

DIAGNOSIS OF THE CONTEMPORARY ISSUES LEADING TO BAD GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA: AN ANALYTICAL READING OF AYI KWEI ARMAH'S *OSIRIS RISING*

Yélian Constant Aguessy,

University of Parakou_Benin

aguessico@yahoo.fr

Moussa Sidi Chabi,

Université de Parakou,

sidichabi@yahoo.fr

Constantin Sagbo Agbossou,

University of Parakou_Benin

constantinagbossou@gmail.com

Abstract

*The present paper aims at depicting the main issues which give birth to bad governance. In order to achieve this goal, the corpus that has been used is *Osiris Rising*, a novel by Ayi Kwei Armah. In this novel, the famous author has alluded to numerous evils that hinder the effective and sustainable development of Africa. Among those evils, the most prominent ones are corruption with its corollaries and the lack of development of ideologies from the leaders of the continent. In this respect, to achieve the goal of this research, we have applied post-colonialism which has helped us to analyse the impacts of colonialism on the management of the different leaders of Africa in the fictional universe Armah has created through his work. So, documentary research has helped go through the novel under study, a range of scientific papers, online sources and some doctoral dissertations. The study has found that the people responsible for the bad governance of Africa remain African leaders and politicians given their engagement in grand corruption, nepotism, embezzlement, witch-hunt, electoral manipulations and the dilapidation of the resources of their countries for their own and egoistic interests.*

Key words: *bad governance, education, corruption, witch-hunt, sustainable development*

Résumé

*Le présent travail vise à dépeindre les principaux problèmes qui sont à l'origine de la mauvaise gouvernance. Pour ce faire, le corpus utilisé est *Osiris Rising*, un roman d'Ayi Kwei Armah. Dans ce livre, le célèbre auteur fait allusion à de nombreux maux qui minent le développement efficace et durable de l'Afrique parmi lesquels les plus dévastateurs demeurent la corruption et ses corollaires et le manque d'idéologies de développement de la part des dirigeants du continent. A cet égard, afin d'atteindre l'objectif de cette recherche, nous avons appliqué la théorie postcoloniale qui nous a aidé à analyser les impacts du colonialisme sur la gestion des différents dirigeants de l'Afrique dans l'univers fictif qu'Armah a créé à travers son œuvre. Ainsi, la recherche documentaire a permis de parcourir le livre étudié, une série d'articles scientifiques, des sources en ligne et quelques thèses de doctorat. L'étude a révélé que les*

responsables de la mauvaise gouvernance de l'Afrique restent et demeurent les dirigeants et les hommes politiques africains, compte tenu de leur engagement dans la grande corruption, le népotisme, le détournement de fonds, la chasse aux sorcières, les manipulations électorales et la dilapidation des ressources de leurs pays pour leurs propres intérêts égoïstes.

Mots clés : *mauvaise gouvernance, éducation, corruption, chasse aux sorcières, développement durable.*

Introduction

Achieving development has never been a piece of cake for any nation or people in the world. This is due to different factors related to the social and political system of each people. Africa is not an exception. For those reasons, many African writers have depicted through their works African countries in post-colonial times when moral virtues are on the wane in the political arena. Ayi Kwei Armah, a Ghanaian writer, author of *Osiris Rising*: a novel of Africa past, present and future denounces some contemporary issues eroding African social, political, and educational systems. He does so by showing the hypocrisy of some African people who try to work for the betterment of their motherland.

The story tragically ended is inspired from an Egyptian myth: Isis-Osiris. That literary work presents not only the consequences of bad governance in post-colonial African countries, but also the proof of a shameless neglect of education which is supposed to be the most important pillar against neocolonialism and the backwardness of the continent.

The current novel constitutes a remarkable reference in discovering the motivations deeply rooted in the paradoxical character of the ideals, ideas and the reality in African administrations and systems. Of course, many other research works conducted on the novel, have shown various intertextual strata and certain layers of meaning that not only illustrate the subtitle of the novel (a novel of Africa past, present and future) but also give the meaning of the symbolic creation of characters and places related to the myth of Isis-Osiris from which Ayi Kwei Armah has built his narrative. This research work has its particularity in the discovering of contemporary issues causing bad governance as depicted through the narration of the protagonist Ast, an African-American scholar who has decided to come back to her original land and connected with other countries of the black continent. Although the work comes from an insightful Ghanaian observer of his community, it is evident that his product kindles issues touching all the other countries of the continent.

Knowing that every matter dealing with social issues, delaying development and waning moral values must not be unkempt or neglected, it remains dutiful and even crucial for the fields like literature to continue the analyses and discussions on them, not only for the brightness of its capacity to bring about change through words, but also for the betterment of African communities and for a sustainable development in every sector. That is the valid reason why a diagnostic reading of *Osiris Rising* is worth being done. This research work, thus, answers the following questions: What are the manifestations of the bad governance so decried in African politics as seen through *Osiris Rising*? What are the subtle causes of bad governance revealed by Ayi Kwei Armah in his work? What solutions to suggest for an effective improvement of tuition programmes in black schools in the future? The development of this research work has been articulated around the Articulation of the Issues Leading to Bad Governance and Subtle Insight Issues Fostering Neocolonialism in the Corpus.

