



*Revue internationale de
langues, littératures et cultures*

**N°24
2026**

**Université Gaston Berger de Saint-Louis
B.P. 234, Saint-Louis, Sénégal
ISSN 0851-4119**

SAFARA N° 24-2026 – ISSN 0851-4119

**Revue internationale de langues, littératures et cultures
Laboratoire de Recherche en Art et Culture**

UFR Lettres et Sciences Humaines, Université Gaston Berger,
BP 234 Saint Louis, Sénégal

Tel +221 961 23 56 Fax +221 961 1884

E-mail : babacar.dieng@ugb.edu.sn / khadidiatou.diallo@ugb.edu.sn

Directeur de Publication

Babacar DIENG, Université Gaston Berger (UGB)

COMITE SCIENTIFIQUE

Augustin	AINAMON (Bénin)	Magatte	NDIAYE (Sénégal)
Abdoulaye	BARRY (Sénégal)	Oumar	NDONGO (Sénégal)
Babou	DIENE (Sénégal)	Fallou	NGOM (USA)
Simon	GIKANDI (USA)	Maki	SAMAKE (Mali)
Pierre	GOMEZ (Gambie)	Badara	SALL (Sénégal)
Mamadou	KANDJI (Sénégal)	Ndiawar	SARR (Sénégal)
Baydallaye	KANE (Sénégal)	Alexiskhergie	SEGUEDEME (Bénin)
Fatoumata	KEITA (Mali)	Aliko	SONGOLO (USA)
Vamara	KONE (Côte d'Ivoire)	Omar	SOUGOU (Sénégal)
Babacar	MBAYE (USA)	Marième	SY (Sénégal)

COMITE DE RÉDACTION

Rédacteur en Chef : Mamadou BA (UGB)

Corédacteur en Chef : Ousmane NGOM (UGB)

Administratrice : Khadidiatou DIALLO (UGB)

Relations extérieures : Maurice GNING (UGB)

Secrétaire de rédaction : Mame Mbayang TOURE (UGB)

MEMBRES

Mohamadou Hamine WANE (UGB)

Cheikh Tidiane LO (UGB)

Moussa SOW (UGB)

© SAFARA, Université Gaston Berger de Saint Louis, 2021

Couverture : Dr. Mamadou BA, UGB Saint-Louis

Sommaire

1. L'article 12 de la Charte Nationale du Niger : enjeux sociaux et psychosociaux d'une politique linguistique
Hamadou Daouda 7
2. Ishmael Reed's *Mumbo Jumbo*: A Postcolonial Reading
Soro Dolourou 27
3. Représentation symbolique des images dans les proverbes balant
Jules Mansaly 47
4. Le hijab : recommandation divine ou mode au Sénégal ?
Aminata Camara..... 67
5. Marginalité et enfermement social dans *Le Mariage de plaisir* de Tahar Ben Jelloun et *Toiles d'araignée* de Ibrahima Ly
Alioune Willane, Raymond Bouré Ndong..... 85
6. Dictatorship and Political Instability in Contemporary Africa: Thematic Convergence of Chaos in *The Trial of Mallam Ilya* by Mohammed ben-Abdallah and *Dasebre* by Asiedu Yirenkyi
Aho Fiacre, Aguessy Constant Yelian, Gbaguidi Célestin 109
7. Développement du commerce pastoral : Organisations, impacts et vulnérabilités dans la région de Kolda (Sud du Sénégal)
Samba Diamanka, Yacine Fall, Boubou Aldiouma Sy 131
8. Les décès maternels et conséquences sociales sur les ménages en République Centrafricaine
Prosper Guiyama 151
9. The Aesthetics of Surprise in John Lanchester's *The Debt to Pleasure*
Abodohou Orierien Olivier 171
10. The Effect of Task Instruction Language on Performance in English Reading Comprehension Assessment: An Experimental Study in Kebemer, Senegal
Mamadou Moustapha Sanghare..... 189

11. Victor Hugo <i>non grata</i> au Sénégal? Quand le plus lumineux ambassadeur de la France présentait d'obscures lettres de créance Moustapha Faye	211
12. A Contrastive Study of Pulaar and Noon Phonology: The Case of the Consonants Tidiane Barry	237
13. Redemptive Action in Subaltern Dystopia: What Role for the Organic African Intellectual-cum-Writer? Abdul-Karim Kamara	251

Redemptive Action in Subaltern Dystopia: What Role for the Organic
African Intellectual-cum-Writer?

Abdul-Karim Kamara

University of The Gambia, The Gambia

Résumé

Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, Ashis Nandy et bien d'autres chercheurs postcoloniaux utilisent le terme « subalterne » pour désigner les peuples des espaces anciennement colonisés : l'Afrique, les Amériques et l'Asie, qui peuvent peut-être être regroupés sous la rubrique « triangle subalterne ». La production littéraire rédemptrice dans ce triangle a le même caractère et le même contenu ; les escribidores (écrivains) et les letrados (intellectuels) de ce triangle subalterne partagent la même préoccupation : la littérature au service de la construction nationale et de la prospérité. Parmi d'autres questions de gouvernance, les écrivains organiques du triangle engagent les conquistadors et leurs successeurs dans un dialogue en vue d'un mouvement vers un troisième espace d'indépendance politique, de prospérité économique et de dignité humaine.

