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Corruption in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* by Ayi Kwei Armah

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Dedication

- This work is dedicated to my guardians and parents Mr. Charef Mabrouk and Mrs. Haddadi Houria for their absolute support
- To my sisters Basma; Moufida; Houda; Abir and Zahra
- To my beloved and only brother Mohamed
- To my dearest friends Assia, Marwa, Rim and Meriem for being by my side I love you all
- To every person who helped me in completing my work.

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Abstract

Corruption is a negative term that connotes general decay and moral laxity in the society it thrives where there is no discipline and strong moral principles, the paper is an exploration of Ayi Kwei Armah *the Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* focusing on the theme of corruption. The work explains the major theme that existed in the African continent after independence where there was moral decay and the lack of ethical leaders that are able to govern properly their country. So the present work examines the phenomenon of corruption dealt in the novel focusing on the means used to make Armah's stand clear and obvious to the readers through criticizing heavily the rot and decayed values of the post- colonial period and specifically during Kwame Nkrumah's government.

Key terms: Corruption, post-colonial, Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Beautiful Ones are Not Yet Born*

Abstract in Arabic

الفساد مصطلح يدل على الانهيار و ضياع الاخلاق في المجتمع وتنتشر هذه الظاهرة عندما لا يكون هنالك انعدام الاخلاق و المبادئ اذا هذه الدر ابي كوي ارما "الحلويين لم يولدوا بعد" مركزة على موضوع الفساد الذي هيمن على الدول الافريقية بعد الاستقلال بسبب غياب قادة و رؤساء ادميين قادرين على حكم البلاد وكذلك هذه الدراسة تركز على الوسائل الادبية التي استعملها الكاتب لوصف ظاهرة الفساد.

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Glossary of Terms

Analepsis and Prolepsis

They are referred as “**flashback**” and “**flashforward.**” In other words, these are ways in which a narrative's discourse re-order's a given story i.e. by "flashing back" to an earlier point in the story (analepsis) or "flashing forward" to a moment later in the chronological sequence of events (prolepsis). Also The term **prolepsis**, as defined by Merriam-Webster, means 'the representation or assumption of a future act or development as if presently existing or accomplished. The term is from the Greek, meaning “he process of taking in front of’ or anticipating” in literature.

Ellipsis

(plural **ellipses** "omission" or "falling short") is a series of dots that usually indicates an intentional omission of a word, sentence, or whole section from a text without altering its original meaning. Depending on their context and placement in a sentence, ellipses can also indicate an unfinished thought, a leading statement, a slight pause, a mysterious, echoing voice, or a nervous or awkward silence.

kitu kidogo

A Swahili word for a bribe, its meaning literally is something small.

The Chichi dodo

Is a very clean bird which hates any form of filth . The bird goes through all pains to keep filth out of its way. The ironical thing about the Chichi dodo is that despite its sanitary standards, it feeds on maggots which are found in animal excrement that are filthy.

General introduction

Ayi Kwei Armah's novel *the Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* is a classic novel written in the years shortly after independence precisely 1968, it is a literary work that attempts to place within context the corrupt values that existed during independence either socially or politically. It is Based in Ghana formerly Gold Coast where Armah was born. This literary work uses the country as a symbolic representation of other African countries so it is meant that the issue of corruption is broadly discussed in the novel and should not be viewed as completely localized in Ghana but rather should be generally used as a mirror reflection of the experiences of other African countries. The novel is rich in its thematic approaches as well as the literary stylistic devices that have been put at the disposition of the author for ease of communicating the message.

While many critics praised his narrative style and technique, others like Frederiksen (1987), Wright (1989), criticized him for what Brown describes as his accusations of the prevailing values in postcolonial society. Yet, others like Chinua Achebe see Armah too pessimistic due to the extreme vulgarity of the language. In spite of all these controversies, Armah's desires for good governance and the equality are unquestionable. Armah's novels aside from being beautifully written are composed by the writer to show his stand. Armah's message to his readers is first to resist all the obstacles that stand in front of Africans secondly to liberate themselves to develop and prosper and finally change for the good.

Armah's novels are considered by Chidi Amuta to be novels of historical reconstruction which are meant to fight what Armah considers to be the injustices, prejudices and atrocities that existed over the years by foreigners and also by Africans on Africans. Armah's novels of liberation like some of the world's literature are designed to speak of revolutionary changes in social, economic and political structures using a vulgar language (Amuta 4).

Edge praised African writers who composed works tackling the African problems after independence such as Soyinka in *Man of the People 1968* and Achebe in *Things Fall Apart* but emphasized on Armah's powerful focus on contemporary Africa's problems emphasizing that Armah is one of the African writers who have spoken to the hearts of the African people and his works are used as an enlightenment and as an indirect quest for Africans to change for the best. One of Armah's main works that dealt heavily with the issues of African countries that existed during independence focusing on the theme of corruption is his debut novel *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born in (1968)* that is described by Garry as the story is about one man's effort to resist corruption and to stay clean.

It is meant that Armah draws his attention extensively on recent Ghanaian history and there are several historical events that are so important in the novel that led Ghanaian society to be so corrupt and full of disgust, initially the legacy left by the war i.e. whites impact on Africans then the rise and the fall of Nkrumah's government that pushed Ghanaians to deviate and finally the so-called neo-colonialism after independence which are mentioned in the novel.

The Beautiful Ones Are Not yet Born has captured the widespread of corruption among Africans and the despair caused by this phenomenon so It is meant that Armah's main perspective is to discuss the harsh image of corruption and selfishness of both the inhabitants and the leaders. Moreover many critics investigated the theme of corruption in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*.

This novel was studied in various ways. According to Eric J Irungu Nairobi Kenya (2014) shows that the novel depicts the reality of life in Ghana in the run up to the country's independence and after independence until life is unsettled by the military coup that ousted Kwame Nkrumah as the country's independence. However, Mavis Thokozile Macheka in "an evaluation of post-colonial African leadership" he has focused on how the misuse of power

causes the offices of African leaders to be sources of evil and wealth creation for a few selected individuals.

