

# TYRANNY AND OPPRESSION IN CHIMEKA GARRICKS' *TOMORROW DIED YESTERDAY*

Ezennadiri Chukwudi Samuel

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Nnemtem Olanike Tony-Ugbejie

## Abstract

Literature mirrors the society that produced it. It is about man and happenings around him in a given society. This is because the writer draws his material from his observations and experiences in his given society. This paper entitled "Tyranny and Oppression in Chimeka Garrick's *Tomorrow Died Yesterday*, shows how the novelist satirizes leadership challenges in the Niger Delta environment called Asiana society. Data was from both primary and secondary sources Marxist criticism was the theoretical approach adopted for the study. Finding are that the novelist succeeded in exposing the issues that undermine the lives of the people; hence he sets out to address those ills and expect rebirth, reformation and equity. Thus, the novelist is advocating good governance, honesty in leadership and elimination of intimidation.

**Keywords:** Disillusionment, Oppression, Disappointment, Crime, Betrayal, Unemployment, Starvation

## Introduction

Literature has been a medium through which artists crave for equality and for the wellbeing of the society. For instance, before the attainment of independence in Nigeria in 1960, many thought that immediately the white man left the seat of power, the road to having a good society would open. They hoped that corruption, political and

economic exploitation would stop. But, ironically, these ills rather than diminish have increased with the departure of the colonial masters.

According to Kofi Awoonor in *A Survey of the History, Culture and Literature of Africa South of the Sahara*: “Revolution and socialist programmes degenerate into disguise, corruption and political thuggery. Neo-colonialism, which some African scholars naively believe was a figment of Nkrumah's imagination, is the real monster of post-independence Africa” (32).

Nevertheless, the writers of post-independence faced the challenges posed by the problems of social ills. This led the writers to change to writing novels that reflect the problems in the system of government and life in general. Ngozi Chuma-Udeh in *Trends and Issues in Nigerian Literature* reaffirms:

The most prominent feature of the literature of this era was the stiff aggressive way in which the writers criticized the post-independence: rulers. They openly and uncompromisingly declared that the ruling class was corrupt, devoid of every vestige of vision and common sense. (135)

Corruption became the bane of the new nation and hindered any form of development in the country. An accusing finger could conveniently be pointed at the effects of colonialism on the ruling class who had been alienated from the true values of their people. Chidi Amuta in his *Towards a Sociology of African Literature* summed up the literature of this period thus:

This is the quintessential expression of superlative dissonance and sin. Its characteristic landscape is a world asunder. The symbolic homeland of this genre is the urban market place. This is the novel of noise and filth. The heroes are the thieving politicians. (133)

However, Chimeka Garricks tried to look into the post-independence dilemmas of the political dispensation in their various societies and other crime rates that brought about the betrayal of hopes and dreams. The writer felt that time had come for the abandonment of the delicate bases of their country's unity by writing only on their cultures and traditions. The situation of the country seems to be so critical that many feel the need for reappraisal.

As a result of exploitation of the masses by a few political elites at the top, the novelists as the watchdogs of the society took up their pens to expose and attack the predominant cases of man's inhumanity to man and crimes in their various societies.

Chimeka Garricks' *Tomorrow Died Yesterday* highlights the despicable situation of Asiama community in Niger-Delta region. This community was a peaceful community before oil was found in their land. The government and the invading oil companies mercilessly exploited the Asiama community. The natives cry out against the adverse effects of oil exploitation which includes: devastation of the flora and fauna, environmental and human lives as well as sea and aquatic lives.

Problems persisted with the Niger-Delta youths and the government over the extraction of oil and the distribution pattern of the subsequent wealth accrued. The violence that erupted between the forces brought unspeakable hardship to the indigenes as the invading army raped Asiama women, destroyed canoes and fishing equipment. Also many lost their lives in this very combat.

In fact, *Tomorrow Died Yesterday* looks beyond the turmoil of oil spillage, the anger of the natives, corruption and exploitation. The researcher also believes that what has caused the corrupt system in the country is cruelty, greed and love for money. Therefore, he finds that the only way to maintain the dignity and image of the-country is to be patriotic and reasonable on how the states resources are being managed.

The theoretical framework for this study is Marxist criticism. Marxism is a political and economic theory of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels that interprets history as a continuing economic class struggle and believe that the eventual result would be the establishment of a classless society and communal ownership of wealth of the nation.