Cet article se concentre sur les efforts déployés par les letrados organiques de l'angle africain pour appeler les différents dirigeants à l'ordre afin que leurs activités s'alignent sur la tâche essentielle de réduction de la pauvreté dans cet angle du triangle subalterne. L'agence (une des caractéristiques de la théorie postcoloniale), telle qu'elle est interprétée notamment par Homi K. Bhabha et Wole Soyinka, est adoptée comme cadre central pour étayer l'analyse textuelle.

L'article conclut que si les lettrés deviennent organiques et se joignent aux intellectuels non diplômés des médias sociaux pour dénoncer les mauvais comportements des dirigeants, le triangle subalterne africain ne sera peut-être pas transformé en utopie, mais au moins la vie dans ce triangle vaudra la peine d'être vécue.

Mots-clés : Agence, Challengers, Intellectualisme organique, Intellectuels diplômés et non diplômés, et Subalternes

Abstract

Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, Ashis Nandy, and many more postcolonial scholars use the term 'subaltern' to refer to the peoples of formerly colonized spaces: Africa, the Americas, and Asia, which can perhaps be subsumed under the rubric 'subaltern triangle'. Redemptive literary production in the said triangle has had the same character and content; the *escribidores* (writers) and *letrados* (intellectuals) of this subaltern triangle share the same concern: literature for nation-building and prosperity. Among other governance issues, the organic writers of the triangle engage the conquistadors and their successors in a dialogue for movement to a third locus of political independence, economic prosperity, and human dignity.

This paper focuses on the efforts deployed by the organic "letrados" of the African angle to call the various leaderships to order so that their activities will fall in line with the all-important business of mitigating poverty in this angle of the subaltern triangle. Agency (a postcolonial theoretical trapping), particularly as it is interpreted by Homi K Bhabha and Wole Soyinka, is adopted as the central scaffold to underpin textual analysis. It concludes that if people of letters go organic and join the uncredentialed social media intellectuals in denouncing bad behaviour by the leadership, the African angle of the subaltern triangle might not be transformed into a utopia, but at least life in it will be worth living.

Keywords: Agency, Challengers, Organic intellectualism, Credentialed and uncredentialed intellectuals, and Subaltern

Introduction

It is deemed necessary to recall here that Edward Said, Homi K Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, Ashis Nandy, and many more postcolonial scholars use the term 'subaltern' to refer to peoples of formerly colonized spaces: Africa, the Americas and Asia, which can perhaps be subsumed under the rubric 'subaltern triangle'. Given that literary productions in the said spaces have the same character and content, it might not be too necessary here to write about each of the angles of the triangle in isolation. Nevertheless, since the African angle of the triangle is the hub of this paper, we limit our focus to it. On a general note, however, it can be posited that the *escribidores* (writers) and *letrados* (intellectuals) of the said triangle share the same concern; that is,

producing literature for nation-building and prosperity. Among other governance issues, they engage the conquistadors and their replacements in a dialogue for movement to a third locus of political independence, economic prosperity, and human dignity.

Rodrigo Lazo, the Cuban writer and organic intellectual in the Latin American angle of the subaltern triangle, believes in this movement to a third locus; so does Maria Odette Canivell, who, assuming the burden of proof, mentions the literary productions of Romulo Gallegos (writer-cum-novelist and later president of Venezuela), José Martí (Cuban poet and fighter for independence from Spain), José Domingo Sarmiento, author of the satirical novel *Facundo*. To this group of intellectual challengers, she adds the Peruvian intellectual who acts in the same way as her Argentinian, Brazilian, Cuban, or Venezuelan counterpart to breathe the winds of political change into Latin American nations.

A similar thing can be said about writers in the Asian angle. Through the barrel of the pen, the Arabs, Koreans, Japanese, Chinese, Cambodians, Vietnamese, Mongolians, Malaysians, Indians, and the like, also yielded to the compulsion of hurriedly working with application and industry in order to belie the negative utterances and actions brought to bear upon them by Western empire builders, re-imagine their relationship with the West, free themselves from the manacles of imperialism and expansionism, and most importantly, fight against oppression and poverty. These obligations are succinctly and integrally enshrined in the ninth volume of the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars (BCAS) Statement of Purpose passed in Boston, Massachusetts. Additionally, names like Kim Chi-ha, VS Naipaul, Sumit Chakrabarti, Mohandas K. Gandhi, Partha Chatterjee, Nandy, Said, and Bhabha are key in the intellectual contribution to nation-building in the Asian angle of the subaltern triangle through their pens.

It is probably significant to add that the contributions made by left-wing intellectuals in the Americas and Asia do not only provide us with parallels and supplementary data that are referred to in this inquiry, but they also serve as models of organic intellectualism that help both in the analysis of the third angle of the triangle, Africa. (We should hasten to establish that in this study,

all geopolitical spaces administered by Blacks are also included in the name Africa). Besides, the contributions of the above-mentioned scholars from the Asian and American angles are also resorted to in the critique of the efforts African intellectuals have deployed, especially Ngugi, Nuruddin Farah, Sony Labou-Tansi, Emmanuel B. Dongala, and Armah in reshaping the relationship between Europe and Africa on the one hand, and the governor and the governed on the other.