However the study will focus primarily on the theme of corruption that is Armah's main focus in the novel, a testament to the fact that the author's intention was to locate exactly the weakness that corruption presented to his country. The experiences of other African countries in this regard were at independence and up to now are not any different. Corruption still remains to be a major social, ethical and political economic challenge for which a lot of attention and emphasis has been paid. The general literary contention that this work will focus on will be to assess as well as evaluate main theme in the novel as a pointer to the challenges African countries continue to faced, it will be an attempt to question this prevailing theme that Armah emphasized in his novel *The Beautiful Ones are Not Yet Born*.

The investigation will help the readers in understanding the theme of corruption within Armah's novel and how it is portrayed .i.e. the work demonstrates this issue in all of its sides, how is the African environment is rot and decayed? How every aspect of the society is deeply influenced by corruption and bribery? as well as it is important since it helps students of English department in Algeria to enrich their knowledge about the African writer's literary works and the study concentrates on the African literature that is rarely investigated. It is crucial to master level students and graduates having literature majors and courses in module format.

Furthermore since the novel centers on the post-colonial era's circumstances and the prevailing issues that existed after independence also it provides a vision on the real situation during that period based on historical context and its literal sense in which the author and the reader comprehend the novel's messages remembering the historic moment along with the novel events.

Hence the methodology that is followed in this work is post-colonial approach because it focuses on the background of the novel and how the author presented the prevailing conditions of the post -colonial period and the study is divided into three main chapters the first one is a background of the study which will provide information about the writer, also about the novel, its plot and the characters.

The second chapter will be about the theme of corruption in the novel using incidents and characters that Armah has used to show the corrupt values that existed in Africa after independence. So this chapter will highlight the theme of corruption by demonstrating some examples from the novel.

Finally the last chapter will be about the techniques that Armah used to illuminate the theme of corruption in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* as well as the symbols he used and the language that is considered as one of the main vehicle that Armah used to clearly shed the light on the theme of corruption.

Chapter 1

Background of the study

1.1. Introduction

Ayi Kwei Armah is known for novels and fiction that examine the effects of colonialism on the people of contemporary Ghana and Africa. His novels explore life in contemporary urban Africa. Among his works that are used as a reflection on Africa's colonized past and the challenges of the continent present is *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. Although his work is regarded as controversial and provocative in Africa Armah is regarded as an important African writer and intellectual. Thus the stark picture of Nkrumah's Ghana is Armah's main focus in his novel emphasizing heavily on corruption that prevailed Ghana after independence and the African countries as whole. Hence the first chapter will provide data about the author an over view about the novel: its publication, plot overview, and its characters.

1.2. Authorial Background

Ayi Kwei Armah is a Ghanaian writer who composed several works of fiction in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Despite his fame Armah has preserved his private life and rarely gave interviews about himself also he scarcely made discussions about his craft. Though critics disagreed about the literary merit of his English language works, his six novels and numerous short stories provide hints and facts about life in Ghana. Armah has been regarded as belonging to the next generation of African writers after Chinua Achebe and wole Soyinka. At the same time it is said to "epitomize an era of intense despair" (Brennan 1)

Armah was born in 1938 in the Sea Port Takoradi Ghana he is from a family that is originated from one of the ethnic groups in Ghana that is known as fante. At the time of his birth, the west African nation was a colony of Britain but the first twenty years of his life he lived the period of Ghana's long battle for independence.

He attended Achimota College in Accra and worked briefly for radio Ghana. Then continued his education in the United States first at Groton College in Massachusetts and then Harvard University he majored in social and political studies having begun the study of literature. His growing political awareness was sharpened by events in independent African countries that had recently achieved B.A. degree in sociology and his M.F.A in creative writing from Columbia University, after completing his studies he worked in Algiers in 1963 as a translator for *Revolution Africaine*.

Later on he went back to Ghana working as a broadcaster for its television and later as an English teacher at Navrongo secondary school in 1966. after that from 1967 to 1968 he moved to Paris and worked as an editor for *Jeune Afrique*. He taught at the University of Massachusetts in 1970 and later that year he moved to Tanzania where he taught for four years at the college of national education at Chang'omb, at the national university of Lesotho, in the 1960s, in the 1980's Armah lived in Dakar Senegal and taught at Amherst and the University of Wisconsin –Madison.

Armah has published six novels and several semi-autobiographical articles. The first three novels record his pessimism and disappointment towards the post-colonial African society one of his major work is the best known novel the *Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968). His other works including *Fragments* (1970) and *Why Are We So Blessed* (1972) pursue the theme of personal disillusionment in the context of early post-independence in African countries. However Armah's last three novels dealt with the history of Ghana and these novels are: *The Healers* (1978), *Two Thousand Seasons* (1973) and *Osiris Rising* (1995) which is a novel of Africa past, present and future so these later three novels evokes African societies in the pre-colonial and early colonial period. (Killam 49)

1.3. About the novel

The events of the novel take place between Passion Week in 1965 and February 25, 1966, the day after the fall of Kwame Nkrumah who is Ghana's first president. The novel describes the political failure of his government, imitating whites during colonial regime. It is meant that the new black leaders, according to Ayi Kwei Armah, used their positions of power for personal gain (Kayode 1)

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born was Armah's first novel probably written while the author was participating in the graduate writing program of Columbia University and was first published in USA. This novel records Armah's disillusionment with the post-colonial experience of Ghana and demonstrates the wasted hopes of Africans due to Nkrumah misuse of power and wealth through corrupt activities (Gillard 2).

Nkrumah and his corrupt government were overthrown in a military coup d'état. It is a period in Ghana's history, the final stages of Nkrumah's reign as "Osagyefo" and its atmosphere of political disillusion and despair. It's unlimited corruption that Armah portrayed in *the Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. This novel has a simple and straightforward plot that tells the story of the "man" unnamed rail clerk and his relations with his wife and family his fellow workers and his few (Killam 9).

This leader led the British colony of the Gold Coast to independence in 1957 which is the first African country to gain autonomy from the British control. Armah's hometown Ghana represents one of the African countries where corruption existed extensively and fraud in these countries could not be estimated easily The novel is Armah's means to illustrate the variety of issues that existed in African countries mainly the wide spread of illegal practices by both their leaders and by low class people themselves i.e. it is due to their conformism without even asking about their rights which led their rulers to profit as much as possible from their country's properties friends. (Killam and Adeoti 49-2)

The novel's protagonist is revealed through his actions and his inner thoughts and encounters with various people that he is in search for understanding and wants to determine a place in a corrupt society under its simple surface, the novel is carefully plotted describing and dramatizing complicated issues. The novel is divided into three parts. The first Part describes a day in the life of the man and his encounters with various people such as a bus driver his fellow rail way workers, a timber merchant who attempts to bribe him and his wife Oyo these various encounters are at length are described at length and in great detail. Everywhere he goes the man encounters moral; physical and spiritual corruption for instance the bus driver steals from the company (Killam 49-50).