Articulation of the Issues Leading to Bad Governance

In his work “The Aesthetics of Impediment and Hope in Ayi Kwei Armah’s *Osiris Rising*”, Aguessy Yélian Constant has dealt with the same novel. After presenting the reading material and critically appreciating the existing works on the novel, he has exposed the different factors that are impediments to the emergence of African society in the post-colonial period. He has concluded that “African governments are selfish; they only search for their own interest. These factors are impediments to the emergence in African society” (Aguessy, 2019: 85)). However, he has recognised that “hope is a way through which one can overcome impediments. When hindrance occurs, there is always a way out, but it needs to develop hope before one can find the way out” (Aguessy, 2019: 85).

The issue of governance in Africa is such a crucial one that many writers have discussed the matter in different articles. In “The Nigeria Novel and the Imperative of Good Governance: a critical study of Joseph Edoki’s “The African dream”, Jude Aigbe Agho, while talking about realities in governance in Africa, has stated:

The term governance as used in this study refers to the process of ruling and governing a nation or state by a constituted civilian government or, as it is in some parts of

Africa and the Third World, by a military regime, which though anachronistic, is commonplace in this part of the world. According to Goran Hyden (quoted in Galadima, 1998), “governance is the conscious management of regime structure with a view to enhancing the legitimacy of the public realm” (116). Whether as an activity or a process, governance entails organising and managing legitimate power structures, entrusted by the people, to provide law and order, protect fundamental human rights, ensure rule of law and due process of law; provide for the basic needs and welfare of the people and the pursuit of their happiness (Galadima: 116-117). Implied in the notion of good governance are virtues such as accountability, responsiveness (responsibility) and transparency.

In Africa, where there is a proliferation of one-party and military dictatorships in some of the nations, governance has been characterised by the blatant corruption of the ruling class, visionless leadership, political instability, corruption, poverty, self-perpetuation in government and hero-worshipping of leaders who see themselves, more or less, as messiahs leading their people into the proverbial promise land which is a haven of comfort and other goodies of life (Agho, 2009: 163).

The story opens up with a discussion between Ast, the protagonist of the novel and her grandmother Nwt. Ast is an African-American scholar woman who has got her doctorate conducted on ‘Kemt’ (Armah, 1995: 8); which refers to Egyptology. Ast had the chance to get more knowledge about herself and her people living in Africa not only thanks to the line she has chosen wilfully at university but also from her insightful and knowledgeable grandmother Nwt who has spared no effort to give all the information the young girl needs about Kemt, her origin, the land of her forefathers. She has been so lucky that Nwt taught her willingly to read the scriptures of her land: The Hieroglyphs.

The continuation of the story allows the reader to understand that two goals have led Ast to go back to Ankh or Kemt her origin: a search for her own people, and a meeting with her great lover, Asar. Unfortunately, the welcome she has received just after her arrival at the destination is not the one; she would have expected or liked: too harsh, too strict, tough, and rigid with Security Services. Here is the proof: “She had wished for a different welcome. She would have spent the first days

in quite solitude, then made inquiries about where to go to live, to work, perhaps to love” (Armah, 1995: 16).

Indeed, the first person previously known that she has met is the one who has tried to rape her twice: the Deputy Director (DD), also called Seth Spenser Soja (SSS). Ast, Asar and Seth have been all classmates in the meantime. Her journey to the old continent would permit her to discover the real face of her country and of Africa at large, issues related to the educational system and the political ambit in governance.

After meeting Seth, Ast has found refuge in Hapi, an affordable hotel of the town where she has met a new friend, Netta Ka, working there. The welcome Netta has given Ast has made her forget her stress and anxieties and has caused them to be good friends. After such an experience that she has lived at the airport, the discussion she is going to have with Netta is the second step in the deeper discovering of the country she had always dreamt of coming back in after her studies in America.

That’s what the government says. Greed is more like it. The country earns foreign exchange. But they embezzle it. Besides, it’s time we manufactured the things we need right here. Instead of solving real problems, the government specializes in hunting and jailing opponents [...]. (Armah, 1995: 54)

These statements coming from Netta a character of the novel, clearly show the author’s warning about the way leaders in the post-colonial period, after independence, use the power they are entrusted with in a bad way. Serious issues can be brought out: firstly, embezzlement, secondly the lack of a real politics of the manufacture of raw materials densely produced here, and finally political witch-hunt.

For Mlambo *et al.* (2019: 40), examples of corrupt behaviour include “the appropriation of public assets and property for personal use, cronyism, nepotism, embezzlement, bribery and extortion”. The one that holds our attention here is embezzlement. It is a kind of theft, a kind of misappropriation of an amount of money placed under one’s control and which is destined for a specific task or a given person. The online *Oxford Learner’s Dictionary* defines embezzlement as “the act of stealing money that you are responsible for or that belongs to your employer”. It is also a fraudulent conversion of property from a property owner, a deliberate misappropriation or not of public funds. It is then clear that one cannot

separate corruption and embezzlement because they are interrelated. Cuervo-Cazurra (2008: 5) distinguishes petty corruption from grand corruption. The type of corruption, where the size of embezzlement is at its higher point, the grand corruption. Mlambo *et al.* (2019: 40) explain the way it happens as follows:

Grand Corruption: In most cases is undertaken by high-ranking government officials or businessman. These corrupt activities could include kick-backs which are rewarded to government officials to award tender contracts, embezzlement of public funds and political patronage (Mlambo *et al.*, 2019: 40)