It is crucial to observe that intellectuals in the third angle of the subaltern triangle, like their Latin American or Asian counterparts, have had to wrestle with serious anomalies brought to bear upon the Black continent, first by the West, and later by the indigenous political leaders. It is against this backdrop that Jean-Pierre Makouta Mboukou summarizes African literature thus: “La littérature négro-africaine est devenue tout entière contestataire, dénonciatrice, revendicative, accusatrice, défensive, démystifiante et démythifiante” (1983:169). [African literature has become wholly dissenting, denunciatory, protestational, accusatory, defensive, demystifying, and demythifying - my translation].

This article explores three main thematic axes: the first constitutes a canvas of negative stereotypes and actions proposed by the intellectual agents of the empire builders; the second, dubbed as reactionary writing, is a debunking of the negative stereotypes crafted by the just-mentioned agents by organic writers of the subaltern space; the third and final axis captures efforts made by the writers of the African angle of the subaltern triangle to excoriate the colonial replacements in black skin and call them to order. We should hasten to point out that we do not intend to draw up a large canvas of the epistemic violence, not to say negative stereotypes, meted out on Blacks by post-enlightenment intellectuals; intellectuals, who, through the barrel of their pens, helped to transform their erstwhile inhospitable spaces into spaces where the preservation of human dignity is at its highest. For the purpose of this work, we foreground just a few negative utterances made by post-enlightenment intellectuals, such as Georg Hegel, Gobineau, Joseph Ernest Renan, Montesquieu, Joseph Conrad, John Locke, Rudyard Kipling, Thomas Jefferson, Gilbert, and Gubar, who, as Ngugi puts it in *Writers in Politics*,

[constructed], espoused and abetted cultural falsehoods against the exploited races, particularly the Blacks (29).

Hegel's words epitomize the pseudo-scientific models of anatomy and craniometry he and other post-enlightenment intellectuals employed to frame Africans, Asians, Native Americans and Pacific Islanders (the subaltern community) as races inferior to the Europeans. These models were later accompanied by postulations borne out of the fear of miscegenation: that offsprings of racial interbreeding would result in the dilution of the European race; that hybrids were an aberration worse than the inferior races, a weak and diseased mutation (Bonetto 15). Pursuant to this logic, Gobineau, often regarded as the father of modern racism, expresses strong negative stereotypes in his *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races* to discourage crossbreeding in order to sustain racial purity.

A particular Nineteenth-Century writer that should not escape mention here is Joseph Ernest-Renan for his advocacy of imperial stewardship over the subalterns. Renan believes that *regere imperio populous*¹ is their vocation. He goes beyond seemingly tolerable limits, viewed with postcolonial lenses, to declare this false conviction in *La Réforme intellectuelle et morale*, cited later by Aimé Césaire in *Discours sur le colonialisme* as follows:

La nature a fait une race d'ouvriers, c'est la race chinoise, d'une dextérité de main merveilleuse sans presque aucun sentiment d'honneur ; gouvernez-la avec justice, en prélevant d'elle, pour le bienfait d'un tel gouvernement, un ample douaire au profit de la race conquérante, elle sera satisfaite ; une race de travailleurs de la terre, c'est le nègre ; soyez pour lui bon et humain, et tout sera dans l'ordre ; une race de maîtres et de soldats, c'est la race européenne. [Réduisez cette noble race à travailler dans l'ergastule comme des nègres et des Chinois, elle se révolte] (8).²

¹ Ruling others is our vocation (my interpretation).

² Nature has made a race of workers, it is the Chinese race, of marvellous dexterity of hand without almost any feeling of honour; govern it with justice, taking from it, for the benefit of such a government, an ample dower for the benefit of the conquering race, it will be satisfied; a race of workers of the earth, it is the Negro; be for him good and human, and all will be in

Renan captures, in the above citation, the essence of the European mission in the subaltern triangle: to impose their political and cultural supremacy on it. His arguments, spurious as many an honest intellectual believe they are, do not seem to have the same injurious capacity as the racially demeaning ones advanced by Hegel or Montesquieu. Montesquieu, generally considered as a strong malicious exponent of the locus of cultural difference, has this to say about the black race in *De l'esprit des lois, livre XV, Chapitre V*: "Ceux dont il s'agit sont noirs depuis les pieds jusqu'à la tête ; et ils ont le nez si écrasé qu'il est presque impossible de les plaindre (1748)."³ That is to say, because of the black man's 'faulty' physiognomy, he does not deserve to be considered and treated as a human being. He goes further to heighten the acrimony in many a public intellectual by arguing that "une preuve que les nègres n'ont pas le sens commun, c'est qu'ils font plus de cas d'un collier de verre que de l'or, qui, chez des nations policées, est d'une si grande conséquence (1748)."⁴ And that, "il est impossible que nous supposions que ces gens-là soient des hommes ; parce que, si nous les supposions des hommes, on commencerait à croire que nous ne sommes pas nous-mêmes chrétiens" (1748).⁵

Although apparently Montesquieu's objective is to demonstrate that slavery is unjustifiable, monstrous and not supposed to be practised by people from a christian community, it can be argued that the irony through which this objective is conveyed is offensive, particularly to the reader from the African angle of the subaltern triangle. It can further be argued that no matter how Montesquieu may intend to atone for showing such insidious disdain for the black race by equally evoking the greed of the race to which he belongs, that effort can hardly be considered good enough. In our estimation, it is easier for the white man to ignore the offence Montesquieu made against his person

order; a race of masters and soldiers, it is the European race. [Reduce this noble race to work in tiny cells like Negroes and Chinese, it will revolt].

³ "The people in question are black from the feet up; and they have noses so crushed that it is almost impossible to pity them (1748)."