Marxism is summed up in *Encarta Reference Library* as a theory in which class struggle is a central element in the analysis of social change in western societies. According to Swingewood Allen in his book *The Novel and the Revolution*, Marxism maintains that a Marxist writer is one who is conscious and fully aware of his own responsibility in the society. No pedagogy which is truly liberating can remain distanced from the oppressed (23).

Marxist analysis of novels falls on the relations among classes. In British and European novels of the nineteenth century, for example, class is a significant factor in the rise and fall of the characters' fortunes. Novels such as Charles Dickens' *Little Mouth*, *Dombey and Sons* and *Oliver Twist*; George Eliot and Anthony Makepiece Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* portray a panoramic vision of society with characters pressing to move up in social rank and status. These and other numerous novels from the eighteenth through twentieth centuries provide abundant territory for Marxist perspectives to investigate the ways political and economic forces conspire to keep social, ethnic and racial groups in power and brought to bear most often on the novel, next most often on drama and least more often on poetry, where issues of power, money and political influence are not nearly as pervasive.

*The Redford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms* by Rose Murfin and Supriya M. Ray define Marxist criticism as:

A type of criticism in which literary works are viewed as products of work and whose practitioners emphasize the role of class and ideology as they reflect, propagate and even challenge prevailing social order. Rather than viewing them

as repositories for hidden meanings. Marxist critics view texts as material product of work and hence reading of production and consumption were. In short, literary works are views as products of work and hence reading of production and consumption were called economics. (102)

As Cornel Ujowundu states in his book *Literature and Literary Criticism: An African Perspective*, Marxist criticism is a special brand of sociological criticism which deals with the methods of production. Its greatest proponents are Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in their theories on Dialectical Materialism. Marxism sees the need to write literature based on social struggle. It uses society in two ways: the economic class and the individualistic or antagonistic class.

Another feature of Marxist art is the positive hero. They must represent the so-called typical. This does not mean what is characteristic of the real state of reality but what would be desired for emulation, in all cases, these heroes are usually a manifestation of the ideal Marxist sense.

Marxist art calls for representation of periods which were in consonant with the communist theory. The implication of this is that it seems the results of deliberate limitation of the choice of subject matter in the part of the writer. According to Ngara Emmanuel, Marxism, therefore, “is a means of consolidating their existing ideology in the socialist world” (31).

### **Tyranny and Oppression in Chimeka Garricks' *Tomorrow Died Yesterday***

Chimeka Garricks debut novel *Tomorrow Died Yesterday*, explores among other things the themes of suffering, pain, disappointment, tyranny and oppression, poverty, dejection and their attendant consequences on the people of the Niger-Delta, Asiam community.

The Federal Government of Nigeria after nearly four decades of oil production on subsidiary basis had by the early 1980s become almost completely dependent on crude oil products as the major source of national income and economic mainstay. However, despite the vast wealth created by petroleum, the benefits to the impoverished indigenes of the area of production have been unexpectedly too infinitesimal. The natives cry against the adverse effects of oil exploitation which includes devastation of the flora and fauna, environmental and human lives as well as sea and aquatic lives. This is evident in the fact that the natives, since the 1960s, have increasingly been forced to abandon their traditional agricultural practices due to wanton ecological destruction. Despite the transition to democratic rule in 1999, this problem has persisted with the Niger-Delta youths and the government getting to a dagger drawn position. Bitter antagonisms between the many ethnic groups inhabiting the Niger-Delta and the government continue to rise over the extraction of oil and the distribution pattern of the subsequent wealth accruing.

Chimeka Garricks exposes the turbulent sociopolitical situation in the Niger-Delta, Asiamas community. After independence in 1960, the people were made to understand that they had finally gained their freedom from the colonial masters. The independence came amidst raised hopes that it would to a large extent solve socio-political problems and create employment opportunities which would ensure a more fulfilled life. A lot of promises came in the wake of independence, but unfortunately, the hopes that were fanned up at independence collapsed woefully and total disillusionment took over the new nation.