From this assertion, it is very clear that this is the type of evil which is organised at the head of African states, a real mafia that wastes the resources and opportunities of the continent ~~to~~ and prevents it from developing. Who talks about bad governance talks about a bad management of the entrusted power, and the fact of taking ~~in~~ the funds of the country without any political ambition is a theft, and then embezzlement. In the story the protagonist, Ast is admiring the ‘coolest’ room she is given in Hapi Hotel for her sojourn over there when she “walked over and tried to close the slats” (Armah, 1995: 53). “They don’t work anymore,” Netta replied. “A simple worn-out part but here we make none, and we can’t afford imports now” (Armah, 1995: 54). After asking if this impossibility to change old materials with new ones coming from abroad is due to foreign exchange problems, Netta pinpoints the local governance of their country as being in fact the potential break for development. By saying ‘The country earns foreign exchange’, Armah then acknowledges the economic capacity of Africa which is not so deteriorated as what many people think. In the mind of the majority of Africans, they do not have any economic power or capacity; they are too poor, reason why they have been aboded by what they have as commodities and infrastructure. For Armah, this is not totally true. It is undeniable that there is no country without economic problems, no matter how speedy they are in scientific prowess. Thus, Africa is a very rich, and much more, the richest continent of the world in all kinds of resources. However, its root problem is rather with its leaders who use those riches for their own profit. This is what Howard French denounces when he states:

In addition to their vast oil reserves, all the Gulf of Guinea producers share the traits of authoritarian governments. They also have in common extraordinary brazen forms of official corruption, which have made their elites some of the richest in the world while leaving the bulk of their populations in-stuck-in-the mud poverty (Howard, 1998: A1).

The reality is that political leaders in Africa add their greediness to the economic problems by filling their own pockets at the expense of taxpayers. In the fight for their own interests, it is difficult for them to save time for serious and realistic political projects based on the acquired riches such as raw materials which can be well manufactured into finished goods. This explains Netta's words: "It's time we manufactured the things we need right here" (Armah, 1995: 54). Through Netta, Armah explains the great need of African countries to think seriously about mechanisation and industrialisation. They are uneschewable for any nation which would like to be independent in the sectors where it produces raw materials itself in large quantities. Even if the work was completed twenty-eight years ago, it still remains a current issue that needs a continuous attention. It is in the same logic that Don Bailey, a paint that Ast has met when she has gone to Ras Jomo Cinque Equiano's residence, states:

Sure. Haven't heard of him since. Then there are a few who really dream of changing things. They find out this no country but a mess, and it blows their mind. What's behind the economic mess?'

'Partly government mismanagement,' Bailey said. 'It's all true the rumors about the government here. They use state power to enrich themselves, personally. In the crudest of ways, like printing money' (Armah, 1995: 134).

Here, Bailey is telling Ast how much Africa has become so disgusting that many talents decide to go abroad in search for better life. In the same vein, Mlambol *et al.* have come out with this conclusion:

From a political perspective, corruption may trigger political instability and brain drain. In this case, unrests may occur driven by individuals who have had enough of corruption activities as this may limit the speed of service delivery and divert resources intended for economic

development to corrupt individuals. (Mlambo *et al.*, 2019: 42)-

From a political standpoint, the quote underscores the detrimental effects of corruption, emphasising its potential to instigate political instability and trigger brain drain. It suggests that widespread corruption erodes trust in government institutions, leading to public discontent and unrest. The discontent is portrayed as a reaction from individuals who have grown weary of the impact of corruption, hindering the efficient delivery of services and diverting resources meant for economic development to corrupt entities. The overall implication is that corruption not only undermines the political landscape but also prompts the departure of skilled individuals seeking better prospects elsewhere, which departure is known as brain drain. Nationalism and the love of the country have completely disappeared from the mind of the majority. And the remaining people in the country rule only for their own interests and the interests of their families. He qualifies Ankh, their country as a ‘mess’ which means a stain, a tarnished object.

Among all those symptoms of bad governance revealed throughout the story, Armah has not forgotten one of the most annoying situations for the ruled people, that is, administrative slowness. The online *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* defines slowness as “the fact of not moving, acting or doing something quickly; the fact of taking a long time” (OALD, 2015). As a matter of fact, the expression ‘administrative slowness’ could be understood as any obstacle or barrier blocking the good progress of a file entrusted to the administration by a citizen. In other words, administrative slowness can be defined as a situation where the administrative processes and functions within an organisation or government move at a slower pace than expected or desired. It implies delays, inefficiencies, and a lack of promptness in decision-making, execution of tasks, and overall administrative activities. Administrative slowness can occur in various ways, such as bureaucratic red tape, lengthy approval processes, slow response times, and a general lack of agility in adapting to changing circumstances. That kind of brake could be deliberately caused by authorities in charge of the matter or not, depending on the professionalism of the civil servants employed and the rules imposed by the heads of the state on them.

Ast, the protagonist of the novel, is a teacher. She has been ‘an assistant prof’ at the University of Emerson, teaching history (Armah, 1995: 15). Just after getting back to her country in Africa, she has planned

to take a rendezvous at the Ministry of Education so as to find a job in Manda Teacher's college. The following dialogue explains it more:

'... I plan to go there Monday. I guess I'll stay here till I find out where I'm going.'

'It'll take time,' Netta said.

'How long? A month?'

'Let's say a year, to be optimistic.'

'Why so long? Security clearance?'

It's not that. Education is part of the civil service. Rule One in the Civil Service Code says never take less than a month to finish a day's work. Rule two says never begin work on a file unless you see the person concerned in front of you. The file just lies there on the floor until someone hunts them out. To get things done, you have to be physically present. If you fill out forms and wait for action, you'll wait till the Sahara turns green again' (Armah, 1995: 55).