Part two of the novel traces the history of the man's progress within a corrupt society, Ghana's post-colonial history is revealed as well as the birth, growth and death of Nkrumah's regime which is shown in the novel by the concentrated life span of the "man child" who goes through a full cycle of birth, death and growth in nine years the period of Nkrumah's regime and finally the last part of the novel describes events leading up the military coup that overthrows the government and the reactions of the public to this event. A lengthy part of this section of the novel describes the escape of the corrupt minister Koomson. Armah had written a novel that places characters in a historical context in order to display the conditions in which people live; conditions in which few prosper handsomely at the expense of those who create the wealth (Kayode 5)

1.4. Depiction of the Prevailing Values of Post-Independent Africa in the novel

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born is a classic representation of post-independence African experiences and value systems. These values represent a complete contrast with the colonial values on the one hand and the aspirations among Africans of their post-

independence governance and systems. The novel is rich with illustrations of corruption, failing economic and social systems in Ghanaian politics also skepticism about the socialist ideology, declining public trust and morality among others. This has to be put within the context of the broader political economic reality of cold war politics and how these affected African countries and indeed other countries in the developing world. One cannot fail to draw a parallel with the governance machinery presided over by Kwame Nkrumah and in particular its system of detention without trial as a way of dealing with political opposition and dissent (Booker 50).

There is also a clear departure from many pre-colonial values like the communal caring of each other. As poverty bites deeper in the Ghanaian society, there are certain baffling realities of many citizens going hungry. For instance, the man is unable to feed his family yet there are certain families whose dogs eat more meat than what an ordinary family eats in a month. These inequalities even in the living areas, tastes and preferences point to a society undergoing immense disparities and inequalities. There is a general feeling that the government of the day makes no attempt to remedy this situation. This probably opens the society up to anti-social tendencies and specifically the declining morality in the society. One cannot for instance fail to notice the vulgarities in the speech as well as expression of a majority of the people a clear indication of a society going amok. There is for instance indication of prostitution where people seek to survive (Inurgu 5).

Post-independent Africa is depicted as a lost cause. People seem to have cast aside their nationalistic feelings as people pursue the ends to their means. A clear disillusionment can be seen in the people. There is also the clear indication of how certain society members have resorted to drug abuse in a sense to ward off these sorry realities. The general optimism at independence is depicted to have vanished. This is reminiscent of many other African

countries. The independence dream seems to have turned out to be a bad nightmare from which many would wish to wake up from (Gakwandi 14).

1.5. Historical Influences that Shaped the Form and Content of the Novel

The *Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* is replete with evidence of a careful attempt to link fiction with historical reality. One cannot merely view the novel as purely and exclusively as a fictional account. The naming and depiction of certain historical characters in the novel like the President Nkrumah clearly demonstrates this. The novel is full of portrayal of the growing intolerance to political dissent that the Nkrumah regime began. There is also the reality of historical events like the coup that finally ousted the regime from power. Having been written in 1968, these events cannot be ignored as possible and real influences behind the writing of the novel. Perhaps one of the best historical influences is the ideological struggle that Ghana went through. On the one hand was the deeply entrenched capitalist system that had been run during the colonial times and the socialist paradigm that sought to replace (16).

The reality of Africa's quest for independence was to gain liberation from European oppressors. However, this reality was short-lived since the newly independent governments quickly became African oppressors themselves. This led to the emergence of African dictators of whom Kwame Nkrumah was named as one and who presided over the repressive single party systems. The destructive nature of these systems had been visible for all to see by 1968 and therefore one cannot ignore this influence on the part of the author.

As pointed above, many Africans felt that the liberation had not been realized in full and this led to the battle for full liberation of the African countries. It is this development that could have forced many African political leaders to seek ways of consolidating their authority and by so doing entrenched dictatorial regimes that became worse than the colonial regimes. These are therefore potential influences behind the critical analysis by Armah of Ghana, the

author thus had to make sense of historical realities and through literary styles attempt to bring that reality alive through fiction (Emike 1)

Perhaps the failure of government in Ghana follows from the fact that the ruling elite appeared to be oblivious of serious national matters that demanded serious, immediate and spontaneous action. Poverty and general disparities in wealth and income fits in this category the high cost of living in the country left many junior civil servants pre-disposed to corruption and bribery to make ends meet. Armah depicts what he calls the ‘passion week’ when many people have exhausted their limited resources and therefore survival for the simplest of Ghanaians is unattainable. This makes many to resort to the vice of bribery (Irungu 4)

1.6 Significance of the title

Armah did not choose the title of the novel randomly since what first draws the reader’s attention is the unusual spelling of the word “Beautiful” which the writer has taken from an inscription written at the back of a car a police man has stopped, in the novel. Yet it has its unique significance. In Ghana, as in most countries perhaps car inscriptions are common. It is an art and also a way of knowing that the driver believes in or stands for (Firtzgerrard 5).

So the word is wrongly misspelled to mean evil in the society. Every time those who were thought to be the beautiful ones they then indulge in corruption and black mail and they earn themselves luxurious things style of life, big salaries, high respect and beautiful houses. The title of the novel is itself ironic; it means it does not portray direct meaning rather shows that in African societies beautiful ones are being born every day but they are being destroyed by their societies in engaging themselves in filth. Armah chooses to indicate his largely pessimistic vision of the state of society of the country just before during and immediately after the reign of Kwame Nkrumah (Shaban 1).

Ayi Kwei Armah describes a society where in order to obtain something in life one need to accept bribes, to worship the occasional politician to get a position of prestige or the

break of the law and get together with power, the money necessary to have trust of one's friends and family. Hence the masses are left to suffer poverty as wearing of rags, being illiterate and hardly get sufficient social services. According to Armah, the blame is to the leaders. Hence good leaders have not yet come or been elected, Therefore the author has used the title to summarize what are in the novel (Mechaka 16).

