidents show the widespread scenes of corruption during the time of the civilian regime and this has in turn led the country into spells of political crisis. And this crisis has provided a perfect excuse for the military to stage a successful military coup.

However, corruption does not cease to exist even during the period of the military regime. After the military regime comes to power, Muhtar Sameer, who used to be a Director of the Department of Education in the nation's capital and one of the corrupt officials of the incumbent regime, is appointed as the Director General of the Office of the Head of State (OHS) of the new military regime. Following his deployment at the palace as the Special Duties boss, Muhtar manages to promote his son Major Bakri, who was initially appointed as a special assistant in the OHS, to the position of the aide-de-camp, ADC, of the new military chief, a Major- General (Ibid: 75). Indeed, the change of government has brought only a change of administrators. As for corruption, it continues to exit as it was during the time of the civilian government. Muhtar does not only use his authority for personal gains but also to attack his ex- best friend. Just like ten years ago when Muthar masterminded Jibran's unceremonial removal from his teaching career for protesting the then military government that failed to hand over the government to elected people, Muthar abuses his power for the same effect:

> Muthar had masterly worked on both his son and Haytham to get Jibran arrested. Haytham was uncomfortable. He had been too much a part of the Jibran family. He knew Jibran well. He could not include well his name among the list of dangerous critics as Muthar had wanted him to. Haytham also told Muthar that he could not plot the arrest of Halliyfah just to rope in the father. He should find someone else to do that. Muthar had accused Haytham of sympathetic tendencies to his duties (Ibid: 137).

Despite Haytham's unwillingness to conspire on the arrest of Jibran, Muthar forces him to comply. Both Haytham and Mhutar are secret agents of the Songhaian Internal Security Organization (SISO). Although Haytham is able to leave the organization because he is traumatized by what Mhutar made him do, we can see he is rewarded for all the services he has rendered to the military regime. We learn this when Haytham visits the Jibran's in order to caution Basil and about the spate of arrest of teachers and students on the ongoing crisis.

> "Goodness!" exclaimed Jibran. "Lost and found. Where have you been hiding all these years?" he added jocularly.
>
> "We too see him only once in a blue moon," Confirmed Basil as he stood up to shake his friend.
>
> "But Dad, I told you that he has resigned from teaching," said Farah grinning.
>
> "Yes, I know," returned Jibran. "But where has he been all this while?" He smiled at Haytham.
>
> "You better get it from the horse's mouth," said Farah, and she looked at Haytham.
>
> "Yes, sir" began Haytham, smiling, "I now work in the Department of Welfare and Youth Affairs."
>
> "I see" said Jibran, nodding his head.
>
> "In the office of the Honourable Secretary for the Department," continued Haytham, with some shyness.
>
> "I see," remarked Jibran again. "Right at the top of the pyramid," he added with a smile, as he nodded his head incessantly.
>
> "I am," resumed Haytham, "the Deputy Senior Assistant Secretary to the Special Assistant to the Honourable Secretary of the Department…"
>
> "Hmm," remarked Basil teasingly, "that's the real bureaucratic set up for you."
>
> Both Farah and Haytham laughed.

"Well, call it whatever you wish," said Farah grinning at her husband,

"He's secured in a job now. Shall I bring my application for a job?"

"Oh come on!" retorted Haytham, smiling. "what for?"

"With all this crisis in schools," replied Farah, "one is not sure how secure one is in job."

She wanted to add that she, too, now wanted her reward here on earth rather than in heaven. She had heard that Haytham, since he joined the Department of Welfare and Youth Affairs, had acquired two new cars, and was planning to buy a house. But she kept that to herself. She then playfully continued, "I'm serious. Shall I bring my application?" (Ibid: 243)

It seems corruption is the fate of Songhai regardless of any regime of regime. Corruption is as rife as it was during the incumbent regime. And this can be taken as one of those instances that show military regimes in Africa were not any better than their civilian counterparts.

It is also the same story during the military regime of Idi Amin in Uganda as it is clearly indicated in Abyssinian Chronicles (2000). As stated earlier, corruption was listed as the number one reason for staging the coup. It still remained to be the fact of life in Amin's Uganda. In the novel we learn that Serenity is relieved to have Hajj Gimbi as his friend immediately after the coup took place because he was frightened by the random arrests and detentions which seem to be the order of the day.

His main consolation was that Hajj Gimbi had connections, courtesy of his religion and his friendship with people who knew people who mattered. Hajj Gimbi had reassured him that in case he fell into trouble with the army or the police, he would help him (Ibid: 128).

This shows how much affiliation with persons who have contacts with officials of the regime becomes a matter that decides between life and death. Once you have a good link with people who sympathize with the regime, you are on the safe side in the same way as Serenity was feels. Apart from this, if you want to involve yourself in any kind of business, it should be at the cost of your strong affiliation with the government. This is explicitly stated when his neighbor Hajj Gimbi offers Serenity a deal to work with him in the new shop that he is going to open. Although Serenity confirms that his interest lies on the Trade Union of Postal Workers, Hajj Gimbi thought that Serenity is refusing because he is not clear with the opportunity:

> "Should I put it in a word for you?" Hajj asked, a conspiratorial smile on his face.
>
> "If you can, "Serenity said reluctantly. " A man with many mouths to feed needs all the help he can get."
>
> "I Know the right people who can nudge the right ribs. Remember, Amin is here to stay. Those who believe that he is here now and gone tomorrow will regret it." (Ibid:188)

This shows how corruption plays a huge role in the everyday life of Amin's Uganda. In fact, later on in the novel we learn that Serenity is about to miss his dream to become the Chairman of the Postal Workers' Union if it was not for his friendship with Hajj Gimbi. We learn this when he is taking a walk with his sister Tiida who has come to visit him in his Pagoda to ask him for the contribution of his father's pilgrimage trip to Rome and Israel.