Chimeka Garricks' *Tomorrow Died Yesterday* tells his story in interconnected episodes; each named after the narrator, or a major character or incident. The novel tells the story of disillusionment, disenchantment, suffering, pains, betrayal and disappointment of the

people of Niger-Delta, Asiamia community. The novelist also used *Tomorrow Died Yesterday* to exposed the military dictatorship in Nigeria in the 1990s, the difficulties of life under military intervention in Niger-Delta. Here, Amaibi, one of the narrators, says:'

Then I remembered my father. He too had suffered in 1997. Some soldiers had beaten and blinded him. Just after Dike and I separated, I went to Asiamia to see him and clear my head. One morning, I heard him mention the soldiers in his prayers. (411)

The narrator again makes us understand the agonising pains of repression and subjugation that is meted on man, the stupidity of an average man using his fellow man as a source of income. Amaibi, sadly continues:

The stupidity of our violence is frightening. I heard this morning that we've started kidnapping our own brothers for ransom. What next? Our women and children? When will it end? Can't we see history repeating itself? Centuries ago, because of greed, we kidnapped our brothers, sisters, children and sold them to slavery. Today, the greed and kidnappings have started again. This is slavery too, but in a different form. Now, we own the slaves, we punish the slaves and we are the slaves. (412)

Chimeka Garricks tries to show us the chaotic society that is disillusioned. He exposes the imbalanced nature in the Niger-Delta region, where the government and every other person in the region have the love of money. The Niger-Delta, Asiamia community, is deprived of all sources of livelihood. Even though they own the land and oil, but the government keep exploiting this community without helping them out or giving them any employment. The people of Asiamia cry out to the government to help them, but the government refuses to come to their aid. The youths of

Asiama takes to kidnapping as a means of making their own money and sustaining their lives.

Doughboy, one of the major characters in the novel, after his graduation as a petroleum engineer, cannot stop feeding from hand to mouth because he has no job. The youths of Asiama are denied virtually all the good things of life. Many drop out from school because they see no future in their dreams. Others who graduate from the university and are well qualified are not given any job. Doughboy reports it thus: "My people have the oil, yet, it is your people who have all the jobs in the oil companies. Your people refuse to employ my people, they say we are not qualified" (7).

Kidnapping of the Imperial Oil expatriate staff and demanding ransom becomes the profitable job in Asiama community because there is no job opportunity given to them. The youths, children of Asiama, dies every day because of starvation. It is a survival of the fittest and most people who want to survive turn to kidnapping. Tubo, one of the narrators in the novel, summarizes it this way: "After looting of public funds by government officials and oil bunkering, kidnapping is the next most profitable enterprise in the Niger-Delta" (196).

The Imperial Oil and the exploration causes a lot of havocs in the Niger-Delta region. It impedes a lot of progress and turn people heart-broken. Gas flaring and oil explosion make many lives in Asiama go in a twinkle of an eye. After all this, the Imperial Oil shows no pity to these damages. Till this present time, the memories still linger in the minds of the Niger-Deltans. Amaibi reports it thus:

I don't care about your white man, Tubo. Just as your company didn't care about the '97'crises . . . Tubo, your concern for the life of one oyibo is touching. What about the people who died in 1997? What about lives of the Asiama people who are dying prematurely because of



imperial flaring? What about them, Tubo? Aren't you concerned about them? (21)

Imperial gas flaring has been the worst fate in Asiamas, Niger-Delta. It takes lives every day and causes damages to the health of innocent citizens. The federal government notices all these damages but refuses to do something to ameliorate the bad effects. Though general gas flaring is illegal but is allowed in certain oil fields for which ministerial certificate must be issued. But in Asiamas community, the Imperial Oil started their works on Asiamas land without any such certificate. The government knows these dangers and they keep silent. The Imperial Oil base camp is situated in Asiamas in an open environment where people do their daily business and this causes damages to properties and lives. Amaibi frowns at the way the Imperial Oil operates and expresses his feelings thus:

Please forgive me, Mr Granger, but that is nonsense. Why isn't Imperial flaring gas in Venezuela or in Libya? Besides, Mr Granger, since 1984, general gas flaring is illegal, but may be allowed for in certain oil fields for which a ministerial certificate must be issued. I asked Mr McCulloch, your predecessor, if Imperial Oil has a ministerial certificate to flare gas in the Asiamas field. As I recall he refused to give me an answer. (26)

Poverty makes most Asiamas youths to join hands in kidnapping the Imperial Oil expatriates. Doughboy and his group kidnap many Imperial Oil expatriates and at the end demand for ransom. The kidnapping of Mr Brian Manning lands Amaibi into serious trouble. Doughboy and his group kidnap Mr Brian Manning and demands ransom (fifteen million naira). Doughboy chooses Amaibi to be a go-between, who will drop the demanded ransom and go home with the Brian Manning. Unfortunately, Amaibi loses the chances of bringing Mr Brian back alive. He goes

to Doughboy's hideout, drops the ransom as was concluded, but in return, Amaibi is forced to go back with the corpse of Mr Brian Manning. Doughboy is enraged and speaks thus:

Get up, stupid fear fear man, . . . take a good look at what you are taking back to Imperial Oil. . . This ugly bastard died seven days ago. On the day we kidnapped him. Just like that. We didn't touch him. We didn't kill him. he had some sort of seizure, and that was that. (37)

Doughboy and his gang know that Mr Brian Manning is dead but they do not let the Imperial Oil know because they need their ransom delivered to them. Amaibi is forced and he takes the corpse to the Imperial Oil. But as Amaibi comes back with the corpse of Mr Brian Manning, it is a different case. He is charged for manslaughter, conspiracy to kidnap, and possession of firearm.

Amaibi suffers for the offence he knows nothing about. The mopols who arrests him have their hidden agenda. Before they could arrest Amaibi, they shoot him on his leg without any just cause. Although he does not resist arrest, it is a conspiracy to get him down and make him feel the pain as he spend his life in prison waiting for trial. Amaibi recounts the incident thus:

They came to my house very early one morning, almost a squadron of them. They smashed down my door commando style. They arrested me . . . in bed." I didn't resist. They beat me up. I didn't resist Then, they shot me. I still don't know why. (54)

We see how corrupt the mopols become. They see no importance in the life of an average Asiaman. Amaibi is dumped in the prison without being treated. For months, Amaibi receives no medical attention and the police still torture him without mercy. He is accused of working with Doughboy.

Disillusionment in Africa started with corruption and most African novels speak of corruption as one thing that hinders a lot of progress and happiness in most African countries. Chimeka Garricks exposes the corrupt leaders and the masses. He accuses the leaders and law makers to be even more corrupt. Kaniye, a friend to Amaibi and his in-law want to see Amaibi in the prison. But for Kaniye to see Amaibi, he has to bribe the warders to allow him. Kaniye report his experience thus:

Alake do with this for now. I could have given you more but I had to settle those thieves called prison wardens so that they would allow me this kind of access to you. You wouldn't believe how much the bastards collected from me. (57)

The happiness that is fanned up after independence is no longer there. Corruption goes as far as making ways into the souls of the prison warders. The only language they understand is money. Even after collecting the money from visitors who want to see their friends inside the prison, the warders do not at least take care of the prisoners and their wards. Inside the prison is like hell; dirty and smelling. Those that have communicable diseases are kept in the same ward with those that are free. It is indeed like a hell. Amaibi puts it thus:

Someone lying next to me stirred in the darkness and started coughing. Instinctively, I covered my nose and mouth with my hand. Tuberculosis was the flavour of the moment. I remained like that, waiting for the coughing to die down. When there was no let up, I decided to move away. I turned towards the farthest direction from the coughing. The smell of fresh faeces wafted gently from there. I knew the toilet bucket shared by all twenty-three men in the cramped cell was in that corner . . . I was lucky to find some unoccupied space near a wall. I sat upright and rested my bare

back on the wall. The smell of the faeces was very strong now. I new that the bucket was about two feet away from me. I knew that big, fat, maggots were crawling happily on the wet floor near me. (51)

Amaibi's suffering does not touch the hearts of the prison wardens. The leg where the mopols gave him a gunshot is still deteriorating and no proper medical care has been given to him. Now his leg has damaged. Deola reports:

He needs proper medical treatment. I've been doing what I can. But his has now got gangrene, and I can't do much. It's spreading. Eventually, his leg will have to be cut off. (61)

Deola is a youth corps doctor who has tried all she can to treat Amaibi's leg. But Amaibi's leg now needs proper medical care. The prison wardens care less and the government wants Amaibi out of their way. Sir James, Kaniye's father put it thus: "The government wants Amaibi out of the way. In this country, the government is the mafia" (69).