The Beautiful Ones Are Not yet Born is a novel which is used to illustrate the extensive spread of corruption in most of the African countries after gaining their independence. Using Ghana as an example which epitomizes most of the other countries who lost hope due to the corrupt values that were prevailing after independence diagnosis of the central problem of Ghana by the author.

1.7. Point of view

It refers to the manners narratives are told, it shows the place of the narrator in the story. Concerning Armah's novel *the Beautiful ones are not yet born* story is told with third person omniscient that presupposes the use of personal pronouns (he, she, they) this narrator is all-knowing also it is noticed that the narrator has experienced the incidents and lived the moment (Emike 2, 3)

1.8. Summary of the novel

The novel is divided into two large parts. The first one that show the daily routine of the man through a typical working day, beginning with the usual bus ride to the railway administration building where he is a traffic control clerk. There is nothing new in the man's day is, but Armah punctuates his narrative with depressing descriptions of the environment, sights and smells of human excrement, spittle, filth, and graffiti, relieved only occasionally by the beauty of some natural phenomenon, the sky or the sea, as yet uncontaminated by man's touch. In the afternoon, a timber man comes to offer the man a bribe, but he leaves unsatisfied. After work the man meets an old acquaintance from school, now a government

Minister, Joseph Koomson, and his wife, Estella. Koomson is one of the hard ones who have succeeded. The man invites the Koomsons for dinner the following Sunday evening, which will initiate the events in the second part of the novel.

The man's return home on the bus completes the workday but hardly ends the day for him. Relations with his wife, Oyo, are strained because his integrity has kept her and her three children from experiencing the good life. The tension, as is apparently quite common, drives him from the house and to the sympathetic home of his former teacher, also nameless, who is in the same difficult situation as the man, except that he is single and has not "immersed" the self in "loved ones." He, too, has refused to follow the easy path to material comfort. Armah devotes a lengthy chapter to Teacher's monologue about his past experiences, his youthful hopes and his growing despair. His function in the novel is to verify the man's dilemma; his function for the man is to provide a temporary reassurance.

This visit, however, ends with an unexpected hopelessness. The man returns to his wife seeking sexual solace but is repelled by the ugly Caesarean scar left by the birth of their third child. The first part of the novel ends with a one-chapter account of the following workday. The man awakes from a nightmare in which he is threatened with complete isolation. He moves about the silent house getting ready for work, decides to take the train instead of the bus, and prepares for another routine day at the desk, but is offered unexpected relief: A young colleague, eager to learn the trade, volunteers to take his place. He uses the afternoon off to walk along the sea, experiencing the freedom of nature, which momentarily puts him in touch with hope and beauty.

The last two-fifths of the novel center on the man's relationship with Koomson. The visit of Koomson and Estella is a disappointment. The motive of the visit is totally utilitarian. Koomson intends to use Oyo and her mother as the official purchasers of a fishing boat, a business venture inappropriate for a Socialist Minister. The man, realizing not only that the

purchase will be made with corrupt money but also that his wife and mother-in-law will never actually own the boat, refuses to participate in the transaction. He does, however, go with her later to the Koomson's house, in the wealthy district of the city, to sign the necessary papers. By this time the wife, too, suspects the truth, but she continues to believe and thus continues to resent her husband's skepticism.

The climax comes suddenly. Kwame Nkrumah's government falls and Koomson loses everything. He comes to the man's home in order to evade arrest. The man is able, in the only exciting dramatic action of the novel, to usher him out the back way while the military police are entering the front. He and Koomson must, however, exit through the stool of the outhouse; they escape, reeking of excrement, along the beach to the recently purchased boat, by means of which Koomson is to leave the country. The man swims ashore from the boat, justified in his morality and now respected by his wife, but realizing that he will find no lasting comfort, no relief from the pain of living day-to-day in a corrupt society. The new government will be no different from the last. Not even Teacher can be his stay in the future. ("Summary Critical Guide to British Fiction")

1.9. Characters

The characters are variations of the two types of people who make up Ghanaian society in the 1960's, the "hard" and the "weak" (The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born by Ayi Kwei Armah)

9.1. The man

He is given no name and his actions and those around him complement this lack of identity since he has a need for love some kind of human connection that is unfulfilled. In the novel he consider him- self among the weak ones yet his inability to join the corrupt successful ones is not entirely a failure of nerve, the man's understanding of the chaotic value system is never

in question but his ability to maintain his integrity is for one thing he begins to wonder if in fact the world offers any evidence of corruption being “natural” perhaps his inner sense of moral distinctions is an illusion and the most grotesque deviation of nature are parts of the order of things (Kayode 2)

8.2. The Teacher

Another character who is considered as important as the man since traces his life from the end of World War II to the novel’s present. Like other Ghanaians who had fought abroad, he was depressed when he returned home to find that the war had done nothing for Ghana. He was acutely sensitive to the effects of colonial occupation. When Kwame Nkrumah entered the scene, he along with others thought that their savior had come. Nkrumah, however, went the way of other leaders; they were really in love with the white man and eventually lost their socialistic ideals (Kayode 4).

The teacher is being more depressed and alienated from society he spends his time sleeping naked in his bed with the lights on. His only contacts with the outside world are the radio, on which he occasionally hears songs that tell him that he is not alone in his sadness, and books written by sympathetic minds. The Teacher has given up hope that the people and their leaders will fight or even stop practicing and living through corrupt activities. Only the man comes to listen, he is a living death, but at least he is keeping himself away from the disgust of his surroundings (Kayode 5).

Hence both the man and the Teacher had known Joseph Koomson before becoming rich and joined the corrupt leadership. The man was his classmate; Teacher knew him after the war. But he is unaware of the reasons behind his change.

8.3. Oyo

She is a victim of greed and hope for a prospered life, her soul is not free it is morally bound up in her mother who pushes her to make decisions that affect her and the children. She always disregards her husband and describes him as a “chichi dodo”. It means that she is not satisfied by her husband she wants from him to be like koomson corrupt and wealthy (Kayode 3)

8.4. Koomson

The Man’s friend is one such politician. His immense wealth results from his corrupt activities. Koomson is not only exposed as an ordinary human being but he is reduced to his opposite. He is the wealthy men who choose to live a luxurious life through corrupt deeds he epitomizes the African leaders who lives at the expense of other’s sufferings. He is the wealthy illiterate high ranked man. Koomson’s individual failure does not mean the end of moral corruption. The new regime will simply produce more Koomsons (Simandan 5).