The passage reveals a conversation about the bureaucratic and administrative challenges within the civil service, providing a glimpse into the protagonist's frustration with the slow and cumbersome nature of government processes. Netta's response, stating that it may take a year, reflects the prevailing perception of bureaucratic inefficiency. The protagonist questions the prolonged timeframe, speculating whether it is due to security clearance. However, Netta attributes the delay not to security concerns but to the inherent inefficiencies embedded in the civil service system. The reference to the Civil Service Code, with its rules emphasising the lengthy timeframes for completing tasks, sheds light on the bureaucratic inertia that characterises government procedures in African countries. The speaker's scepticism about waiting for action through paperwork alone highlights the prevalent belief that physical presence is often required to expedite processes within the bureaucracy. This physical presence Armah is referring to here is much deeper than it could appear. The presence may imply giving bribes to get satisfaction. The rules cited, particularly Rule One advocating not finishing a day's work in less than a month, emphasise a culture of deliberate slowness. Thus, it is clear that the slowness is a decision formerly established. This depiction suggests a need for reform within the civil service to enhance responsiveness and effectiveness. On the whole, the passage provides a critical perspective on the bureaucratic challenges and administrative

shortcomings that (can) hinder the functionality of government institutions.

When Ast has gone to the Ministry of Education to fill in application forms for a teaching job, the secretary she has found there has postponed the operation for ‘two weeks’ (Armah, 1995: 155). The morning “was awful” (Armah, 1995: 157) for the African-American woman who seems to have made a mistake by deciding to prefer his people and getting back to them. Additionally, the deep love Ast and Asar share have brought Asar to help his beloved one in those administrative operations tirelessly. Here is the proof:

The appointment letter from the Ministry of Education came in mid-December. Asar made six trips to the Ministry in the capital each time to retrace Ast’s file and to help move it to the next official in the decision-shirking labyrinth (Armah, 1995: 166).

From this behaviour, one can understand that it is mandatory to have someone in high position in the government or institutions in order to have satisfaction in the African administrations. This is a kind of nepotism that in most cases, finds words to justify its legitimacy. Otaluka, in his doctoral dissertation, has come to the same conclusion as we can see here:

For instance, nepotism when seen within the purview of the African extended family system is assumed to be ethical. This is because, in Africa it considered unethical to withdraw favours from a member of the extended family as this Igbo adage succinctly portrays, “charity begins at home”. Thus, an average African would see denying a favour to one’s kinsmen not only as unethical but a mark of wickedness. In this way, the extended family system promotes nepotism (Otaluka, 2017: 116).

On the whole, in the mind of African people, nepotism is totally normal and ~~at~~ to some extent a duty. Since one should be good and favourable towards his or her family members, any contrary action is viewed as wickedness. This is the sad reality Africans have to cope with.

In most African societies unless they want to get in troubles with their family.

Apart from the aspect mentioned above, another leading power of corruption is unconsciousness. Most of the time, the perpetrators of corruption always find a legal manner/ reason to justify their action. This

way, they convince their mindset on the fact that they do what they do for a good reason, that they do not really have the choice and many other pretexts. Thus, the circle of corruption and all its corollary grow abundantly. That is what Mlambol *et al.* meant in the following:

If the individual cannot have a reason for participating in corruption, it is not likely that s/he may be involved in crime. For instance, some of the reasons may include “some people did it why not me too”, “I was borrowing the money”, moreover, “I was entitled to the money because my employer is not paying me enough to sustain myself and family” or “I had to steal to provide for my family” (Abdullahi, Mansor and Nuhu, 2015). It is very difficult to notice such individuals because it is not possible to read someone’s mindset. In this driver, most of the individuals partaking in fraudulent activities don’t see themselves as offenders’ rather normal, honest individuals who are just victims of adverse circumstances (Mlambo *et al.*, 2019: 44).

They suggest that understanding the reasons behind an individual’s participation in such activities is crucial for assessing their likelihood of involvement in crime. They also suggest that there is difficulty in identifying such individuals because their mindset is not easily discernible; in other words, appearance is deceptive. It implies that many of those involved in fraudulent activities may not perceive themselves as offenders but rather as normal; or honest individuals who see their actions as responses to challenging circumstances.

Let’s make a short trip on the first discussions Ast has had with her beloved friend Netta. “Besides it’s time we manufactured the things we need right here. Instead of solving real problems, the government specializes in hunting and jailing opponents” (Armah, 1995: 54).

In fact, the real problem of African countries is that their leaders concentrate all their efforts ~~at~~ on useless and selfish things. Instead of working for the real developing of their countries and rendering them attractively autonomous, they prefer to dilapidate the resources of the countries and to engage in a harmful witch-hunt. Such a remark has been made by Alzouma in Niger when he declares:

The Nigerien government is known for being intolerant of both the local opposition and local media workers, imprisoning them regularly. Many journalists, opposition political leaders, students, and civil society activists are

currently being detained by the hundreds in various prisons in Niger (Alzouma, 2019: 4).

It is a fashion for African leaders to imprison any contradictory voice. The lust for power and consequently the fear of losing this power make them imprison or exile any potential opponent in case they cannot buy the voice, or let say, the silence of the latter. This is one of the most gangrenous wounds handicapping Africa; and as long as the mindset is not changed, it will continue to nibble the continent till its last morsel.