> He talked about long meetings, canvassing drives and visits to workers' homes. He said that the campaign had robbed him of his sense of reality. He complained about his insomnia. He expressed his wish to win and gain access to extra resources. He was angry that somebody had edged him out of the chairmanship, but he could not really complain, because Hajj Gimbi's invisible friends had intervened, pushed assigned a Muslim candidate and supported his candidacy for treasurer (Ibid: 244).

When Amin's fall becomes likely to happen and the fear of insecurity begins to worry, Serenity for fear of being in the middle of it if a war broke out in Kampala, he uses the fund of Postal Workers Union for financing his housing construction in the rural area:

> Serenity, who had no death wish, had quickly adapted to the times. He discovered a safer way to make money: by saving on trade-union purchases like gas, he amassed a small fortune. The incompetence of his new boss played into his hands, although, with characteristic restraint, he took only what he could account for. After getting the land, he commissioned a house plan, bribed somebody in the land office to get it approved and within two months of the purchase, the builders had started working. After the house had reached window level, Serenity realized how wonderful it was to own the roof over once head (Ibid: 308 and 309).

Thus, the pervasiveness of corruption is a common subject of the military regimes that are discussed in each of the four novels. Despite the variation on the different forms of corruption that are reflected in the narratives, the novels overlap in explaining that government corruption has not reduced a bit during the reign of each of the military regimes.

3.3.3.2 POLITICAL INSTABILITY

In Sweet and Sour Milk (1978) the General's regime is characterized by perpetual political unrest that has a huge impact on the society and the nation at large. Coming to power through a military *coup d'état* the general's regime tries to legitimize its power by whatever means possible and this has led the country towards political instability. The whole plot of the novel revolves around Loyaan's investigation into the death of his twin brother Soyaan. Soyaan had been for many years the economic advisor to the presidency, responsible directly to and answerable only to the General (Ibid: 31). But Soyaan's days at the government's office were characterized by political turmoils which eventually led to his killing by the General's regime. Though the circumstances leading to his death seem to be mysterious, Loyaan unravels the secret and comforts the Minister to the Presidency as it can be seen from the following excerpt of their dialogue:

> "Out of academic interest – but please tell me if you will – what was it that the Russian doctor at the Military Hospital gave to Soyaan?"
>
> The Minister's voice trembled as he spoke in haste to cover the tremor:
>
> "What Russian doctor at the Military hospital?"
>
> "The one you yourself took him to see."
>
> He turned his back on Loyaan. "I don't know what you are talking about," he said.
>
> "What was his name? Is he still here? Will he be leaving on tomorrow's special plane to Moscow? Just out of academic interest. What was his name?"
>
> "I did not take Soyaan to any Russian doctor."
>
> "Whom did you take him to?"
>
> "No body."
>
> "You drove him yourself to the Military Hospital. I can name three persons who saw the two of you enter the hospital that day when you returned from Afgoi. I also know of somebody who saw you consult a doctor yourself. But what was the injection which the Russian doctor gave to my brother, the thing which poisoned my brother's blood and eventually killed him, what was that? Just out of academic interest."
>
> "Have you gone out of your head?"

> "What was it, Mr Minister?"
>
> "This is absurd."
>
> "What was it, Mr. Minister? And why? Was it because he had written and had made statements which proved the culpability of the KGB and our Security Services in harassing the lives of innocent human beings, in torturing them, in depriving them of the right to live a decent life? Was it because Soyaan intended to publish the memorandum titled Dionysus's Ear? Had he become inconvenient, too intolerably inconveninient?"
>
> "You are out of your mind."
>
> "You could've sent him out of the country. You know you could've made him to join the officers in the army whom you deport monthly to Moscow and other places, couldn't you? You could've waited until the day he was supposed to take the plane, the special plane you've just mentioned, to Moscow and finally to Belgrade, no? Too neat a job for our Security men. I smell the KGB." (Ibid: 183)

As it can be seen from the above dialogue between the Minister to the President and Loyaan, the regime has murdered Soyaan because he was opposing the General's regime for its illegitimacy. The regime has intentionally syringed Soyaan with a poison that eventually kills him. Like most military regimes do, we see the regime institutionalizing its illegal act of legitimizing its rule with the help of KGB- the former secret police of the USSR. The death of Soyaan represents what could happen to anyone who opposes the regime. As can be seen in the following excerpt from the novel, even a protest demonstration by ten sheiks and a woman does not spur the regime from killing them just because they are very critical of the regime:

> "The regime wouldn't let the immediate family go anywhere near the dead bodies. I was there when they fired. I watched the bodies collapse like mined buildings. And the sky thundered a warning. But would he hear, would the general listen to anyone but his Russian advisers? The Grand Warder. The Grand Jailer of Somalia's Grand Prison." (Ibid: 53)

This shows how much the regime is illegitimate as far as the way it treats its political opponents is concerned. The regime commits politically motivated killings to silence its opponents. Apart from this, anyone who is suspected to be dissidents of the regime is likely to face harsh interrogation and torture by the General's regime. A case in point is the pain and suffering that Soyaan's secretary Mulki goes through as two Security men tortured and interrogated her to make her reveal the manuscript of a Memorandum that she has typed for Soyaan (Ibid: 91). These acts of torture and interrogation have their toll on the ordinary. In one instance, for

example, the costly portrait of the General was displayed in a village in Mogadisco. However, before night falls the eyes of the General had been pierced and anti-soviet slogans had been scribbled on it. Thus, the General's security men came and arrested the village boys and girls:

> "This village was purged the following day; three hundred boys and girls were taken for interrogation. Of the three hundred, about fifteen had been held in custody. They were still there. Untried. Tortured nightly….." (Ibid: 111).

Therefore, the General's regime is depicted in the novel as a period which was marred with political instability that claimed the life of many political opponents and that greatly affected the life of ordinary Somalians at large.

