

RESEARCH
ARTICLE**Extreme Contemporary African Literature: A Battleground
Spanning Multiple Fronts**

Mahdeb Aissa

University of Blida2

Algeria

E-mail: mahdebaissa@yahoo.fr, ORCID ID: 0009-0003-3246-2971**Doi Serial**<https://doi.org/10.56334/sei/8.6.51>**Keywords**

African literature, postcolonialism, aesthetics, struggle, identity.

Abstract

This paper aims to provide a nuanced examination of how contemporary African writers manage to reconcile the dichotomy between Africanity and universality through a hybrid vision. Rather than limiting themselves to a binary debate, these authors—including Léonora Miano, Fatou Diome, Sami Tchak, Mohamed Mbougar Sarr, and Véronique Tadjo—offer a plurality of perspectives that illustrate the transition from a concept of a homogeneous universe to that of a pluriverse, an approach that recognizes the richness and diversity of human experiences. Deeply rooted in African realities, their writings succeed in articulating universal themes such as identity, exile, and ecological crisis, while also integrating local and specific concerns. In doing so, they challenge the expectations of both African and international readers and contribute to a global discourse that embraces universal values while respecting local identities. The primary objective of this paper is to demonstrate how postcolonial African literature builds intercultural bridges while maintaining a strong attachment to its cultural identity. Drawing on postcolonial and aesthetic literary theories and approaches, this study emphasizes the trend of navigating between the local and the global, thereby strengthening Africa's voice on the international literary scene. Through this analysis, we hope to offer a nuanced view of the place of African literature in the contemporary world, highlighting its essential role in constructing an intercultural and transnational discourse.

Citation

Aissa M. (2025). Extreme Contemporary African Literature: A Battleground Spanning Multiple Fronts. *Science, Education and Innovations in the Context of Modern Problems*, 8(6), 493-501; doi:10.56352/sei/8.6.51. <https://imcra-az.org/archive/364-science-education-and-innovations-in-the-context-of-modern-problems-issue-6-volvi-2025.html>

Licensed

© 2025 The Author(s). Published by Science, Education and Innovations in the context of modern problems (SEI) by IMCRA - International Meetings and Journals Research Association (Azerbaijan). This is an open access article under the **CC BY** license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Received: 10.02.2025

Accepted: 25.04.2025

Published: 19.05.2025 (available online)

Introduction

Today, themes such as identity and exile, the tension between globalization and the preservation of cultural identities, the question of language in writing, memory and history, as well as ecological challenges, are among the main topics that have captured the attention of many contemporary African writers and essayists. Given the recurring nature of these subjects in African literature, it becomes necessary to reflect on how certain African authors tackle themes that are both locally grounded and universally relevant, infusing them with a soul that is deeply African. It is precisely this alchemy—or perhaps this new way of seeing and speaking the world—that merits our attention in this paper.

It should be noted from the outset that this study does not aim merely to list all the themes echoed in the works of various African writers. Rather, its central objective is to understand the dynamics of contemporary African literature, its adaptation to the current global context, and its ability to assert its Africanity while reconstructing African identity in the modern world. At its core, it is also clear that behind every story, every poem, pulses a deep conviction—an energy that calls for awareness and a revolution against racial and ethnic stereotypes and prejudices toward Black Africans. This indicates that African literature is much more than storytelling—it is a tool for

questioning reality, a genuine weapon of struggle and resistance, and a powerful means of expressing cultural identity and a sense of belonging.

By analyzing a diverse body of postcolonial African authors such as Léonora Miano, Fatou Diome, Calixthe Beyala, Sami Tchak, Mohamed Mbougar Sarr, and Véronique Tadjo, this study summarizes the key aspects of this literature by focusing on its stylistic, thematic, and aesthetic features. It examines how these writers navigate between local expectations and a desire for universality, contributing to the recognition of African literature beyond the Black continent and encouraging a shift from the idea of a single universe to that of a pluriverse.

For analytical purposes, we rely on modern literary theories, including postcolonial studies and textual aesthetics. This approach allows for a critical engagement with literary works that demonstrate how African literature has gained global recognition without losing its cultural identity or its sense of belonging to indigenous communities.

As for the structure of this investigation, we will focus on three lines of inquiry. First, we will present a summarized analysis of the selected works to grasp the multiple voices and perspectives within this literature and how they reflect the realities of a constantly changing world. Next, we will explore the diversity of narrative and aesthetic approaches that have been adapted to address universal themes while remaining rooted in specific local contexts. Finally, we will briefly discuss the transnational and intercultural dimensions of this literature, which opens itself to the world while remaining grounded in contemporary African realities.