Another form of power abuse consists violence against women. Some scholars think that rape is linked to the myth of cultural beliefs. This is the case of Fakunmoju *et al.* (6) who while quoting Buiten and Naidoo, state that “the rape culture cannot be separated from the main culture itself, as rape is an integral part of cultural values and beliefs that define years of subjugation and colonial institutionalization”. It is then necessary that Africa’s patriarchal societies reform their cultures. Otherwise, in such a case, it is difficult to fight it. It is a practice which draws Africa back. Yet, one should recognise that it is present on every continent but Africa alone has the highest rate. Fakunomju *et al.* shed the light on the matter as follow:

Although the USA had an annual estimated victimization rate of rape at 2.1 per 1,000 females age 12 or older in 2010 (Weigel, n.d.) and 41.7 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2017 (Statista, n.d.), these rates are not as high as those in South Africa, where a recent report indicated a rate of 70.5 per 100,000 people in 2017/2018 (Africa Check, 2018). Although reliable official statistics of rape in Nigeria and Ghana are lacking, results from studies indicate that the rate is high in both countries. For example, out of 108 respondents who reported experience of sexual harassment/victimization on the campus of a university in Nigeria, 35 (32.4%) reported having been raped (Ogbonnaya et al., 2011). In past (2005) and recent (2016) surveys in Ghana, between 8% and 9% of female respondents reported a lifetime experience of rape (Fakunmoju *et al.*, 2021: 5-6).

The impunity of this gangrene is also due to the fact that the perpetrators occupy high positions in the society or government. This is the case of Seth, a great security chief of the army who has nearly raped Ast. Seth has paid a visit to his “prey”. It has not taken a long time for Ast to notice the veracity of Netta’s utterances. This is the first time she has been raped. Fortunately, she has won the fight. But before this mess happens, the discussion Ast has had with her rapist is an undeniable proof of the great enmity that the government of their country has against every kind of political ideal or idea going against their will. This can be noticed in the extract below: “I’m absolutely sure of four things. One, you’ll be your stubborn self and link up with Asar and his dreams of a unified Africa that never was, never will be. Two, he’s planning something. Three, it’ll fail. Four, you’ll go to pieces with him unless” (Armah, 1995: 61).

One can understand from this passage that the government has chosen to use violence to fight any opposition to their leadership. In an organised bad governance, all the institutions of the country are admitted to the absolute cause of the executive. This way, whatever they do, they are sure to be covered by the judiciary organ. This is what gives them the freedom of abuse without the least punishment because all the system is corrupt and at the disposal of the government. They also have spies everywhere and are abreast of the least project.

As a saying goes, “People do not really change”. This is the case of Set who since his youth had a harsh hatred against Asar for the latter is very brilliant than him. On his side, Asar who was a brilliant and ideologist student has become a powerful politician in addition to being a teacher. About him, Netta has made the following assertion for his revolutionary fights: “Here children who do well in school turn into big shots ten years later. But Asar went south to the freedom wars” (Armah, 1995: 71).

As said, Seth keeps his promise. Ast would receive another visit of her rapist (Seth) in her apartment at the university with a written proof that Asar is planning a coup d’état against the government, which information would be a “lifesaving” one for Ast. Of course, it is a conspiracy to discredit and tarnish his personality. One talks of theory of conspiracy. Uscinski and Enders have elaborated a very clear definition on it in their paper. For them:

A brief working definition of the formal component might run as follows: ‘conspiracies, in the political context, involve the machinations of a small group of powerful people, working in secret, against the common good’. It is clear that *conspiracies* might exist that meet this definition (Uscinski and Enders, 2022: 4).

This is the way politicians or let’s say, the adepts of the theory of conspiracy function to destroy the lives of any potential opponent. In the extract under study, General Seth has organised a coup against Asar in order to pin him down. He says:

‘I’m listening. You have evidence proving intellectuals here are a threat to your government.’ “What I came to show you,” SSS said, “concerns one person. An intellectual working to mount a coup d’état.” It is a document in which Asar is supposed to plan with a group so as to put an end at any time to the political system in place (Armah, 1995: 204).

Actually, the conspiracy has been a reality when surprisingly, some agents have come to arrest Asar on Manda campus as it can be seen in the following passage:

‘I can’t simply walk off my job without a word to anyone just because your security people want to arrest me’. ‘We are not arresting you’, one of the men said, as if repeating lines learned by rote. ‘We want you to help with our investigations. It would be unprofessional to publicize your cooperation’. The first man spoke again: ‘We have instructions from the top. Get ready. Let’s go’ (Armah, 1995: 234).

Fortunately, Asar, thanks to the solidarity of all the actors of the educational system of Manda campus and his own cleverness, escapes the arbitrary arrest he is about to undergo. Students, librarians and other authorities have defended him courageously. Asar launches: “‘They have no warrant’. From the crowd, a voice has amplified Asar’s statement ‘There they go again, arresting people without a warrant’” (Armah, 1995: 237). His intelligence is what has prevented him from random arrest. Numerous are those who get arrested in African societies without a valid reason. Most of those arrests are favoured by the ignorance of the victims and their lack of imagination. It is not necessary to have a physical strength. As people say, violence does not solve every issue; sometimes,

we just need to run our head. It is very important that people know their rights and duties in our societies to reduce many bad habits and abuses.

