



Interrogating irresponsible Leadership within the Post Independence Matrix in Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *Wizard of the Crow* and Alobwed' Epie's *The Bad Samaritan*

Tse-Nwi Wankah¹, Njong Divine², Adamu Pangmeshi³

¹PhD Student, Department of English

²Associate Professor, University of Bertoua, Cameroon

³Professor, The University of Bamenda, Cameroon

Received: 16 Aug 2024; Received in revised form: 19 Sep 2024; Accepted: 25 Sep 2024; Available online: 04 Oct 2024

©2024 The Author(s). Published by Infogain Publication. This is an open-access article under the CC BY license

(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Abstract— *The aim of this study is to demonstrate the phenomenon of irresponsible leadership within post-independence nations, exploring its impact on governance, societal development, and sustainability of democratic systems. The problem at hand is multi-faceted. Irresponsible leadership perpetuates a cycle of underdevelopment, erodes trust in government institutions, breeds social unrest, and hinders progress towards sustainable growth and stability. This study intends to answer the following research questions; how does irresponsible leadership affect socio-economic development of post-independence nations? and how do citizens react to irresponsible leadership in the post-independence matrix? By analyzing, interpreting and evaluating Wizard of the Crow and The Bad Samaritan, we aim to illustrate underlying factors that contribute to irresponsible leadership, drawing parallels with historical and contemporary events. This paper is built on the hypothesis that irresponsible leadership after independence is like a tangled web of power and corruption. By examining this theme closely, the novels demonstrate how leaders can harm society through their actions, highlighting the struggles faced in building a just and fair postcolonial world. This study employs postcolonial theory which is relevant in that, it unveils how historical injustices and imbalances continue to manifest in contemporary governance. Interrogating irresponsible leadership through the postcolonial lens enable us to understand how neocolonial forces and the imposition of Western ideologies contribute to corrupt governance. Drawing upon both primary and secondary sources, this study engages in comparative analyses across varying geographical locations to offer an understanding of the nature of irresponsible leadership. The findings of this study underscore that irresponsible leadership after independence has hindered progress and development in many African countries. The study also revealed that irresponsible leadership has led to economic instability and social unrest in post-independence nations.*



Keywords— *Interrogation, Irresponsible, Leadership, Postindependence, Matrix*

I. INTRODUCTION

Post-independent African elites were generally criticized for continuing to embrace European ideology and mishandling their power in various domains such as politics, economics, and military. *Wizard of the Crow* and *The Bad Samaritan* explore this phenomenon in depth, highlighting the complex relationship between Africa and its former colonizers. Chinua Achebe in his article “*Neo-*

Colonialism and African Literature,” argues that African leaders have failed to break away from colonial mentalities and continue to prioritize Western ideals over indigenous ones. Achebe points to the corrupt practices of many African elites, who amass wealth at the expense of their citizens and perpetuate systems of inequality and oppression. Similarly, Ngugi wa Thiong'o discusses the impacts of colonialism on African literature. In his essay *Decolonizing the Mind*, he argues that the perpetuation of

colonial exploitation continues to shape Africa's political and cultural landscape, with leaders often using European ideologies to maintain power. Achille Mbembe further examines the ways in which African leaders utilize military force to control their populations and suppress dissency. In his work *Necropolitics*, Mbembe highlights how African governments often use violence and intimidation to maintain power, echoing the oppressive tactics of their colonial predecessors.

II. MACHIAVELLIAN TACTICS: POLITICIZED OPPRESSION AND MISUSE OF AUTHORITY

This subsection delves into the strategic manipulation of power dynamics for personal gains and control. Rooted in Niccolo Machiavelli's political philosophy, these tactics often involve deceit, coercion and ruthless actions to maintain authority. Power relations are complicated and confusing. John Dalberg-Acton in his letter titled *The Corrupting influence of Power* is known to have said in 1887 that:

I cannot accept your canon that we are to judge pope and King unlike other men with a favorable presumption that they did no wrong. If there is any presumption it is the other way against holders of power, increasing as the power increases. Historic responsibility has to make up for the want of legal responsibility. Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men, even when the exercise influence and not authority; still more when you super add the tendency or certainty of corruption by authority. (1)

The quotation above is commonly referenced from a letter that Acton wrote to Bishop Mandell Creighton in 1887. In the quote above, Acton reflects on the nature of political power and its potential for corruption. It is worth noting that Acton's full letter explores the relationship between power, morality, and the role of the church. However, the quote captures the essence of his sentiment that power has a corrupting influence and that even those who are regarded as 'great men' are prone to moral failings when given unchecked authority.