8.5. Estella Koomson

Estella sits in the backseat of their Mercedes like a bored, delicate kitten. She and her husband are accustomed to luxury that they have become careless to human suffering. They have forgotten the filth and decay out of which their luxuries come and to which they return. Their home on the hill is a picture of comfort and gadgets.

8.6. Kofi Billy

He is a dock worker he is a victim of an accident due to a white man’s fault where he lost his leg and replaced it by a wood and metal one and at the end of the novel commits suicide.

8.7. Sister Maanan

She is a woman that finds solace in smoking wee (marijuana) and who goes mad by the novel.

Conclusion

The Beautiful Ones is so complicated novel. It explores individual isolation, unequal development, corruption and wasted potential in newly independent African nations against a backdrop of centuries of colonial rule. There is no clear resolution in novel, and the outlook of it can be easily perceived as miserable. Armah mocks with great forcefulness and misshapen language all that is rotten in the world of hypocritical people, lost opportunities and the enormous gap between the few with all the money and power hence the theme that is Armah's main focus is corruption that existed in various form politically and socially through means either bribing or embezzling.

Chapter 2

The Theme of Corruption in *the Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*

2.1. Introduction

The novelist Ayi Kwei Armah wrote *the Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* for the purpose of explaining and portraying the main theme that existed after and during Kwame Nkrumah regime. The theme has been tackled in so many cases these levels where depicted in Armah's novel and is used to demonstrate different types of corruption that existed in Ghana and in almost all of the African countries after they took their independence. During colonization those countries where hoping for better future. However, their political leaders did not do much for improving their country's status. By the contrary they have set the way for corrupt practices to exist and forget about the benefits of the Ghanaian inhabitants so corruption is the prominent theme in the novel that Armah wants to shed the light on.

2.2. Physical and spiritual Corruption

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born transmits a sense of bitterness, due to the extreme spread of corruption and bribery, which are universally accepted in Ghana as the only way to prosperity and development. This work discusses the harsh and cruel image of corruption; self-interest and hypocrisy in Ghana and reflects the people after independence who believes that the only way to gain power and wealth one needs to be a liar, a thief, and a selfish caring only is personal interests. The book is featured by the egocentrism of leaders and individuals who took over the stream of ruling in the country; opposing their control over Ghana (Macheka 16).

According to Gakawandi (1977)

“In the world of the novel, wealth and power have become the principal pursuits and the inevitable result the situation is a complete disregard of any moral or social considerations in the drive to satisfy individual desires” (102)

Throughout the novel it is clearly shown that corruption existed heavily in the society. Armah used the novel to show his unpleasantness and disagreement towards the political and social standards of Ghana during the post-colonial era; his rejection of the current values is seen in the protagonist's character that appears to struggle in the preserve of his clean soul in the middle of a dirty environment filled with rot and disgust (Firtzgerrard 2)

Armah has stated that the African continent is drowned in corruption and in the carelessness of both its leaders and people, the phenomenon of corruption is considered as a need for prosperity and development as Armah says:

“The rot which imprisoned every life in the effortless embrace” (Armah 4)

Here Armah is clearly stating that corruption has been immersed in every aspect of the country's norms; each member of the society desires to prosper through involving in corrupt deed. Moreover the 'man' resists his wife's insistence for accepting bribery and pushes him to imitate his fellow 'Koomson' in offering his wife and children a prosperous life through engaging himself in corrupt engaging him-self in corrupt activities, hence corruption is found everywhere in Africa as it is illustrated in the novel and those who are in better positions are the ones engaged in it the most. For example presidents and ministers i.e. people who rule the country even after the countries gained independence, corruption never cease to exist. It accumulated more than before and those flourishing ideas for better society after colonization has disappeared and vanished i.e. none of the wishes Africans dreamed about came true (Gillard 6).

Armah says that those independent countries

bowls in the throes of corruption and the national coffers; wealth, treasure became free for all scramble for man whose thought and learning rested and ended only within the grumblings in their stomachs. There is something so terrible in watching a black man trying at all points to be the dark ghost of a European... (Armah 80)

In this quotation Armah means that the black leaders after colonization wanted to imitate whites in the way they ruled their country; the way they treated blacks during colonization those blacks did not make any change by the contrary independent countries remained as if they did not gain their freedom. Furthermore, some modes of corruption are seen all over the continent and some individuals are promised some developments by their candidates and they never happen (Macheka15)

According to Gakwandi 1977

“We are presented in a world in which the sewage pipes of history have been exploded and everything is polluted” (140)

This is evident in Armah’s novel *the Beautiful Ones are not Yet Born* where corruption substituted morals and became essential in every aspect of the society .i.e. the corruption of post-independent leaders triumphed and gained over morality of humans those rulers are misusing the power for the sake of prosperity and wealth (15).

The Teacher asserts that

“The naked body is a covering for a soul once almost destroyed, now full of fear for itself ... This naked body. Has an outward calmness about it, but inside it how much power is lying hidden from the watching eye ... “(Armah 77)

Hence, the body seems to be a barrier around the ideal that is the soul at one time the Teacher

“Parted everything so clearly into the light and shadow” but now he speaks in

“words that mix the beauty with the ugliness.” (Armah 78)

2.3. Corruption and Bribery

The theme of corruption exists in the leaders way of governing the country and people as well those governments are built with promises which finish as a fruitful opportunity for those leaders and their groups to profit and enrich themselves at the expense of others sufferings this phenomenon in Ghana and in all African countries is accepted as the useful and the only means for prosperity while workers are poorly paid and those in higher position enjoys wealth; for instance Amakwa approaches the man to get his timber transported from the bush for a reward; i.e. the phenomenon of bureaucracy existed in almost every African country, since they've reached at a point that if one does not possess a “kitu kidogo” he cannot attain any service of any kind (Shaban 1).

Though the man refuses the bribery offered from Amakwa but his fellow workers accept and those who rejects are being mocked by others.

Amakwa says:

“...you are a very wicked man you will never prosper” (Armah107)

It is meant that if someone holds on his morals and refuses to engage himself in corrupt practices such as accepting and taking bribery others will despise and ridicule on him. The individual will be considered as wick; also it seems that corruption among officials and politicians become an ordinary activity through which they gather money and own luxurious cars.

