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LIGNE EDITORIALE DE *PARTICIP'ACTION*

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Un résumé de l'article ne doit pas dépasser 160 mots. Le résumé doit être à la fois en français et en anglais (police Times new roman, taille 12, interligne 1,15).

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Une liste de cinq mots clés maximum décrivant l'objet de l'article.

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-La structure d'un article, doit être conforme aux règles de rédaction scientifique, selon que l'article est une contribution théorique ou résulte d'une recherche de terrain.

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- Pour un article qui est une contribution théorique et fondamentale :

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Résumé en français. Mots-clés, Abstract, Keywords,

Introduction, Méthodologie, Résultats et Discussion, Conclusion, Bibliographie.

Par exemple : Les articles conformes aux normes de présentation, doivent contenir les rubriques suivantes : introduction, problématique de l'étude, méthodologie adoptée, résultats de la recherche, perspectives pour recherche, conclusions, références bibliographiques.

Tout l'article ne doit dépasser 17 pages,

Police Times new roman, taille 12 et interligne 1,5 (maximum 30 000 mots). La revue *Particip'Action* permet l'usage de notes de bas de page pour ajouter des précisions au texte. Mais afin de ne pas alourdir la lecture et d'aller à l'essentiel, il est recommandé de **faire le moins possible usage des notes (10 notes de bas de page au maximum par article).**

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Les passages cités sont présentés en romain et entre guillemets. Lorsque la phrase citant et la citation dépassent trois lignes, il faut aller à la ligne, pour présenter la citation (interligne 1) en romain et en retrait, en diminuant la taille de police d'un point. Insérer la pagination et ne pas insérer d'information autre que le numéro de page dans l'en-tête et éviter les pieds de page.

Les figures et les tableaux doivent être intégrés au texte et présentés avec des marges d'au moins six centimètres à droite et à gauche. Les caractères dans ces figures et tableaux doivent aussi être en Times 12. Figures et tableaux doivent avoir chacun(e) un titre.

Les citations dans le corps du texte doivent être indiquées par un retrait avec tabulation 1 cm et le texte mis en taille 11.

Les références de citations sont intégrées au texte citant, selon les cas, de la façon suivante :

- (Initiale (s) du Prénom ou des Prénoms de l'auteur. Nom de l'Auteur, année de publication, pages citées) ; - Initiale (s) du Prénom ou des Prénoms de l'auteur. Nom de l'Auteur (année de publication, pages citées). Exemples :

- En effet, le but poursuivi par **M. Ascher (1998, p. 223)**, est « d'élargir l'histoire des mathématiques de telle sorte qu'elle acquière une perspective multiculturelle et globale (...), d'accroître le domaine des mathématiques : alors qu'elle s'est pour l'essentiel occupée du groupe professionnel occidental que l'on appelle les mathématiciens (...) ».

- Pour dire plus amplement ce qu'est cette capacité de la société civile, qui dans son déploiement effectif, atteste qu'elle peut porter le développement et l'histoire, S. B. Diagne (1991, p. 2) écrit :

Qu'on ne s'y trompe pas : de toute manière, les populations ont toujours su opposer à la philosophie de l'encadrement et à son volontarisme leurs propres stratégies de contournements. Celles-là, par exemple, sont lisibles dans le dynamisme, ou à tout le moins, dans la créativité dont sait preuve ce que l'on désigne sous le nom de secteur informel et à qui il faudra donner l'appellation positive d'économie populaire.

- Le philosophe ivoirien a raison, dans une certaine mesure, de lire, dans ce choc déstabilisateur, le processus du sous-développement. Ainsi qu'il le dit :

le processus du sous-développement résultant de ce choc est vécu concrètement par les populations concernées comme une crise globale : crise socio-économique (exploitation brutale, chômage permanent, exode accéléré et douloureux), mais aussi crise socio-culturelle et de civilisation traduisant une impréparation sociohistorique et une inadaptation des cultures et des comportements humains aux formes de vie imposées par les technologies étrangères. (S. Diakité, 1985, p. 105).