1. Presentation of the Works and Authors of the Corpus

In this first section of the study, we find it fitting to focus on a thematic analysis of the selected works by the previously mentioned authors. It is important to note that these writers represent different generations of postcolonial African authors; therefore, each one brings their own concepts and perspectives on political, social, cultural, and even environmental issues. These are conveyed through a variety of narrative modes.

Indeed, **Léonora Miano** is one of the Black women writers who have successfully adapted their writing to the specific features and orientations of the socio-cultural context. She has become a prominent figure in contemporary African literature, focusing mainly on issues of exile and identity. Her narratives continuously invite deep reflection on the relationship between the Self and the Other. They aim in particular to build a bridge between the colonial past and contemporary realities, while emphasizing the need to reinvent oneself and find one's place in a globalized world. In this regard, the Franco-Cameroonian author draws attention to the complexity of contemporary African identity, which is shaped by multiple cultural affiliations. She states:

"I am a fully assumed Afro-Western woman, refusing to choose between my African side and my Western side. [...] It seems to me that what I affirm for myself is indeed the current reality of my native land. [...] To be African today is to be a cultural hybrid. It is to live on the border." (Miano, 2012, p. 28)

Fatou Diome, for her part, explores similar themes but with a greater focus on plurality, otherness, and the diasporic experience. In her novels, notably *The Belly of the Atlantic* (2003), she advocates for a multiple and evolving identity, far removed from the fixed clichés tied to origin or nationality. For her, *"Identity is something to be thought and lived; it evolves. It is not a passive state."* (Diome, 2018). This statement encourages a form of universal humanism in which identity boundaries are increasingly blurred in favor of recognizing the Other in their diversity. More generally, her fiction invites deep reflection on exile, belonging, and the gaze of and toward the Other.

Sami Tchak is another African writer who engages in deep reflection on the themes of immigration and identity crisis, exposing both historical and contemporary contradictions and injustices faced by Africans in the modern world. His writing functions both as social critique and as psychological exploration of plural identities. In the novel *Place des Fêtes* (2011), Tchak portrays characters in search of a better life abroad, particularly in Europe. However, as the stories unfold, the illusion of a Western Eldorado is gradually dismantled as the characters come to realize the hardships and hidden realities behind this dreamed and idealized image. He thus addresses the disillusionment of immigration, the precarity of migrants, and the violence they face. As illustrated in the quote below from one of his characters, the focus is particularly on the difficulties of integration, racism, and the marginalization of African immigrants, while also exploring issues of cultural disorientation and identity fragmentation:

"And now, Dad, you're asking me to go live over there? Am I dreaming or what! I'm not saying France is better! But I was born French, Dad. I'm French, even if I'm not really French, because my skin doesn't match my papers. But I also know I'm not from over there either, because I don't really belong there at all." (Tchak, 2001, p. 23)

Mohamed Mbougar Sarr represents a new generation of young writers and has become one of the most influential voices in contemporary Francophone literature. His novel *The Most Secret Memory of Men* (2021) is especially marked by a profound exploration of identity, memory, inner exile, and cultural heritage, often approached

through a meta-textual lens. Stylistically, his writing is rich and dense, blending different narrative forms such as stories, journal excerpts, and literary dialogues.

Through this formal plurality, Sarr questions the ties between Africa and the West, especially regarding issues related to postcolonial literature and the condition of the African writer in a globalized world. It is also worth noting that while his works are rooted in a Senegalese context, Sarr seeks to broaden the literary vision beyond local realities to address more universal concerns about humanity, literary creation, and the transmission of memory—granting his writing both personal and universal significance. In his analysis of *The Most Secret Memory of Men*, Abibou Samb highlights how Sarr explores identity boundaries through innovative writing, stating:

"Reading The Most Secret Memory of Men opens us to a constellation of issues that transcend inquiries into the 'Tout-Monde' discourse, integrating and recycling all kinds of urgent matters. In this fiction, Mohamed Mbougar Sarr boldly explores an individual path that demonstrates his maturity in novelistic poetics, nurturing new models of writing driven by creative freedom, working to provide responses to questions about human anxieties related to identity boundaries." (Samb, 2023, p. 283)

Finally, **Véronique Tadjo** offers a unique perspective on the issues of collective memory, cultural heritage, and ecological and health challenges facing the African continent. Her novel *In the Company of Men* (2017), for example, is characterized by poetic sensitivity, exploring the deep connection between humans and nature, while reflecting on the devastating consequences of the overexploitation of African natural resources by powerful multinational corporations.