Michel Foucault in his book titled *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* discusses the concept of power as "something that is exercised through networks, and individuals do not simply circulate in those networks; they are in a position to both submit to and exercise this power" (29). In this book, he explores the historical development of various forms of power particularly in relation to the prison system. Foucault argues that power is

not solely held by institutions or individuals in position of authority but it is instead diffused throughout society and operates through a network of disciplinary mechanisms.

However, Most African countries were colonized and exploited. As colonized Africans were fed up with the various inhuman treatments they were subject to, they fought for their political independence and sent away the former colonial masters. There after African elites took to ruling over destinies of their countries. However, these new leaders were lured by the advantages that went along with their political position. All the hope the people had in them vanished as these new leaders proved to be replicas of former colonizers from whom they took over power.

Moreover, postcolonial narratives depict the malpractices of the new leaders. Irresponsible manifestation of political power will be examined in terms of some negative key issues of bad leadership such as: rigging of elections, faking votes, dirty politics practised by political parties, and appointment of administrators based on favoritism, nepotism, tribalism or discrimination.

In *Wizard of the Crow*, Ruler appoints his cabinet members based on favoritism and so, focuses on leading to please only his sycophant administrators (cabinet) and at the end produces no results. In order to please Tajirika, Ruler appoints him as the first chairman of the Matching to Heaven Building Committee. A large number of contractors visit Tajirika and hand over their visiting cards. Each card is handed over with thousands of Buris. The narrator narrates this scene thus:

Each card was handed over with thousands of Buris. A few dignitaries had tried to write checks, but Tajirika would not hear of it...cash or nothing, Tajirika told them, and they were quick to say that they completely understood. A few insisted on a business luncheon appointment adding even more Buris with their cards. Non so much as whispered about the money left behind. All they would say even to their closest friends, was that they had been to see the Chairman and had left their visiting cards. (104)

From the above quotation, one can clearly see how because the Ruler leads to please his administrators and not the nation, he appoints only partners in crime. Tajirika who is appointed by Ruler collects huge sums of money, promising to employ job seekers in the building projects. Tajirika takes bribes and consequently no results are produced. In another instance, Ruler appoints John Kaniuru based on favoritism as Head of the Research Regarding Youth and Women's Conformity with Nation Ideals. This is highlighted when ruler says that:

The sole responsibility of the unit I am now creating is to oversee the activities of these segments of the population. John Kaniuru, stand up. You have proven that you can be trusted to organize youth and be tough with women, even the wives of the rich and the powerful. Effective today, you are Head of Research Regarding Youth and Women's Conformity with National ideals. (557)

As a learning edge to leaders, they should be more focused on achieving results, personal and leadership accountability, holding others accountable, courage when it comes to performance issues being decisive and making harder choices.

In the same light, still on the aspect of appointments, if the present Ruler of Aburiria, chose the right administrators, there would be a good administration. Instead the Ruler appoints people like Tajirika, Sikiokuu, Machokali and Kaniuru who cannot deliver good results in timely manner. They spend their time taking bribes, spear heading and backstabbing each other so as to win the Ruler's favor. As a learning edge, the focus should be laid more on accountability, tasks, processes, people and outcomes than other things. This is seen when results are in a dangerous position.

The Ruler's party becomes the 'Ruling party' while the creation of any other party is conditioned by the fact that the party leader must pledge his loyalty to the 'natural president' of Aburiria. It is then that Silver Sikiokuu decides to create the Loyal Democratic Party in a bid to ally with the president during elections and eventually recover his lost ministerial duty. This confirms Adrian Leftwich's assertion in *States of Development: On the Primacy of Politics in Development*, that, politics in most developing countries can be understood as a complex network of "inter-elite accommodation that has nothing to do with the welfare and genuine concerns of the common man in the street nor some strongly held political principles or credo" (174).

Moreover, leaders always have the tendency to be complacent, stop learning, over-invest in the status quo, or let themselves off the hook too easily. What the researcher means by complacent here is that some leaders are so satisfied with themselves or with their mediocre results that they do not see any need for a change. This fact is very visible in *Wizard of the Crow*. This is a common phenomenon of political power and Ngugi tries to highlight this fact. In the novel the Ruler has one and the same authority members who do not bring change. Political power manifests when the Ruler only manages to carry out a reshufflement only among the very administrators concerned. A Learning edge to elites is that they should take

up the challenge to improve upon themselves and constantly seek for ways to serve the people better.

