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Actes du 3eme Colloque Scientifique International des
Laboratoires LAReLSo et LaRMA - (FLSL- UYOB)

tenue les 30 et 31 Mars 2026 à Kabala



Thème : Résolution des crises en Afrique et reconstruction
nationale par les sciences et la recherche scientifique à l'ère
de l'Alliance des États du Sahel (AES)



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LAReLSo et LaRMA de l'Université Yambo Ouologuem de Bamako,
sise à Kabala sur le thème : " RESOLUTION DES CRISES EN
AFRIQUE ET RECONSTRUCTION NATIONALE PAR LES
SCIENCES ET LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE A L'ERE DE
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The African Journal Kurukan Fuga is an online scientific journal of the Department of Education and Research in English (DER English) of the University of Letters and Human Sciences of Bamako. It is a quarterly Journal which appears in March, June, September and December. The African Journal Kurukan Fuga was set up from the desire of the English Department professors to enrich their university landscape, which is quite poor in scientific journals (three journals for the whole university). Indeed, more and more young teacher-researchers arrive in our universities, and higher education institutions and institutes with very limited publication opportunities. The English Department is a case in point, with more than forty young doctors and doctoral students producing scientific articles which almost always have to be published elsewhere. The African Journal Kurukan Fuga intends to boost scientific research by offering larger publication spaces with its four annual publications. The creation of this journal is therefore intended as a response to the many requests made by many teacher-researchers in Mali and elsewhere who often do not have free access to quality online documentation for teaching and research. The journal favors texts in English; however, texts in other languages are also accepted.

The journal publishes only quality articles that have not been published or submitted for publication in any other journals. Each article is subjected to a double blind reading. The quality and originality of the articles are the only criteria for publication.

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*Actes du 3eme Colloque
Scientifique International des
Laboratoires LAReLSo et
LaRMA de l'Université des
Lettres et Sciences Humaines de
Bamako, sise à Kabala*

*Sur le thème : Résolution des
crises en Afrique et
reconstruction nationale par
les sciences et la recherche
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Argumentaire de l'appel à communication du 3eme Colloque Scientifique International des Laboratoires LAReLSo et LaRMA (UYOB-FLSL)

I-CONTEXTE ET JUSTIFICATION

L'Afrique, depuis son accession à la souveraineté politique dans les années soixante, demeure en proie à des crises multidimensionnelles, mêlant insécurité armée, fractures sociales, fragilité étatique, corruption, *Africaphobie*¹ et chocs économiques, qui compromettent durablement ses trajectoires de développement et entravent l'affirmation d'une véritable indépendance sur tous les plans. C'est dans ce contexte que des leaders patriotes et visionnaires, notamment au sein de l'Alliance des États du Sahel, s'attachent à rompre les chaînes de l'impérialisme, du néocolonialisme, du sous-développement et de la dépendance à l'Occident. Cependant, il convient de noter que les premiers leaders africains révolutionnaires tels que Modibo KEITA, Julius NYERERE, Kwame KRUMMAH, Thomas SANKARA, Mohammad GADAFI et d'autres ont vu leurs luttes avortées en mi-chemin car elles n'étaient pas assez adossées à la science et à la recherche scientifique. De même plusieurs crises assaillent l'Afrique de nos jours, surtout sur le plan sécuritaire, mais la réponse semble être toujours soit militaire, soit faire recours à des personnes non universitaires, voire des non experts dans le domaine de la recherche scientifique. Le Mali, le Burkina Faso et le Niger ne font malheureusement pas exception. Pour pallier cette situation, une place de choix devrait être accordée aux sciences et la recherche scientifique d'où l'impérieuse nécessité de l'implication du monde universitaire.

En effet, les sciences, qu'elles soient africaines ou importées, constituent sans nul doute le véritable creuset de connaissances, de savoir-faire et de technicité permettant de poser des diagnostics fins, des outils de prévention et des évaluations d'impact indispensables pour concevoir des politiques publiques ou stratégies adaptées aux spécificités locales sahéliennes et africaines. Les approches scientifiques permettent également de dépasser les réponses purement militaires en intégrant prévention, résilience sociale, relance économique et réconciliation, et en rendant les interventions plus légitimes et efficaces. Pour corroborer ce qui précède, Aristote dans le *Traité d'Organon* écrit : « La connaissance scientifique se définit comme la connaissance des causes, son approche formelle vise à distinguer le démontrable (théorèmes) et l'indémontrable (axiomes), ce qui relève de l'enchaînement causal et ce qui relève des principes premiers. » (Vrin, 1979, p.89). En termes explicites, la recherche scientifique favorise l'appréhension objective et la découverte réelle des causes d'un problème ou d'une problématique tout en évitant de s'agripper à des causes qui ne découlent pas d'une connaissance scientifique véritablement avérée. Il est également saillant de faire remarquer que la recherche est un effort pour trouver quelque chose ou un effort de l'esprit vers la connaissance (Le Grain, M., 1994, p. 945). De même, D. Bruno (1994, p. 85), soulignera que la recherche est un exercice systématique et méthodique portant sur l'étude d'un problème ou d'une question et mettant en cause des faits qui doivent être vérifiables en vue d'atteindre une fin : la résolution d'un problème ou la réponse à une question ou d'une hypothèse préalable, la recherche exige