This is achieved especially through narrative techniques such as blending the marvelous and the real, and using mythological or legendary references, particularly from African cultural heritage, adapted to the contemporary context. In doing so, she creates a deeply profound literary work that interrogates the past, present, and future of a continent often confronted with ecological challenges and the need for social and environmental justice. In this context, scholar Francesca Cassinadri notes that Tadjo's narratives prompt an ecological reflection that extends beyond health concerns to questions of harmonious coexistence with nature, emphasizing the need to reconcile science and tradition:

"Tadjo lays the groundwork for an ecological ethic that invites humanity to reconcile with nature. While the story focuses on the health dimension, it also addresses two other major themes: the relationship between humans and nature, and the relationship between science and tradition." (2020, p. 170)

All these characteristics lead us to examine the aesthetic aspect and the narrative approaches adopted by these writers, given that the stylistic, narrative, and poetic techniques they employ are, in one way or another, inseparable from broader social, cultural, moral, and ethical concerns that transcend cultural and national borders. These writers thus create a literary space in which readers are invited to reflect on contemporary issues while immersing themselves in a form of writing that draws from African cultural roots while projecting itself toward a future that remains, for them, uncertain.

2. Aesthetics and Narrative Approaches

To begin with, it is important to highlight that postcolonial African literature is particularly characterized by a great diversity in narrative and stylistic approaches. This diversity reflects the multiplicity of voices, experiences, and perspectives concerning the African continent. Indeed, by emphasizing the richness, originality, and quality of the works, as well as the diversity of styles and genres, **Lilyan Kesteloot** asserts that African authors are no longer perceived merely as emerging or marginal voices but as creators of a truly rich, original, and diverse literature:

"Today, the abundance and quality of the works, the diversity of styles and genres, the undeniable originality of temperaments—all this invites us to consider African authors as the creators of a true literature." (Kesteloot, 2020, p. 14)

It should also be noted that the aesthetic strategies adopted by the authors in our corpus should not be seen solely as narrative tools used to stand out, but also as part of a broader intention to reconstruct narratives that address the complexities of African history, memory, and identity. According to **Lydie Moudileno**, this is mainly due to the emergence of a new generation of African writers based in France, whose works are distinguished not only by the recurring themes they address—such as migration, exile, illegality, métissage, and questions of identity—but also by changes in the way they write:

"The transformations affect not only the themes that preoccupy these authors, but also the very ways of writing." (Moudileno, 2003, p. 83)

To summarize, these writers stand out for their dual originality—both thematic and formal.

This distinctive feature of the literature manifests mainly through the fact that contemporary African writers adopt innovative literary techniques and bold practices, particularly aiming to liberate literary creation from the constraints of genre. It is also evident in the emphasis on African oral tradition, while integrating modern forms of expression—resulting in an **aesthetic hybridity** that transcends geographical and cultural borders. It is, in short, a form of:

“Reactualization of ancient genres and past content, a hybridization of scholarly and mass culture.” (Lamontagne, 1998, p. 63)

2.1 The Reactualization of Oral Heritage: Between Cultural Affirmation and the Demand for Cultural Autonomy

Wishing to meet the expectations of both African and international audiences, many writers seek to invent a hybrid literary language of communication that oscillates between oral and written traditions in African languages and the literatures of the world. This key aspect of their aesthetics—consisting of incorporating tales, legends, and myths from different cultures and adapting them to contemporary contexts—has been central to the authors in our corpus.

This approach is not only a tribute to their African cultural heritage—since it allows literature to be more closely linked to history, geography, and the shared cultural heritage of the authors (Huannou, 1989, p. 89)—but also a form of resistance to **colonial narrative structures**.

For instance, **Véronique Tadjo** integrates this oral dimension in her novel *In the Company of Men* through the use of oral literature genres such as songs, folktales, and legends rooted in African traditions. This is particularly evident in her incorporation of the song *Ancien combattant* by Zao:

*“Mark the step, and one, two
Old soldier Mundasukiri
Mark the step, and one, two
Old soldier Mundasukiri.”* (Tadjo, 2017, p. 91)

The inclusion of this song evokes the memory of old war veterans, their courage, but also the trauma, neglect, and poverty they endured. Tadjo’s use of this song reinforces the **oral dimension** of literature, drawing from African oral traditions to transmit a powerful message with a strong evocative force. In this regard, **Natasa Raschi** emphasizes that:

“This is the voice of Véronique Tadjo, deeply African, who revives and exalts the founding traits of ancestral culture, of evening storytelling, of oral and animist tradition, where the poetic magic of Birago Diop’s Souffles still resonates.” (Raschi, 2019, p. 401)

Similarly, **Mohamed Mbougar Sarr** incorporates many elements from oral tradition and culture into his writing, which enriches his narratives with cultural depth and storytelling grounded in African heritage. He explains that his childhood was steeped in stories, folktales, legends, proverbs, journals, and songs specific to the **Serer** culture:

“I grew up in Serer oral tradition.” (Sarr, 2022)

This experience shaped his sensitivity to language, his way of building narratives, and his worldview. Like traditional storytellers, he often uses **embedded narratives**, where secondary stories are inserted into the main plot. This creates a **fragmented narrative structure** that echoes oral storytelling by exploring different perspectives while maintaining a fluid and dynamic flow.

In *The Most Secret Memory of Men* (2021), the plot unfolds through a series of nested stories using various formats—journals, newspaper articles, emails, etc. Sarr confirms that his writing is deeply rooted in his oral cultural heritage, influenced by the women in his family:

“This dimension is deeply present in the imagination of my culture, naturally accepted. This much-maligned animism is inscribed in me. Literarily, it has poetic value and adds depth to reality. I come from a family of seven boys whose imagination was shaped by tales, word games, the recitations of my mother, grandmothers, aunts, and cousins—which is why the narrative is often driven by women.” (Sarr, 2021)

Moreover, in *The Sun Hath Looked Upon Me* (1987), **Calixthe Beyala** uses expressions and vocabulary from **Cameroonian vernacular languages**, incorporating words, proverbs, and references in both dialogues and descriptions. This gives her work a unique authenticity rooted in **oral and popular traditions**, while introducing foreign readers to the specificities of this culture.

This aspect has been highlighted by **Ibrahim Osmanu**, who underlines the richness of orality in Beyala’s writing:

“In The Sun Hath Looked Upon Me, Calixthe Beyala uses several local terms, none of which appear in a French dictionary. We find terms like: ‘gâ’ (p. 11), ‘haâ’ (p. 26), ‘kabas’ (p. 24), ‘gala’ and ‘maffé’ (p. 51), ‘kruma’ (p. 98), and

'sadaka of Ekassi' (p. 119). These words become clear through context and repeated use, allowing the reader to grasp their meanings." (Osmanu, 2020, p. 17)

By inserting terms from Cameroonian vernacular languages, **Beyala** engages in a bold literary experiment that takes into account both the **local specificities** of her narrative and the **broader dynamics of globalization** that influence cultural expressions.

Rooted in African oral tradition, this approach invites readers to enter a world where **cultural and linguistic boundaries are transcended**. By adopting such a style, Beyala gives her work authenticity and depth that faithfully reflect **Cameroonian realities** while addressing **universal themes** that resonate with readers from different cultures. She thus bridges **local realities with global concerns** such as identity, globalization, cultural dynamics, and the **female condition**, creating a body of work that is both **local and universal**.

As noted by Mahdeb & Maizi:

"By using certain glocalizing practices, Calixthe Beyala manages to create a literary universe that is both rooted in a specific cultural reality and accessible to an international audience. She seeks, in a way, to craft a unique literary space that reflects, on one hand, cultural diversity and, on the other, the challenges contemporary societies face." (Mahdeb & Maizi, 2023, p. 81)

2.2 Magical Realism and Myth

It should be noted that several contemporary African novels are distinguished by a desire to insert a dose of magical realism by introducing fantastic, irrational, or surreal elements into a realistic framework. In this respect, it is commonly accepted that the use of this genre allows authors to represent complex African realities, taking into account traditional beliefs and ancestral traditions that are an integral part of many African cultures. "It was necessary to help the reader by finding a form that would allow them to enter into a difficult but necessary subject." (Tadjo, 2017)

For Léonora Miano, for example, in *Rouge Impératrice* (2019), magical realism manifests through elements of the marvelous such as travel to the spirit realm, exchanges with ancestors, as well as projection and astral travel experiences. Magical realism thus becomes a means to revisit earlier periods of African history from an angle that goes beyond rational or conventional historical explanations.

Myth, for its part, is also a narrative tool used to anchor African stories in a universal dimension while preserving their local specificities. Véronique Tadjo, in her novel *In the Company of Men*, incessantly revisits African mythologies, blending them with contemporary reflections on the human condition and natural constraints. This reactivation of ancient myths establishes a link between past and present and highlights the timelessness of certain current global issues and challenges, particularly concerning the relationships between nature and human beings. This is why she has drawn on myths and popular legends concerning animals and plants.