Pour les articles de deux ou trois auteurs, noter les initiales des prénoms, les noms et suivis de l'année (J. Batee et D. Maate, 2004 ou K. Moote, A. Pooul et E. Polim, 2000). Pour les articles ou ouvrages collectifs de plus de trois auteurs noter les initiales des prénoms, le nom du premier auteur et la mention "et al" (F. Loom et al, 2003). Lorsque plusieurs références sont utilisées pour la même information, celles-ci doivent être mises en ordre chronologique (R. Gool, 1998 et M. Goti, 2006).

Les sources historiques, les références d'informations orales et les notes explicatives sont numérotées en série continue et présentées en bas de page.

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Les divers éléments d'une référence bibliographique sont présentés comme suit : NOM et Prénom (s) de l'auteur, Année de publication, Zone titre, Lieu de publication, Zone Editeur, pages (p.) occupées par l'article dans la revue ou l'ouvrage collectif.

Dans la zone titre, le titre d'un article est présenté en romain et entre guillemets, celui d'un ouvrage, d'un mémoire ou d'une thèse, d'un rapport, d'une revue ou d'un journal est présenté en italique. Dans la zone Editeur, on indique la Maison d'édition (pour un ouvrage), le Nom et le numéro/volume de la revue (pour un article). Au cas où un ouvrage est une traduction et/ou une réédition, il faut préciser après le titre le nom du traducteur et/ou l'édition (ex : 2nde éd.).

Ne sont présentées dans les références bibliographiques que les références des documents cités. Les références bibliographiques sont présentées par ordre alphabétique des noms d'auteur. Il convient de prêter une attention particulière à la qualité de l'expression. Le Comité scientifique de la revue se réserve le droit de réviser les textes, de demander des modifications (mineures ou majeures) ou de rejeter l'article de manière définitive ou provisoire (si des corrections majeures doivent préalablement y être apportées). L'auteur est consulté préalablement à la diffusion de son article lorsque le Comité scientifique apporte des modifications. Si les corrections ne sont pas prises en compte par l'auteur, la direction de la revue *Particip'Action* se donne le droit de ne pas publier l'article.

AMIN Samir, 1996, *Les défis de la mondialisation*, Paris, Le Harmattan.

AUDARD Cathérine, 2009, *Qu'est-ce que le libéralisme ? Ethique, politique, société*, Paris, Gallimard.

BERGER Gaston, 1967, *L'homme moderne et son éducation*, Paris, PUF.

DIAGNE Souleymane Bachir, 2003, « Islam et philosophie. Leçons d'une rencontre », *Diogène*, 202, p. 145-151.

DIAKITE Sidiki, 1985, *Violence technologique et développement. La question africaine du développement*, Paris, Le Harmattan.

NB1 : Chaque auteur dont l'article est retenu pour publication dans la revue *Particip'Action* participe aux frais d'édition à raison de **55.000** francs CFA (soit **84 euros** ou **110** dollars US) par article et par numéro. Il reçoit, à titre gratuit, un tiré-à-part.

NB2 : La quête philosophique centrale de la revue *Particip'Action* reste : **Fluidité identitaire et construction du changement : approches pluri-et/ou transdisciplinaires.**

Les auteurs qui souhaitent se faire publier dans nos colonnes sont priés d'avoir cette philosophie comme fil directeur de leur réflexion.

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ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER: A STUDY IN AYI KWEI ARMAH'S THE BEAUTIFUL ONES ARE NOT YET BORN AND NDIKARU WA TERESIA'S CRY OF THE OPPRESSED

Tikpambiti N'BATCHAKA*
&
Monfaye KOFFI*

Abstract

This paper raises the burning issue of environment degradation as a consequence of bad governance. In fact, African elites were expected to lead their states and fellow citizens to a safer and more secure destination, but once in power, they rather pushed the masses into abject poverty and misery. Not only do these leaders oppress and subdue the masses, but they also exploit the physical environment. The ecosystem is permanently degraded and no one cares about that. All that matters to the decision makers is how to enrich themselves, regardless of the outcome of their irresponsibility on their fellow citizens. The situation is so serious that palliatives need to be sought so as to address the problematic of environmental disaster if we still wish to live long on our planet Earth.