Another example where Armah demonstrates that one cannot live without offering or accepting bribery and this appears when the man says

I know people who won more than five cedi's last year. They still haven't got this money. Have they been to the police to help them get their money 'you're joking' said the messenger with some bitterness 'it costs you more money if you go to the police that are all, what will you do?' The man asked. 'I hope some officials at the lottery place will take some of my hundred cedi's as bribe and allow me to have the rest'. The messenger's smile was dead. 'You will be corrupting a public officials' the man smiled. 'This is Ghana' the messenger said (Armah 18-19).

In the above quotation Armah is stating that people cannot achieve any service without offering bribe i.e. here the police officers are the ones engaged in corrupt practices, there is an absence of ethics and morals so they are kept away, what matters for them is glittering things.

In an example where Africans need bribery to achieve anything is when Armah says

“There would always be only one way for the young to reach the glean...eating the fruits of fraud” (Armah 95).

In the novel money arises constantly in the first chapter and it is obvious from the beginning of the plot when the man taking a trip from his house to where he works at the rail way administration. During his trip the bus conductor does not give a full change and the rest of the money belongs to him, the reader feels the humor of the conductor smelling the note and the coins and his observation that

“... strange that a man could have so many cedi's pass through his hands and yet not really know their smell” (Armah 3)

The conductor hopes that the rider will not ask for change, for he would profit more if he does not have to give any change in a time when currency is scarce, people would just do anything to obtain some (Amala).

2.4. The Corruptive Activities of African Leaders

In *the Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Armah has shown the African politicians are corrupt indeed; in the text of the novel the writer used the character koomson who represents an example for those corrupt leaders. He is introduced to the readers to present the way those politicians steal public funds for the sake of enriching themselves at the expense of the ordinary people in the society.

In the quotation below, Armah revealed how Joe koomson the minister used his political status to collect wealth for him. When the “man” the main character visited koomson’s house with his wife Oyo and when he entered the house he was astonished by the quality of things koomson possessed, as well as the expensive nature of the possessions he has in his house, while the man was looking to the properties an idea came to his mind:

“There were things here for a human being to spend
a time desiring There were things here to attract
the beholding eye and make it accept The power of the owner
things to initiate and obviously expensive design” (Armah 144)

In the quotation above ‘the man’ was surprised at those things he saw in koomson house, he knows very well that koomson has owned all of the fancy properties as a result of being a top politician, using corruptive means to attain several luxurious things for himself and his family.

In another incident where the mother of the man’s wife when she was amazed by the luxury and wealth that koomson lives so she said

“Aah, koomson has done well we must say it, he has done well
for himself and his family” (Armah 139)

The above quotation reveals that the woman was praising koomson for being very rich, not paying attention in the way he gathered his wealth. This shows that ordinary people do

praise those politicians for their achievements even though through illegal activities. The woman wanted that her daughter's husband did like Koomson and engaged himself in corrupt practices (Abiodun 34).

Political corruption and failed development is due to the African leaders misgoverning all over the African countries, also it caused a great disappointment of the newly appointed government officials with little salaries but who have great material manifestation. Koomson who changed suddenly from a low class worker to a leader in the country represents always those politicians who profit the maximum from the government's money, Koomson is the depiction of the rot of the day's government so Armah is showing that post-colonial leaders have failed in developing their country.

In one of the incidents where Koomson tells a story about a professor who was invited by the government to speak about the stages of growth in the country. The gathering was bored with the presentation and was actually sleeping through it. In the end the Attorney General rises to give a vote of thanks and announces that they have their five stages of getting drunk as he welcomes the gathering for drinks. He collapses immediately after, a sign of probably having reached the fifth of these stages. Government roles are casually seen as opportunities to enrich one self, In fact there is a general saying among the people that one should enrich themselves from where they work (Inurugu4).

An example that Armah used to reveal that politicians in Africa are doing their best to profit the maximum from the state finances without even thinking about the citizens benefits. An example of this is in the visit of the man to Koomson house, Koomson ordered from the steward in his house saying

“Atinga, bring the trolley and put the drinks

Put also ice and put glasses four” (Armah140)

In the above episode, the different drinks koomson has ordered show the fortune he enjoys, the different types of drinks represents the luxury that koomson is living in. As an attachment to the earlier mentioned quotation in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* reflecting the carelessness and the free manner which the African leaders used the money of the poor for themselves “The Man” and the mother of “The Man’s” wife and “Oyo” his wife were having a discussion with Koomson about the price of a boat, with which fishing business can be done. Koomson mentioned that one boat can be bought for “twelve thousand pounds” “The Man” and his family members shouted in amazement, claiming the money was too much, but Koomson said:

“Twelve thousand pounds yes. But the money is not the difficult thing after all, the bank is ours and we can do anything” (Armah 136)

In the above quotation it is shown that koomson is confident that he can do anything with the money he possesses and that he can lift cash from the government any time without being caught, those politicians are sure that the government funds are under their control without thinking that they can put the country’s economy in jeopardy (34).

2.5. Embezzlement of government fund

Armah reveals to his readers the social life of Ghanaians whereby government leaders like koomson, Zacharias Legos and Abednego Yamoah who enjoy lavish life surrounded by expensive possessions; all of these are mainly due their embezzling of their countries funds. The abuse of leadership is mainly observed in koomson’s character and his government even from people of the law positions in life like the conductor, boatman, watchman, clerk and drivers again koomson is one of the basic characters who started as a rail way worker then with engaging himself in corrupt practices he become a minister in the government (Macheka 16).

Thus he is tempted with the fruits of office; the man knows that koomson is successful as a result of public theft it is meant that power is his salvation. koomson steals the money that belongs to the state coffers and abuses the trust that public places at his responsibility. He and his wife enjoy luxurious life and are able to buy expensive things such as houses, cars and furniture also their daughter is well dressed she behaves like the British in the way she walks talks and eats (Macheka 17)

Furthermore, koomson embezzling of government funds is pictured in his physical appearances; he represents the neo-colonial leaders who are fattened by the fruits of betrayal of their own people. The man ironically says about him and their likes

The man says:

“these were the socialists of Africa, fat, perfumed, soft with ancestral softness of chiefs who sold their people and are celestially happy with the fruit of the trade”
(Armah 131)

To be successful in Ghana one needs to be a thief and corrupt since what koomson has cannot be acquired from his salary. He is preoccupied with gathering money, he lives prosperous life at the expense of other fellow workers for instance, he uses the fishing boat plot to deceive Oyo the man’s wife and her mother since he promised them that he is going to write the boat under their names yet the boat belongs to his daughter princess.