⁴ "it is that they pay more attention to a mere glaze necklace than to gold, which, among polished nations, is of such great importance (1748)"

⁵ "it is impossible for us to suppose that these people are men; because, if we did suppose them to be men, they would begin to believe that we ourselves are not Christians (1748)"

than for a black man to do the same for the deprecating words pronounced against him by the same epistemic violator.

It seems difficult, if not impossible, to discuss the epistemic violence meted out on Africans, particularly by the agents of the narcissistic tormentors without mentioning one of the earliest purveyors of such violence, John Locke, who journeyed to West Africa in 1561. Probably easier to remember negative experiences than positive ones, in the estimation of Adichie, Locke intimates that black Africans are “beasts who have no houses” (Tedtalks 2009). And to maximize the damage and contempt against the Othered Africans, he further posits that “they are also people without heads, having their mouth and eyes in their breasts” (2009). It is tempting to assume that a house in West Africa in 1561 could not be considered a house if it was not in keeping with Locke’s understanding of a house. It is not useful to pursue this argument here because he did not supply a definition. The least that can probably be said is that the African situation could not have been as bad as to be completely empty of anything good worth writing about.

Probably following the footsteps of Locke, Rudyard Kipling, the English poet, uncharitably etched another deprecating sketch of a violent single story where he portrays Africans, who constitute an important fraction of the new caught sullen peoples of the colonial master, as “half devils and half children” (Kipling 1899) in the last two lines of the very first stanza of “The White Man’s Burden” that catapulted him to stardom. A reading of the poem in its entirety cannot but tempt the critic to propose the following interpretations: first, it constitutes an abuse against conquered races, particularly black Africans and, secondly, white men are presented as a philanthropist race that is sacrificing its human and material resources to elevate the status of the black people. By so doing, it can be argued that Kipling attempts to befog the condescending attitude of the white man and the main economic interest that is believed to have motivated his coming down to the black continent. A catachrestic reading of the title “The White Man’s Burden” seems apt in order to reveal the irony embedded in it: The Black Man’s Burden. There is no contesting the view that Kipling espouses private intellectualism to promote

European ascendancy and to make their cultural imperialism reign supreme in a sustained way.

Further to this, Thomas Jefferson dilates on the same inferior-superior racial dichotomy in *Notes on Slavery* by David Voelker. Although in the said notes he cautions and urges scientific investigation before anyone can reach final conclusions on racial potentialities, Jefferson subscribes to the beliefs of their time regarding the biological dangers of race mixture, the innate cultural differences, and the impression of undesirable physical characteristics of the Blackman (Voelker 1). After attempting to defend the negative perceptions he has made of the African on the American soil, he concludes that “the Blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstances, are inferior to the Whites in the endowments both of body and mind” (2). It is evident that these deprecating pronouncements can only promote a superior-inferior configuration, which, in the thinking of middle-way intellectuals, is too damaging for anyone to desire its presence in any form of writing.

It can be assumed that the few uncharitable utterances discussed above have provoked the ire of intellectuals in the subaltern triangle who have not minced their words in writing back at the empire. Thus, in the next section of this paper, we have explored the reaction of writers from the subaltern triangle (as agents of the movement to a third space) to these pernicious stereotypes, particularly from a literary perspective.

The African intellectual-cum-organic social worker and challenger, both within the continent and in the Diaspora, is first and foremost confronted with the urgent task of debunking the prejudicial and racist utterances made by Georg Hegel and other Western intellectual bigots. In this slate, we have a recourse to the voices of the subaltern writers across times and spaces.

One of the first internationally recognized voices in the combat against Western prejudices aiming at devaluing the black race is that of Edward Wilmot Blyden who invests immense time and energy in trying to conceptualize *The African Personality* with a view to inspiring the black continent and its people – both in and outside of it – and at the same time

instil in them the conviction that they are neither inferior to the white man nor are they obliged to be copycats of western civilisation hook, line and sinker (276-7). It is tempting to fall in line with Blyden, with probably no reservation, that for Africa to attain material advancement, it is first and foremost important to force herself out of the shell of inferiority in which she has been locked up by the narcissistic European via the ink of Hegel, Renan, Montesquieu, and their ilk.

Reacting further to the violent pronouncements that seek to establish that Whites are naturally human but should be inhuman to Blacks because there is nothing in the Black that links him to humanity (Hegel 93; Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois*, 1748), René Maran argues in *Batouala* that what they say about the Negro is more ingrained in them than in any other human race on the face of the earth (22).

David Diop continues from where René Maran stops - not in chronological order though - to decry the Europeans and their civilizing mission. But while Maran sees them as a destructive fire for Africans anywhere, as opposed to the Promethean fire which is a boon to humanity at large, Diop ascribes to them truly bestial qualities. The Europeans transmogrify into vultures who, in the possible assessment of Diop, are a true incarnation of the negative attributes of these aviary creatures. It therefore seems impossible for Diop to ignore the need to cudgel them in the most brutal manner as he does in his collection of poems titled *Coups de pilon*, particularly in "Vautours" (1973). What Diop unarguably wishes to foreground is the sadistic nature of these empire builders who, in their interaction with their black Other, particularly during the days of slavery and colonialism, would use every imaginable subterfuge and atrocity to subtract something vital from this black Other in order to realize their objective: establish and sustain their hegemony over the rest of mankind, but especially over the African. Attributing animal qualities to the empire builders is not reserved to David Diop alone though it is difficult to come by any piece of poetry that can outclass or even be paralleled with his poem entitled *Vultures*.