In the following excerpt, the narrator, relying on an oral narrative mode, recounts the African legend surrounding the creation of the bat, thereby reinforcing the oral dimension of this literature. According to this story, this animal was born from an extraordinary union between a fox father and a dove mother. These two animals, whose forbidden love affair condemned them to exile far from the forest, mated, defying the conventions of the animal kingdom. It was under the roots of the trees that they gave birth to this placental mammal that is the bat. This oral transmission, rooted in myth, highlights the cultural richness of African oral traditions.

Their improbable love was thus born, ignoring their differences and the scandal that would inevitably shake the animal people. My mother told me that they had found refuge between the roots of a tree that supported their cause. My father was so in love that he no longer hunted. He had found happiness, something he had despaired of ever knowing.

At the time of my birth, my mother withdrew to the top of their tree to give birth to me. That is how I was born, bat, half-mammal, half-bird, fangs and snout of a fox, translucent wings. (Tadjo, 2017, p. 157)

On another level and in another sense, a second aspect of magical realism is reflected in the voice given to another non-human character, the Baobab, making it a true pillar on which the soul of her story rests. This tree, a symbol of wisdom and longevity in Africa, is not only a narrative element used to advance events, but also a protagonist endowed with speech and consciousness whose role is to stimulate reflection. By giving it a voice, Tadjo merges the real world with the marvelous, embodying the African oral tradition where nature is often described as a living and communicative entity. The Baobab thus assumes a narrative and revealing function by sharing the author's reflections on human and ecological crises, thereby inviting the reader to reconsider the relationship between man and his environment. This technique anchors the story in a poetic and philosophical dimension, while maintaining a universal scope that goes beyond the traditional framework of realism.

The following excerpt, which recurs throughout the novel, demonstrates a clear artistic intent to bring a kind of typically African magical realism to this literary writing. This repetition creates a kind of intrigue, arousing increasing curiosity about the symbolism of this mythical tree. Let us add, briefly, that giving such a status to the Baobab is based on cultural, ethical, or moral considerations concerning the relationship of the human being with other living species and of African culture with that of the Western and Eastern world.

I am Baobab, first tree, eternal tree, symbolic tree. My top touches the sky and offers refreshing shade to the world. I seek the gentle light, bearer of life. So that it may enlighten humanity, illuminate the darkness, and ease the anguish. (Tadjo, 2017, p. 23)

Let us reiterate that by granting the Baobab consciousness and speech, Tadjo anchors her story in a narrative tradition that transcends the realistic and scientific aspect of the subjects treated to reach a poetic and spiritual dimension. She also invites deep reflection on the relationship between man and nature, while infusing her text with a universal dimension that questions the present time and raises questions about the search for meaning and the preservation of ecosystems. This narrative technique thus broadens the field of interpretation, transforming the Baobab into a symbol of resilience and wisdom in the face of contemporary challenges.

2.3 Hybridity and Narrative Practices

Another distinctive aesthetic feature of this literature is linked to its hybridity. That is to say, many postcolonial African writers often navigate between several cultural and linguistic worlds, and this openness to plurality is precisely reflected in their texts. As we have already indicated, Calixthe Beyala, in her novel *C'est le soleil qui m'a brûlé*, used terms and linguistic expressions derived from both French and African languages, thus creating a hybrid and pluriversal language that expresses the diasporic experience, identity fragmentation, and the feeling of exclusion among people of African descent. This feeling was clearly expressed by Fatou Diome in her novel *The Belly of the Atlantic* (2003):

At home? At the Other's? Being hybrid, Africa and Europe wonder perplexedly which part of me belongs to them. I am the child presented to King Solomon's sword for fair division. Permanently exiled, I spend my nights welding the rails that lead to identity. Writing is the hot wax I pour between the furrows dug by the builders of partitions on both sides. (Diome, 2003, p. 254)

In this perspective of discursive plurality, the novel *The Most Secret Memory of Men* by Mohamed Mbougar Sarr also illustrates this recourse to a poetics of hybridity by developing complex and interwoven plots around a double quest led by a Senegalese writer living in Paris named Diégane Latyr Faye, while recounting intercalated narratives. This diversity of voices and background episodes creates a polyphonic discourse, structured around transcultural debates, investigations, and literary confrontations, indicating the existence of a hybridization of literary genres (novel, essay, dialogue, investigation, etc.).