Armah stated:

“How long will Africa be cursed with its own leaders” (Armah 120)

Armah feels sorry for Africa since it is being destroyed by its own people. They are caring only about their benefits.

2.6. Social and Economic Corruption

Armah’s novel is a careful depiction of the social, political and economic life that Ghana experienced in the years immediately after independence, it is a careful description of

the great hope that Ghanaians had in their government and their institution and how their dream for a better life vanished and was depressed with their leaders, Ghana experience has at its center stage the reality of a ruling class that was struggling to acquire the trappings of power that would satisfy their desires to feel like European counterpart. This life has driven citizens to desire for attaining a 'good life' and to afford that they are forced to resort to corruption as well as other anti-social behaviors; to the citizenry the reality much awaited change with the coming of independence was definitely diminished (Kayode 6).

There is particularly the depiction of corrupt practices, all spheres of public and private life relies heavily on fraud i.e. to live one need to steal the government. The Ghanaian body politics reflects the misgoverning of the country as if they are manipulating every aspect of the society for the sake of their own gain. Individuals in Ghana did not stand against the stream by the contrary they have done like their leaders undergoing unethical behaviors relying on unlawful and dishonest practices.

What Armah do make clear through the constant struggle of his characters is that the political, social and economic issues in the post-colony are remarkably complex. The most striking example of this can be witnessed through the man's employment by the national railway. This was a railway set up under colonial rule to export out the wealth and resources of Ghana. The man's earn a job, in which he tries to avoid unethical behaviors and corrupt practices but unfortunately corruption is in fact a part of the system Armah has shown in the novel that when corruption is perpetrated by the political leaders, who push ordinary citizens to practice corrupt activities, the quotation below shows how people of law class also engage in corrupt and illegal behaviors due to the impact of their leaders (Firtzgerrard 7).

A messenger at the rail way administration had won the lottery; but since he is aware of the extent of corruption some people are engaged in he doubts that he will not be given his entire money so he says:

“I hope some official at the lottery place will take some of my hundred Cedis as bribe and allow me to have the rest” (Armah 19)

In the extract above the writer presented to the readers the fact that corruption in Africa has prevailed every place and each domain, one cannot take what belongs to him fully in terms of money; since all of the society is depraved and frustrated they cannot do anything i.e. corruption has turned to be a daily habit . The quotation has shown the skepticism that most African live; wondering if they can do anything without bribing someone or steal from other's money, they are living a life filled with injustice and unfairness. To Armah a corrupt society is a society where there is no room for morals; poor people cannot live freely without being abused by their leaders (Abonduim 35).

In another main incident from the novel in which a timber contractor tried to bribe “The Man”, in order to get a space in the train to move his woods from the bush. “The Man” found the bribery act quite offensive and so rejected it. The discussion of the rich timber contractor and “The Man” goes, with the businessman saying:

“Take one for yourself and give the other one to your friend. I myself will find fine drink for you. Take it. Take it, my friend” (Armah 30)

“The man” responded saying:

“I will not take it” (31)

The quotation above shows the level of depravity of the entire people of the society in the world of this novel. it is a representation of how people in different African societies do engage in bribing their ways to get favors, which Armah considers to be awful and

particularly detestable. The writer tries to tell the readers that it is indeed bad for the people to bribe their ways at whatever time, as this will not make any society grow.

2.7. The frustration of upright people

Moreover, Armah has used his novel *“The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born”* to portray the fact that in a society where there is numerous people engage in corrupt practices, those who kept their moral values are disappointed as a result of those corrupt people; the “man” a morally upright railway worker becomes frustrated as a result of the pressure from his wife and her mother to be corrupt like others, particularly using his office for his benefits. However he never accepted or achieved their desires. Koomson, the politician was the classmate of The Man while in school, but Koomson became rich due to his corruptive activities as a politician. The Man at a point in the novel, while discussing with the Teacher another morally upright person in the novel said:

“I am asking myself what is wrong with me. Do I have some part missing?

Teacher, this Koomson was. My own classmate. My classmate. So tell me what is wrong with me?” (Armah 57)

The quotation indicated that the man is fully frustrated due to the mess that existed all over the society which he denied to be part of. The man stayed aloof from illegal activities made by his fellow workers, the frustration appeared in the fact that those who kept their ethics are despised by others, the man questions himself whether he has taken the wrong or the right decision. He epitomizes every ordinary person in Africa who feels frustrated by the surroundings, who praise corrupt people and mock at upright people.

The Beautiful ones are not yet born is used by Armah to prove that in Africa corruption existed in a wide range and everywhere. The corruption that poisoned the African leadership and African citizens as a whole, this phenomenon is the main reason behind the decline of those independent countries. The following quotation is one that justifies Armah’s view that it

is due to the corrupt activities of African leaders and governors; the incident from the novel is when the man went to a public toilet and saw some inscriptions on the wall of the toilet where it was written

“Money sweet pass all who born fool socialism Chop make I chop Country broke” (Armah 106)

The above quotation indicates that corruption existed in the highest levels and with several dimensions, furthermore the phrase “chop make I chop” shows that while politicians were taking money from the government funds other people of the low class are also busy of stealing from anywhere.

Whereas “country broke” means that people are gathering money from whichever opportunity they have, causing the breakdown of their country, this incident clearly demonstrate the negative and the bad effect of the country’s economy, it also indicate that those leaders are careless about the country’s benefits i.e. the only way to gain money is through corruption, engaging themselves in corrupt deeds is engraved in their souls. For them there is no need for maintaining their ethics or good deeds (34).

Conclusion

As conclusion *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* is Ayi Kwei Armah weapon to highlight the misuse of power by the African leaders. He has criticized heavily the widespread of corruption in Africa; which destroyed the economy. Ayi Kwei Armah’s main focus is to reveal the extensive spread of corruption in the highest levels .i.e. leaders and in the lowest levels as well, it means social groups, no one has prevented himself from these activities. Armah’s nationalistic tendencies he pushed him to compose this prose, since he desires from the Africans to develop and live a clean life. Moreover for the sake of portraying corruption in newly independent countries the writer has used several techniques to highlight this theme to make the readers comprehend his message.