Alobwed' Epie's *The Bad Samaritan* is set in a kleptomaniac and highly corrupt imaginary African country called Ewawa. Due to mismanagement, financial institutions collapse. Salaries are slashed and there is unprecedented unemployment leading to country exodus. Professor Esole and his wife are not only aggrieved by the salary slashes, but also by the dubious closure of the post office savings Bank with their savings. Desperate for money, they resort to borrowing from private sources at exorbitant interest rates. Esole toddles into politics with the aim of re-writing things.

The Bad Samaritan is characterized with a lot of negative vices in political parties, appointments, elections, backstabbing and the quest for more power. When time for elections reach, the people vote except the SDO. He invites a few prominent people he thinks can be his advisers. These are people who have been hurt by the administration. They have to choose a political party, that is, the truth speaking party that would remedy the people from years of exploitation. They have to decide on which of the two positions he would contest the elections (parliamentary or Mayoral). The narrator states:

They x-rayed all political parties. They studied old and new manifestoes of each party. For the past thirty years only the Ewawa Party for Advanced Democracy (EPAD) had been in power. So only the EPAD manifesto could be put to question. They scrutinized it and found that it had never been fulfilled at any stage of the existence of the party. The fight would therefore be against the EPAD and not against the non-consequential mushroom parties that carried banners on national days. (33)

The quotation above indicates a political atmosphere of dictatorship and reluctance to change where one party keeps winning all the time, yet their impact in the country is not felt. The SDO and a host of others carry out a task of preventing the ruling party win.

Moreover, in the novel, we realize an atmosphere of fraud in elections. There is a high level of rigging of elections. Esole in his opinion opts for opposition because the salvation of the country could only be achieved by the opposition. The SDO demands Esole's choice of party, and his reply is:

The Serious People's Deliverance Party (SPDP). The party that provoked riots after the last presidential elections that it claimed but was deprived of victory by the Minister of Territorial Administration? The party we have been

instructed to regard as enemy number one of the country? That party is in our red books?. (36)

The excerpt above illustrates the contemplation of which party to vote for. SDO and Esole take serious precautions on voting the right party that is transparent. Throughout the text, The SPDP party is the only opposition capable of standing against corrupt elites and this is the more reason why it is in the governments' red books.

The Bad Samaritan projects a lot of evil in politics whereby politicians go to the extent of involving themselves in dirty acts like killing and occultism, in order to obtain more power. This is seen when the narrator states that:

The population of Lebmot remained in shock. Everybody doubted who might have killed an innocent teacher and taken his parts. Suspicion started entering on the incumbent Mayor. It was alleged that finding the odds too much against him, he had killed the teacher and taken his parts to Ojebu Ode where his marabouts would concoct election winning talismans for him. If that were true, Esole thought it will work in his favor. (40-41)

The excerpt above indicates the degree to which power mongers can go, so as to acquire more power. They will get this power even through bloodshed. Citizens of Ewawa are shocked at these strange happenings even in the education sector.

In *The Bad Samaritan*, leaders would do everything to maintain their political positions. The SDO tells all top civil servants, especially the directors to tell the villagers that if the opposition wins in their area, he would lose his Ministerial post and his chances of becoming Prime Minister would be lost. He does this to protect his position at all cost. The novel makes reference of the fact that the 26 years old regime of the ruling party is a failure. One troubling aspect are fake promises elites make to uphold power. The narrator states:

The Minister had made several empty promises and was sort of dry in what to tell the people again. So he aimed at the chiefs. He convened a chiefs' conference and sent his fleet of vehicles to the villages to bring them to Lebmot. To entice on heavy turnout he sent FCFA 20,000 pre-attendance stipend to each invitee with word that heavy pacts were on their way. (43)

The quotation above shows how deceitful politicians are. The need for absolute power triggers leaders to do all sort of odds. The Minister does not only end here. He goes as far as hiring 'Hotel de Bon Conscience' for the chiefs for two days. For the first time the chiefs of Lebmot sub-Division

are treated to the bounty of the coffers of the ministry of Junglety. At the end, the Minister bribes each chief with 150,000 and an oath that they will give their support to the ruling party.

The Minister warns the chiefs against voting for SPDP party which he mawkishly renames Stupid People's Destructive Party. They go as far as forming conspiracy squads on payment of FCFA 50,000 each if they fulfill their mission. This is done with the support of the police and military. The narrator quotes:

Some chiefs who decide to spend an extra day in Lebmot sent word to their subjects at home to stitch camp. The beggar chief of Lebmot central, a PhD cap-in-hand stooge decreed by Muankum that if one vote went to the opposition, the non-natives of the area would be repatriated to their villages of origin. He even suggested that the opposition should be banned. (44)

The statement above demonstrates how corrupt those aspiring to obtain power are. The team Esole sends to West Bassiland is chased out of the place by the very people who have hailed them a few days earlier. This very act also portrays the betrayal of the subjects and justifies the fact that the masses themselves contribute to power abuse in the nation. Even the motorcycles the SPDP have hired are constantly packed at the verandas.