¹ Terme utilisé par l'écrivain malien Aboubacar Sidiki COULIBALY (2024, p.95) dans son roman socio-historique, *Le monde Africain doit se réveiller*, Bamako : Alqalam, pour signifier le rejet et le dégoût pour tout ce qui est africain ou renvoie à l'Homme africain ou à l'Afrique

ipso facto un travail d'interprétation. La science, quant à elle, renvoie à l'ensemble des connaissances humaines acquises par la spécialisation (études) ou par l'expérience (pratiques). Son fondement est la raison et l'objectivité.

En sus, l'émergence de l'Alliance des États du Sahel (AES) crée un nouvel espoir pour toute l'Afrique et constitue un espace stratégique sous régional requérant des réponses harmonisées mais devraient être fondées sur des savoirs locaux et scientifiques pour ménager la sécurité, la gouvernance et la reconstruction nationale. C'est pour cette raison que COULIBALY (2024, p.94) écrit : « La seule science qui libère l'Homme véritablement quel que soit le degré de l'aliénation est la science de soi-même. » Nous comprenons ainsi la prééminence des connaissances, des valeurs et savoir-faire endogènes dans la résolution des conflits et la reconstruction nationale à l'ère de la reconfiguration de l'Afrique et de la multipolarisation du monde.

Ce troisième colloque international offrira une tribune idéale pour interroger, analyser et préconiser, dans toute leur étendue, les outils pertinents de décolonisation, les mécanismes de résolution des crises et les dynamiques de reconstruction des États africains par la science et la recherche scientifique, dans un contexte marqué par les enjeux du néocolonialisme et de la menace terroriste. Il convient d'ores et déjà d'affirmer que science et recherche scientifique sont indissociables et qu'elles doivent exercer pleinement leur vocation pour résoudre les grandes problématiques de la cité et favoriser son développement.

Comme Objectif, ce colloque scientifique international vise à créer un cadre de rencontres et d'échanges entre chercheurs nationaux et internationaux sur la problématique de la décolonisation véritable, la résolution des crises par la science et la recherche scientifique au Sahel et en Afrique de façon générale. Il ambitionne également de proposer, à partir des résultats scientifiques issus des travaux menés par les chercheurs et enseignants-chercheurs du Sahel, de l'Afrique et, plus largement, de la communauté scientifique internationale, des pistes de solutions endogènes aux défis sécuritaires et de développement qui fragilisent ces régions sur tous les plans. A cet effet, les axes suivants sont retenus pour les propositions de communication :

II-AXES DE COMMUNICATION

- **Axe 1 : Diagnostic scientifique des crises africaines et reconstruction nationale**

Mettre en lumière la capacité des disciplines scientifiques à analyser finement les causes multidimensionnelles des crises (insécurité armée, fragilité étatique, ruptures sociales, *Africaphobie*, chocs économiques), en mobilisant tant les méthodologies quantitatives que qualitatives pour établir un état des lieux rigoureux.

- **Axe 2 : Littérature, Langue et valorisation des valeurs et savoirs endogènes**

Promouvoir les recherches conduites en terre africaine et la redécouverte des savoir-faire traditionnels comme fondements d'une science authentiquement africaine, apte à proposer des solutions adaptées aux réalités culturelles, sociales et environnementales du Sahel et du continent.

- **Axe 3 : Gouvernance, sécurité et développement fondés sur la recherche**
Souligner l'importance d'intégrer systématiquement les résultats scientifiques dans l'élaboration et l'évaluation des politiques publiques, afin de dépasser les réponses purement militaires et d'instaurer des dispositifs de prévention, de résilience civile et de relance économique légitimes et durablement efficaces.
- **Axe 4 – Libre**
Cet axe est libre et prend en compte tous les autres volets connexes.