In terms of narrative space in this novel, it is intended to be more than an indication of the place of action; it is constantly evolving, moving from Africa to Europe and South America, symbolizing the feeling of loss, despair, and disappointment experienced by the different characters.

Similarly, it is to be noted that time also reflected an anguishing image of an unfavorable situation: the eras are interwoven, from colonization to independence, through the social movements of the 60s and 80s, up to the Arab Springs. In short, by mixing historical reality and fictional representation, the novel follows a non-linear and fragmented plot, characteristic of its plural approach, where different times and places respond to each other, thus embodying a form of literary pluralism.

Véronique Tadjo, for her part, adopts a distinct approach compared to her predecessors when addressing the theme of the Ebola epidemic. She opts for a hybrid and polyphonic literary approach, combining factual, marvelous, and fictional genres, while integrating elements of her cultural heritage:

Poetry:

Let us go to the University Hospital of the capital,
The global market of diseases
Let us go buy cholera
In the toilets that vomit feces!
Let us go buy malaria
In the stagnant waters of the courtyard!
Let us go buy AIDS
In the non-disinfected waste!
Let us go buy madness

In the bags of corruption and pride!
Come with me! (Tadjo, 2017, pp. 59-60)

; the **folk tale and myth**:

"At the time of my birth, my mother withdrew to the top of their tree to give birth to me. That is how I was born, bat, half-mammal, half-bird, fangs and snout of a fox, translucent wings." (Tadjo, 2017, p. 157)

; the **diary**:

"I am the Congolese researcher who discovered the Ebola virus in his own country." (2017, p. 131)

and other genres intermingle and intertwine in an unprecedented way, thus creating a hybrid and coherent work.

This pluralist, versatile, dynamic, and adaptable approach allows, according to this novelist, to offer several perspectives on the subject of health crises in Africa, thus allowing a wide range of readers, with diverse experiences and knowledge, to grasp the Ebola epidemic and related issues, such as the degradation of moral and ethical values and environmental health crises, in a way that is both visual and sensory.

This generic hybridity becomes, for Tadjo, a means of creating a rich, multidimensional work, where reality, the marvelous, and fiction intersect to explore contemporary issues. For her, "It was necessary to help the reader

with diverse experiences and knowledge, to understand the Ebola epidemic and related issues, such as the degradation of moral and ethical values and environmental health crises, in a way that is both visual and sensory.

This generic hybridity becomes for Tadjo a means to create a rich, multidimensional work, where reality, the marvelous, and fiction intersect to explore contemporary issues. For her, "It was necessary to help the reader by finding a form that would allow them to enter a difficult but necessary subject." (2017) In addition to the above, it should be noted that "In poetry as in the novel, but effectively abolishing the boundary between genres, texts such as those by Werewere Liking, Véronique Tadjo, Tanella Boni, Anne-Marie Adiaffi, and Calixthe Beyala stand out from the mass of women's writings by the renewal not only thematic but also formal that they demonstrate." (Kesteloot, 2020, p. 34)

It is, all in all, a revolutionary approach aimed at safeguarding the cultural, linguistic, and artistic identity of Africa through the resurrection of the tangible and intangible heritage of this continent. It is for this purpose that these women writers and many others incorporate heritage elements such as language, traditions, customs, beliefs, and African experiences into their novels, which contributes to the preservation and promotion of African cultures. For Véronique Tadjo, she writes "novels, stories, and illustrated texts, in which she plays with myths, traditions, and more recent events, thus creating a heterogeneous work from both a generic and thematic point of view." (Cassinadri, 2020, p. 167)

3. Contemporary African Literature of the Extreme: Issues and Perspectives

Considering the above, it is important to emphasize that African literature produced from the 2000s to the present day is part of an approach of reappropriating identity, collective memory, and the heritage of a lost African history.

After centuries of colonization and cultural domination imposed mainly by various means of communication, African writers seek to free minds from stereotypes inherited from the West. By deconstructing the exotic and demeaning images imposed by the colonial literary and media gaze, these authors give voice to African perspectives long marginalized.