Rigging of elections remain a major issue throughout the novel. Professor Esole and his party SPDP loses the election carried out. Politics only puts Esole in misery and terrible debts. Money borrowed from financial institutions purposely to carry out campaigns is all lost. Njume a gentle man openly confesses to Esole that he was one of the citizens of Lebmot brought to prevent him from getting into parliament. The betrayal of the masses themselves is highlighted when the young man describes the whole process. He states "in previous elections, government agents sabotaged electricity. But in this case, it was thunder which knocked out the lights" (48). Njume goes ahead to describe the whole process:

And once lights went out, especially as foreign observers had gone, the police and the military and the Minister had arranged to handle the rigging process went into action. Although I was incorporated into the rigging lot, your overwhelming victory convinced me that you were the people's choice and nothing should disturb you. But then, a twig does not build a fence. So, I Helped in rig in favor of the ruling party...(48)

The quotation above vividly describes the mean political deeds of the ruling party. It also demonstrates the fact that the idea of irresponsible leadership is not only practiced by

the post-independent leaders, but, it is equally promoted by masses who claim to be subjugated.

Tribalism and nepotism still remains part and parcel of the manifestation of political power in *The Bad Samaritan*. Esole poses series of questions about the Minister's deceitful nature and describes the way the Minister has been in power for more than twelve years and still yet, there is no single boy/girl that can boast of his help. This is highlighted when Esole states:

Has he a plan for building up the manpower of this beautiful and fertile motherland so that he can have a strong team to face the challenges of the nepotistic politics of our country? Other Ministers put their people in strong places so that together they can constitute a strong force that is consulted before major decisions are taken. But see, your man has been Minister for more than twelve years, yet there is no one single boy/girl who can say, he has helped them get a scavenger's position. (49)

The quotation above insists on the greedy nature of leaders. Esole also describes him as "He is a do it alone and enjoy it alone person. At first he said he was appointed by the President and elected by our people." (49)

In addition, we find a political atmosphere of exploitation where the narrator says "Time and again politicians who lose elections complain of electoral fraud. Fraud in elections is simply out-maneuvering the opponent for personal gain" (70). The people still complain of the Minister's empty promises which eventually are never fulfilled. Complains come in about his unfulfilled promise of a good road. This very issue of rigging of elections come up again when Esole states "Look at this second picture. You see people chasing out a team... Look at this 3rd picture, you see the SDO assisting in rigging the elections. Look at the 4th picture. It is the picture of the supremecourt judge declaring contested elections in favor of the ruling party"(120). After winning the elections through fraudulent means, the ruling party does not honor a single pledge nor visit West Bassiland. Esole expresses his regret of getting into politics and makes use of a powerful irony which goes thus "I lost more than sixteen million francs in the elections. Which Samaritan would be carried to hospitals the patients of those who made him lose so much money in elections while those they voted for enjoy the booty of the rigged election?" (120).

Financial Misconduct and the Question of Accountability

This section demonstrates the lack of a principled economic vision that can command the harnessed efforts of the leaders. Financial misconduct specifically focuses on the control and influence exerted through the possession and

mismanagement of financial resources such as money, capital and assets. Financial misconduct is exercised, when African leaders do not use state finances to develop their nations but practice embezzlement, backstabbing, and blackmail.

In essence, Ewawa in *The Bad Samaritan* epitomises an atmosphere of theft and mismanagement of finances. The narrator makes the statement that "Ewawa was rotten. There was no saint. Since the three salary cuts and the institutionalization of kleptocracy, every Ewawan even babies were thieves. The government cut salaries not because it was a measure to fight economic crises, but a measure to hoard funds for Ministers and the top brass of our country to embezzle" (13). Worse still bankruptcy is the order of the day, as Ewawa banks are extremely empty. In effect, a military man who is stranded causes a scandal at the bank:

See a military man whose mother-in-law had died, and who had been coming to the bank to no avail to withdraw money and prepare to take the corpse home, went mad when a day before the removal of corpse from the mortuary, he came and still found the gates locked. He tied a chain to the gate, tied it to his military jeep and tore down the gate. He then went for the corpse and laid it in front of the bank. (18)

Financial institutions embarrass the citizens. The military man goes further to sit on the coffin with a loaded gun and threatens the authorities saying that he will bury the corpse in front of the bank if they don't give him money. It takes twenty other armed military men to convince him to withdraw.