What happens here is a great lesson for people who consider themselves as intellectuals. One must master the laws that determine freedom in this society, the rights and duties so that one may defend oneself even before receiving someone else's help. This is more crucial if one decides to be part of civil movement fighting for change and justice in an organisation, a school system or in politics.

In his *Online Political Dictionary*, Taegan Goddard defines a witch-hunt as follows:

The term has since come to be used more broadly to describe any situation in which individuals are targeted and persecuted without justification. In a political context, a witch-hunt is often used to refer to situations in which an individual or group of individuals is targeted and investigated for political purposes (Goddard, 1998).

In the novel, Asar is a tangible example of witch-hunt victim of the political power in place until his eventual killed. Then, one can clearly understand that Armah is raising the great value of solidarity, union, and faithfulness for any fight for justice, especially when dealing with a political witch-hunt power. No one could act individually and hope a change for everyone. Union is strength, and strength is needed to face a political power. As lessons, one should keep in mind that solidarity is a fatal weapon against all sorts of conspiracy.

On the other hand, Armah clearly raises the issue of a multiparty system, a system involving a unique political party. Since the era of blacks' forefathers, Africans have most of the time known monarchy as their ruling system. They have always been submitted to the dictatorship of a monarch, or a king who rules and detains every kind of power whether legislative, judiciary, or executive. Even in this kind of system, this anarchy was not so noticeable as what we reach today. It is true that the monarch or king or emperor was the head of every power, but he did not use to make decisions on everything as he pleases. There were always some elders/wise, various advisors and what we call "le fou du roi" who help him make decisions. In addition, the tradition was used in this ruling system and helps the leaders a lot in several ways. Nowadays, modernism has made many countries all over the world to adopt democracy as the best political system for a sustainable development. This definition is purely utopic because everybody knows that democracy is not made for

Africa. A solution for African should be elaborated by Africans or at least in their presence, taking into account their different realities. So, it is a pure lie to say that this or that system is the best one. There is no a universal political system to rule the world. The world is a melting pot, a set of diverse cultural identities, each with its peculiarities. Even if alternation in power is adopted, it is very crucial to notice that the application of the rules imposed by democracy is not every time obvious for many countries in Africa. It sounds difficult for some political leaders, even being in a democratic system, to rule according to the standards of democracy: liberty of expression, tolerance, multiparty system, etc. The sad part about it is that the cult of personality anchored in African customs makes those leaders almost untouchable by the rigour of justice and laws. Aguessy, in his doctoral dissertation, has clearly talked about the “Deification of the African Leaders” (Aguessy, 2012: 40). Deification is “the fact of making someone or a god or the state of being a god” (Aguessy, 2012: 40). He has also recognised this:

... it appears that the way Africans view their environment (and tribal chiefs and kings) has a great effect on their beings. The permanent fear of committing insanity and fornication inhibited their capacity of transforming their environment and challenging their leaders. African kings and chiefs see their salvation through deification. This renders the power they hold over their subjects absolute. They lie to their people by saying that this power comes from the Absolute God. Therefore, all their deeds emanate from God. (Aguessy, 2012: 41)

This way of treating former African leaders has not completely disappeared from the ongoing system. Nowadays, very few African leaders are judged for the period of time they have led their country in a questionable way of ruling. Whether their way of ruling is bad or worse, they are only considered as the baobabs of the country, the pillars of the nation, the sloe of the people. This must not be the case in a democratic system where it is considered that no one is above the law. But there is as a trap in the judiciary system. It is said that law protects the minority against the majority. Everybody applauds but what do they really applaud for? The question is: Who is the minority and who is the majority? The answer to those questions demonstrates that law is elaborated to protect the rich, the powerful individuals of our societies given that they constitute the minority. It does not protect the weak as it

pretends to do. It is like the League of Nations that has been set up after World War I without real tools to complete its duties. This is the reason why in most cases, the rich escape prison. If a political leader has nothing to fear or is considered as an untouchable 'god' he would easily be intended to act with cupidity and selfishness even if this was not necessarily his former intentions. And this is the beginning of bad governance. Another issue is also the desecration of the teaching career.

Aristotle has once said that those who educate children are more to be honoured than those who produce them. Unfortunately, the noble image that the teaching career must normally have in society is not the one it really benefits from. Desecration is the fact of damaging or showing no respect towards something fully or greatly respected. The way the profession of teaching is seen is far away from praises. Armah points out:

‘...In Africa, everything is at the opposite pole from the ideal... They’ve been some superficial changes, but teaching remains a dog’s job. I hope you didn’t come here with a crazy notion of working as a teacher; ‘Let me free you from that mistake’ (Armah, 1995: 32)

Just at her arrival from America, SSS, Seth Spenser Soja, also known as DD, Deputy Director, discourages Ast from her vocation to pursue her teaching career in Kemt, their country. This is due to the fact that teachers in Manda do not receive the required respect or consideration from the authorities. The teaching career is seen here as a “dog’s job”. What is a dog’s job? One can understand it in different ways. Firstly, a dog is an animal, a mammal domesticated by a human being and commonly used at home as guardian and alarm in case of any strange intrusion in their territory. Clearly, this is an insult to the teachers in Kemt. It just means that teachers are like dogs to whom children are entrusted while their parents are busy doing more important things. Secondly, the word “dog” is also used for any person who is a coward, a craven person, a thing of low quality, a failure. Why are teachers treated this way? The main reason resides in the fact that everybody does not come to the profession by vocation, but by obligation; some engage in teaching just to escape unemployment. In such a situation, they do not take it seriously as they should and as human beings focus on people’s lack, they use the latter as scapegoats to tarnish the reputation of the whole profession. A teacher, given his representation in the society should be a model. Saying so, a teacher of sports should be sports. A

