

## THE RULE OF LAW IN CHINUA ACHEBE'S *ANTHILLS OF THE SAVANNAH*

**Dorothy Ogochukwu Eze**

Enugu State College of Education Technical, Enugu

[dorothyoeze@gmail.com](mailto:dorothyoeze@gmail.com)

07062175547

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**Florence O. Orabueze**

Department of English and Literary Studies

University of Nigeria, Nsukka

[florence.orabueze@unn.edu.ng](mailto:florence.orabueze@unn.edu.ng)

### **Abstract**

The Rule of Law is a concept that describes the supreme authority of the law over government action and individual behaviour. It corresponds to a situation where both the government and individuals are bound by the law and comply with it. The antithesis is arbitrary rule which is what holds in *Anthills of the Savannah*. The activities of General Sam, Major Ossai, the army, the secret police and some cabinet members manifest arbitrary use of power. Abuse of power is emblematic in General Sam's mode of governance which manifests in torture, intimidation, threats and brutal killings. He inflicts suffering on the people he rules. This paper investigates *Anthills of the Savannah* as a representation of misrule through the application of A. V. Dicey's concept of the rule of law. This study adopts analytical design, and utilizes close reading technique to establish that the rule of law has been set aside in Kangan, and is a replica of the Nigerian politics and governance.

**Keywords:** the rule of law, arbitrary, *Anthills of the Savannah*, supreme authority, government.

### **Introduction**

*Anthills of the Savannah* as a literary text x-rays the violation of the rule of law and democracy in African countries. The rule of law is concerned with the existing law of the state and their requirement being followed without fear or favour. The rule of law demands that no person should be subject to punishment except for a breach of a pre-established law, and it is the ordinary courts that are the proper venue for determining whether such a breach of law

has occurred. Both government officials and other individuals are bound by the same law. The antithesis is arbitrary rule which holds in *Anthills of the Savannah*. The activities of General Sam manifest arbitrary use of power. He uses the instrument of government to inflict pain on the people he rules. *Anthills of the Savannah* reflects illiberal democracy in some African countries and is a representation of misrule by the democratic government of Nigeria. Democratic erosion paves the way for bad governance, corruption, electoral malpractices, violence and poverty.

Queen Njemanze in "A Structural Study of Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*" describes Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* as a struggle for power and political unrest in the country of Kangan. She calls our attention to the statement made by the president at the beginning of the story, first, Sam talks to his cabinet rudely even when they make useful suggestions about matters of state. Secondly, he does not want to see people of Abazon at all. Njemanze stresses that it is not proper for the president of a country to say no to any delegation without considering their request, be it reasonable or unreasonable. When he accuses Ikem of "conspiring with them to invade the presidential palace and also colluding with the same people to sabotage the presidency referendum, two years ago" (*Anthills of the Savannah* 144), we realize why he flatly refuses to see the people of Abazon. According to her, all these portray the president as a ruler indifferent to the suffering of his people. For the cabinet members, the days are good or bad depending on the mood in which he wakes up in the morning.

Njemanze elucidates that "in the novel, there are unconfirmed rumors of unrest, secret trials and executions in the barracks but His Excellency rides the storm quite comfortably" (59). That's why he makes reference to the fact that he is still a soldier. The way these units of narrative link up shows that the president is a military despot, a dictator of the highest order. For her, within the cultural milieu of the text, His Excellency cuts the image of a power monger who wishes to stay in power all his life. She says that Chris Oriko falls into trouble with the president just for defending and protecting the interest of the Abazons, and His Excellency neglecting the demands of the Abazon equals sheer injustice and evil.

She goes further to stress that Chris tries to bring this to the notice of the president the plight of Abazons and gets into trouble. Other troubles he gets himself into and even the one that leads to his death are caused by his trying to speak up against evil and demand for justice. Also, Ikem Osodi is referred to as a saboteur by a minister and Chris goes on to defend him, this

defense she says correlates with the one done for Abazon. She posits that this unit of narrative shows how vicious the president is, "he wants Ikem sacked because he accuses him of conspiracy with the Abazon which is not true. Though he finally sacks Ikem, Chris is not a party to it" (96). She points out that "from these three units of narrative from the cultural perspective of the novel, we see the president as a perpetrator of evil and injustice and Chris as a crusader of justice and fair play" (97). His constant battle with the forces of injustice and evil finally rob him his life.