Mrs. Esole presents a cheque of FCFA 2000,000, but ends up receiving FCFA 20,000 due to the bankrupt nature of the bank. This leads to series of retaliations from customers who start throwing stones in violence. Ministers and their likes squander hundreds of millions of tax payers' money. The shameless Minister of Finance specializes on cutting salaries of workers who go on retirement and no worker is given the chance to establish his pension as 20 to 30 percent is subtracted from it. Esole is a victim, as the only way to receive his pension is to give 20% of it worth FCFA 5000,000 to the private secretary of the Director of Salaries in the Ministry of Finance. Again, the excessive taxes imposed leads to the entire close down of a cocoa company.

Administrators engage in fraudulent acts in administrative garages. Parliamentarians make their workers exchange their old car engines with brand new car engines. The narrator describes the whole process "Whenever we heard that an old government vehicle had an

accident, we rushed there and replaced its number plate with that of a brand new vehicle of the same make” (85). Leaders in Ewawa are described to have uncountable personal bank accounts everywhere. After stealing billions of francs the money is saved in towns such as; Tumba, Timbe, Tuanda, Elia, Dande, Bassam and Menda. Additionally, Professor Benlon's father who is a minister abuses financial power by building his house costing FCFA 60,000,000 and another fellow aims at building his own house at FCFA 90,000,000. When dignitaries organize meetings which yield no positive outcome, bribery is promoted. Chiefs are bribed by politicians when the narrator quotes “Each chief was given FCFA 50,000 and Chief Nkume 75,000” (165).

However, *Wizard of the Crow* depicts bribery, fraud and embezzlement when Ruler carries out a building project and appoints Titus Tajirika as the first chairman of the Marching to Heaven Building committee. Tajirika uses this building project as an opportunity to amass more wealth for himself and eventually grows rich overnight. A large number of contractors who are interested in the building project visit Tajirika, and offer him bribes and money cheques. The narrator states “the money had piled up so quickly that, with his desk drawers stuffed, Tajirika was forced to send Nyawira to buy sacks and cartons for the rest of his abundance” (104). Altogether, Tajirika receives bribes of about three sacks of Buri notes. The Ruler haven learnt that Tajirika has taken a lot of Buris as bribe he abuses economic power in that, he is impressed and still thinks Tajirika is a better person to do business with. This is evident when the narrator states:

The Ruler had not always been so enamored of Tajirika. He had appointed him Chairman of Marching to Heaven initially as an interim measure, pending the release of funds by the Global Bank. But he had started to think well of Tajirika the moment he realized that the man was a crook, better at the art than any of his counselors. It was Tajirika's disclosure that as Chairman of Marching to Heaven he used to demand payment in dollars from potential contractors that first impressed the Ruler and made him decide that he could certainly do business with this man. A person who could make others beg to pay in fresh dollars for services yet to come was way ahead of the game. Kaniuru and Sikiokuu suffered by comparison. (612)

From the above statement, Ruler abuses economic power by yielding to fraud and is in the same agreement with Tajirika. Despite the theft, he is still contented to have Tajirika as an ally so that they both can fortify their tactics in stealing and amassing more wealth.

Moreover, leaders abuse economic power when they practice fraud by mismanaging state funds, blackmailing and backstabbing. Kaniuru's secretary named Jane Kanyori, fakes signatures and cheques of money for him. She fakes the signature of the Ruler on cheques and in that way, they both steal money. Soon after, Kanyori tells Kaniuru to get married to her and when he refuses to marry her, she blackmails him by threatening to reveal the truth about the fake signatures and cheques together with other secrets they shared together if he does not yield to her condition. This can be seen in the conversation between Kaniuru and Kanyori:

“Are you crazy? Ondoka. GET OUT!” he yelled, threatening to call the police. “Hold it!” Have you forgotten all the work you and I have done together? A husband and wife Team? [...] My heart flew to you the day you trusted me with your secrets and all that money... “God gave me a foolish attachment to papers, documents or anything with hand writing on it-even those pieces of papers on which you used to practice the signatures of...let us mention their names. I still have them save in the bank.” [...] But what scared Kaniuru the most was not her reference to the loot from Matching to Heaven but her mention of the signatures. In addition to Sikiokuu's Kaniuru had tried his hand at the Ruler's signature in an attempt to impress Kanyori with his partnership. She had him by the balls. He thought he was toying with her, and it now turned out that it was she who had been toying with him!(710-13)

The above discussion is a serious argument between John Kaniuru and Jane Kanyori whereby Kanyori reveals Kaniuru's secrets and blackmails him by threatening to use them against him if he wants to double-cross her. They both threaten each other.