Keywords: Environmental Disaster, leaders, exploit, ecosystem, irresponsibility.

Résumé

A travers la présente étude, notre objectif est de soulever l'épineux problème de la destruction de l'environnement comme étant la conséquence de l'action anthropique et comme la conséquence d'une mauvaise gouvernance. En effet, le manque de considération vis-à-vis de la Nature et de tous les éléments qui l'entourent notamment en Afrique, serait la résultante de la mauvaise gouvernance perpétrée par les dirigeants des pays de l'Afrique contemporaine. Une fois au pouvoir, ces élites Africaines qui étaient supposées conduire leurs pays et leurs peuples à bonnes destinations ont plutôt induit la masse dans une pauvreté accrue. Ces leaders ont, non seulement maintenu leurs peuples dans la misère, mais ils se sont aussi livrés à l'exploitation abusive de l'environnement. L'écosystème est permanemment dégradé et personne ne s'en soucie. Ce qui urge pour les décideurs politiques, c'est comment s'enrichir au détriment de la masse. La situation est aussi alarmante qu'il urge de trouver des palliatifs à la question de la dégradation environnementale si nous souhaitons continuer vivre aussi longtemps sur cette planète terre.

Mots-clés : Dégâts Environnementaux, leaders, exploité, écosystème, irresponsabilité.

Introduction

Man and Nature are intimate elements that have been cohabitating over the generations. They have interchangeable functions that they play for the wellbeing of

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humanity. However, very recently both agencies have developed a critical relationship as man has started abusing nature in various ways. Natural resources are being misused, trees are being regularly cut down, seasons are becoming unpredictable, wastes are being over-produced and insalubrity prevails in every corner of the planet earth. This natural instability coupled with the frequent and repetitive occurrence of natural and anthropic calamities has put humanity at the highest risk. To meet their insatiable and egoistic needs, human beings usually damage and destroy the environment regardless the negative impacts that this action may have on the whole society. As Tawhida A. and Tariq A. (2022, p.9) argue, “the environmental issue is one of the main worries of the day”. It is no doubt clear that one of the greatest pains affecting mankind is the threat that nature daily undergoes due to the actions of man. Environmental troubles have become burning issues for the last decades. This updated issue is not without consequences. It alarms the entire globe with its negative impacts on man and the ecosystem itself. Many writers and critics, hence, wrote about environmental issues to highlight the extent to which nature is being exploited. Paramount among them are Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, Rachel Carson, Wangari Maathai, Michael Braungart to cite but a few. These scholars have devoted most of their writings to raising matters related to the environment and the ecology. Their studies are meant to address the environmental havoc which seriously impacts the global cycle of humankind. Such scholars are known as ecocritics since their task is to highlight the degrading features of Nature as the result of human’s actions.

The analysis of issues in link with nature and environment is alluded to as ecocriticism. Ecocriticism is hence, defined as criticism on and about ecology. It is the writings that deal with environmental issues in connection with man and his actions. Ecocriticism, to some simple extent, is literature about nature. Primer (1994, p3) defines ecocriticism as “the critical and pedagogical broadening of literary studies to include texts that deal with the nonhuman world and our relationship to it” Based on that definition, ecocriticism appears as a pedagogical use of the tool of literature to be used to retrace the intimacy that exists between man and Nature or the connection between the human and the nonhuman.

Alluding to the essential function of ecocriticism, Tawhida A. and Tariq A. (2022, p18) elaborate on the opinion that:

Ecocriticism's greatest mission inside the first part of the twenty-first century is to deal with the question of environmental troubles in nature writing, nature poetry, and barren

place narrative. Ecocriticism's schedule is worried about issues of social justice and equity. Ecocriticism has reformist and transformational aspirations.