On another redemptive note, Tamsir Gibril Niane (in *L'épopée mandingue*) and Seydou Badian (in *Sous l'orage*) write with wit and verve to help Joseph

Conrad out of his demonstrated ignorance of the history of Africa by relating the lofty deeds of great kings like Soundiata Keita and Chaka Zulu. In a similar vein, Chinua Achebe (in *Things Fall Apart*) and Amadou Kourouma (in *Les soleils des indépendances*) demonstrate that Africa had neatly structured, respected and working political systems. Going by these works, it can be suggested that it was the colonial master who disrupted the whole decorous system of governance in Africa by driving in wedges of discord into the oneness of African societies in order to establish their hegemony. This is the reality revealed in *Things Fall Apart* when, through the words of William Butler Yeats, Achebe accuses the West of unleashing anarchy upon the world (Yeats 1919).

It is perhaps pertinent to close out the discussion of the efforts made by organic writers to rebut the negative stereotypes by observing that it is important to debunk falsehoods, but rebutting falsehoods alone cannot make the empire builder budge an inch. If the aim of the organic subaltern writer is to prick the conscience of the empire builders so that they can accept relocating to an exploitation-free new world, it can be suggested that they have no alternative but to include in their writing toolkit elements of oppression. It is this movement from defensive to offensive writing that constitute the main thrust of the following analysis.

It is deemed vital to posit that a combatant does not quite merit the name if they are always on the defensive. Therefore, in addition to protecting their prestige, the boxers also need to administer deadly punches in order to demoralize and throw their opponent out of the boxing ring. The African writer, not excluding Blacks in the New World as mentioned earlier, therefore moves from the defensive to a more offensive style of writing. The writer's objective is now to embark on a full-blown derision of the colonial mission, unmask the colonial mission and strip it down for all to perceive what it truly represents: unenviable greed, inhumanity of the vilest description, unbridled lechery, and the like.

It is not unusual, therefore, to see organic intellectuals-cum-writers of this period to always create a small corner in their works to give the colonial masters some verbal trouncing for purporting to be the saints the subaltern

writers believe they are not. For instance, in *Une vie de Boy*, Ferdinand Oyono portrays the French administrative contingent as an embarrassment to the French colonial mission, a mission which, in their own words, aims at elevating the Blackman to an admirable status. The immoral scenarios chronicled in the novel seem to leave in the reader the conviction that the white field workers sent to Cameroon to manage the colonial enterprise must have been handpicked from a morally damaged set of French people. He does another exposure of the colonial master's ingratitude and disrespect for the black man in *Le vieux nègre et la médaille* where old Meka, who, in the morning, is decorated by the colonial establishment in recognition of his sterling land contribution to the colonial enterprise, but arrested in the evening by the same colonial establishment because he is found loitering in the wrong place and in the wrong state of mind: drunk. Similarly, Mongo Béti's *Le Pauvre Christ de Bomba* catalogues the exploitative activities of a Christian mission that makes the reader believe with less strain that they were poorer than the Cameroonians it came to civilize.

Contemporary poets, too, have contributed to such attribution of bestial qualities to the same empire builders. One example of such poets is the Gambian poet, Tijan Sallah, who does so in *Before the New Earth, African Short Stories* where he conjures up avian images to decry the hubris and Procrustean comportment of the Westerners first in "Weaverbird" (51) and in "Fall" (51). Sallah aptly captures the condescending obscenities of this race in his work and further adds weight to both David Diop's depiction of Whites as scavengers, and to Maran's portrayal of the incendiary propensity of the same race. But beyond this, Sallah sees what comes from the mouths of the narcissistic Other as nothing but faeces meant to pollute the bahama grass (the African space). It should be noted that the neo-colonial behaviour of the erstwhile colonial masters Sallah makes reference to here is fully fleshed out by Elizabeth Schmidt in *Foreign Intervention in Africa: From the Cold War to the War on Terror* (2013). In chapter 7 of this book (165-192) titled "France's Private Africa Domain 1947-1991," she amply demonstrates, with cogent proofs, that western powers, particularly France, in order to make themselves appear indispensable, would drive in wedges of discord into African societies, ignite wars, and then come later to serve as arbiters or

problem shooters. Thus, it can be argued that they force Africa (the grass) to pander to their whims and caprices.

It is important to add that in certain areas of Africa, especially in the southern hemisphere, intellectual challengers use both pen and gun in their dialogue with their oppressors for movement to a third locus. The South African educated challenger shows no scruple to use the gun to fight against his white tormentor. In their own case, it can be argued, there is no room for fatalism. This, unarguably, is so because the Boers in South Africa are not just portrayed by writers as colonizers, but also as an adamant set of white people who have chosen to stay and sustain their hegemony over blacks and will therefore leave no weapon unused to achieve this aim. Therefore, when, in the African-Scandinavian Writers Conference held in Stockholm in 1967, Wole Soyinka concluded his lecture, rather compromisingly, that writers should confine themselves to recording the mores and experiences of their society and not to take to physical violence or run radio stations, Alex La Guma took umbrage at his admonition and responded thus: "I, as a South African writer, am prepared to run guns and to hold up radio stations, because in South Africa that is what we are faced with, whether we are writers or whether we are common labourers" (Wastberg 21).