In addition, leaders in Aburiria abuse economic power as seen in the case where after the Ruler discovers that Kaniuru has been stealing money through the fraudulent use of fake cheques and signatures, he joins him in the act of mismanagement of state money. Economic power manifests through theft among leaders, where, because the Ruler is also a criminal, he promotes his colleagues who are also criminals and together they all share the stolen money. When Kaniuru is caught stealing, he is given a second chance and is even promoted to a higher rank. One can see this reflected in the quotation below:

And now I come back to you, he said, looking at Kaniuru and barely holding back his laughter at the thought of a male being out-done in crookedness by a female. “I want fifty percent of

all the money you stole from Matching to Heaven, and the interest, to go to the Ruler's Smog Disaster Fund. But I will give you another chance. Your kind of cunning is best for youth and money matters. You are my new Minister of Finance and Youth. As for your wife Jane Kanyori, I want her transferred immediately from the National Bank of Commerce and Industry and placed in a strategic position in the Central Bank."(717)

The excerpt above is a clear indication that the Ruler and his entire government are all crooks and have sworn to drain Aburiria's economy. The entire Ewawa economy is in ruins as Ruler promotes stealing and theft. It is very pathetic and ironical that after finding out that Kaniuru stole money, Ruler demands his own share of the stolen money and instead of sanctioning him, Ruler instead promotes him to Minister of Finance and Youth, to steal more state funds.

III. DICTATORSHIP AND THE DARK SIDE OF MILITARISM

This portion demonstrates how dictatorship effectively dominates the government, suppress political opposition, restrict civil liberties, and exert control over all aspects in the texts under study. Dictatorship in one word means absolute power or unjustly administered despotism. In other words, it is arbitrarily cruel exercise of power. Having absolute power means having excess power or power which is limitless. A leader who has absolute power takes decisions without the concern of the people. His decisions whether good or bad, are hardly influenced by his subjects. Scott Eposito posits in *Thrice told Tales: How Stories Become Reality* that:

Although it is many things, Wizard of the Crow is foremost an allegory for all Kenyans' and other Africans' post-colonial dictatorships. It charts a path that many nations have taken as they toss of imperial rule, move on through the transition from dictatorship to democracy (often 'democracy'), and stumble towards other forms of governance that are appearing on the horizon of the 21st century. (2)

Dictatorship has been a product of postcolonialism. This is underlined by Ngugi in *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. Dictatorship was a creation of the West. Even after independence, things did not change much for the African people. Their leaders were not better than colonizers. Ngugi posits thus:

To claim the past is to reclaim one's history, language and culture: It is also to regain control over one's future. In shaping the future, unity of

the purpose of all: just as the divisive events of the past generated the vision of the wholeness expressed in Pan-Africanism, so past resistance can be invoked...to inspire present-day Africans to reject neo-colonial dictatorships, enslavement to the Western values and exploitation under global capitalism. (73)

Ngugi's quote emphasizes the significance of acknowledging and understanding one's past as a means to connect with one's history, language, and culture. By reclaiming the past, individuals can take ownership of their narratives and traditions, thus empowering themselves in shaping their future. Through a unified approach rooted in a deep understanding of one's heritage, individuals can actively mold a future that aligns with their values and aspirations, paving a way for progress and self-determination.

Ruler reveals the brutal nature of bureaucratic and autocratic power yielded by man. He exercises this power by attempting to completely wipe out the West from Aburiria, reason being that the Westerners had given invitations to some army officers for cocktails and dinners at Western Embassies. He reminds the Westerners that in Aburiria, he is still the man, regardless of the loans for Marching to Heaven and there is nothing these arrogant bastards can do about his laughter of his own people. He issues an ultimatum followed by an order for armored division to clear the people's assembly. The narrator insinuates "the armored cars on television, their long guns poised to murder, relentlessly moving down the streets of Eldares made him feel manlier. The media swarming around the columns excited him. Let them see blood, the Ruler whispered to himself, pointing at the television screen. Let them see that I am still in charge" (643). Ruler's cruel rule is to crush and wipe out followers of the Voice of the People. He declares "those who had killed innocent civilians whose only crime was to celebrate their Ruler's birthday, he had only one message for them: his security forces will hunt them down and bring them to justice" (697).

In summary, as soon as Africans took over the leadership of their nations, they were attracted and obsessed by the lust for power, personal well-being and wealth. Soon after, African leaders oppressed their people through their dishonest deeds.