Véronique Tadjo, in *In the Company of Men*, for example, explores various subjects using the theme of the Ebola epidemic, offering a plurality of perspectives and voices, thus showcasing the richness and diversity of African culture and literature. For her part, Fatou Diome, with *The Belly of the Atlantic*, deals with the tensions between individual aspirations and community realities in Africa, while criticizing the illusions of the European El Dorado dream. It should also be added that this literature does not just tell stories; it also participates in the restoration of historical memory by highlighting a cultural heritage that is unknown, forgotten, or long neglected. This is concretely illustrated in *The Most Secret Memory of Men* by Mohamed Mbougar Sarr. This novel offers a critical rereading of African literary history, restoring the complexity of an African identity marked by cultural mixing and the weight of the colonial past. Moreover, this literature aims at cultural resistance by reaffirming an African identity too often reduced to clichés and negative stereotypes. The cited writers, and even others, have celebrated the richness of African traditions while confronting them with contemporary realities. Calixthe Beyala, for example, stages female figures who challenge patriarchal norms, thus offering a more nuanced and current vision of African societies. Orality, which runs through the stories of Sami Tchak, becomes not only a form of resistance to the hegemony of colonial languages but also a way to reconnect with the ancestral sources of African culture. Furthermore, writing in French, far from being a mere colonial legacy, then becomes a space for subversion, where authors like Fatou Diome and

Véronique Tadjou play with linguistic codes to express a hybrid identity, blending local languages and the colonial language. Moreover, it should be noted that by integrating elements of orality, myths, and legends from popular culture, these writers enrich world literature with a unique narrative diversity, thus attempting to redefine African identity in the modern era.

It should also be added that social and political criticism constitutes another fundamental objective of this literature. The novels of Sami Tchak offer a virulent critique of corrupt African elites while questioning the consequences of neocolonialism in all its forms on the continent. By using fiction to interrogate social realities, these writers raise essential questions about governance, justice, and ethics. For the writer Véronique Tadjou, she does not hesitate to use myth and allegory to address contemporary issues such as ethnic conflicts or health crises, thus offering a deep reflection on the challenges Africa faces today. Similarly, Mohamed Mbougar Sarr addresses in his works themes such as censorship, freedom of expression, marginalization, exclusion, and ideological excesses, also highlighting the responsibility of intellectuals in the face of social injustices. We understand here that by denouncing systems of oppression, postcolonial African literature engages its readers in a critical reflection on contemporary socio-political dynamics, while inviting an awakening of consciousness in the face of the inequalities faced by African communities, notably intellectuals.

Another key objective is the promotion of intercultural dialogue and respect for diversity. Postcolonial African writers often become spokespersons for diversity by highlighting the theme of otherness, which symbolizes empathy and mutual understanding. Fatou Diome, with her experience of the diaspora, explores the feeling of uprooting and the desire for belonging by questioning the multiple identities resulting from migrations. Calixthe Beyala also addresses the issue of immigration in Europe, exposing the tensions between assimilation and the preservation of African cultural roots. Through these stories, the authors construct a pluriversal space where various identities and plural cultures coexist, thus rejecting the borders established by colonization. Overall, their works foster a dialogue between cultures, not to seek homogeneity, but to celebrate diversity as a strength. This constitutes, for them, a fundamental axis of a civilized relationship between nations.

Finally, it should be said that extreme contemporary African literature is distinguished by its stylistic and aesthetic innovation and its desire to breathe new life into literary writing. In fact, the authors do not simply imitate Western narrative forms; they hybridize them with elements belonging to African tradition. Sami Tchak and Véronique Tadjou integrate into their narratives structures inspired by African orality while exploring contemporary themes. As for narrative hybridization, it reflects the complexity of current African societies caught between tradition and modernity. By drawing on oral stories, myths, and legends, these writers have used appropriate narrative techniques aimed at renewing aesthetic forms while offering “A literature that, while recognizing the importance of geographical, linguistic, and identity anchors.” (Clamote Carreto, 2019, p. 99)

Furthermore, it should be noted that this literary reinvention goes beyond formal structure; it often serves to exorcise the traumas linked to the colonial past and the complex postcolonial realities. Writing thus becomes therapeutic, a means for authors to confront the historical wounds left by colonization, civil wars, genocides, and attempt to reconcile generations with their history. Ecological concerns also emerge in this literature, as evidenced by the works of Véronique Tadjou, which warn about pressing environmental challenges. This means that through their stories, these African writers seek to raise awareness of ecological issues, showing that literature can be a powerful tool to encourage global awareness of the challenges humanity faces.

In addition to this, it can be said that extreme contemporary postcolonial African literature pursues multiple and complementary objectives. On the one hand, it aims to give a voice back to African authors in the global historical narrative by integrating African perspectives and experiences that have been historically marginalized. This contributes to a richer and more nuanced understanding of human history. On the other hand, through committed writing, the authors are determined to assert a rich and complex cultural identity, to criticize systems of oppression, to promote intercultural dialogue, and as we have previously emphasized, to renew narrative forms to better reflect the diversity and challenges of the continent. Through this plurality of intentions, it consequently demonstrates that literature is not only a space of fictional representation of a fact or a reality but also a space of action, capable of transforming imaginations and provoking change on a formal, notional, and reflective level.