Within the cultural milieu of the text, she elucidates that Chris's death denotes "the demise of the force of justice and fair play in Africa. He is the lone voice in the wilderness of the anthills crying for justice; unfortunately, the force of injustice gets rid of him" (97). On a general note, according to her, they convey the meaning that leadership in Africa is still very corrupt, crude, incompetent and bedeviled by various problems.

Njamanze points out clearly the roles of the major characters: Sam, Ikem and Chris just as they are depicted in the novel. She describes Sam as a perpetrator of evil and injustice against his people while Chris is a crusader for justice and fair play. She likens the disenchantment of President Sam with that of most African leaders as she points out that the various characters and events in the novel convey the meaning that His Excellency, his cabinet and people around him do not rule well.

Ikechukwu Asika writing on "Military Incursion in Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*, x-rays the ugly experience of coup *d'état* and military incursion in the affairs of the nation as it relates to the Nigerian experience. Asika seeing the ugly situation of events in the country at the hands of the military, whose manner of governance is oppressive and hostile, says that Achebe paints the ugly picture of military involvement in the leadership of a country known as Kangan which allegorically represents Nigeria. *Anthills of the Savannah* deals with "the problems of the era of military dictatorship when the civilians are overthrown on the charges of gross indiscipline, looting and corruption" (279). He describes the story of *Anthills of the Savannah* as condemning military incursion to politics through coup *d'état* with the aim of sanitizing the nation. The military takes over with the motive to right the wrongs of the civilians according to him is a total failure that did more harm than good. He sees military leadership as a curse rather than the blessing it claims to be. This is depicted in the character of His Excellency who is dreaded by all and sundry because he is a military leader, "even his commissioners could only suggest things that delight him or they will be shown the walls of the

prison for disobeying him. The people are made to suffer and no one is allowed to utter a sigh of despair or he would face dangerous music" (280). His Excellency gets whatever he wants and suppresses the people under his tyrannical leadership. Chris the commissioner of information and Ikem Osodi are "victims of this cruel and hostility in leadership, they pay dearly with their lives" (280). He elucidates that His Excellency, the military leader wants to be a life president who will continue to brutalize and silence the people. His government is like a den, no one leaves his den unhurt. Even when Chris tries to resign as the commissioner for information, he is not allowed to do so; he will be jailed for refusing to carry out his instruction.

Asika continues by stressing that the military era is one of tyranny, denigration, molestation and complication where His Excellency like all military leaders hates anything that portrays the truth. This is what makes "Ikem Osodi a victim of his injustice. Ikem Osodi, the editor of the *National Gazette* takes it upon himself to write about nothing but the truth to expose and satirize the corruption and dictatorial attitude of those in power. This is a great threat to the government of His Excellency and Ikem must be stopped by all means" (281).

He posits that Achebe exposes many actions and activities of the military rulers, actions that cannot be sustained in a democratically elected government. He sees His Excellency as hell bent on silencing everyone who says the truth about his government. That is why Ikem pays heavily for saying the truth, he is arrested and murdered. Even when Chris refuses to carry out the orders given to him, His Excellency could not be made to change his mind. He refuses his resignation letter, reminding him that "he was not in Westminster or Washington but in a remote country of Kangan" (281). This ugly situation Asika says could only happen during military dictatorship. The plight of those who are against the dictatorial government is also highlighted. They are maltreated and marginalized and this is exactly what happens to the people of Abazon; they are abandoned to poverty and hardship. They have no boreholes and other amenities because they refuse to support the military ruler in power. The military leaders care nothing about the people but see them as sets of "gullible and simple-minded followers. Even when the people of Abazon come to visit him, he simply sends Professor Okong to attend to them with lies" (282). Elewa, Beatrice, Adanna, Emmanuel and Abdul, the victims and survivors of dictatorship are brought to light. In them he suggests we see "despair, weariness and agony, but a sense of pride and cheerfulness for having survived the military era" (282). He concludes by stating that the lesson and message to

the entire humanity from the text is that "the society is for the people and not for a group of military leaders. The era of military dictatorship claims the lives of Ikem Osodi and Chris, but the kidnapping of His Excellency is a medium through which Achebe demands a total eradication of military incursion in Kangan, an imaginary country that can be linked to any African state" (283).