Military power would refer to a nation's ability to exercise control and exert influence through the utilization of armed forces. The concept encompasses a diverse range of factors, including military technologies, combat readiness, manpower, logistics and strategic decision-making. This work is based on the Kenyan and Cameroon experiences which illustrates the repercussion of military

leadership. The rulers of these societies turn to gruesome and inhuman policies that only help to sour the relationship between rulers and citizens. The novels under study the betrayal in the notion of leadership and brutal policies such as the standing army, lack of freedom of speech and other inhuman experiences. This often leads to an uncordial relationship between the neo-colonialists and the indigenous people. In other words, leaders' inability to meet the needs of the masses often provoke resentment, discontentment and violence which seem to be the preoccupation of most post-independent writers.

John J. Mearsheimer in *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* argues that military power is crucial in maintaining a nation's security and global standing. He states "military power serves as a fundamental tool for states to protect their interests from perceived threats, and it forms the basis of national *security* strategy" (20). But this is not the case in the texts under study. In addition, Yagmur Akgul in *Understanding Military Power: A Theoretical Framework*, highlights the importance of military power in the context of international relations when he explains that "military power provides a state with the means to defend itself, achieve dominance over adversaries and influence the behavior of other states" (18). Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Alobwed' Epie create fictional nations such as Ilmorog, Aburiria, Ewawa and Dande whereby, leaders counteract these scholarly ideologies and do the opposite. They exercise their own military strength using the gun, by terrorizing innocent civilians.

From Michael Howard's book *War in European History*, "military power means the capacity of a state to impose its will on other states in international systems through force or threat of force. It depends on the constellation of military capabilities and the ability to use them to achieve political objectives" (10). This is not the case with African nations.

The post-colonial State's dependence on the coercive institutions of the police and the army is vividly exemplified in *Wizard of the Crow*. The Head of the Free Republic of Aburiria is more of a military than a civilian ruler. It is said that he was a military staff under the colonial administration and his military instincts will predominate his civilian office as he appears mostly in his Commander-in-chief military uniform. In the Free Republic there is virtually no distinction and the police in terms of their brutality and political instrumentalization. The narrator emphatically comments that:

The so-called national army is a colonial institution. It was trained to hate its own people. The soldiers hate even themselves, shorn as they are of any national pride. They were trained to kill

nationalists fighting for freedom. How can they feel for the nation whose emergence they fought? They pass these attitudes to the new recruits, the young. In time, these traditions of self-hate in the colonial times become the everyday. (758)

The above authorial intrusion best provides an explication for the negative perception of the army and security forces is regarded by awe, distrust and animosity by the citizens. The army exists less to guarantee the territorial integrity of the nation than to ensure the personalization of the nation by the leader. In one of his television appearances, Ruler shamelessly and un-regrettably declares to the nation that "the only votes that mattered are those cast for him by the armed forces" (234). The Ruler's addictive reliance on military and police forces is based in his Machiavellian philosophy that "it [force] is the only language his own people understood" (641). Consequently, the importance of the army in political affairs of most African countries dwarf that of the parliament and other democratic and republican structures of the state, because the army is most appropriately substitutive of ideological barrenness. The saying by Paul Brooker in his book entitled *Non Democratic Regimes: Theory, Government and Politics* go that:

If the only tool at your disposal is the hammer, you will certainly consider any problem as a nail. It is due to this mentality that most of the African armies have been politicised through selective induction to serve the interests of particular governments as opposed to the state. (19)

The quotation above underscores the critical concept that individuals, particularly in powerful positions such as within African armies, can become narrowly focused and biased in their approaches when limited by a singular tool or perspective. As such, the quote reflects the dangers of instrumentalising institutions for personal gain.

In the same vein, Ngugi goes further to demonstrate the depraved practices of the post-colonial police system in *Wizard of the Crow*. The police maltreat civilians for sport. This is glaring when Minister Sikiokuu orders the police to chase away the beggars (some of whom lost their limbs during the country's independence struggle) during the visit of the Global Bank delegates at the Paradise Hotel. The narrator insinuates that, "although they [the police] had tried to be stoic and some even aspired to good humor, the police had been chaffing under their order of restraint. So they were now jubilant about the business at hand. With their riot gear-clubs, shields, and guns-the police attacked the crowd" (74-75) . Here, it can be said that the police men seem to obtain a sense of self-fulfillment through their masochistic and sadistic belief in violence

when they attack the people whom they are supposed to protect.