teacher of music should be gifted in music and without he says a word, anyone should identify some talents or some skills in him. King and King (2019: 54) stipulates about the issue: “This is what makes people keep on arguing that education professors should demonstrate their competencies in their area of competence. If one is a professor of business management should literarily have business. Education is key in attaining sustainable development”. Armah has then succeeded in revealing the real mindset of many people about the teaching career, starting from the governing body. One can even say that it is part of his first goals while writing his work. Surely, that is the reason why many of his characters are teachers, namely Ast, the protagonist, Asar, a prominent character, Netta Ka, a minor character, Tête a minor character and all Ast’s colleagues in Manda campus. Netta, Ast’s friend of Hapi Hotel, is also a teacher who has eventually left her vocation:

‘I was also a teacher, once... I found teaching as a masochist’s job... I grew convinced my work wasn’t merely useless; it was self-destructive. I fled... I planned for financial independence. Set up this place. In my nightmares I’m dependent for a living on the government’ (Armah, 1995: 78).

The online *Oxford Learner’s Dictionary* specifies that a masochist is “a person who gets sexual pleasure from being hurt or controlled by somebody else” (OALD, 2015). Teaching is then considered as a painful job. Let’s call a spade a spade. Many teachers (especially in primary and secondary schools) in most African countries share the same point of view as Armah has succeeded in showing it through Netta. The way those valuable civil servants live and the way some among them complain clearly shows that the wages they receive at the end of each month barely satisfies or do not even satisfy all their needs and desires. For that reason, many teachers have always planned to quit once they find another better opportunity. In most African countries, people no longer teach out of passion or vocation, but because they have no alternative left. This is very dangerous. Firstly, those teachers would find no pleasure or moral satisfaction in what they teach. And secondly, they would be preparing a time bomb for the country for they would not give the best of their abilities as tutors and advisors for the educational welfare of those young souls who are supposed to rule the nation tomorrow.

Asar has said: “I don’t threaten anybody. I have a job no one envies” (Armah, 1995: 208). Bad governance is not only related to

corruption or embezzlement. It is also directly linked with the way civil servants are treated in a country. And this is far from praising for Africa. The lesson is that teaching is a vocation in Africa. However, each person who accepts teaching as his job must accept it as a vocation, a will and pleasure as a noble job practised consciously, 'not as a spare tire' for survival. Any kind of carelessness must be avoided. The way teachers are ill-treated decreases no value from the nobility of their job because the reward of a teacher is the success of his students; he just needs to be remembered as a good teacher.

Subtle Insight Issues Fostering Neocolonialism in Corpus

Individualism and patriotism are quite opposite words. Individualism is a kind of doctrine that specifies that nothing exists but the individual self. It is directly synonym of egoism. "Individualism is a type of culture under which people prefer to think of themselves more than others and to act for the sake of their own interests instead of other groups or communities" (Kim). On the opposite side, patriotism is the love for the country. It is also related to nationalism. Stephen Nathanson defines it as a "special affection for one's home country, a sense of personal identification with the country, special concern for the well-being of the country and willingness to sacrifice to promote the country's good" (Nathanson, 2009). Here is a well-given explanation about it:

"The roots of Patriotism are even deeper than love for and pride in the group. They reach individual' self-concept and social identity. The group becomes part of individuals and they experience themselves as part of the group... It helps create unity, cohesiveness, solidarity and mobilization- the psychological elements of sociality, of community that are essential for a group's existence and survival" (Bar-Tal, 1997: 2).

As the myth from which the long tale of Ayi Kwei Armah confirms it, Asar is the exact image of the god named Osiris, whereas Seth, the Security chief is at his antipode. The behaviours attributed to him concur with Osiris's killer, Seth, his brother. The author of the work clearly shows that, Asar is not certainly a perfect being, but he reflects the kind of citizen that Africa needs to rule over the continent in great need of justice and development. Asar was certainly an intelligent student at school. He was also a loved person by many in his surroundings. The

conditions of life attributed by the author to the country in which the narrative has been displayed clearly shows that many young of his promotion became who were so intelligent ‘turn into big shots’ (Armah, 1995: 71). Instead of pursuing personal goals, which is normal for a young person of his time, he decides to take the difficult side.

‘Asar didn’t return here after his studies. He went to the liberation wars down south. I told you. There were rumors he was dead. No, mad. Missing’ ‘Where?’ ‘What came through was that he’d volunteered to work against white supremacy, some said in Angola. Mozambique. Zimbabwe. Then inside South Africa’ (Armah, 1995: 76).