Political instability is also underscored in Achebe's Anthills of The Savannah (1987). The following excerpt shows, for example, what happens after Sam declares himself as president for life and orders military men to return to the barracks:

> There were unconfirmed rumours of unrest, secret trials and executions in the barracks. But His Excellency rode the storm quite comfortably thanks to two key appointments he had personally made — the Army Chief of Staff and the Director of State Research Council, the secret police (Ibid:14).

Sam's personal decision of making himself president for life as well as retiring military men and returning them to the barracks has led to political violence in the military. It seems anyone must pay a price for opposing Sam's personal rule. This is what happens to the people of Abazon when the chiefs from the northern region of Abazon refused to back the president's plan of ruling Kangan forever:

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

Sam's military regime does not even spare taking actions against members of its own cabinet when they oppose him. This is what happens to both Ikem and later on to Chris for strongly criticizing Sam's repressive rule. Despite repeated warnings from Chris, Ikem continues to protest Sam's military regime by exposing the government's misdeeds in the *National Gazette* as he is editor in chief of the gazette. Unable to tolerate Ikem's act of criticizing his regime, Sam

tells Chris to fire Ikem from his position only this time for Chris to refuse and denounce his act. Chris's refusal to act in collaboration with Sam leads to a fierce controversy between the two which reaches its climax with Chris's resignation from his position of Commissioner for Information. Chris walks out on his erstwhile friend at the expense of all the threats that Sam is making on him and Ikem.

Following Chris's suspension from the *National Gazette*, Sam tries to get rid of his perceived political opponents step by step. The regime uses Ikem's political speech for Bassa University Students as an excuse of carrying out its crack down on its political opponents. By claiming that Ikem has attempted to plot a coup against the regime, the State Research Council puts him under custody. In covering up the real reason behind his detention, the State Research Council makes an announcement as described in the following extract:

> In the discharge of its duty in safeguarding the freedom and security of the State and of every law-abiding citizen of Kangan the State Research Council has uncovered a plot by unpatriotic elements in kangan working in concert with certain foreign adventures to destabilize the lawful government of this country.
>
> This dastardly plot was master-minded by Mr Ikem Osodi until recently Editor of the government-owned *National Gazette* (Ibid: 168).

But this is not acceptable for Chris, who knows that the SRC has abducted Ikem without any evidence. With the intention of divulging the secret and avoiding what has happened to Ikem, Chris hides himself and carries out his activity secretly. When Chris reveals the regime's unjust deeds in his interview with the BBC correspondent in Bassa, the regime hunts him to teach him a lesson. The only escape out of the situation for Chris seems his journey to Abazon, the drought stricken poor region in northern Kangan. Just before reaching the terminus of his destination, he discovers that a military coup is already in place - paving the way for another inadequate succession of leadership in Kangan. Even Chris is miles away from Bassa, it doesn't stop the coup from claiming his life. In one devilish act the news of the coup brought Chris loses his life in a desperate attempt of saving a young lady who was being raped by drunkard soldier. Therefore, it is possible to observe that the illegitimacy of Sam's military regime has led to political instability in Kangan and this has affected the nation at large.

The political instability that loomed large over Songhai can be taken as the immediate cause of the military *coup* in Footpints (1998). Thus the military regime comes to power promising to

guarantee a peaceful political environment by checking the state of anarchy that was disrupting the day to day life in Songhai. As an act of its vindication, the new military regime suspends the constitution, dissolves the national assembly, and puts the president, the vice-president and the leaders of both the houses of the national assembly under protected custody. Despite of all this and the regimes claims of accelerating Songhai towards democracy, the regime still does not give a specific deadline as to when it will transfer its power to a civilian government. Rather, the military regime detains few journalists and cautions some politicians for they dare to remind the new rulers to provide visible signposts to convince the citizenry that the regime has come to stay for long (Ibid: 90). This creates tension among both the media and the politicians reminding the population the days of political instability during the reign of the incumbent regime.

However, a wind of optimism began to blow as the National Salvation Council, NSC, - the ruling eleven member council of the military regime headed by the head of state - once again unveiles its plan and looks determined by announcing that its life span would be no more than twenty four months. But when a civilian caretaker government that acts as an interim one is elected, the manner of campaigns for the election of the members has all the ingredients of the cardinal sins of politicians which has provided the perfect excuse for the military to interfere with elected government in the previous occasion (Ibid: 99). Yet again, it seems the politicians become the main cause of the political unrest in Songhai.

Despite these challenges, the military regime continues with its plan of handing over to an elected civilian government. This move by the military regime creates great hope among Songhaians. As never seen before, there is a strong belief in the military regime that it is going to make the right decision this time. Even Farah who refuses to admit that she is ever impressed by the military's exit plans is surprised (Ibid: 99). But, this move has also created a rift among members of the military regime. On the one hand, young military officers argue that the politicians should not be given a second chance after what they have done during the election for caretaker government. On the other hand, senior military officers including the former leader of the military regime and those in the rank of Brigadier-General and above favour the general elections to be held as scheduled (Ibid: 113). Putting aside the claim by the younger military officers, the NSC announces the general election will go ahead as planned. However, during the general election, all the political sins committed at the care taker election are repeated on a much

bigger scale, and it becomes likely that the country is set for another political turmoil. Even after the long awaited general election takes place, as the following extract reveals, Songhai's future seems very much uncertain:

> Immediately the caretaker government started releasing the election results, protests began to mount. Most of the provincial governorship results were contested. However, the most controversial result was the presidential one. Within twenty-four hours of the result being made public, not less than a dozen objections were filed in courts. The elections of the law-makers at both the provincial and central level generated similar gale of protests and court actions. It was a maze of confusion that bewildered even the senior military officers, the protagonists of a quick return to elected government. They knew that in the midst of the disarray which had taken over the political scene, it was going to be uphill task swearing a new President by the end of October as planned by the caretaker government. There were too many court injunctions restraining the caretaker government from swearing in the President, Speaker of the House, Senate President and about a dozen Senators and some twenty members of the lower house of the National Assembly (Ibid: 114).