From the above excerpt, one could easily infer that ecocriticism is a study that is preoccupied with the environmental issues either in prose, poetry in drama. It purports to raise problems of environmental injustice or inequity in view of sorting out suggestive solutions. Writers are artists and as such, they have to be interestingly creative so as to reform the mind of society. In other terms, ecological critics have the mission of drawing people's attention and awareness to the urgent need to promote and preserve the ecosystem. That is to say, facing the global ongoing environmental crisis, there is a necessity to study the phenomenon with the prior aim of coming out with sustainable palliatives and concrete solutions to it. Therefore, literature appears as a tool used to analyse social and societal constraints on nature as the result of man's action. In that vain, it helps denounce the socio-political as well as economic exploitation of the environment along with its components. Literature, therefore, gets interested in the ecological perspective of humankind. Henceforth, throughout this study, we seek to address the issue of environmental havoc as dealt with by both Ayi Kwei Armah and Ndikaru Wa Teresia in their respective novels *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* and *Cry of the Oppressed*

1- Ecocritical Reading of Ndikaru Wa Teresia's *Cry of the Oppressed* and Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*

The environmental issue is one of the outstanding problems raised in Ndikaru Wa Teresia's *Cry of the Oppressed* as well as in Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*.

Both novels can be read using the input of postcolonial ecocriticism as the works depict important aspects of the environment degradation resulting from bad leadership. Ecocriticism is also defined by Alpalsan T. and Safiya J. (2019, p.37), as "the study of literature from the purview of nature and environment". This implies that literature that discusses the environmental is referred to as ecocriticism or ecocritical analysis of literary texts. Thus said, our critical reading of the two literary masterpieces mentioned above will be done distinctly using the lenses of ecocriticism.

1.1 Ecocritical Reading of Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*.

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born is above all, a satirical novel that intends to downgrade the governance of political African leaders at the morrow of independence. It is a piece of fiction that aims to reveal the flaws and weaknesses of post independent African leaders as their states got freed from the heaviest yoke of western colonialism and bondage. Post-colonial African leaders, after conquering to positions in the states, do not care about their ecology. Showcasing the specific example of Ghana as a newly independent African state, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* skilfully reveals the irresponsibility of the Ghanaian government under the leadership of late Kwame Nkrumah. Known for its high degree of corruption the Nkrumah's regime also proved mediocre in taking good care of the environment and all the elements of the ecosystem surrounding the country. Many of their actions as rulers are impacting negatively the environment in such a way that the decadence discussed in Armah's novel is not only moral or cultural but also environmental. Immorality can also be understood as environmental uncleanliness linked to filth and pollution. The degradation of human morality has consequently led to the degradation of the environment; the fact which can be illustrated through Koomson's perpetual search for gleam in the novel, regardless the sufferance of the masses and the impact of such actions on the whole environment. As Koomson has diner in the man's house, he couldn't afford going into the dirty toilet room when a boy preceded him, he simply "let a small gasp escape him, hesitated at the door, then, then with just a single glance into the entrails of the latrine, he turned back. He said nothing to the man and the man did not ask him anything." (Armah, 1968, p.134). Individuals, in their scramble for material wealth, willingly or unwillingly destroy and damage their environment. Armah has pointed it out in these terms:

Apart from the wood itself there were, of course, people themselves, just so many hands and fingers bringing help to the wood in its course toward putrefaction. Left-hand fingers in their careless journey from a hasty anus sliding all the way up the banister as their owners made the return trip from the lavatory downstairs to the offices above (Armah, 1968, p.12).