Lawrence Whitehead in *Democracy and Democratization: Theory and Practice*, also emphasizes the point “that one of the key institutional changes that need to accompany any significant political process of democratization, is the restructuring and indoctrination of the police and the army” (90). To be able to change the perception of the masses toward these custodians of the state, the army and the police have to be reformed from their precedent role as structures of control to structures of civilian protection. From this perspective, the police and the arm forces have not been sufficiently reformed to cleanse their image in the hearts and minds of the African masses who still bear an innate antipathy towards these institutions.

In a vivid description of the typical post-colonial African State, the Nigerian development analyst, Claude Ake in *Democracy and Development in Africa*, states that:

There is hardly any rule of law, no plausible system of justice, no transparency. The coercive institutions of the state and above the law, civil society is below it, and ordinary people are out of sight, for beyond its protection. The judiciary is dissociated from justice, and the bureaucracy is oppressive and arbitrary. The...states, like the colonial state before it, turns on the calculus of strength. (6-7)

Though the above painted picture is not representative of all African state institutions in contemporary times, the majority of them fall within this description. Major state structures like the courts, the police and the army which are supposed to transcend the brevity of any particular government have come to represent the deterioration of state sanctity in the eyes of the masses as they are rife with corruption and lack transparency. The brutality of the police action in *Wizard of the Crow* is not subject to any scrutiny for those who act under the cover of the state's reason seem to benefit from an unrestrained impunity and unquestionable immunity.

One other important issue as far as the exercise of militarism is concerned in *Wizard of the Crow* is the fact that Ruler thinks of backstabbing his colleague with the help of his army. Power consumes the Ruler so much that he sees Tajirika as a threat. He fears that Tajirika may one day take his place and so, wants to eliminate him by sending him on one last mission and executing him afterwards. Tajirika after been promoted to Minister of Defense is seen as an enemy to the Ruler. The narrator narrates that:

His instrument would be non-other than Tajirika. He would send Tajirika on one more mission. His plan was simplicity itself. He would send his

devoted minister, his very trusted counselor, on a last mission, to order the army for a massacre. Blood would flow. And after the massacre he would set up a commission of enquiry supervised by a couple of observers from America and the European Union, if necessary which would end up blaming his Minister of Defense. He would then have him executed publicly. (750)

The above expression justifies how military power is used to get rid of other collaborators and maintain power. Leaders rule with the gun, by using the army to wipe out any rival who threatens their position. Blood mentioned in the quotation above symbolizes misery and evil.

Barry R. Posen in *The Sources of Military Doctrine* highlights the importance of adopting and adapting military doctrine to changing international security environment. He states that “military doctrine should be based on a state's unique strategic circumstances, including its geography, national interests, and political context” (22).

IV. CONCLUSION

This paper has discussed and demonstrated irresponsible leadership in the political, financial and military domains within the post-independent matrix. The findings of this research indicate that irresponsible leadership after independence has hindered progress and development in the texts studied. However, it is a portrayal of some states in Africa. The study also revealed that irresponsible leadership has led to economic instability and social unrest in post-independence nations as analyzed and demonstrated in the texts under study. This is probably part of what has resulted to social unrest in the postcolony.

REFERENCES

- [1] Acton, John Dalberg. “*The Corrupting Influence of Power*”. *The Cato Journal*, Vol. 21, No. 3, 2010, pp. 473-485. Print.
- [2] Ake, Claude. *Democracy and Development in Africa*, Washington D.C:Brookings Institution Press, 1996.
- [3] Alobwed' Epie. *The Bad Samaritan*.Bamenda: Publisher Langaa RPCIG, 2009. Print.
- [4] Akgul, Yagmur. *Understanding Military Power: A Theoretical Framework*. New York: Routledge, 2019. Print.
- [5] Brooker, Paul. *Non Democratic Regimes: Theory, Governmentand Politics*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000. Print.
- [6] Eposito, Scott. *Thrice Told Tales: How Stories Become Reality*. New York: W.W Norton and Company, 2004. Print.
- [7] Howard, Michael. *War in European History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976. Print.
- [8] Leftwich, Adrian. *State of Development: On the Primacy of Politics in Development*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018. Print.

- [9] Mbembe, Achille. "Africa's Wars and the Age of Mechanized Warfare." *Cultural Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2-3, 2015, pp. 145-179. Print.
- [10] ---. *Necropolitics*. North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2019.
- [11] Mearsheimer, John J. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2014. Print.
- [12] NgugiwaThiong'o. *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1986. Print.
- [13] ---. *Wizard of the Crow*. Nairobi: East African Educational, 2006. Print
- [14] Posen, Barry R. *The Sources of Military Doctrine*. Ithaca: New York, 1984. Print.
- [15] Whitehead, Lawrence. *Democracy and Democratization: Theory and Practice*. Oxford: University Press UK, 2002. Print.