III-Calendrier

- Lancement de l'appel : **22 Novembre 2025**
- Date limite de soumissions **des abstracts/résumés : 10 Mars 2026**,
- Les Notifications d'acceptation : **15 mars 2025**
- Date de déroulement du 2^{ème} Colloque Scientifique International : **30 et 31 mars 2026 à l'Université Yambo OUOLOGUEM de Bamako-Kabala-Mali.**

IV-Informations générales sur le colloque

- Les propositions de communication (**New Times Roman, police 12,interligne simple**), assorties d'un résumé de **300 mots** et de **5 mots clés** maximum en **français ou en anglais ou en arabe** sont recevables aux adresses électroniques suivantes : Labolarelso010@gmail.com ou larmaulshbmali@gmail.com jusqu'au **10 Mars 2026**.
Date de notification des résumés acceptés : 15 Mars 2026.Le colloque se déroulera du **30 au 31 mars 2026** à la cité universitaire de Kabala – à l'Université Yambo OUOLOGUEM de Bamako.
- Les auteurs y indiqueront les noms et prénoms du ou des contributeurs, l'institution/laboratoire d'attache, le grade ou la qualité, l'axe d'étude choisi, l'adresse électronique et les mots-clés au-dessous du résumé. Les langues d'écriture des communications ou articles sont le français, l'anglais et l'arabe. **Les auteurs des propositions des résumés retenus seront invités à payer 25.000FCFA comme frais de participation par communicant.** Les meilleurs textes après évaluation seront publiés dans un numéro spécial de la *Revue Kuru kan Fuga* ou la *Revue LaRMA*.

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Diagnosing and Negotiating State Fragility in Postcolonial Africa: Governance Lessons from Achebe's *A Man of the People* and *Anthills of the Savannah*

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Abstract:

Among the attempts to remediate the recurrent instability in postcolonial Africa, the military solution comes on top. However, the military response seems to be inefficient since it has consistently failed to bring about the expected sustainable peace and institutional stability. This work presents itself as a critical stance toward the dominant military intrusion into the political sphere, as the ultimate solution to the failure of African politicians. The argument supporting this stand is that literature and academic research are some neglected approaches though they can serve as alternative proactive tools for rethinking governance and preventing conflicts. This aligns with the view of African authors and theorists who consider literature as a space where adaptation, improvement and readjustment of socio-political and economic governances can be imagined. This is about governance inspired by literature, which means the ethical political frameworks represented in fictions such as Achebe's *A Man of the People* and *Anthills of the Savannah*. Consequently, literature stands as a tool of civic pedagogy and a strategic proactive resource that can prevent State fragility and collapse.

Key words: governance, literary productions, military, responses, State fragility

Résumé :

Parmi les tentatives de remédier à l'instabilité récurrente en Afrique postcoloniale, la solution militaire occupe une place prépondérante. Cependant, cette réponse militaire semble inefficace puisqu'elle a constamment échoué à instaurer la paix durable et la stabilité institutionnelle attendues. Ce travail se présente comme une position critique face à l'intrusion militaire dominante dans la sphère politique, considérée comme la solution ultime à l'échec des politiciens africains. L'argument qui soutient cette position est que la littérature et la recherche académique constituent des approches négligées, bien qu'elles puissent servir d'outils proactifs alternatifs pour repenser la gouvernance et prévenir les conflits. Cela rejoint la vision des auteurs et théoriciens africains qui considèrent la littérature comme un espace où l'adaptation, l'amélioration et le réajustement des gouvernances socio-politiques et économiques peuvent être imaginés. Il s'agit d'une gouvernance inspirée par la littérature, c'est-à-dire des cadres éthiques politiques représentés dans des fictions telles que *A Man of the People* et *Anthills of the Savannah* de Chinua Achebe. Ainsi, la littérature apparaît comme un outil de pédagogie civique et une ressource stratégique proactive capable de prévenir la fragilité et l'effondrement des Etats.

Mots-clés : gouvernance, productions littéraires, militaire, réponses, fragilité de l'État

Introduction

The topic of the current work is positioned within the context of the recurrent media debates and warning from postcolonial literature on socio-political crises in African countries. These issues are mainly related to weak institutions, non-adapted policy templates and contested legitimacy, which configure most of the contemporary African countries as represented in social science research works as well as the postcolonial fictional works. The cumulative effect of these realities of the postcolonial governance are the deterioration of the socio-political sphere and the fragility of States. The problem is that, to respond to this state of fragility, some African countries have been facing military and foreign interventions, from the early decade of independence up to the recent years. This constitutes the core problem that this article seeks to address.