As the leaders exploit and oppress their masses, so do they neglect their ecosystem. No care is taken of hygienic rules and the countries' cities are soiled and rotten with dirt and putrefaction. Private dwellings as well as public services are messy and disordered. The concrete example well-chosen by the narrator to depict the issue of environmental havoc in the novel is the bad implementation of an environmental project by the Ghanaian political

officials. At the opening of the narrative, the writer informs the reader about a costly campaign initiated by state officials to rid the town of its filth and uncleanness. The project which is entitled “Keep Your Country Clean By Keeping Your City Clean” (p.7) has turned out to be a great failure in its phase of implementation. Although some receptacles were put in place for waste disposal, no one cared about them once they were full. People continued throwing their wastes on the recipient in such a way that its inscriptions became invisible. The author narrates the fact in a most sneering manner:

In the end, not many of the boxes were put out, though there was a lot said about the large amount of money paid for them. The few provided, however, had not been ignored. People used them well, so that it took no time at all for them to get full. People still used them, and they overflowed with banana peels and mango seeds and thoroughly sucked-out oranges and the chaff of sugarcane and most of all the thick brown wrappings from a hundred balls of *kenkey* (Armah, 1968, p.8).

A thorough reading of this extract, reflects in the readers' minds the image of a disposal filled with dirt and waste and set in an unlivable environment. The fact that people continue to use the receptacle, though it overflows, is evidence that humans chiefly contribute to the environmental havoc. Citizens refuse to abide by the hygienic laws before the speechless mouths of the political leaders. The negligence of the health care authorities coupled with the carelessness and irresponsibility of political governors has impacted the way citizens manage their immediate environment. This is also a message that the African leaders implement well-planned projects based only on what they can gain from these projects. Once those projects are financed; the benefits go directly into the pockets of a selected few and no care is taken of the thing. The environment is abandoned to its own destiny. As if the situation was not well-illustrated, the novelist makes a driver urinates on the containers and “his urine hitting the clean-your-city can as if to mock the thing” (Armah, 1968, p.39). Creating a character and making him urinate on the over-filled garbage can is a way of ironizing the whole masqueraed behind the so-called project of keeping the country clean. The fact that the government does not care about emptying the can creating thus insalubrity, shows that they are not serious when it comes to the project. They have reached their goal in pocketing part of the money meant for that project. They no longer care about the cleanliness of the country.

An additional fact that illustrates the derisive aspect of environment protection in Armah's novel is the image of decadence and rottenness used to represent the Ghanaian landscape and its inhabitants. The situation is so alarming that the narrator narrates the story using a much filthy and dirty vocabulary as he depicts the environment in which people live daily. The author depicts an environment characterized by filth, putrefaction and all the

elements that are related to human waste including odors, vomits, blood and phlegm. The most remarkable thing noticed throughout the novel is that almost all the environmental constraints are man made. The odors of vomits and other filths and excreta disturb readers' sense of thinking. The fact can be exemplified through the following excerpts:

Hot smell of caked shit split by afternoon's baking sun ...Here, there is only the stale soapsuds merging in grainy rotten dirt from everybody's scum, a reminder of armpits full of yellowed hair dripping sweat down arms raised casually in places of public intimacy (Armah, 1968, pp. 40-41).

If the cited extract may provoke nausea to the readers' throat, it is no doubt, a strategy chosen by the novelist to paint the degree of insalubrity prevailing in that country. It is also, in our view a way for him to raise people's awareness about the seriousness of the matter related to environmental havoc. Following a corpus assisted approach of studying Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Samuel Nkansah numbered the frequency of use of words like filth, decay and rot by the narrator as a sign to prove the so degraded environment in which people live. From his analysis, (Nkansah, 2021, p. 30) realized however, that:

The occurrence of the terms *rot* and *decay* which occur twenty-nine times representing 66.66%, filth and dirt fourteen (14) times representing 21.5% and bribery and corruption eight (8) times representing 12% in the novel. The data suggest that rot and decay, which the researcher labels as 'decomposition', is a dominant concern that seeks to drown the nation in the novel.

From this linguistic literary analysis, comes the final result that the words rot and decay are more dominant than any other term. This implies that the writer has attached more importance to the issue of environmental decadence than to any other topic in the novel. Though the novel is known to be addressing specifically the problematic of corruption, yet the word corruption is numbered as used only eight times which implies that the matter of corruption in terms of bribery is less predominant than that of nature or environment destruction.