Omar Sougu looks at the artistic exploration of power in *Anthills of the Savannah* as emerging through Achebe's ability to present its various levels based on social and economic circumstances. He assesses the use of power at the lowest level of society in order to illustrate that the misuse of power is not restricted to those at the apex. He points out that in *Anthills of the Savannah*, soldiers, even at the level where they are not officers, portray tendencies to misuse power. He cites the attitude of the soldier-driver who nearly kills a young man abuses him, the soldier who searches Beatrice's home is rude, brutal and wicked. In his lack of consideration this red-eyed sergeant pulled out the bed sheet off the bed and threw them on the floor where he walked all over them as he frenziedly darted from one object to another. This is equally seen in the character of the policeman who arrests Ikem Osodi for parking light offense in a well-lit environment. According to him, this scene "is tragic as it shows the ignorance of the law enforcement agents" ("Critical Approaches to *Anthills of the Savannah*" 32).

He maintains that those in government lack wisdom in the use of power and this is why the ordinary soldiers and policemen, who should have an affinity with the poor downtrodden people, rather exhibit degenerate vices: ranging from extorting money from commercial vehicle drivers to rapes of young girls. To this effect, Kangan Mobile Police is described as "hungry Alsatian" (32) Chris Oriko on the run from security men is killed because he tries to prevent a policeman from raping a girl. According to Omar, the excesses of His Excellency are thus adopted by ordinary policeman and soldiers including his favorite expression "Kabisa" (33).

*Anthill of the Savannah* portrays all these to show that power could be wielded by any member of society towards negative purposes. He posits that in the story of the *Anthills of the Savannah*, the metaphor of power is showing that "a country is not owned by the few privileged individuals who fritter away its resources. The tragedy of *Anthills of the Savannah* is felt through Elewa, the girlfriend of Ikem Osodi and Beatrice, the girlfriend of Chris Oriko, who as the centre of consciousness in the novel, gathers the broken human fragments together in her home. The remark which Beatrice makes to captain Abdul Medani and Emmanuel, the intelligent student leader, lies at the heart of the

novel. She asks "what must a people do to appease an embittered history" (*Anthills of Savannah* 220). The novel he says "proceeds beyond the positive depiction of womanhood to cast insight on human frailty. The characters are carefully magnified to "reveal the complexity of the wider society where power materializes through deliberate actions and unforeseen incidents to affect events and people" ("Critical Approaches to *Anthills of the Savannah*" 33). The story of *Anthills of the Savannah* therefore creatively illustrates much of the contemporary tribulations of African socio-political reality through a metaphoric depiction of power in human interactions.

#### **A.V. Dicey's Concept of the Rule of Law.**

The rule of law is a concept that describes the supreme authority of the law over governmental action and individual behavior. According to him, no man:

Is punishable or can be lawfully made to suffer in body or goods except for a distinct breach of law established in the ordinary legal manner before the ordinary courts of the land. In this sense, the rule of law is contrasted with every system of government based on the exercise by persons in authority of wide, arbitrary, discretionary powers of constraint. ("Introduction to the Study of the Law of the Constitution" 175)

He stresses that the rule of law is peculiar to those countries which like United States of America, have inherited English traditions. In his reading of De Tocqueville's judgment, he posits that "wherever there is discretion, there is room for arbitrariness and then in a republic no less than under monarchy discretionary authority on the part of the government means insecurity for legal freedom on the part of the subjects" (178).

By rule of law, he means that "every man whatever is his rank or condition, is subject to the ordinary law of the realm and amenable to the jurisdiction of the ordinary tribunal" (181). For officials like colonial governor, a secretary of state, a military officer and all subordinates, though carrying out the commands of their official superiors:

Are responsible for any act which the law does not authorize as in any private and unofficial persons. Officials, for example as soldiers or clergymen of the established church, are, it is true, in England as elsewhere, subject to law which do not affect the rest of the nation, and are in some instances amenable to tribunals which have no jurisdiction over their fellow countrymen, officials,

that is to say, are to a certain extent governed under what may be termed official law. (181)

To him the rule of law is a trait common to all civilized societies and the courts are supreme throughout the state. He goes further to stresses that the rule of law which forms a fundamental principle of the constitution has three means namely:

The absolute supremacy or predominance of regular law as opposed to the influence of arbitrary power, and excludes the existence or arbitrariness, of prerogative, or even of wide discretionary authority on the part of the government. Even man is ruled by law and may be punished for breach of law; rule of law may mean equality before the law or the equal subjection of all classes to the ordinary law court; it excludes the idea of any exception of officials or others from the duty of obedience to the law which governs other citizens or from the jurisdiction of the ordinary tribunal; and lastly, the rule of law means that the law of the constitution forms part of the constitutional code, and the consequence of the rights of individuals as defined and enforced by the courts ; thus the constitution is the result of the ordinary law of the land.(190)

There is no separate law, constitution, courts for the government, religious officials and ordinary citizens. They are all bound by the same law. Dicey's concept advocates the right to personal freedom, the right to freedom of discussion, the right of public meeting, the rights and duties of the army, the collection and expenditure of the public revenue and the responsibility of those in authority to the ordinary people.