This work presents itself as a critical stance toward the dominant military intrusion into the political sphere, as the ultimate way to address the failure of governance in contemporary Africa. Indeed, the argument that supports this stance is that literature and academic research are some neglected approaches, though they can serve as alternative proactive tools for diagnosing and rethinking governance to prevent conflicts. This aligns with the view of several African authors and theorists who consider literature as a space where adaptation, improvement and readjustment of socio-political and economic governances can be imagined. Specifically, this work uses *A Man of the People* and *Anthills of the Savannah* by Chinua Achebe as the fiction anchors of the analysis. The two novels, respectively display the indigenous replicate imperial practices by Africans and the autocratic ruling of military regimes. In addition to empirical resources, these fictions enable the study to address the following questions: How is State fragility represented in the postcolonial context? In what ways do the fictions interrogate ethical leadership and negotiate good governance for sustainable political stability?

The methodological and theoretical framework guiding this study is anchored in postcolonial theory as elaborated by Achille Mbembe (2001) and enriched by Wole Soyinka's (1996) ethical interrogation of power, as well as the structural analysis of political practices by Jean-François Bayart (1993). Through a qualitative textual analysis, this study foregrounds the writer as a public intellectual who, not only reflects political realities but also reframes them. In this sense, literary and scholarly works emerge both as early-warning systems and as imaginative laboratories in which alternative horizons of governance may be conceived. According, this work in two main sections establishes a diagnosis of State fragility, then analyses how good governance is negotiated in the corpus.

1-Diagnosing State Fragility in Postcolonial Africa

The definition of State fragility remains a complex task, since it relates to various social, economic and political factors as well as some manifestations that make it difficult to draw a common concept. In effect, the theoretical and empirical literature on the concept of fragility is profuse, which makes it hazardous to frame the diagnosis of State fragility. However, its quintessence lies in different forms of weaknesses across the economic, political and social systems of a country that amplify each other and constrain its development. Thus, in this article, the concept of State fragility in Africa builds on the perspectives of the postcolonial thinkers or theorists and the indices deciphered through the postcolonial fiction. In this frame, A. Mbembe explains the expressive and excessive forms of postcolonial authority, Wole Soyinka exposes the moral fractures at the heart of leadership, while Jean F. Bayart maps the networks and logics through which power is produced and sustained.

1-1. State Fragility from the Perspectives of Postcolonial Thinkers

In the current analysis, the focus is on the issues of governance in connection with State fragility. Thus, the notion of fragility is apprehended through the political structures that govern the postcolonial African States. When we consider the regimes from the earlier decades of independence up to the ones of the last decade, there is a constant irregular transfer of power. It ranges from irregular elections up to constitutional or military coup. Those forms of control or acquisition of political power contradict the very principles of democracy. Thus, a governments born out of such political transitions become illegitimate and unable to achieve democratic rule. Consequently, in the context of postcolonial African countries the notion of State fragility is perceived through the incapacity of political rulers to ensure security, stability and good governance.

From this standpoint, some postcolonial theorists consider that the state of fragility in contemporary Africa is essentially the result of the legacy of colonial rule. This stance is theorised by Achille Mbembe (2001) as follows:

The lack of justice of the means, and the lack of legitimacy of the ends, conspired to allow an arbitrariness and intrinsic unconditionality that may be said to have been the distinctive feature of colonial sovereignty. Postcolonial state forms have inherited this unconditionality and the regime of impunity that was its corollary. Such unconditionality and impunity can be explained by what long constituted the credo of power in the colony. (p.26)

Achille Mbembe's analysis frames the fragility of postcolonial African countries by tracing it to a specific legacy of colonial sovereignty. This form of sovereignty was based on a logic whereby power is grounded in arbitrariness and impunity. For him, this political rationality did not disappear with independence but was reconfigured within postcolonial countries. As a result, what is often described as State fragility is better understood as the persistence of a historically constituted form of

sovereignty. In such a context there is no control over violence and populations live in a worsening state. Also, the governance is operated through a normalised form of disorder, whereby patronage, elite impunity and corruption prevail. It all ends up in a political domination of the regimes that take advantage of the chaos engendered by the disordered or distorted form of governance.

Some other postcolonial thinkers locate state fragility in the erosion of moral responsibility of rulers and their incapacity to build an inclusive political culture. In this regard, Wole Soyinka (1966) points to the degeneration of political authority into domination, observing that under authoritarian rule “a nation ceases to exist” (p.150). This perspective suggests that political instability in many contemporary African countries is closely tied to social injustice and the patrimonial management of public resources. Yet such an ethical diagnosis can be deepened through a shift of attention from moral failure to the structured dynamics of political life. On this, Bayart (1993) argues that political action is organised through “personalized networks and factions [in which] the stakes are the accumulation of wealth” (p.59-60). From this perspective, the weakening of the state cannot be understood solely as a decline in moral responsibility, but as the outcome of a system in which power is negotiated through networks that often privilege subnational affiliations over a cohesive national project. The result is a form of political fragmentation that exposes societies to recurring tensions and vulnerabilities, not merely because leaders fail ethically, but because the very logic of the system encourages competing loyalties and the strategic mobilisation of identity.