Another paramount point which the narrator uses to depict people's irresponsibility towards the environment is the case with the conductor at the very beginning of the narrative. When the bus arrived at its stop, the conductor brought out his manhood and started pissing in public near the foodstuff sellers. After urinating, the conductor bought a loaf of bread and returned to his bus eating his food with his dirty hands. This shows the extent to which environment cleanliness does not mean anything to anybody. What matters the most is where and how one could find one's daily food; that is, one's pittance. Once the food is obtained, no mind is reserved for hygiene.

Moreover, the aspect of dirtiness can clearly be depicted through the lamentation of the narrator when he was going home from his office. The passage reads:

The nostrils, incredibly, are joined in the way that is most horrifying direct to the throat itself and to the entrails right through to their end. Across the aisle on the seat opposite, an old man is sleeping and his mouth is open to the air rushing in the night with how many particles of what? (Armah, 1968, pp. 40-41)

Based on this extract, readers may wonder why Armah as a Ghanaian himself, has totally exposed his country's failure to secure its. It is also possible to assume that the description of the situation in the above passage could be viewed as a metaphorical discourse which shows people's degree of immorality and irresponsibility, particularly in Ghana and in Africa as a whole. Through these symbols and imagery, Armah conveys a message that reflects the realities lived in most of our African countries and cities after independence. In this vein, Alpaslan T. and Safiya J. (2019, p.48), observes that "the presentation of a filthy and dirty environment by Armah serves as a metaphor to represent the level of decay, corruption and collapse within the ruling class in the postcolonial African society." In the attempt to analyse Armah's vision by describing his society in the way he did, Miller C. (1968, p. 19) opines in these terms:

To the clerk, going to the toilet is a nightmare, not only because the public lavatories which he uses happen to violate every rule of hygiene but because they also represent in very physical sense, the moral contamination which surrounds him sometimes even tempt him in his full way and against which he must always be on guard. Armah has treated a most delicate function with remarkable skill and force.

The concluding part of Miller's comment is a praise to Armah for his skillful and artistic use of words to paint a worrying situation which undermines the African communities and that needs to be corrected. A more illustrative passage that describes the filthy environment in the novel is the bathroom in which the man has his bath. The place is smelly, dirty and rather inappropriate for a normal human being to go to. However, this is the setting the author finds suitable for him to convey his message to his audience. This is therefore, a way for him to inform his readers that people are living in slums and ghettos where no hygienic prescription is obeyed. The slums are then equated to a jungle, whereby each individual behaves as they please. Armah goes deeper in his writing by describing artfully and thoroughly how the door of the slum is rotten at the bottom with a smell escaping from the dead wood. The bathroom has a hole through which water flows carrying strands of fibers from rotten sponges. Besides, the man on one occasion, came to his office at the railway station and was welcomed by an abandoned vomit of a traveller. There again, when he felt the desire to go to toilet, he opted for the junior staff latrine. The place was another representation of filthy and

decayed social environment as everything was smelling and rotting. As the man reads the inscriptions on the wall of the toilet room, the scripts say: "...vagina sweet...money sweet pass all...who born fool...socialism chop make I chop...country broke...you broke not so? Pray for detention...jailman chop free." (Armah, 1968, p. 106) This shows the extent to which people care less about their environment but are rather preoccupied by profit making. This looks like a capitalist world in which everyone struggles to have their share of the 'National Cake' no matter what happens next.

In Armah's text under discussion, we notice that he has generated a military overthrow of government. The situation became so unbearable that the politicians like Joseph Koomson have to run away. In his process of escaping, Koomson will be helped by the man, one of his oldest school friends. The help consisted in making Koomson escape through the toilet hole full of shit and smell. By rescuing the minister in this dishonest way, Armah, somehow, would like to convey a message about the probable end that awaits post colonial African leaders who are reluctant to take good care of their social environment. In case they refuse to maintain their environment clean, there is no fear, that the same 'nature' will dictate its law to them sooner or later. At that time, they would probably harvest what they had sown earlier on.

Shortly put, throughout this analysis, one comes to have a clear depiction of what post-colonial African leadership really looks like as leaders neglect, oppress and exploit the environment. Facing the situation, writers like Armah intend to call upon leaders to be more responsible and grant much more care to the environmental issues that prevail in most parts of their countries.