### **Right of Freedom of Speech**

Right to freedom of speech is not "a privilege but the outcome of the ordinary law of the land enforced by the court" (195). Individual rights are the basis not the result of the law of the constitution. The right has more than normal existence. He elucidates that in England, the strict maintenance of the principle is that "no man can be arrested or imprisoned except in due course of law; under some legal warrant or authority, and what is far more consequence, it is secured by the provision of adequate legal means for the enforcement of this principle" (195). Discussing the right to liberty of thought and freedom of

speech, Dicey propounds that:

Any man may thereof say or write whatever he likes, subject to the risk of, it may be, severe punishment if he publishes any statement (either by word, mouth, in writing, or in print) which he is not legally entitled to make ... It is well worth while to trace out with some care the restrictions imposed by the law of libel on the "freedom of the press" by which he likes in books or newspapers. (226)

This implies that the liberty of thought or freedom of speech has limit and if otherwise is punishable by law. Liberty of the press is "the right to write or say anything which a jury, think it expedient should be said or written. Such "liberty" may vary at different times and seasons from unrestricted license to a very severe restraint. Liberty of the process is a mere application the general principle, that no man is punishable except for a distinct breach of the law. According to Dicey:

Neither the government nor any other authority has the right to seize or destroy the stock of a publisher because it consists of books, pamphlets, or papers which in the opinion of the government contain seditious or libelous matter; ... Writers in the press are in short, like every other person, subject to the law of the realm, and nothing else. Neither the government nor the courts have any greater power to prevent or oversee the publication of a newspaper than the writing of a letter. (235)

Therefore, press offences in so far as the term can be used with references to English law, are tried and punished only by the ordinary courts of the country, that is, by the judge and jury.

### **The Right of Public Meeting**

The right to public meeting is to be exercised only 'subject to careful restriction'. The law of public meeting involves some practical consequences which, though logically deduced from it, are found by many persons, magistrates and others, somewhat startling, and are not of invariable benefit to the nation. In the right to public meeting, he maintains that "the right of assembly is nothing more than a result of the view taken by the courts as to individual liberty of persons" (256). He goes further to stress that if a meeting is lawful, neither the government nor the magistrates could prohibit it. Individuals



are allowed the right "to exercise/ have public meeting in as much as it will not provoke violence or breach peace among the people or to others but, there has to be restraint to any public meeting which is capable of exciting violence" (256). If a meeting is lawful, neither the government nor the court could prohibit it.

### **The Army**

According to Dicey, the fixed doctrine of English law is that a soldier, though a member of a standing army, is in England subject to all the duties and inabilities of an ordinary citizen. Nothing shall extend or be construed to exempt any other officer or soldier whatsoever from the ordinary "process of law". "A soldier is liable to the law as ordinary civilian. A soldier is subject to the same criminal liability as a civilian" (276). If he is found wanting, he is to be put on trial before "court for any offence for which he would be triable if he were not subject to military law, and there are certain offenses, such as murder, for which he must in general be tried by a civil tribunal" (276). If a military commits theft or murder, his military character will not save him from standing the court trial, he cannot escape from civic liabilities as well as military law. So, the principle determining the relation of the armed forces of a country and the general public is the law of the land.