1-2. The State Fragility Dramatized in Postcolonial Fiction

Postcolonial novels represent various aspects of African societies, ranging from cultural, socio-political, up to the economic evolutions. As such, we can refer to the productions of Ayi Kwei Armah (1968), Nuruddin Farrah (1979) and Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1987), to quote a few, that fictionalize the aspects and effects of governance in different African countries. What characterizes these novels is the description of the disillusion and decay engendered in their respective settings under the ruling of the postcolonial regimes in African countries. Chinua Achebe is part of those African novelists depicting the trajectories of post-colonial governance. Indeed, Orock (2022) observes that his novels are “a useful resource for our efforts to define and elaborate a political anthropology and critique of power in the early postcolony” (p.76). although these are fictions, they represent various tropes of the decadence in the postcolonial Africa. Particularly, in the narrative of *A Man of the People* (1966) one can read the weakness of governance operated by the civilian regimes that took after the colonial administration. This fiction displays a diagnosis of the postcolonial State failure in a setting that can be traced to Nigeria.

Along this diagnosis the narrative points out moral decay and elite predation as the root drivers of the postcolonial State fragility. Chief Nanga and the other officials in the novel epitomize the postcolonial elite predation and the inability to operate an efficient governance. This behaviour challenges the ethical and institutional foundations of governance. Through the trajectory of Chief Nanga and the broader political class, the narrative mirrors Bayart's reflexion (1993) on postcolonial moral consciousness. As he observes, "the stakes of political action are above all the acquisition of wealth and the struggle for hegemony" (p.60). Achebe's novel thus reveals the tension between ethical responsibility and the powerful lure of political and material success, a tension sustained not by individual failure alone but by a system of relationships that normalises participation in its logic. On this, the attitude of Chief Nanga, a Minister and influent member of the ruling party, exemplifies the fragility of political institutions, since the public office is seen as an opportunity for self-aggrandizement and corruption. Indeed, Chief Nanga considers that "the country is an oil well... the only thing is to get in on it" (Achebe, 1966, p.55). This reveals self-aggrandizement as a central pathology of postcolonial governance.

The political elite transform the public power into a self-serving instrument, which seems to be normal and admitted by the populations. On this, the main narrator expresses regrets about the ignorance and the cynic attitude of the people that encourage the looting of public resources by the new elite. The narrator states:

Tell them that this man (the minister) had used his position to enrich himself and they would ask you -as my father did- if you thought that a sensible man would spit out the juicy morsel that good fortune placed in his mouth (Achebe, 1966, p.2).

This claim denotes an ideological justification of the elite predation in the parodied Nigeria supporting the plot of the novel. This statement reflects what Mbembe describes as the *conviviality* of postcolonial power, where rulers and subjects alike develop complicity and indulgence before the excessive use of public resources. Self-serving politics is no longer concealed but performed openly, as part of the political order. Exposing this reality, the novel reveals: "in fact there was already enough filth clinging to his name to disqualify him -and most of his colleagues as well -but we are not as strict as some countries. That is why C.P.C. publicity had to ferret out every scandal and blow it up" (Achebe, 1966, p.108). Here, corruption cannot be reduced to individual pathology. While Chief Nanga is illustrative, the narrative extends the nonethical practices to the whole structure of the ruling political party.

Odili's awareness that the problem encompasses an entire political culture denotes unaccountability in the public sphere. On this, it could be acknowledged that the moral issue is a kind of shared social

practices extending beyond the individual. This interpretation finds an echo in the analysis of postcolonial State by Jean F. Bayart (1993, p.7-8), where the political life unfolds through “vertical relationships... between patrons and clients”. He describes this condition as “the politics of the belly” in which individuals participate in the system of corruption. Therefore, unaccountability in the postcolonial countries appears as a structural and relational phenomenon, sustained by networks of complicity, tribal ties and the necessity for survival.

By maintaining such a structural patron-clients relationship in the public sphere, the postcolonial regimes can ensure a full control of their dominant position, which is another feature of fragility. This important feature is displayed in the novel through the notion of confiscation and concentration of power by the new elite. It is dramatized through the reflective voice of Odili, as he observes the context. He says:

The trouble with our new nation [...] was that none of us had been indoors long enough [...]. We had been in the rain together until yesterday. Then a handful of us—the smart and the lucky and hardly ever the best—had scrambled for the one shelter our former rulers left, and had taken it over and barricaded themselves in (Achebe, 1966, p.37).