1.2 Ecocritical Reading of Ndikaru Wa Teresia's Cry of the Oppressed

Ndikaru, through his *Cry of the Oppressed*, has not closed his eyes when decrying the contemporary burning issue of climate change and environment protection as the consequence of man's actions and political leaders' irresponsibility. Dirty towns, un-usable roads, social infrastructures and amenities are presented to the readers at every part of the book pointing hence, an accusing finger to the degree of irresponsibility of the political leaders of fictional Sabasita. As the outcome of bad leadership, the environment has to bear almost the same stroke as Sabasitan citizens themselves. The ecosystem undergoes the same exploitation as the people.

From the very beginning of the novel, the narrator portrays a given town known as Kiryandogo, where the environment is degraded with its bumpy roads and its thousands heaps

of rotten garbage as compared to the town of Bonde. From the aerial to the bird's eye-view, the environment bears almost the same aspect that could not favor a safe and secure journey. In a coherent passage, the writer illustratively clarifies that:

Elsewhere, the driver wasn't sure how to avoid the potholes. The conditions that unfolded in the street roads were very unfavorable. The monotony of gullies and mud holes would however, be broken by rotting garbage heaps. A serious quagmire would then be encountered if you ventured into the rutted Chatu Street, alongside Maendeleo open-air market" (W. T. Ndikaru, 2005, p. 38)

This excerpt from Ndikaru's novel, sheds more light on the image of the cities of Sabasita in terms of environment preservation. Hence, either in Bonde, Kiryandogo, Chatu or Maendeleo, streets are in poor conditions; neglected by the political officials. Everybody, especially leaders are quite aware of the situation of roads impracticability, "yet none of the government officials made promises to repair the roads. But one couldn't deny the occasional presence of road surveyors" (W.T. Ndikaru, 2005, pp.48). This's a message that no care is taken of the environmental issues; which to some extent, is the same realities that are experienced in contemporary African cities. In case any attention has to be paid to the issue of environment, it could no doubt be relying on foreign aid with its capitalistic interests. Such aids which are granted with profits going into the pockets of the former colonizers are generally meant to make poor countries poorer. As an example, showcasing the bitter cooperation between developed and underdeveloped or African countries, Rut signed a Union Charter with the United States of America in matter of the environment preservation. The Charter stipulates that:

Washington and its allies required not to wait until their services as critics of wrong systems were invoked. Rather, fruitful diplomacy was needed to boost the Union's economic, social and political achievements and to produce the prospects of ecological disaster by helping to ventilate the growing threat of environmental deterioration (W.T. Ndikaru, 2005, p.156).

Such a charter which intended to bring together the United States of America (USA) and the United States of Africa (USA), has been a failure. This seems to be an urgent appeal to the contemporary African leaders that the shortcomings encountered in the management of their states ought to find their solutions in Africa not elsewhere. They have to be a little more conscious and tackle those problems by themselves instead of always relying on alien forces. Solutions to the environmental havoc need to be sought at home in Africa.

Deploring this form of interference by the westerners in the management of the African states' affairs, J. A. Alemazung (2010, p.63) declares that "international factors affecting governments, states and politics in Africa are exogenous components which can be

regarded as playing significant role (positively and negatively) in the unfolding of socio-economic and political developments on the continent.” Lamenting the same situation in African states, Kwame Nkrumah (1975, p.69) opines that “even though these states were independent, their economic system and eventually their political policy were indirectly formulated by the colonizers”. All these thoughts brought together confirm the existence of postcolonialism in the running of post independent African countries. This system alluded as colonial legacy, is very often expressed in terms of aids, which does not favor the countries they intend to help. The system rather undermines and exploit the countries maintaining them in perpetual bondage. Alluding to the economic form of neo-colonialism in *Cry of the Oppressed*, Ndikaru (2005, p.150). made the narrator assert:

After decades of ignoring the impact of IMF/World Bank prescriptions about their economic potentials, African leaders were now ready to drop the term ‘Aid’, because they learnt it implied economic neo-colonialism by the so-called industrialized powers. Once, Sabasita’s Minister for Finance intimidated that they extend credit which Africans barter for their goods and services, and which eventually overtake the value of what they intended to secure and _ the terminology dubbed with mismanagement. We find ourselves loaded with debts that we can’t pay or service.