### **The Revenue**

The collection and expenditure of the national income all things pertaining to that are governed by strict rule of law. According to him, are three things to be considered; "the source of public revenue, the authority for expending the public revenue and the securities provided by law for the due appropriation of the public revenue, that is, for its being expended in the exact manner which the law directs" (292). He goes further to stress that not a penny of revenue can be logically expended except under the authority of some Act of Parliament. Payment made out of the national revenue are "made by and under the authority of the law, namely, under the directors of some special Act of Parliament and the security of the money expended by the government is provided by an elaborate scheme of control and audit" (293-294). Under this system:

Not a penny of public money can be obtained by the Government without the authority or sanction of persons ... whose duty is to see that no money is paid out of the Exchequer except under legal authority. To the same officials, ultimately

comes the knowledge of the way in which money thus paid out is actually expended, and they are bound to report to Parliament upon any expenditure which is or may appear to be not authorized by law. (294)

The centre of this system of Parliamentary control is the Comptroller and Auditor General. He is a high official, absolutely independent of the cabinet; and cannot take part in politics, for he cannot be "written a member of the House of Commons or a peer of parliament in his exercise of his duty of control. The comptroller general is bound, with the aid of the official under him, to see that the whole of the national revenue which, it will be remembered, is lodged in the Bank" (294). He audits all the public accounts and then reports annually to Parliament upon the accounts of the past years. Everything that has to do with the revenue is done under the mappings of the law of the land.

#### **5.4 Significant Patterns of arbitrary rule in *Anthills of the Savannah***

There are several significant patterns of arbitrary rule in *Anthills of Savannah* but only those concerned with this work are pulled together. The most significant pattern in this narrative is the abuse of power by His Excellency. Dicey's concept will help us determine the extent the right to personal freedom and speech, the right of public meeting, the rights and duties of the army, the collection and expenditure of the public revenue and the responsibility of those in authority to the ordinary people play out in *Anthills of the Savannah*. The abuse of power manifests in General Sam's negligence to his duties as the president. He inflicts excruciating suffering to the people he rules and he deliberately does it so that they will suffer. The whole sequence of this narrative centers on the denial of the people's needs and the visit of Abazon to the Presidential Palace. This is a manifestation that the President is using the instrument of government to inflict pain on the people. The drought in Abazon is metaphorical. The people's needs supersede just drinking water. They also need good governance, good road and other basic amenities.

His Excellency has perfected torture, threats, lies, intimidation, oppression and cold-blood killing as weapons to cow the opponents of their policies believing that he is accountable to no one but himself. From the beginning of the narrative, we observe how His Excellency intimidates the cabinet members. He detains them for not having any idea about who the crowd is or what its mission is. He also uses foul language on his cabinet in order to silence them. This is reflected in his statement to the Inspector General of

Police and others thus:

Look at him! Just look at him, sneers His Excellency. Gentlemen, this is my Chief of Police. He stands here gossiping while hoodlums storm the Presidential Palace. And he has no clue what is going on". Sit down Inspector General of Police ... That's what I mean when I say that I have no Executive Council ... Take your seats gentlemen and stay here. (*Anthills* 9)

General Sam is dreaded by everyone including his cabinet. They can only make suggestions and are not allowed to debate any issue with him. His wishes must always prevail. Even in the midst of the suffering of the people, no one dares utter any word that is contrary to his wish. That is why Chris being aware that his intervention in Abazon's case is giving rise to another argument decides to resign but His Excellency threatens him as he says "if anyone thinks that he can leave the cabinet on this issue he will be making a sad mistake. Anyone walking out of that door will not go home but head straight into detention" (119). He uses threats and intimidation to keep them at their duty posts. His act of intimidation is also witnessed during his discussion with Prof Okong and the Attorney General as he summons them to his office for private discussions and is common with his security agents.

Sam's oppressive mode of governance manifests in his denial of civic rights to Abazon and Kangan in general. The people of Abazon are suffering, they are denied of their basic needs which include good drinking water, good roads, and the like, because they refuse to endorse General Sam's referendum for life presidency. He stops the work on their bore-holes to make them feel the pain of what they have done as the old man laments:

More shifting eyes people came and said: Because you said no to the Big Chief, he is very angry and has ordered the water bore-holes they are digging in your area to be closed so that you will know what it is to offend the Big Chief. 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... So, we came to Bassa to say our own yes and perhaps the work on our bore-holes will start again and we will not all perish from the anger of the sun. (127)

General Sam refuses to attend to their needs thereby making life unbearable for them. He also denies them of their freedom as he is afraid, they may plan

uproar in the palace. Beatrice narrating her experience during her invitation to Abichi employs flashback as she gives commentary on the money spent on building and refurbishing the Retreat. She frowns at the money spent "which had not been passed through the normal Ministry of Finance procedures" (71). She equally brings to notice the argument between Chris and Ikem on this issue:

"Retreat from what? From whom?" I recall him demanding with characteristic heat. "From the people and their basic needs of water which is free from Guinea worm, of simple shelter and food. That's what you are retreating from. You retreat up the hill and commune with your cronies and forget the very people who legitimize your authority." "Don't put it on me," cried Chris. (74)

Her narration also gives us insight into the extravagant party organized in honour of Lou Cranford, the American journalist to the detriment of the people of Kangan. General Sam in pursuit of absolute power plots the secret police that intimidates Ikem and accuses him of committing parking light offence. General Sam deliberately does this to prove that Ikem connives with Abazon delegates to plan an uprising against his government. For this reason, he arrests and detains the delegates just to inflict more pain on them while Ikem is relieved of his duty as the editor of the national *Gazette*. General Sam in his misrule asks Chris to suspend Ikem without trial:

At last! But God knows I did not ask for it. It's you, my oldest friends, you and Ikem who swore for reasons best known to you to force a showdown. What more can I say except: So be it ... While investigations continue into Ikem's link with the Abazon agitators he cannot continue to edit the *National Gazette*. But I must still do things properly and constitutionally no matter the provocation. That's why I have sent for you. I want you as Commissioner for Information to issue a formal letter suspending him with immediate effect. (143)

Relieving Ikem and Chris of their duty without proper investigation and court order is undemocratic. While Sam restricts Ikem from having meeting with Abazon, Chris tries to restrain him from expressing his personal opinion about the government through his stinging editorials and all these are characteristics of arbitrary use of power. Ikem is embittered by this, coupled with other ugly experiences encountered in this present government, he gives a lecture at Basa

University on "The Tortoise and the Leopard: An Imperative of struggle". He believes that Sam cannot restrain him as he laments:

Those who mismanage our affairs would silence our criticism by pretending they have facts not available to the rest of us. And I know it is fatal to engage them on their own ground. Our best weapon against them is not to marshal facts of which they are truly managers but passion. Passion is our hope and strength, a very present help in trouble. (38).

The lecture reflects General Sam's mode of governance and a call for revolution. This leads to Ikem's secret arrest and murder. Chris is brought to the fore as he connives with the president of the University of Basa Students Union to reveal the secret behind Ikem's disappearance. Chris has been targeted by His Excellency since his failed referendum. His Excellency blames him as he declares that he and Ikem fail in their duties as the Commissioner for Information and the editor of the National *Gazette* to disseminate the information about his intention properly to the populace. Chris goes underground and is later killed by Sam's men. This has consequences as it connects to the coup which results to the death of General Sam and the emergence of Major Ahmed Lango as the new head of state.

Also, soldiers at the various levels where they are portraying the tendency to misuse power. The police officer who searches Beatrice's house does it with no respect. He "pulled out the bed sheets of the bed and throws them on the floor where he walked over them as he frenziedly darted from one object to another ... He merely spilt clothes everywhere (76). He does this to intimidate them. The death of Ikem and Chris correlates with all the ugly experiences by Kangan people in general to signify the abuse of power in this narrative.

### **Conclusion**

In *Anthills of the Savannah*, the rule of law is in shambles. The arbitrary use of power manifests in the characters of General Sam, Major Johnson Ossai, the Secret Police and the Army. The analysis involves the breach of the rights of the people of Kangan. The rule of law demands that it is the duty and responsibility of the government to promote, protect and have the rights of the masses fulfilled but instead General Sam has perfected torture, intimidation, brutal killing, and censure as his mode of governance. The instances of arbitrary use of power identified include: His Excellency suspends Ikem as the editor of the

National *Gazette* for having a meeting with his kinsmen and alleges that it is a plan to undermine his government; Ikem is arrested and brutally killed without trial after his lecture at Basa University, for condemning the president's idea of having his head on the nation's currency; Abazons are denied of their civic rights which include good drinking water; instead he stops the work already started on their borehole for their failure to endorse his life presidency saga; then when they visit the palace to show loyalty to the Big Chief, he detains them; he lavishes the nation's fund refurbishing the Presidential Retreat and throwing extravagant party for the American journalist to the detriment of his subjects. It is also the duty of the army and police to ensure the security of life and property of the citizenry but instead Major Samsonite and his cohorts subject the people of Kangan to excruciating pain and torture. Thus, the rule of law is flawed in *Anthills of the Savannah* and is a representation of misrule in Africa, a society with corrupt leaders, and the masses facing deep-rooted inequality and wide spread poverty.

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