What arises from the insight of this protagonist is the moral failure of leadership. Indeed, when reading through Soyinka’s moral framework, Odili’s reflection exposes not merely the structural appropriation of power but a profound ethical rupture at the heart of the postcolonial state. The image of leaders who manage, by any means, to position themselves into the arena of power reveals a transformation of political authority from legitimacy to opportunism. Thus, the narrator’s reflection appears as a tableau representing the continuity of colonial governance, the individualism and moral degeneration of the new elite. This assertion concurs with the argument of E. Gümüş (2025), when he puts that,

what emerged in the postcolonial period was not the radical transformation envisioned by anti-colonial thinkers, but a more covert and insidious replication of colonial structures by the new ruling elites seeking to consolidate their power (p.282).

Beyond the fragility of the institutions, there is a transformation of liberation into domination. The new elite just reproduce the autocratic political culture of the former colonial administration. Particularly, the image of the leaders who barricaded themselves in the shelter, materialises the logic of monopolisation of power. Consequently, the authority of these leaders is marked by illegitimacy, that is why Chief Nanga and other important members of the government are downsized by Odili.

To labour further, the narrative also reveals that the elite in power is mainly composed of politicians who obtain their positions through bribery. Indeed, “Nanga won a seat in parliament. It was easy in those days – before we knew it cash price” (Achebe, 1966, p.2). Ironically, this passage exposes the normalisation of corruption as a mechanism of political advancement in the postcolonial society. It illustrates how democratic ideals, through election, is transformed into a mere transaction where merit and integrity are not the norms to determine leadership. This perception of the political culture of postcolonial society is shared by E. Gümüş (2025) as he puts that: “positions are accessible not through ideological commitment or meritocratic competition, but through bribery or proximity to power” (p.287). This stipulates the lack of ethical practices in the political arena, a condition that biases the legitimacy of the ruling elite.

Notwithstanding the illegitimacy of the predatory elite, they paradoxically stand as the home for the population. This is testified by the main narrator: “a common saying in the country after Independence was that it didn’t matter *what* you knew but *who* you knew. And, believe me, it was no idle talk” (Achebe, 1966, p.17). This condition introduces the phenomenon of patrimonialism in the postcolonial African countries. As a matter of fact, the absence of ethical governance is intensified by the patrimonial management of the public service. This creates a system in which the country’s institutions are appropriated and operated as the extensions of personal power. The notion of merit and accountability no longer govern the functioning of public services. In the narrative, this form of erosion of ethical standards is symbolized by Chief Nanga’s invitation to Odili. He argues:

I want you to come to the capital and take up a strategic post in the civil service. We shouldn’t leave everything to the highland tribes. My secretary is from there; our people must press for their fair share of the national cake (Achebe, 1966, p.12).

The rationale behind this invitation is probably to consolidate his power through ethnic network or tribal ties. This strategy is a characteristic feature of patrimonial rule that tends to weaken formal institutional structures. Indeed, as observed by Bratton & van de Walle (1997), in the patrimonial system, personal and ethnic loyalties override bureaucratic norms, thereby eroding institutional integrity. This is in line with the imagery of *shelter* or political power, which the elite confiscate. It means transforming the public domain into a space that is controlled through exclusion and appointment based on tribal or regional identity.

Considering the analysed textual data from *A man of the People*, the novel appears like a diagnostic tool that helps reveal the sociopolitical pathologies that weaken African States. The narrative demonstrates that political leadership without accountability and ethics is vowed to lose legitimacy. Thus, there is an elite with excessive power and institutions with weak and instable structures. The

novel's conclusion, marked by a military coup, underscores the inevitability of political breakdown under such conditions. The collapse of civilian governance is not an anomaly but the logical outcome of sustained institutional erosion. In addition to the analytical lens of this fictional work of Achebe, there is a shift toward its normative and pedagogical capacities.

2-Postcolonial Fiction

The selected novels by Chinua Achebe, do not only expose the pathologies that affect the governance in postcolonial African; they also shed light on the possibilities to resolve those issues. Thus, we consider theme as a discursive resource with alternative political imaginaries that display the contestation of some practices and mediate some insights for the reconstruction or re-adaptation of the political culture in postcolonial Africa. In this sense, literature goes beyond critique to adopt a stand of ethical negotiation, as it engages in a reflective process about the conditions necessary for sustainable governance, per displayed in the two novels. This perspective is structured by two interconnected trajectories: First, these fictional texts refute the military solution to political disorder. They dismantle the idea that coercive force can serve as legitimate solution when the political sphere is in any kind of impasse. Second, these fictions engage in the negotiation of ethical political frameworks for good governance.