As it can be seen from the above account, establishing the result of the general election becomes difficult as everybody blames everyone else. Yet again this created a perfect atmosphere for the junior military officers to announce a return to military rule by claiming that the politicians are unable to solve their differences and lead Songhai. As a result, they set up a new ruling body which is known as Redemption Council, RC, suspend the Caretaker Government and detain the former chairman of the defunct National Salvation Council, NSC, just because he firmly opposed the return of his junior colleagues. Once again, as the following excerpt shows, it seems Songhai will never be out of unstable political situation:

> There were loud noises for the support of the military's action as there were oppositions. Rallies for and against the new regime spread throughout the country, leading to clashes and casualties. Quickly the new rulers banned all forms of rallies, detained editors of the critical press and vocal citizens. The enabling legitimizing instrument for their action was the state of emergency decree which they had promptly promulgated (Ibid: 114).

Therefore, Songhai's military regime in Footprints is characterized by pervasive political instability which affects the country to a great deal.

Albeit creating a stable political situation is one of the reasons that Amin forwarded for staging his coup, Abyssinian Chronicles (2000) clearly reveals Amin's regime as equally politically

disordered as that of the incumbent Obote regime. Idi Amin is known for overthrowing the incumbent Ugandan president Milton Obote and ruling through terror, ordering the deaths of approximately 300,000 persons considered to be intellectuals or political opponents. Such atrocities were committed against anyone believed to be politically opposing the regime and it was handled by soldiers and state spy agencies like the State Research Bureau- the government organization that has the mandate of monitoring the enemies of the state, both actual and potential (Ibid: 117). In the novel the character, who is the victim of the State Research Bureau, is Lwandeka (Padlock's younger sister) (Ibid: 164). On hearing that Lwandeka is detained by the State Research Bureau, Padlock departs to her parent's house to find the whereabouts of her sister. Later on we know the reason behind her arrest at the family gathering:

> "We are told that the State Research Bureau arrested her for corresponding with German Saboteurs. Why did she do that? Didn't she know that Amin meant business? Didn't she know that it was dangerous to write letters to Germans?" Somebody asked. (Ibid: 165).

Lwandeka is detained and tortured to death because of the fear that she may collaborate with an expelled German woman who used to be her boss and a physician of a Catholic hospital in her Uganda days. The State Research Bureau discovers this after it manages to read a letter addressed to Lwandeka by the German woman. As it is indicated in the novel, the Bureau opens foreign mails that are addressed to the country in order to track its political opponents (Ibid: 289). It seems the regime is engaged in a futile attempt of silencing its political opponents by any means possible.

The illegitimacy of Amin's regime has created unstable condition in the country and this has affected the life of the Ugandan people to a greater degree. In the novel we see the protagonist Mugezi worried to death and having too many sleepless nights about what could happen to his uncle- Kawayida, whom he is very fond of, if a war between Amin and the Gorilla fighters broke out. On the words of Mugezi himself:

> I was worried about him and his family. His town lay along the route to where anti-Amin guerrillas, under the leadership of the former dictator Obote, were operating along the Uganda-Tanzania border. Amin had successfully repelled one guerrilla incursion, inflicting heavy losses on the attackers, but one never knew what would happen next. What if the guerrillas crossed the border and took over the Uncle's area? (Ibid: 162)

The political unrest between Amin and his opponents leads the nation to chaos. The state of the country is described in the novel as follows:

> Uganda was in a state of siege, writhing like a dying moth on the floor. The bungles of defeat were poised, waiting to blow the walls down. The inside of the country was like a grenade whose pin had already been drawn. There was an explosive feeling in the air. Catastrophe or catharsis? (Ibid: 305)

Finally, the continuous political unrest leads to the overthrow of the regime as the gorilla fighters extend their surge to the capital city.

> The flow of traffic to the north choked to a tickle and dried up. Within a fortnight the road was dead, oppressed by the vacancy of the grave. I thought of Grandpa and the explosions he had foreseen. I wanted to be at his side, but the lacuna between us widened by the hour, resounding with bombs. In what seemed to be the climax, there was continuous frightening for two weeks, two days, two nightmares. As bombs exploded and empty stomachs growled the city center, the National Radio and the Parliament Building were finally overrun. Amin's government had fallen. It was April 11, 1979 (Ibid: 319 and 320).

However, for ordinary Ugandan's like Mugezi- the protagonist in the novel- both the rise and fall of Idi Amin took place at a great cost of their life. Just as Obote's overthrow on January 25, 1971, had turned Mugezi's world upside down since his Grandma died and his childhood was driven to an unexpected direction because of it, the April 11, 1979 overthrow of the Amin government has taken his Grandpa's life.

All the military regimes in each of the novel are characterized by perpetual period of political instability. Politically motivated killings, tortures and detentions by the military regimes are very common phenomena in each of the novels. Hence, there is a high degree of similarity in representing political instability as a characteristics feature of military regimes.

3.3.3.3 ECONOMIC CRISIS

In Sweet and Sour Milk (1979) the economic crisis under the General's regime is among the issues that are spotlighted. The abundant numbers of beggars who are desperately trying to pursue their livelihood are very much common in the novel. While Loyaan and Margaritta are eating their dinner together in a hotel, all of a sudden:

> A little girl of barely four with out a stitch of clothing on, entered the restaurant and went straight to the table at which Loyaan and Margaritta were seated. She picked up Loyaan's glass, and with one single cooking gulp, sent the fruit Juice down her noisy throat. (Ibid: 119)

Thanks to the poor economic condition of the General's regime, a little girl who should be well fed and taken care of by her parents, is wandering at night all over the place in search of her basic livelihood.