The determination to resort to the use of guns shown by La Guma in this angry outburst translates the feeling that the non-violent Ghandi-like protest cannot be the solution in an Apartheid configuration where the oppressor's conscience has been petrified. Balutansky patronizes La Guma's militant posture as is expressed in the citation above for another reason than dialoguing with the rhinos in a language that they understand best, in a language that will make them see reason and urgency to relocate to a third space of enunciation; she sees through La Guma's novels the conviction that "individuals within the collective must be allowed to live a free, decent life in which they can develop their human potential" (Balutansky 9).

Furthermore, the dynamics of intellectual writing in Africa have not been exclusively tethered to damning and condemning the West for their epistemic violence against Africans and to repairing the dented image of Africa even to the point of extolling the unextollable or yielding to the compulsion to glorify

the African past and things African, as Irele would couch it in *The African Experience in Literature and Ideology* (113). African writers are aware that it is ill-advised to continue playing the role of thurifers of African values that serve no purpose in the development agenda of the continent. This is not to suggest that defining the African Personality and Negritude (or eulogizing the African past) are completely devoid of significance. Irele and many other scholars believed that the proponents and exponents of these concepts had helped Africans to see themselves as a distinct category of people with a responsibility to other citizens of the planet, but most importantly with a commitment to their particular destiny as a people. The purveyors of the said concepts did not only serve as eye-openers, but had also laid the ideological foundations for latter African scholars to build upon (113).

It is perhaps useful to establish at this stage that the survey done on reactionary writing to the negative stereotypes promulgated by the Hegels, on the one hand, and on aggressive writing, on the other, is far from being exhaustive. It suffices, however, to say that the purveyors of the African Personality and Negritude wrote to dismantle the abusive constructs made by early agents of the empire. As times change, and with this, the agents for the continuity of empire supremacy and exploitation, so too the concerns of the anti-empire writer. These are the concerns, particularly the disappointment brought to bear on the subalterns by the colonial replacements in black skin, that are discussed in the next pages.

Long is still the night, to open the discussion on a not-too-optimistic note, and it is probably appropriate to state that the post-Negritude African scholars and writers, who must have acquainted themselves with the writings of Blyden and Caseley-Hayford on their definition of “The African Personality”, seem to have understood the necessity to shift from the romantic fords to deeper and more engaging writing. This time, the writer of the African angle of the subaltern triangle writes to excoriate the colonial replacements in black skin, but in white masks, borrowing from the wisdom of Fanon.

It is vital to observe that African literography has graduated from the misty-eyed romanticization of everything African even where it is vile; writing today seems to be centred on raising awareness in Africans everywhere in the

globe to condemn evil irrespective of the colour of its perpetrator, especially when it is deemed by one and all that Africa can no longer continue to have her development agenda postponed; that Africa can no longer accept being held to ransom by Western powers and multinationals using African leaders as their front men or women. It is obvious that intellectuals, especially the lettered, are propelled by the thinking that the colonial master left unwillingly, and that they were severed from the breasts of the African continent rather prematurely and would therefore take to working out a strategy of proxy-sucking and governing. It is even tempting to imagine that because of the audacity demonstrated by their challengers, the colonial masters would do everything possible to derail the process of African enfranchisement. This is the open secret Jean divulges to the Providential Guide in *La Vie et Démie* by Labou-Tansi when he laments thus: “Excellence, nous devrions avoir honte. Ceux qui nous ont jeté l’indépendance avaient parié leur tête et leur sang pour dire que nous serions incapables de gérer la liberté » (163).⁶

Few as they are on paper, Jean’s words seem to occupy a bigger space in the critic’s mind. Why should the Whites bet their lives against the success of Independence in Africa? By so doing, they render themselves suspect of not just harbouring inordinate grudge against their challengers, but also of intending to undermine the success of this Independence. It can be argued further that they agreed to depart, but they made sure it was a he-goat departure: gone, but the odour left behind is strong enough to convince one as to their presence, though invisible. Wole Soyinka is certain about the non-departure of the colonial master in his appraisal of the agony of the Ogoni in *The Man Died*, where, for the hegemony of a few military leaders and their scions, scores of lives of the Ogoni people had to be wasted:

Ogoni people are, alas, only the guinea pigs for a morbid resolution of this nurtured feudal oligarchy and their pampered, indolent and unproductive scions (6).

⁶His Excellency, we should feel ashamed. Those who threw independence at us did bet their heads and blood that we would not be capable to manage our freedom.

This call-to-order made above by Jean is not restricted to the Providential Guide; through this call, it can be suggested that Jean equally invites the pen fraternity to know that the new enemy of the continent, the African leader, may be new but not completely so. In the thinking of Bhabha, the new African leader is an embodiment of ambivalence: attractive on account of his verbally-expressed ambition to transform the continent into a paradise-on-earth, but repulsive on account of the sudden alacrity with which he adopts the exploitative and hegemonic ways of the ousted colonial master. The new hybrid African leader therefore represents the two-headed Janus god with the beautiful head facing Europe and the ugly one facing Africa. This is what the Generalissimo in Farah's trilogy, His Excellency Ole Excellence in Armah's *Matigari*, and the President in his *Osiris Rising* seem to represent: they are more than willing to please the exploiting and arrogant white Other at the expense of the black man whose interest they are supposed to protect.