2-1. The Refutation of the Military Solution

In postcolonial African political discourse military intervention is often framed as a necessary response to corruption, disorder, and institutional fragility. This narrative casts the military as a stabilizing force capable of restoring discipline where civilian governance has failed. Yet the premise rests on a fundamental contradiction, regarding the assumption that coercive authority can generate democratic legitimacy. African fiction consistently exposes the limits of this logic, which is captured in the analysis of Edwin C. Onwuka (2018). It stipulates:

a major factor that lured the military into Nigerian politics is the poverty of leadership ethics among the political leaders. It is that same cause that has elicited the critical response of writers to military dictatorship in the Nigerian polity. (p.149)

The narrative of *Anthills of the Savannah* is one of the best portraits of the military regime, according to this logic. The novel exposes the military, not as a remedy for crisis but as its intensification. Set in the fictional state of Kangan, the novel demonstrates how military governance accelerates the erosion of institutional integrity as well as the ethical authority. The novel insists that the state of a country becomes catastrophic through militarized response.

The political life of the setting is structured according to this dynamic, as the narrative describes. In effect, early in the novel, the atmosphere of political suffocation is palpable: “nothing is safe, not even the flattery we have become such experts in disguising as debate” (Achebe, 1987, p.2). At this point, language itself signals the transformation of governance into performance of authority. In this light, the military rule transforms the political space into a zone where violence becomes the main instrument of governance. When reading alongside the theorization of postcolonial power by A. Mbembe (2001), one can notice that power is not negotiated. The military regime displays a form of authority, which he defines as a system marked by arbitrariness. He puts: “...the privatization of public prerogatives and socialization of arbitrariness [becomes], the cement of postcolonial African authoritarian regimes” (p.33). There is coercion instead of reciprocity and dialogue, which the narrative also highlights through the reaction of the military ruler towards the delegation of Abazon. Indeed, this delegation attempts to mediate a kind of peace between their region and the military rule.

The appeal for negotiation and communication of the delegation of Abazon is rather perceived by the military regime as an offence. For this reason, the leader of the delegation is arrested by the secret police and “held in solitary confinement at the Bassa Maximum Security Prison” (Achebe, 1987, p.153). Thus, dialogue between the government and population, which is a principle of good governance is recast by the military regime as a threat. Here, the authority asserts itself through refusal, while engagement is expected. The State withdraws from mediation, transforming manageable grievance into political rupture. Militarism thus forecloses political space. By eliminating negotiation, it converts dissent into instability and redefines governance as, not as consent but as domination.

The regime's hostility extends beyond collective dissent to intellectual critique. Ikem Osodi, editor and poet, functions as a mediator who translates social experience into political meaning. In his university lecture, he asserts: “Storytellers are a threat... they threaten all champions of control” (Achebe, 1987, p.141). Narrative, in this formulation, becomes a political act that resists the closure imposed by the postcolonial military regime. Ikem's execution marks a decisive rupture. It is not merely repressive, but eliminative: the removal of the interpretive space through which power might be questioned. With the disappearance of mediation, the State loses its capacity for self-reflection. Violence becomes its primary mode of articulation, signalling the collapse of discursive plurality into coercive silence.

This trajectory culminates in the death of Chris Oriko, killed at a checkpoint while attempting to protect a civilian. His death epitomizes Achille Mbembe's (2003) *necropolitical* condition of the postcolonial regimes. As he argues, “the ultimate expression of sovereignty resides, to a large degree,

in the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die” (p.11). This is a condition whereby law is suspended and life is subject to arbitrary force. The distinction between protector and perpetrator dissolves, revealing the internal disintegration of the State authority. From this, one can infer that military regimes are not meant to stabilize governance. Arguably, a system grounded in coercion erodes the institutional and ethical frameworks. This produces more fragmentation and exacerbated fragility. The movement from fragility to collapse is thus structurally embedded within militarized rule.

Like many other African fictions, Achebe’s narratives under study, move beyond critique of the military solution, and open a space for ethical reimagination. These narratives interrogate the conditions under which authority can coexist with accountability, and power with responsibility. Rather than advancing prescriptive models, they stage a reflective inquiry into governance grounded in reciprocity, dialogue, and civic trust. In this sense, the two novels perform a pedagogical function. Their respective plots promote a political consciousness focussed on the possibilities of a fairer and dialogic future for the strengthening and stability of postcolonial States. By foregrounding the ethical and societal consequences of unethical civilian and militarized rules, these narratives expose various inherent contradictions. Particularly, we learn that, in most cases, the military solution makes the situation evolve from fragility to collapse.