The custom and ritual of begging in Somalia provides a perfect excuse for the youth to escape the unemployment and poor economic condition under the General's regime. On his way to his stepmother's house in Afgoi, Loyaan encounters a beggar. "The beggar was about eighteen, at the maximum twenty years old. He was well- built physically; there was nothing wrong with him, that is." (Ibid: 143)

On his way to meet Ibrahim Musse nicknamed "Sciliano" the Ministry of Justice and Religious Affairs, Loyaan sees Hospital *De Martini*, the hospital where his friend Dr. Ahmed-Wellie works and at that moment he is struck by the deteriorating health service of the country.

> Time, it was time he went back to meet Ibrahim Musse, nick named "Scilliano". Behind him, Hospital De Martini, once the only hospital in the whole country. Yes, Dr Ahmed-Wellie worked there with a team of Chinese doctors. How it dulled Loyaan's mind when he thought of the unhealthiness of its health policies. The contradiction of the country's compromises. A city with no more than four hospitals in all. One for the Military, One for the police and two for the General public: one of these was De Martini. Definitely not a hospital fit for anything. The Ministry of Construction had suggested they demolished it and built another. The Chinese said they would, if requested, provide aid and construct a maternity hospital (Ibid: 132).

All these are indicative of the endless economic problems that were recorded during the General's regime. Rather than improving the country's economic stability, the General's regime provided the country economically bleak and desperate.

This is not also different in the case of Anthills of the Savannah (1987). In those times when Sam's cabinet meets, ways of improving the Kanganian economy is not even the last thing that comes to their mind. Rather more attention is given to ways of consolidating their stay in power. In addition people are assigned to different positions not based on their personal skills and this

has an impact on worsening the poor economic condition of the country. A case in point is the appointment of John Kent nick named Mad Medico as chief administrator of a certain hospital:

> Mad Medico's proper name is John Kent but nobody here calls him by that any more. He enjoys his bizarre title; his familiar friends always abbreviate it to MM. He is of course neither a doctor nor quiet exactly mad. Ikem once described him as an aborted poet which I think is as close as anyone has got to explaining the phenomenon that is John Kent. And the two of them, poet and aborted poet, get on very well together. MM got on very well too with his Excellency, as everybody knows. It was their friendship which brought him here in the first place, made him hospital administrator and saved him a year ago from sudden deportation (Ibid: 55).

As it is indicated in the above extract, we see that Mad Medico is appointed to his position without considering the necessary qualifications. The assigning of an unqualified person to serve the people of Kangan raises a lot of questions about the service that is going to be delivered.

Rather than helping Kangan to move out of its poor economic condition, what is more important for the regime is winning a life term presidency for his Excellency—Sam. When the Abazonian deputation of elders went to the government asking for help because their region of northern Kangan i.e. Abazon is struck by a severe unprecedented drought, Sam answers by ordering to the halt of the digging of the water bore-holes in their area. This is a brutal act of retaliation for the region voted a NO to his quest of leading Kangan forever. Furthermore, the regime is seen as being subservient to foreign manipulation. During a dinner party at the presidents Guest house, Beatrice is amazed to see His Excellency Sam agree to what a delegate of an American United Press has to say:

> Without any kind of preamble she began reading His Excellency and his subjects a lecture on the need for the country to maintain its present (quite unpopular, needless to say) levels of foreign debt servicing currently running at slightly more than fifty-one percent of total national earnings. Why? As a *quid pro quo* for increased American aid in surplus grains for our drought provinces (Ibid: 78).

As the above extract clearly indicates, the regime is faithful to meet the demands of its foreign allies. His Excellency shows his commitment to serve foreign interests by allocating more than half of the country's GDP for paying the debt of the country. This act raises the question how the regime can help Kangan stride out of poverty while it does prioritize the interest of foreign elements at the expense of the nation. It would be a miracle to expect the regime to meet the

demands of Kangan with this huge budget deficit. Instead, this can exacerbate the poor economic condition of the country leaving the regime unable to address the poor socioeconomic condition of the country. This is indicated in the novel by the shortage of pure water at the town of Agbata. While Chris and his two friends are travelling to Abazon, they make a stop at the town of Agbata. They settled at a 'Very Decent Restaurant', and ordered food. When the waitress brought them a plastic bowl of water to wash their hands, one among the trio asks the girl to change the water for it was dirty. But the lady of the house explains how the problem of water has worsened in Agbata, in the following manner:

> 'Change the water?' she laughed. 'You people from the South! Do you know how much we pay for a tin now? One manila fifty.'
>
> 'And the tankers have not come today,' chipped in the waitress still holding her bowl of dirty water.
>
> 'No' said her mistress. 'The tankers have not come. Those people you see over there are selling yesterday's water at two manila.' She pointed through the window to a man carrying across his shoulder like a see-saw a stout pole at each end of which was tied a four- gallon tin. There were two or three others like him maneuvering their heavy and tricky burden expertly through the crowd (Ibid: 208).

Therefore, it is possible to say that the need to solve the poor economic condition of Kangan has not been met by the military leaders of Kangan even in the slightest way.

In Footprints (1998) the new military rulers are reminded by the media to make plans for the country's economic growth and development just after the first one hundred days of the regime though they flaunt their achievement in areas of security of life and property, and a peaceful political climate (Ibid: 90). In response to the call by the media, the military regime organized a strategy to hand leadership back to an elected civilian government. However, the plan could not be implemented because the politicians created a mess in the election process and junior members of the military were not willing to accept the return of the politicians to the leadership arena. Even after the return of the military regime for the second time within a year and the establishment of the so called Redemption Council (RC), it took the regime over a year to declare its plan for the future.