Even if recognising that this mindset is rare in present times, it would never be a waste of time to continue encouraging young to develop qualities as love for others, compassion and mercy. Repetition is pedagogical, one uses to say. Reinforcing the reason why youth need to increase patriotism for their nation in their hearts is a quite interesting beginning for a better educational system, either in family or at school. If what must be done is not said and taught and repeated, what must not be done would be done without any other remediation. It is remarkable that the right opposite of Asar’s mindset is in the character of Set. In the narration, he is a powerful man, Security Chief in charge of the army of the country. His position is then more active than Asar’s in the governing system. The way he has behaved all along the story proved that many leaders who have strived a lot before having high positions that they eventually obtained do not have at first time for good motivations. It is a flagrant proof that, if someone is going to be good or bad in terms of political governance, this could be only determined from the time his or her deep motivations were known. Unfortunately, there is no motivation detector to help people foresee the outcomes of our leaders. That is why one can conclude that good or bad governance is not so superficial. First, it is a matter of conscience. Conscience is shaped by education. And education guides in the objectives or goals that men set for themselves in all their enterprises. When this enterprise would involve two or many other people’s future, it becomes more serious and delicate. And Seth’s actions clearly show it. Firstly, he is a rapist as the events presented on the pages 63-65 and 206-207 prove it. Secondly, he never felt pity for Asar, a less influent man than him in the country. “He struggles with the burden of having to persuade himself he’s not inferior, knowing he is... He’d wipe you out if he could” (Armah, 1995: 115). He tried many times

to get him into trouble since the time they were at school till they become adults. Competition has always been part of him, destructive competition, not constructive. After different attempts of arrest, he finally kills Asar without feeling any pity or regret. As long as this would be beneficial for the peace of their political power, the rest does not matter. That is the reason why we here talk about individualism.

The word egocentrism describes exactly what Ayi Kwei Armah criticises in the behaviours and attitudes of many African despotic political leaders. Egocentrism is the constant following of one's egotistical desires in an extreme way. It is also the tendency to bring everything back to oneself, to feel the centre and the hub of the world.

'Why would other African be hostile to anyone going south to work against apartheid?' Not other Africans. Elite Africans.' 'How real is the difference, in this case? 'Plenty real. Liberation is the African problem. The elite is interested in something else, belly level. "Like money.' 'Like money. Like power. The magic ability to fly high above famine, inflation, civil war. The charmed life while the continent burns. Money. Politics. The bureaucratic trip...Money traps, such jobs are called' (Armah, 1995: 76).

The right word is found: Money! Nowadays, rare are post-colonial pan-Africans who would be ready to sacrifice their time, energy and resources for the interests of the people they rule. The most important thing is maintaining in power themselves, their own economic security. The rest, including development is left for the randomness of nature. In this case that there is less care about the how to manage the power entrusted, it would not be a surprise to talk about bad governance. Bad governance results from carelessness on issues impacting directly the welfare of the country.

"Gadgets have nothing to do with it", Ast said. She spoke with unintended force. "Those gadgets" are supposed to dwell well the power entrusted; it would not be a surprise to talk about carelessness on issues touching directly the country's welfare.

'Gadgets have nothing to do with it', Ast said. She spoke with unintended force. 'Those gadgets are supposed to detect dangers out there in the open. To SSS you're not an external threat. You're a threat in his mind. In his guts. What you do doesn't matter. What you are condemns you

in his eyes. He's always wished you didn't exist. Now he has the power to make that wish come true. Why are you blind to that?' (Armah, 1995: 164)

Political debaters and actors who bring their contribution to the evolution of their continents are often seen as parasites, disturbing worm deserving to be neutralised. "SSS has as much power as one person can get in this country. But he is unhappy. He feels insecure at a deeper level than you admit" (Armah, 1995: 164). The author qualifies politicians' anxiety as a "psychological need". This means that they are in constant fear of losing control and influence on the system they rule. Losing control would then mean misery for them because once there is an alternation, they could be a prey for the new power in place. Do they need the help of skilful psychologists able to help them make a difference between objective political actors and harmful opponents so as to calm their fear down?

Conclusion

Africa is obviously a wonderful continent in matter of cultural heritage left by our forefathers. Nevertheless, no community is perfect and Africa is not an exception. Literary works like novels reveal the real face of African society through a well-structured presentation of the imagination of insightful writers who depict realities by exposing their psychological state of mind subtly about the matters. This paper deals with the analytical reading of Ayi Kwei Armah's *Osiris Rising*. After applying the analytical reading, the results give the real value of its use in the brightness of the capacity of literature to bring out what is hidden, and unveil what is not worthy of us in matter of issues leading to bad governance. It also presents the different interpretations withdrawable from the author's work as well as useful lessons for every day's decisions and actions for current youth in African society. Two detailed chapters have been developed to complete the present analysis.

It is clear that one has learnt so much while reading and analysing Ayi Kwei Armah's work. What has been found is the problems related to the bad governance of our African societies have their origin only in harmful western intrusion in African affairs. Most of our problems and issues undermining our systems, whether in politics, economy, or education are due to the defaults and tares of our own leaders of different sectors such as egocentrism, hypocrisy, betrayal, jealousy, phobia of

change and greed. We have learnt that only strong bollocks and a well-prepared mind can withstand victoriously adversity coming from a dictatorial and puppet governments and that it is useless to start fighting for justice being unprepared from the toe of feet to the hair of the head. By the same way, even if the way the teaching job is presented in the novel does not encourage teaching lovers, this does not totally discourage because it is a fact that money is not the only important thing in life. There is not much happiness than in exercising the job one has always wanted. Nevertheless, the way the system is designed does not mean that it is impossible for the continent to go forward as wished. Patience is a golden path. It would just depend on our individual way of dealing with it at all levels, either in family, at school or in politic. It has been learnt much more in the frankness of Ayi Kwei Armah as well as the practical suggestions he made throughout the novel towards each detected issue. This made his artistic work not only revealing, but also useful for strata of blacks' society. Somehow, issues related to bad governance will never be discussed enough because of humans' imperfection. Only patience and resilience can help in the fight for the reduction of its drawbacks.

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