2-2. Negotiating Ethical Framework

From warning about corrosion of power in *A Man of the People*, to the dialogic complexity of *Anthills of the Savannah*, Achebe moves toward a more reflective pedagogy of governance. Consequently, fiction becomes a tool enabling societies not only to diagnose political failure but to imagine fair and sustainable forms of collective life. Along the previous sections of the current analysis, the novels reveal that the fragility of postcolonial State derives from the coercive authority in the public sphere. If the first novel exposes the moral bankruptcy that invites military intervention, the following reveals the consequences of that intervention once institutionalized.

Both civilian regime and military rule function within the credo of total power and unaccountability. Thus, the fictions trace the corrosion of civic life under repressive regimes, while also anticipating the trajectory of military intervention that follows political breakdown. This trajectory is already foreshadowed in *A Man of the People* (1966), where the regime’s collapse culminates in the military coup that closes the novel: “The Army has taken over the government of the country” (p.165). Significantly, this intervention appears less as a solution than as the inevitable outcome of unchecked corruption, leaving unresolved the deeper structures of power it inherits.

The unresolved tension finds its most sustained exploration in *Anthills of the Savannah*, where Achebe highlights the aftermath of such coups. The plot and the setting recalling Nigerian successive military regimes become a testimony of escalating authoritarian control. In this light, the literary exposure of authoritarian and militarized regimes functions not merely as critique but as ethical intervention. By revealing how coups reproduce or intensify crises instead of resolving them, the narratives challenge the enduring belief in militarized governance as a stabilizing force. The rejection of the military solution, however, is only a preliminary gesture. The fiction moves beyond negation toward a more demanding inquiry: what forms of governance can sustain justice, accountability, and collective well-being?

Among the tentative responses, the narrative mediates the transformation of governance into participation instead of performance of authoritarian power. The message is thus, to dismantle the notion of militarism as corrective, revealing instead its tendency to intensify crisis, erode civic structures, and normalize violence.

The Abazon delegation episode further illustrates this logic. Their attempt to petition the Head of State represents a residual faith in dialogue, yet it is reinterpreted as subversion. The refusal of the delegation's request exemplifies how militarized authority forecloses negotiation, which is a corner stone of the State stability. As a response to this condition, Ikem Osodi's university lecture claims the power of dialogue in the political sphere. Thus, the novel mediates a dialogic space rather than a totally controlled one. Instead of eliminating the intellectual mediator, the postcolonial regimes should encourage and grant their capacity for self-reflection and bane violence as their primary language. This pedagogical stand of the fiction culminates in the death of Chris Oriko, killed at a checkpoint while attempting to protect a woman (Achebe, 1987, p.215-220). The scene condenses the necessity to avoid dissolving law into arbitrariness. The authority should play the role of protector, not predator.

Another symbolic response is envisioned in the closing chapter of *Anthills of the Savannah*. Against the backdrop of State collapse, the naming ceremony of Elewa's child (p.228-233) stages an alternative political imagination. Beatrice's leadership in this scene embodies a reconfigured form of power grounded in care, dialogue, and moral responsibility. The name *Amaechina*, meaning *may the path never close again*, symbolizes a reopening of ethical and political horizons. Unlike the hierarchical logic of authoritarian civils and military command, this communal act redistributes authority through the restauration of plurality. This refers to a vision of political life sustained by ethical reciprocity and civic voice.

Conclusion

With precise narrative insight, *A Man of the People* and *Anthills of the Savannah* emerge as both fictional representations of postcolonial governance and literary prefiguration of State fragility in postcolonial African contexts. Achebe demonstrates that sovereignty without legitimacy, institutions without ethical grounding, and power without accountability generate political systems that appear stable yet remain structurally hollow. In this sense, the novels anticipate key concerns of later political science by revealing that fragility precedes collapse, taking root in moral decay, elite capture, and the progressive alienation of citizens. Here then, we talk about governance inspired by literature, which means the politics ethical frameworks represented in fiction, which positions literature as a tool of civic pedagogy.

By foregrounding these dynamics, this study also challenges the dominant recourse to military and external interventions as primary responses to governance failure in postcolonial Africa. Against this backdrop, literature and academic inquiry emerge as alternative and proactive modes of engagement: not instruments of force, but tools of diagnosis, anticipation, and reorientation. It operates as an early-warning system, rendering visible the latent crises embedded within political systems before their full eruption. At the same time, it opens a space for reimagining governance with ethical responsibility and legitimacy. In this way, Achebe's work affirms the role of the writer as a public intellectual, and of fiction as a vital site where the possibilities of more just and sustainable political orders can be conceived.

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