> In mid-October, the ruling Redemption Council, in commemoration of its first year in office, stirred up a hornet's nest that sparked of industrial unrest across the country. The resultant turbulent atmosphere disrupted the school's calendar. In a

> self-adulatory broadcast to the people of Songhai, the head of state and chairman of the Redemption Council said that in order to move the country forward, the existing five provincial structure would be reviewed and new ones created in a bid to bring the government nearer to the people. He told the nation that, given the mounting economic problems of the country, especially the declining revenues from the country's major export revenue, gold, the government was going to introduce new taxes to finance its programmes. And on its own exit programme, the military ruler said that he was proposing a national debate on the issue, so that Songhai is spared military intervention forever. After the national debate, the Redemption Council would set up a committee to study the issues, and a final position would be taken: the proposition he put forward for the banishment of military coups, he said, was a diarchy, which would allow both the military and the politicians have a shared access to political power (Ibid: 184).

On the contrary to what the military has desired, the broadcast unleashed a wave of strikes and violence for the majority of the population denounced the offer that was made by the ruling military junta though there were some sycophantic admirations that filled the air commending the leader for his foresight. And this political instability that happened afterwards has affected the economy of Songhai negatively. A case in point is the education sector of the country. When the trade unions threaten the government to face industrial action unless it overturns its policy and two days later the SUT (Songhaian Union of Teachers) obliged to the trade unions demand, all teachers in Songhai go on a general indefinite strike. As a result, all schools are closed leaving the future of the country in doubt. Even when the government seems to manage its grievances with the SUT, it doesn't order the re-opening of the schools immediately. But when the schools restarted, Halliyfah is puzzled as to how education will continue at Azania International School (AIS) because some of the teachers at the school resigned and took up new jobs with some other non-educated organizations outside the teaching profession:

> Halliyfah's class lost its chemistry, physics, and economics teachers in this manner. As it was not easy to get new hands to take up those vacancies, their mathematics teacher was asked to cover physics lessons as well. Their biology teacher added chemistry to his time-table, while the geography teacher took up economics. Try as the substitute teachers did, Halliyfah felt that something was not flowing as smoothly as it used to. He felt the indifference: they were not as proficient as the ones that left. And he held the government responsible. He wished and prayed that the teachers who left the school returned (Ibid: 195).

To worsen the already deteriorating condition of education in Songhai, the instructional process could continue only for a single term. Barely midway through the term, the teachers' union began to urge the government to keep its promise especially on the issue of tax and fees. To the crux of

the matter, the SUT gave the government an ultimatum of three months to show a good will in adhering to earlier agreements. As this confrontation between SUT and the government escalates the university students demonstrate demanding the government to meet SUT's demand. Once again the unstable political situation in Songhai drives the educational sector of the country backwards.

Abyssinian Chronicles (2000) clearly reveals how Uganda has gradually plunged into economic depression during the rule of the military dictator Idi Amin. As economic mismanagement was one of the eighteen reasons for the *coup*, it was expected that the unequal distribution of wealth in the country would be solved. This has gained a high momentum with the expulsion of the Indians from Uganda. However, as time passed, even the existing economic condition of the country began to worsen. By the time Mugezi- the main character in the novel- was thirteen and it was time for him to make it to junior secondary school, one of the Shitters- his brothers- overheard his parents - Padlock and Serenity- thinking about sending Mugezi to Catholic school because of their fear on the deteriorating condition of education in government owned schools:

> "They offer very good education. On the other hand, you can't imagine how bad government schools have become. Pupils go to school with knives, some with guns, and threaten both teachers and headmasters. The children of soldiers have really messed up our schools. Mugozi needs a quieter environment (Ibid: 182).

As all efforts where underway to overthrow the Amin regime from both within and outside the country, the country's foreign exchange is seriously affected with no means other than smuggling in and out of Uganda:

> To the east, in Kenya, Uganda's goods were embargoed and piled sky hard in the harbors. Smuggling operations based there, aimed at bringing down Amin's regime by crippling the coffee-based economy, were reaching an odious climax (Ibid: 306).

The political instability that has led thousands of Ugandan's to flee their country is the reason for the loss of literate Ugandans:

> The exodus of Ugandans fleeing for their lives, which had began with had began with a brain drain as educated Ugandans quietly departed, now reached epidemic proportions as spy organizations became more paranoid and picked up more and more people suspected of helping guerillas (Ibid: 307).

After Amin waged a war on Tanzania and invaded the Kagara triangle, which is a seven-hundred-square-kilometer tract of land on the Uganda-Tanzania boarder, the country finds itself in a very terrible economic situation:

> Things, however, continued to move from bad to worse. Prices escalated as hoarding and black-marketing hit a new peak. The country's imports rotted in Kenyan ports, where they had been impounded for months, some for years. The little gas there was went to the army, leaving the country's transport system paralyzed. Food could no longer be moved from the villages to the city. As a result, Aunt Lwandeka started preparing the hated posho – better-quality stuff than the seminary hog feed, but posho all the same. As it became almost impossible for people to go to work, poverty settled firmly in homes and tormented large families with incurable hunger, reducing most to one meager meal a day. Quite a few people got shot while stealing from shops or government depots. War was at its worst now, crushing through arid elementary canals, sapping energy, fertilizing vengeance and breeding scapegoats and collective guilt (Ibid: 316).

As it can be seen from the above passage, it is possible to say that the Amin's regime as a whole has turned the nation of Uganda in to Pandora's Box. In contradiction to what the regime has promised when coming to power, it unleashes all forms of misery on the people putting the nation at its worst state of economy.