In Niger-Delta, Asiama community, we see greed, envy, jealousy, betrayal of trust, wickedness and man's inhumanity to his fellow man . The greed brings about the selfish desire of some top ranking politicians in Asiama, Niger-Delta to eat up Asiama in one night. The Imperial Oil come to Asiama and change the lifestyle of this people living together before like brothers. Evil has come to stay in Asiama because everybody wants oil money. The top rank politicians sit on the pinnacle of power, eating oil money alone and the poor masses die of hunger and starvation. Many youths in the Niger-Delta drop out from school because there is no money to see them through and they take to kidnapping and oil bunkering. Kidnapping of Imperial Oil expatriates become the business of the day. Doughboy used to use Wali and other government workers as a go-between for him. As Doughboy finds out that Wali, Chief Ikaki, the Imperial Oil and other government boys make enough money from his sweat kidnapping the Imperial Oil

expatriates, he chooses his childhood friend Amaibi to stand in for him as a go-between, who will be dropping his demanded ransom. This causes Chief Ikaki, Wali and some government boys to dislike Amaibi. They now keep building a plan to get Amaibi out of their way. Amaibi's arrest and charges are only a conspiracy, a perfect opportunity to take him out of the picture. Now, it is a case between him and the government and his friend Kaniye wants to stand in for him and defend him in the court of law. But due to the system run in the country, Sir James, Kaniye's father, point out corruption thus:

The government wants Amaibi out of the way. In this country, the government are the mafia. Everything has already been arranged. The trial will be merely to rubberstamp his predetermined conviction. And the rest, as they say, will be history. (69)

The situation that lands Amaibi into the prison is arranged because of greed and envy from Chief Ikaki, Wali and other top government officials. Just because Doughboy made Amaibi bypass everyone and deal directly with the top management of the oil company, Wali and some government boys plan to make him pay. As Tubo, one of the Imperial Oil workers and a childhood friend of Amaibi convincingly says, "for Wali, Amaibi's case isn't about Manning. Manning's death was just a convenient excuse. It's really about money, and payback" (195).

The situation in Asiamama Community is so bad and corruptible. The so-called government and top ranking officials support the idea of breaking the oil pipeline in the middle of the night to collect oil but they continue stealing that which they claim belong to them. The government sees oil bunkering as a great offence when the masses do it, but to them, it is a good business that fills their bank accounts. They device means of this oil bunkering and through it, exploits the land. Saboye, Doye's brother reports it thus:

A few they powerful people in the country. I'm not sure who they are but the rumour is that they include generals in the army, and some, mainly Hausa civilians in government and business . . . Oil bunkering is not the same as stealing meat from somebody's pot. The government has a hand in it . . . It is their biggest business in Nigeria. And except these people approve of you, you cannot enter the business. (112)

The government has no interest of the masses at heart. They indulge in oil bunkering because it fetches them much money. Even at that, the government is not there at the forefront of the bunkering. They use the innocent citizens to operate the illegal duty, putting their lives in danger. Oil bunkering lead to loss of many lives in Asiana Community. Doughboy loses his only brother in the cause of oil bunkering and oil explosion. Doughboy reports this dilemma thus:

However, I could never have imagined what we saw past there. A roaring fire, about ten feet length, marked the tiny uninhabited island where Saboye and twelve other people had gone to steal or rather, bunker oil. The fire, bright and brilliant, gave enough light for us to see their deep-roasted corpses which littered the shore. The corpses were contorted into violently grotesque positions in death. Death, from the pipeline explosion, had been immediate. We smelled the heavy aroma of burnt flesh. (112)

The Niger-Delta youths lose their lives on the account of oil bunkering, which the government has forced them to do. It looks more like a better opportunity for some youths to feed themselves. The government is willing to pay for the lives of these innocent youths but they never think of changing the poor situation in Niger-Delta. No infrastructure, good roads, electricity in Niger-Delta, Asiana community. The land belongs to Asiana community, the Imperial Oil makes money from the sales of oil and the government has its own

share. Instead of making life more reasonable to the Niger-Deltans, the government enjoys to see them suffer. Catechist Akasse, the father of Amaibi, opines:

We have other problems in Asiamia. There is no electricity, no potable water, and no hospital . . . Our schools have produced some excellent students, especially this year. But many of these students, who are the future of Asiamia, cannot afford to go to the university. They are likely to join the many other unemployed Asiamia youths who roam around restlessly, causing trouble. (129)

It is unfortunate that oil is being produced in Asiamia community yet the community has nothing to boast of. Poverty wrecks the streets as government does not show any interest to develop the community. The people only survive in fishing and selling the produce. But it happens that this same source of their livelihood is being shattered. It is only one morning that the fishermen are told to leave their base camp because the government wants the Imperial Oil to use the land and it is again just one morning that the fishermen in Asiamia sail off to fish and all they can see are dead fishes floating on top of the Asiamia River. And this is caused by Imperial Oil spillage. Doughboy gives his account thus:

This year, there was also something that happened up on the Asiamia River. We woke up one morning to see oil, thick and black, floating on top of the brown water of the river. The river became sluggish in its flow, as the oil gradually choked its life away. After school, I sat on the banks and watched dead fish, turn on their sides, slowly drift by. The river bank stank. Papa called it an oil spill. (118)

Asiamia community has their chiefs and their King Amayanabo. However they are all corrupt. As Asiamia fishermen complain bitterly on the effects of Imperial Oil spillage to them, the Imperial Oil could do nothing but to compensate the fishermen through King Amayanabo. The

Imperial Oil gave him ten thousand naira to share to the Asiaina fishermen. The king neglected the plight of his people and gave them small money out of the money provided by the Imperial Oil Company. Doughboy recounts:

The Amayanabo, who I thought, was afraid of papa quickly and quietly, paid him seven hundred naira. Later on, we heard that the Amayanabo had paid only one hundred naira each to the other fishermen and kept over seven thousand naira for himself. (119)

The Asiama chief were as corrupt as their king. The Imperial Oil explosion kills many youths in Asiama. The chiefs demand for compensation so that they will forget about the lives of their youths. Only a few people like Sir James, Kaniye's father and Catechist Akassa, Amaibi's father, object to such a move by making it clear to the chiefs that compensation is not the best way to help Asiama community. Catechist Akassa put it thus:

As I understand it, Imperial Oil has offered to assist in developing Asiama. This honourable council . . . this council is to decide on what projects Imperial Oil should undertake to help our town. Even if Imperial Oil owned that pipeline, I am not sure that paying compensation for the deaths of some of our boys is the best way to help Asiama . . . We have other problems in Asiama. There is no electricity, no potable water, and no hospital. Yes, we have no good schools . . . Let us tell Imperial Oil to give some scholarship to our young people . . . Then maybe we can talk about electricity, water, a hospital, expanding our schools, a bridge and a good road, then maybe compensation. (129)

The chiefs grow a stony face, refused to look at Catechist Akassa. Others who do have anger in their eyes. Antagonism and anger because



all the projects mentioned by Catechist Akassa cannot give them any monetary benefits.

The leaders are neck deep in corruption, mismanagement, selfishness and unpatriotic acts which undermine the stability and wellbeing of the society. The masses faced kidnapping as a most profitable enterprise. The politicians and some top military personnel support them in every angle. It is the biggest con, the greatest "wayo." This is how it works in Asiamma community: A militant group will kidnap a Whiteman, and then make all sorts of reasonable demands—development for the Niger-Delta, jobs for indigenes, compensation for spills, oil companies should leave the area, etcetera. In reality, however, all it takes is a ransom. The companies usually cough up the ransom money. Sometimes, the government pays part of it. The government money usually comes from a special fund called the Security Vote. A bottomless pit of money, actually billions, to be spent without the scrutiny of accounts—that is the security vote. Government security boys, interface with the militants, the companies and the government to secure the release of the kidnapped hostage. In reality, many of them are working for themselves or for some politicians in government.

Well, let us go back to the militants. The militants make a ransom demand, let us say, five million. Now this is where the wayo starts. Since they have direct link to the militants, and the blessing of the politicians, the government security boys can say the figure is ten million, fifty million, or anything they want it to be. If the company that is paying the ransom, some people inside the company may be in the know. These company people are usually in a position to recommend that the company pay whatever the government security boys say the ransom is. Of course, they will get a cut from the money. If the government that is paying the ransom, the politicians give approval to the security boys to dip into the security vote and collect anything they want. The politicians and security boys take as much as they want, give the militants five million, receive the hostages,

and everyone is happy. The militants are simply making money for other people without knowing it. This makes Kaniye to reason at a point, wondering why no one has been caught or charged for kidnapping and he says: "Anyway, the more prolific a militant group is at kidnapping, the better it is for the government security boys" (197).