This form of economic exploitation not only affects the citizens of the exploited countries but also their environments which have to suffer the innumerable projects referred to as ‘white elephants’.

An additional aspect where the environmental destruction is seen and experienced in Ndikaru’s masterpiece, is the description of Bob Twiga’s administration block known as the ‘white house’ which has undergone some “generations of dusts” (W.T. Ndikaru, 2005, p.40). A white house having absorbed years of dust will no more be white, of course. This paints an image of the state of the building into the mind of the readers. The oldness of the office combined with the great amount of dirt on it, proves that no care is taken of that infrastructure. The local school even shares the same office with Chief Twiga, which in some sense, looks abnormal and irresponsible from the local authorities.

An additional infrastructure known for its dirtiness is the detention house filled with fleas that “kept the prisoner trotting like a calf enjoying its mama’s milk” and which “attacked until the body was all scratches, but would never give up their assignment” (W.T. Ndikaru, 2005, p. 43). The presence of innumerable fleas in a jail is synonymous with the passiveness of political authorities in the resolution of environmental problems undermining postindependence African states. The environment is soiled from the private to the public places. Besides, the writer also informs his readers about a place where Dam’ Rut was

graduated, which is a bungalow inherited from a certain Joshua. The village is said to be forbidden simply because of its “immunity against beggars, rotting garbage and the stench of pollution that permeated the whole city” (W.T. Ndikaru, 2005, pp. 101-102). This shows the earlier conditions under which Dam’ Rut had lived. Now that he himself has climbed to power, he should under normal circumstances pay more attention to the environmental issue than to any other subject of social life. Unfortunately, he only cares for himself alone, living in “Paris-style homes compound decorated with innumerable species of flowers” (W.T. Ndikaru, 2005, p.102). From the exploited individual, Dam’Rut has become the exploiter of people and the environment, which copes with the saying that “power corrupts even the best of individuals” (W.T. Ndikaru, 2005, p. 175).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the current article has purposely addressed the spiny issue of environmental degradation. The analysis has basically focused on Armah’s *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* and Ndikaru’s *Cry of the Oppressed*; two literary works that raise the problematic of environmental havoc prevailing particularly in almost every part of Africa. The severe exploitation of the ecosystems coupled with the negligence of the environmental components are some of the ills undermining the contemporary African states. Local governors attach less importance to the ecological challenges and this points to the reason why Nature is threatened and tortured by people. Political African leaders who are supposed to be more preoccupied by that issue of environmental havoc, are rather irresponsible in terms of protecting and preserving Nature. As a consequence, everybody, especially the citizens, become victims of this eco-trauma characterized by the globalizing phenomenon of climate change; manifested through the punctual occurrence of natural calamities like hurricanes, flooding, drought, earthquakes, seasonal shifts, to mention but a few.

Facing the exponential rise of environmental problems, suggestive solutions ought to be sought and implemented so as to attempt to reduce the least of consequences of this phenomenon of climate change. Adaptive methods need to be developed to help face that thunderous plague undermining the whole planet. Besides, communities have to be more resilient in their attempt to address in a more specific way the issue of environmental degradation. In this perspective, citizens should therefore, be totally engaged in safeguarding and keeping their environment clean and safe. As for political decision makers, true and sincere policies should be implemented with the objective of addressing current and future

environmental disparities. Critics, as for them, have the responsibility to continue playing the role that is theirs in raising people's awareness about the issue of ecological damage. Being the voice of the voiceless, writers should keep on challenging the social injustice that people as well as Nature are always faced with in their daily lives. Such an outstanding action may help reduce at least the risk of social irresponsibility among both political power holders and the ordinary citizens.

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