Thus, under the reign of the military regimes that are represented in each of the novel, the economic woes aggravate than it used to be during the incumbent regime's period supporting the fact that military regimes are not any better than their civilian counterparts.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

African literature is the reflection of the historical, cultural and social experience of the continent that could range from pre-colonial Africa to post-independence disillusionment. Based on its linguistics makeup, it can be classified in to three categories as Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone African Literature. Anglophone African Literature refers to novels, plays, short stories, and poetry written originally in English by indigenous Africans in the countries which were parts of the British Empire in Africa. Hence, Anglophone African Novels are one of the genres that fall under the category of African literature in English. Unlike the corpus of Anglophone African Literature which were characterized by themes of celebration and restoration of historical past in the early days of independence, African literature in English after the mid 1960's focuses on the examination of the prevailing socio-political plights. Among such literary works, novels that criticize the post-independent authoritarian regimes are very common. Harlow (1987) categorizes such kind of works as a corpus of literary productions that make up resistance literature. According to Harlow (1987), resistance literature is literature dedicated to instructing the masses and calling for their participation in the struggle against oppression.

The crisis of military rule is among the issues that are spotlighted in resistance literatures. Military rule is a form of government where the political power resides within the military. Though military regimes are hailed to be saviors of nations at the time they come to power, they are not any better than their incumbent regimes. On most occasions, they do not even meet the fraction of promises they made when they captured political power. Instead, their aftermath is characterized by the practice of falsehood ideology. Corruption, economic crisis and political instability are the hallmark of their stay in power. As a result, countries are plunged into a deep socio-political crisis, and citizens suffer from the existing negative syndromes of military regimes. The analysis of military rule in the selected four Anglophone African novels in this study more or less corresponds with these points identified in the review of literature. The rationale behind the military rulers staging of military coups, their mistaken fictitious political ideologies and their failure of military reign is disclosed in each of the four novels.

In Farah's Sweet and Sour Milk, the General's regime comes to power in the name of addressing the political vacuum that threatened to plague Somalia. As opposed to what the regime practices, however, this turns out to be only the manifest reason of staging the *coup*. In the case of Achebe's Anthills of the Savannah, the failure and unpopularity of the incumbent civilian regime

is the cause behind the *coup* that brought Sam's military dictatorship to power. Nevertheless, Sam's desire to remain His Excellency President for life of Kangan could show the hidden personal motive behind the coup. As opposed to these two novels, the military regimes rise to power is broadly treated in Footprints and Abyssinian chronicles. In Gimba's Footprints, it is because of the disorder and anarchy that prevailed over the land of Songhai—the fictitious nation in the novel—that the army staged a military *coup d'état*. Later on, when the military regime refused to transform political power to an elected civilian government, it is clear that the state has used the state of anarchism in Songhai as a pretext for its real intention of coming to power. In Moses Isegawa's novel Abyssinian Chronicles, it is stated that General Idi Amin Dada justified through a list of eighteen points, his overthrowing the former Obote regime by claiming that the former's regime was characterized by corruption, illegal detention, economic mismanagement and lack of freedom of speech. However, things got even worse after Amin came to power and instead of keeping the promises he made, the regime catered more its desire of staying in power for long. Therefore, in each of the four novels, the weakness of the incumbent African states has acted as a driving force for the military to stage a *coup d'état*. But with what they achieved after coming to power, it seems there are other hidden agenda of their takeover.

In justifying their reign, the military regimes identify themselves with different kinds political ideologies. In Nuruddin Farah's Sweet and Sour milk the General's regime is portrayed as an exerciser of the Marxist-Leninist ideology. In both Anthills of the Savannah and Abyssinian Chronicles the military regimes are depicted as usurpers in uniform. In contrast, the military rulers in Footprints first came to power as a caretaker government. Subsequently, however, the rulers establish themselves as reformers and redeemers of the nation of Songhai. Though each of the political ideologies are based on a different thought as indicated in the theoretical framework, the unrealistic and concealing nature of the military rulers makes them very common and similar in the four novels under investigation.

The pervasiveness of corruption is a common subject of the military regimes that are discussed in each of the four novels. In Sweet and Sour Milk we see the General's regime practicing acts of bribery and patronage as a means of elongating its stay in power. With the same intention, nepotism and graft are the forms of political corruption that are committed by Sam's military

dictatorship in Anthills of the Savannah. Whereas, in Footprints, nepotism, extortion and patronage are among the misdeeds of the military regime officials that make the situation in Songhai as rife as it was during the incumbent regime. It is also a same story in the case of Abyssinian Chronicles. The practice of all forms of corruption by Idi Amin's regime is reflected in the novel. Despite the commonality and differences of the different forms of corruption that are reflected in each of the novels, the novels plainly reveal that government corruption has not reduced a bit under the period of each of the military regimes. As it is indicated in the novels, each of the military regimes plays an oppressing role in making their countries politically unstable and this has affected the population profoundly. In Sweet and Sour Milk the General's regime commits politically motivated assassinations, tortures and interrogations on anyone who is suspected to be an adversary. Themes of political instability in Achebe's Anthills of the Savannah include politically motivated purges, abductions and assassinations and a military *coup d'état*. Gimba's Footprints also presents characters who are affected by the military regimes illegitimate act only to be ousted at the end of the novel by another military *coup d'état*. It is also not different in the case of Amin's military rule in Abyssinian Chronicles since it gives us pictures of political instability. Therefore, there is a high degree of commonality among each of the novels as they portray military regimes as highly characterized by political instability. In addition to corruption and political instability, in each of the four novels, the economy of the countries worsened after the emergence of the military rulers in to political power.

Therefore, it is possible to say that each of the writers has successfully documented the crisis of military rule in Africa. With superficial differences the writers have emphasized on the fact that the military rulers are not any better than their incumbent rulers. For asserting this claim, the writers have revealed different forms of corruption, political instability and economic woes in their novels. Another point of similarity is the point that each of the military regimes in the novel has their own motive behind staging the military *coup d'état*.

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my work and it has not been presented before in any university. Moreover, I declare that all the sources of material used for this thesis has been duly acknowledged.

Name: Aman Mohammedsaid

Signature: …….

University: Addis Ababa University

Institute of language studies

Department of Foreign Languages & Literature

Date of Submission: June, 2010

This thesis has been submitted for an examination with my approval as a university advisor.