In Niger-Delta, it is not only the government that are corrupt. The masses joined hands in making life more agonising for themselves. There, it was a battle for who will drill more oil than the rest. Doughboy sadly reports the situation thus: Everyone else is milking our oil. The government has already sold the oil that will be drilled in the next decades. The politicians and military boys have shared oil blocks among themselves. The companies use outdated but cheaper drilling methods which pollute the environment. The refineries never work because it's more profitable for some people to import petroleum products. The marketers cause artificial scarcity so they can make a killing. It's never ending gang rape. (235)

The government and top politicians played with the lives of the people and have more interest in oil. They claimed they own all the land and oil. Their views were that Asiamas belongs to the government and the oil belongs to the federal government as well. Doughboy in anger speaks:

All Mr President does is shit in and drill oil from my river. Does he eat the rotten fish from Asiamas river. Does his wife drink the contaminated water? Do his grandchildren play next to gas flares and pipelines? So, how the hell can he own my river? (236)

The youths of Asiamas are left disenchanted. They see no future in their dreams. They lost hope in the present condition that exploits their community. Hunger and starvation kills them every day. No job opportunity was given to their graduates; yet their land and oil were being raped.

The graduates of Niger-Delta Asiana community are not given any job with the excuses that they are not qualified. The youths have nothing to do than to join militants. It is not that the graduates are not qualified, but it is tribalism and corruption. Doughboy points it out thus:

The Yorubas control all the juicy jobs in the oil industry, and they are the most openly biased tribe in this country. Our people are left with menial jobs. The stupid excuse is that we are not qualified. So, since I can't work as an engineer with my two-one, I'd rather be a militant than a cleaner. (233)

Doughboy graduates from the university in 1990, with two-one. He applies for a job everywhere—Imperial, Shell, Chevron. He goes for aptitude tests and passes them easily. He is called for interview but later denied the job. In this action, Doughboy says:

Actually, I was the best at the interview. But, they gave the job to one Yoruba boy who also had a two-one, the personnel manager at the time was his distant relative or something. (234)

Doughboy sees the system as corruption. He looks at the Niger-Delta, Asiana community and finds fault in everyone. In this situation, he rightly opines that:

It's no secret that we, the people of the Niger-Delta, are our own worst enemies. Some of our governors loot our states' share of oil revenues, some of our chiefs and youth leaders frustrate development from coming to our communities simply because they won't receive any monetary percentage for the contracts. Yet we always blame oil companies and the government. Don't you think we should shoulder some, if not all, of the blames for this mess we're in? (324)

The situation in Niger-Delta after oil is discovered in their land is a bad one. The government drills the oil found in Asiana community without any form of development in the community. Doughboy loses

everything including his brother in a fight for survival. He believes that he must continue this struggle with the government for his own survival. Doughboy opines:

Niger-Delta struggle is essentially a fight for oil, or the control and use of the resources from oil. No one fights for oil for purely philanthropic purposes. Yes, I have made money from my fights. But there is an ideological angle to my fight. In taking what is rightfully mine. (323)

The youths of Asiana now realise that the government is using them and their resources. They find out that the government drill their oil, cage their source of livelihood, halt development in their land and cause damages to their land. Asiana's future dies because the government exploits them and denies them their rights. No plans for the community. Amaibi further explains:

What plans do the government and companies have for our land and people after they finish drilling the oil? What are they doing to prevent the landslides, earthquakes and subsidence that may happen to our land after all oil is sucked out . . . I asked them a million times before. Are the companies forced to properly treat oil-field water, a byproduct of oil drilling, before pumping it into our rivers? Isn't that why our aquatic life and vegetation are polluted and dying? (334)

## Conclusion

Chimeka Garrick's *Tomorrow Died Yesterday* narrates beyond the pains of repression and disillusionment. It exposes the mentality of our people after they gained their freedom from the white man. The novel captures the sufferings, the pains, the disappointments, the chaos and brutality of Niger-Delta, Asiana community under the corrupt masses and leaders. Thus the novel is a satire on the evils and angers of Asiana community.

The author plead for a change through his main character, Amaibi, who put it thus:

Things are bleak. Our mentality has been corrupted. But I refuse to give up hope. We need change the way we do things. We need to stop fighting the wrong battles. Our people must drop their arms and get off the streets and creeks. The war will not be won there. The war will be won in lecturer halls as we expand the minds of our young people. It will be won in corporate boardrooms if we convince big oil companies that in the long run, it will be more profitable for them to drill ethically. (412)

The author employs devices such as irony and sarcasm to convey his message. He feels that people have been disoriented and disillusioned and he calls for change in his present time. This is a powerful and startling vivid novel.

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