It is probably pertinent to argue that the use of the new African leader does not really suggest that the Heads of States are to blame exclusively for the renewed disappointment. It can in fact be argued that if leaders fail, their cohorts have a hand in that failure. There is abundant evidence pointing to the fact that without the complicity of private intellectuals, Africa would have been able to manage her independence. Farah, among the challengers, subscribes unequivocally to this assumption and even goes a step further to badmouth and accuse intellectuals as the people who "keep dictators in power" (*Sardines* 82). Although Medina uses 'we', it should be understood that she does not mean to put a tag of sameness on all the intellectuals. It is an oblique attack on those private intellectuals who spite the interdictions and permissibilities proposed by renowned scholars, especially Chomsky, as a viaticum for intellectuals in the fight against oppression and inequalities.

Like Medina, Josiane in Tierno Monenembo's *Les Crapauds-brousse* raises a very serious concern over the apparent cecity and irresponsible behaviour of the African intellectual (not in generic terms) in the governance business of their continent. This European lady (Josiane) does not seem to understand how intellectuals, who, on the eve of independence were busy preparing

diatribes against their oppressors for attainment of independence (utopia), are now busy undermining that same independence (Monenembo 293).

The cecity Josiane evokes above, which indeed is a major trait of rhinos, is very evident in the novels consulted to shore up this study. The vision of the Generalissimo and the Providential Guide does not go beyond protecting their selfish interests. Chavouala, the Minister of National Education in *La Vie et Démie*, is a glaring example of such people that are not expected to ride their conscience roughshod and engage themselves head-on in unbridled corruption. But he seems to be so immersed in it that he even gives a negatively brilliant lecture on it to the newly appointed public officers. One of such is the new Minister to whom Chavouala chooses to transmit the corruption contagion is Dr Ntchi, the new Minister of Health (34).

This corroborates Armah's forecast that the [beautiful] ones are not yet born. That is to say, if the credentialized intellectuals, who are supposed to be the most trusted militants for the liberation of the continent, refuse to carry out this assignment because of greed, who else should the masses look up to for redemption? Who shall be the trusted credentialized intellectual Moses that will free them from the bondage imposed on them by the new-but-not-too-new leaders? Where is that Third Force of mediation that should help sanitize the governor-governed relationship? And above all, what lessons do the masses have to learn from anybody about corruption? Where are those ferrymen, as Armah captures it in *Osiris Rising*, who are to ferry the downtrodden across the river of abject poverty and abuse to the banks of real independence? It can be argued that collusion has suffered a major abuse: done by those who are not expected to do it.

In the same vein, Ngugi portrays Nderi (another Minister), Chui, Kimeria, and Mzigo, in *Petals of Blood*, as self-serving individuals whose lust for wealth has rendered them completely inhuman and impervious to the plight of their compatriots. The same can be said about the public authorities in Dongala's *Les Petits garçons naissent aussi des étoiles* where they actively collude with sons outside the soil of the republic to the sorrow of the true sons of the soil. They do not only promote the consumption of imported goods against home-grown produce, they go as far as giving contracts and loans to

foreign businessmen, represented in this novel by the Lebanese businessman, Monsieur Hussein El Fayçal Al Moustapha Hussein Morabitoune. It is important to note that in a cooking competition organized to probably prove the nutritional superiority of home-grown food over the imported ones, Monsieur Hussein El Fayçal Al Moustapha Hussein Morabitoune, whose dish is made out of imported canned food, is made to win the competition by the government authorities, even when it is obvious that the local teacher's food is the tastiest among the lot.

On an optimistic note, however, there is no gainsaying the fact that the night is still long, but, going by the view of the Gambian writer, Lenrie Peters, in *The Second Round*, and other writers, there is still room for optimism vis-à-vis the possibility of checking the collapse of the Independence programmes. One of the key characters of this work, Dr Kawa, believes that there is a remedy to the moral crisis that has brought African countries to the brink of disintegration, a remedy he anchors on how determined and brave Africans are to take the bull by the horns. This is what he tries to communicate in this heavily charged image:

Where was the reconstruction to begin? What man could copy those ingenious wasps by thrusting his sting into the nerve centre of confusion without poisoning the entire system and say: 'That is where sickness begins; these are the very earliest beginnings of decay – this cloudy swelling' without being subjected to the humiliation of being put away safely, Christlike, on a shelf? (30).

In the above, Dr Kawa ponders on what can possibly be the solution, the way forward in a seemingly despondent situation. It can strongly be argued that Dr Kawa is inviting Africans, but especially those Africans who have been to the land of the Whiteman, to act like him in the all-important business of reconstruction.

A similar optimism can be read in *Osiris Rising* where Armah, who may not have been unacquainted with Peters' novel features the Christlike treatment Asar is made to suffer by Seth Soja Spencer, who wants their hegemony over the exploited masses to remain as it is. It can also be argued that Armah may not have been equally unacquainted with Ngugi's writings, especially *Petals*

of Blood. It seems so because, Ngugi catalogues in it how the group actions initiated by teachers, especially Karega, contributed in making the Rhinos - Chui, Kimeria, Mzigo and Nderi - understand that power belongs to the people. First, reminiscent of Bakayoko in *Les bouts du bois de Dieu*, he initiates the idea of mass march by the people of Ilmorog to the city to have Nderi, their minister, listen to them and resolve their plight caused by the drought. This is addressed and, consequently, Ilmorog becomes an important township once again, although this is going to later represent doom for them. In the second instance, Karega presses for the creation of a workers' union through which he succeeds in creating unease for the exploiters. In *Matigari*, Ngaruro wa Kiriro succeeds in creating a similar unease for the owners of the Anglo-American Leather and Plastic Works, but more so for the government of the day.