Conclusion

What we essentially retain from these observations is that extreme contemporary African literature is mainly characterized by a unique aesthetic that combines tradition and modernity, realism and the marvelous, the serious and the parodic. African writers, through hybrid works, rehabilitate narratives and traditions long marginalized by colonial history while exploring contemporary realities such as social, health, and environmental crises.

At the same time, it was appropriate to point out that linguistic, narrative, generic, and cultural hybridity is at the heart of this literature, which aims to be a pluriversal universe, thus reflecting the plurality of African identities.

Authors such as Véronique Tadjó, Fatou Diome, and Mohamed Mbougar Sarr redefine African imaginaries while addressing subjects relating to global issues such as migrations, ethnic conflicts, and ecology.

In this plural perspective, it was noted that beyond the exploration of these themes which transcend cultural and temporal boundaries, this literature becomes a space of resistance, dialogue, and innovation. It questions the relationships between man and the world around him. It also highlighted the intercultural and social dynamics that emerge when immigrants settle in a new country, transforming the narrative into a creative tool for shaping new horizons.

More broadly, thus, we were able to realize that extreme contemporary African literature constitutes both a celebration of diversity, a critique of injustices, and an invitation to rethink the world through a prism that fuses ancestral values and modern aspirations.

Bibliography

- Cassinadri, F. (2020). *Raconter une épidémie : Ébola dans les romans de Véronique Tadjó et de Paule Constant*. Études littéraires africaines (50), pp. 165-177.
1. Clamote Carreto, C. (2019, December 18). *Déterritorialiser la littérature : herméneutique et mondialisation*. Gerflint(07), pp. 93-112.
 2. Diome, F. (2018, August 29). *Fatou Diome; « Ces débats sur l'identité ne sont qu'une forme d'expropriation »*. (N. Henni-Moulai, Interviewer)
 3. Diome, F. (2003). *Le Ventre de l'Atlantique*. Paris: Anne Carrière.
 4. Huannou, A. (1989). *La question des littératures nationales en Afrique noire*. Abidjan: CEDA.
 5. Kesteloot, L. (2020). *Histoire de la littérature négro-africaine*. Dakar: Nouvelles Editions Numériques Africaines (NENA).
 6. Lamontagne, A. (1998). *Métatextualité postmoderne : de la fiction à la critique*. Études littéraires, 30(3), pp. 61-76.
 7. Mahdeb, A., & Maizi, S. (2023, December 31). *Le roman africain francophone : vers une Glocalisation littéraire*. ALTRALANG, pp. 77-86.
 8. Miano, L. (2012). *Habiter la frontière*. Paris: L'Arche.
 9. Moudileno, L. (2003). *Littératures africaines francophones des années 1980 et 1990*. Dakar: Codesria.
 10. Osmanu, I. (2020, January 2). *Langue Et Style Dans "C'est Le Soleil Qui m'a brûlée" de Calixthe Beyala*. Hybrid Journal Literary and Cultural Studies, 2(1), pp. 14-39.
 11. Raschi, N. (2019, August 1). *Véronique Tadjó, En compagnie des hommes*. Studi Francesi (188/2019), pp. 399-401. doi:10.4000/studifrancesi.20387
 12. Samb, A. (2023, October). *La plus secrète mémoire des hommes de Mohamed Mbougar Sarr entre virtuosité esthétique et péril de l'autarcie identitaire*. Ziglôbitha, Revue des Arts, Linguistique, Littérature & Civilisations, pp. 283-292.
 13. Sarr, M. M. (2022, February 24). *La littérature transfigure la vie*. (J. C. Raspiengeas, Interviewer)
 14. Sarr, M. (2021, October 15). *Culture/Livres*. Retrieved from *Le Temps*.
 15. https://www.letemps.ch/culture/livres/mohamed-mbougar-sarr-lecriture-face-reel?srltid=AfmBOopW2dLxvm0FjMEZkvmtnUGwx40q_oNCHVxRabriqo_PO168GLjb
 16. Tadjó, V. (2017). *En compagnie des hommes*. Paris: Don Quichotte.
 17. Tadjó, V. (2017, September 1). *La littérature a cette faculté de créer un espace de mémoire*. (E. Sauphie, Interviewer) *Jeuneafrique.com*.
 18. Tchak, S. (2001). *Place des fêtes*. Paris: Gallimard.