Name: …….

Signature: ……

Date of approval: …….

APPENDIX

BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHORS

A. NURREDIN FARAH (1945- -)

Born in Baidoa, Somalia, Farah is the son of a merchant father and a poet mother. As a child, he attended school at Kallafo in the Ogaden, and studied English, Arabic, and Amharic. In 1963, three years after Somalia's independence, Farah was forced to flee the Ogaden following serious border conflicts. For several years thereafter, he pursued a degree in philosophy, literature and Sociology at Panjab University in Chandigarh, India. After releasing an early short story in his nativeSomali language, Farah shifted to writing in English while still attending university in India. His first novel, From a Crooked Rib (1970), told the story of a nomad girl who flees from an arranged marriage to a much older man. The novel earned him mild but international acclaim. On a tour of Europe following the publication of A Naked Needle (1976), Farah was warned that the Somali government planned to arrest him over its contents. Rather than return and face imprisonment, Farah began a self-imposed exile that would last for twenty-two years, teaching in the United States, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Sudan, and India. In 1990, he received a grant from the German Academic Exchange Service and moved to Berlin.

Farah describes his purpose for writing as an attempt "to keep my country alive by writing about it". His trilogies of novels *Variations on the Theme of an African Dictatorship* (1980-1983) and *Blood in the Sun* (1986-1999) form the core of his work. Though *Variations* was well-received in a number of countries, Farah's reputation was cemented by his most famous novel, Maps (1986), the first part of his *Blood in the Sun* trilogy. Maps, which is set during the Ogaden conflict of 1977, employs the innovative technique of second-person narration for exploring questions of cultural identity in a post-independence world. He followed the novel with Gifts (1993) and Secrets (1998), both of which earned awards (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuruddin_Farah).

B. CHINUA ACHEBE (1930- -)

Albert Chinụalụmọgụ Achebe is a Nigerian novelist, poet, professor and critic at Brown University. He is best known for his first novel, Things Fall Apart (1958), which is the most widely read book in modern African literature. Raised by Christian parents in the *Igbo* town of

Ogidi in southeastern Nigeria, Achebe excelled at school and won a scholarship for undergraduate studies. He became fascinated with world religions and traditional African cultures, and began writing stories as a university student. After graduation, he worked for the Nigerian Broadcasting Service and soon moved to the metropolis of Lagos. He gained worldwide attention for Things Fall Apart in the late 1950s; his later novels include No Longer at Ease (1960), Arrow of God (1964), A Man of the People (1966), and Anthills of the Savannah (1987). Achebe writes his novels in English and has defended the use of English, a "language of colonizers", in African literature. In 1975, his lecture *An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's "Heart of Darkness"* became the focus of controversy, for its criticism of Joseph Conrad as *"a bloody racist"*.

When the region of Biafra broke away from Nigeria in 1967, Achebe became a devoted supporter of Biafran independence and served as ambassador for the people of the new nation. The war ravaged the populace, and as starvation and violence took its toll, he appealed to the people of Europe and the Americas for aid. When the Nigerian government retook the region in 1970, he involved himself in political parties but soon resigned due to frustration over the corruption and elitism he witnessed. He lived in the United States for several years in the 1970s, and returned to the U.S. in 1990 after a car accident left him partially disabled.

Achebe's novels focus on the traditions of *Igbo* society, the effect of Christian influences, and the clash of values during and after the colonial era. His style relies heavily on the *Igbo* oral tradition, and combines straightforward narration with representations of folk stories, proverbs, and oratory. He has also published a number of short stories, children's books, and essay collections. He is currently the David and Marianna Fisher University Professor and Professor of Africana Studies at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, United States (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinua_Achebe).

C. ABOUBAKAR GIMBA

Alhaji Abubakar Gimba is a prolific and well known writer and a poet from northern Nigeria. Regarded as a major writer from Northern Nigeria and one of the internationally acclaimed writers from Nigeria, Gimba's burgeoning corpus includes Trail of Sacrifice (1985), Innocent

Victims (1988), Golden Apples (1997), Footprints (1998), Once upon a Reed (1998), Sunset for a Mandarin (1991), This Land of Ours (2001), A Toast In The Cemetery (2003), Letter to the Muslim Fundamentalist (2005). His most recent works are Why Am I Doing This? (2007) and Letters to my Children (2007). He is also known for his poetry collections and short stories. He strongly believes that a writer in the African context has a primary role to correct the wrongs of the society in their works. His poetry collection entitled as "This Country of Ours", whose major thematic trope is the socio-political decadence that has plagued Nigeria is a case in point. Much of the thematic preoccupations of his poetry also transcends to his short story "The Inquisitive Child." Alhaji Gimba whose educational background is in economics, has had varied experiences as a banker and administrator including midwifing the Niger State owned Ibrahim Babangida University. He attended the International Writing Programme at the University of Iowa, USA in 2000 and was awarded Honorary Fellow in Writing. From 2003 to date he is serving on the Committee for the Nigeria Prize for Literature, an initiative of the Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas company. He is currently special adviser to the Senate President on economic and budget matters (http://www.africanwriter.com/veeb/showthread.php?t=285).

D. MOSES ISEGAWA (1963- -)

Known to the reader by his pseudonym Moses Isegawa, Say Wava is a Ugandan author who was born in 1963. He taught history until he moved to the Netherlands in 1990 and settled in Beverwijk. Isegawa studied Dutch and has a diploma in bookkeeping. Written first in Dutch, his debut Abyssinian Chronicles (1998) was a great success in nine countries. Having been naturalized, he returned in 2006 to Uganda. Isegawa's other novel that are published so far include Snake Pit (1999), Premeditated acts (2004) and Who does not want to hear (2007). Isegawa belongs with the main representatives of the so-called "immigrant literature" together with authors like Hafid Bouazza and Abdelkader Benali. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moses_Isegawa).