Conclusion

Attempt has been made in this paper to make it evident that organic writers in the African angle of the subaltern triangle have had, since post-slavery, to wrestle with serious anomalies brought to bear upon the continent by both the colonial enterprise and the indigenous political leaders with the collusion of the replaced colonial master and the complicity of private intellectuals. The few instances captured above underscore the fact that the challenging writers have a mammoth task on hand, for they now have to deal with a formidable diabolic trinity: The President, Private intellectuals, and European underminer of independence. Some would argue that this trinity is here to stay, and only a scorched-earth policy can eradicate it. This should not be the approach of the organic writer and academic as a third-force or agent of change since their space is mainly the classroom, as Armah strongly believes.

Pursuant to this belief, the recommendations below can be proposed for the attention of the writer and academic. First, those of us who are in the business of teaching should strive to understand the neo-colonial dynamics and pass this knowledge to our learners who will later make the leaders feel the heat if they refuse to see the light. It is not just about teaching and sensitizing our

youth learners, it is also about us adopting Artificial Intelligence denounce the abuses of both ingenuous and metropolitan leaders.

Second, we should strive to decolonize education; this does not mean discarding everything Western and embracing everything African. Rather, it is about moving towards eclecticism: retaining the best in all cultures and denouncing bad behaviour by the leadership and followership.

Third, we should design robust projects for our local billionaires (in hard currency) with a view to having them contribute to the strengthening of our economies and provision of jobs for the multitude of jobless youths our countries are replete with.

Fourth, we should study the problems inflicting the local communities and help them get sustainable solutions to them. In fact, as alternative parliamentarians, writers and academics should discuss the issues of de-dollarization of our economies and that of the common African currency with the seriousness they deserve.

Finally, we should sensitize the colonial replacements in black skin that gifts coming from the (former) colonial master should be looked at in the mouth.

Should writers and academics work with maximum commitment for the realization of these recommendations, they would not only be models for future generations, or absolve themselves from blame, they would have also contributed to the transformation of the African angle of the subaltern triangle into a hospitable space for all, just like the uncredentialed intellectuals in the social media aim to do.

References

- Armah, A. K. *Osiris Rising: A Novel of Africa Past, Present, and Future*. Dakar: Per Ankh, Per Popenguine, 1995.
- Balutansky, K.M. *The Novels of Alex La Guma: Representation of a Political Conflict*. Colorado: Three Continents Press, 1990.

-
- Bédi, Mongo. *Le Pauvre Christ de Bomba*. Paris: Présence Africaine, 1976.
 - Bhabha, H.K. *Nation and Narration*. London: Routledge, 1990.
 - ---. *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge Classics, 2010.
 - Blyden, E.W. *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1962.
 - Bonetto, S. "Race and Racism in Hegel: An Analysis." ISSN 1393-614X Minerva – An Internet Journal of Philosophy, Volume 10, pp. 35-64, 2006.
 - Diop, D. *Coups de pilons*. Paris: Présence Africaine, 1973
 - Fanon, F. *Peau noire, masque blanc*. Paris: Présence Africaine, 1952.
 - Farah, N. *Sardines*. Saint Paul, Minnesota: Graywolf Press, 1981.
 - Gobineau, A. *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races*. London: William Heinemann, 1915.
 - Hegel, G.W.F. *The Philosophy of History*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1956
 - Irele, A (editor). (2009). *The Cambridge Companion to the African Novel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 - Kipling, R. "The Whiteman's Burden." https://www.kiplingsociety.co.uk/poem/poems_burden.htm 1899. Accessed February 19, 2025.
 - Labou-Tansi, S. *La Vie et Demie*. Paris : Seuil, 1979.
 - Maran, R. *Batoula*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1922.
 - Mboukou, J-P, M. *Spiritualités et cultures dans la Prose Romanesque et la Poésie Négro-africaines*. Dakar : Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1983.

- Ngugi, wa Thiong’O. *Matigari*. Nairobi: Heinemann, 1990.
- ---. *Petals of Blood*. Nairobi: Heinemann, 1978.
- ---. *Writers in Politics: A Re-engagement with issues of Literature and Society*. Nairobi: Heinemann, 1997.
- Peters, L. *The Second Round*. London: Heinemann, 1966.
- Renan, J-E. *La Reforme intellectuelle et morale*. Paris : Michel Lévy Frères, 1871.
- Sallah, T.M. *Before the New Earth, African Short Stories*. Asmara: Africa World Press, 2007.
- Schmidt, E. *Foreign Intervention in Africa, From the Cold War to the War on Terror*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, R.C. “Epistemic Violence: To Dehumanize is to Reduce the Person to the Status of an Object.” www.heathwoodpress.com, 2014.
- Sembène, O. *God’s Bits of Wood*. London: Heinemann 1985.
- Soyinka, W. *The Man Died*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited, 2011.
- Voelker, David. *Thomas Jefferson on the African Race 1781, Excerpted from ‘Notes on the State of Virginia’*. www.htthistorytools, 2006.
- Wastberg, Per. “The Writer in a Modern African State.” In *The Writer in Modern Africa: African Scandinavian Writers’ Conference, Stockholm 1967*. New York: Africana Publishing Corporation 1967.