Chapter three

Literary Techniques used by Armah in the portrayal of corruption in “*The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*”

3.1. Introduction

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born portrays the extreme spread of corruption in Ghana, where this issue existed in every aspect of the society. Armah used the corrupt practices in order to illustrate his disgust and hatred to the government of Ghana during the post-colonial period and to achieve his goal the writer utilized several techniques to explain in details the widespread of corruption in the novel, so these techniques are used to demonstrate the corrupt environment after independence. Hence the essence of this chapter will be the various vehicles that the writer utilized to illuminate the theme of corruption.

3.2. Progressive tense

The progressive tense is a narrative technique that Armah used in his novel in order to depict the non-stop expansion of corruption and filth all over Ghana, this technique is used to show continuity that indicates the gradual decay of morality in the Ghanaian politics and individual as well. This technique is known as ‘aspect goes’ linked with ‘ing’ form of verbs, so it suggests progression and what the writer did is that he balanced the meaning of progressive tense with the leaders of Nkrumah’s regime (Chukwuloo 72).

Throughout the novel the protagonist ‘the man’ is revealed that he is always in motion so as corrupt issues in the society goes on without cease, i.e. every aspect of life in Ghana such as civil service, politics and even family life is continuously damaging and deteriorating hence Ghana is seen by Armah as a country where corruption will never cease to exist like Nnolim states that “Ghana is one giant stinking lavatory” (72).

Armah’s character Koomson is a person who started as a low-class worker at railway station and then changed progressively into a spoiled politician involving himself in corrupt

practices through offering and accepting bribes that indicates his immoral tendencies.

Koomson the corrupt leader is seen by Derek Wright as

“fallen from fame ...” thus Koomson become an embodiment of useless body drowning in a hole of mud (Amala 33).

An example where Armah used the progressive tense to mean the repetition of the main verbs of the phrase attached with ‘ing’ is when the dock worker “Kofi Billy” was noticing the developed destruction of Ghana and when he was smoking wee-wee with Manaan he said:

“I see a long, long way; it is full of people, so many people going for into the distance and I see the mal like bubbles joined together. They are going just going but in the very long lines of people I am only one. It is not just at all possible to come out and see where we are going; I am just going” (Armah 74)

Koomson is also illustrated as he walks with The Man to the latrine searching for a path to run away from the coup.

The two “where along the latrine circuit through life” (Armah 170)

Therefore Koomson is again seen as a “walking dead like some wooden thing, not seeming to care where it was he was going” (170).so the escape by Koomson is eventually the sudden decay of koomson’s character and his power rolling in shit and other corrupt matters (33).In another example in chapter 6 The Teacher says that

“the wondering and the shaking and the vomiting horror” (Armah 170).

He means that the horror is not from the individual but from the whole society of Ghana, thus the excerpts above with the “ing” form going’, ‘walking’, ‘seeming’, ‘wondering and ‘vomiting’ conform with the continuous moral decay in Ghana and indicate the unbroken stream of ethical and moral decay causing the society and the country to collapse and never be developed. It is the progressive spread of corruption that will lead to an unpleasant ending. It is essential to point out that *The Beautiful Ones* serves the same as the function of the

progressive tense in highlighting the progressive, continuous and gradual existence of corrupt matters (Chukwuloo73).

Armah has used this technique to demonstrate to the readers that there is no ending in the extensive spread of corruption in Ghana. Each person is influenced by these corrupt practices. The progression appears in the wide range of the corrupt values that substituted morals after independence no one is caring about ethics what matters for them is the materialistic progression at the expense of their deviation from moral values.

3.3. Ellipsis

Ellipsis is another technique that aids Armah in portraying the widespread of corruption rot and disgust in the novel, through the use of marked ellipsis omissions are created that is used almost in every part of the novel. Starting with one of the examples where the author used ellipsis is when The Man was going to work and there he found the clerk worker falling asleep he tries to wake him gently and like a ‘walking sleeper’ the clerk smiled, when the man asked why he is sleeping, the clerk says “no country, no work and when man is alone here all through the night...” (Armah 15)

The worker cannot say everything he wants to say and the man listens shockingly, surprised about the clerk’s saying. In another example that there is ellipsis but to talk indirectly with corrupt people is when Oyo’s mother is worried and waiting for the boat business to start in order to be counted among those people who are regarded as the ones who can drive fast she talks without continuing her speech providing doubts on the real intention that she wants to explain to others.

In one of the occasions she says “it is about the ahead...” (Armah135) here the mother is speaking in mysterious manner for the sake of making Koomson understands what she wants to say since she knows the corruption involved in aiding and dealing with a corrupt politician .The result is that she paves the way to her daughter to complete her speech, Oyo’s

mother could not utter everything in her mind because she knows that her daughter's husband the man will reject completely that they participate in a corrupt tendency since he is aware of the immoral and corrupt deeds that Koomson is engaged in.

In an incident when the man and his wife Oyo were preparing to host Koomson and his wife Estelle Koomson in their house, the man comes home asking his wife "did i live anything out?" The woman answers and says "the food is fine but the drink..." (Armah 115) She does not finish her talk since she is aware that the man is not able of buying the expensive drinks such as White Horse Whiskey or vat 69. She preferred that her husband smuggles wine like others.

Through the context of the novel the woman boosts her husband to be corrupt in order to live a prosperous life, but the man does not want that, she asks from him to take bribes from Amakwa and involve himself in the boat business. However, when the man rejects she calls him a chichi dodo. The novelist has used ellipsis to keep his readers attentive with the writer (Chukwuloo 75).

In another discussion during the boat business is when Oyo's mother says "I thought ..." (Armah 138) and the narrator states that in the middle of what she wants to say something seems to have struck in her mind and she stops. Thus the marked ellipsis is used by Armah to show the corrupt practices or phrases are not easily spoken and sometimes avoided so the dots are considered as clues instead of words, also when the man suggests from Koomson to go through the hole of the toilet to escape from the coup and the Man says "if they come ..." hence every sentence in *The Beautiful Ones* comes as a result of the corrupt deeds that existed in Ghana (75).

3.4. Prolepsis and Analepsis

Modern literary theorists consider deviation from such chronological progression as anachronny, according to Hawthorn a number of such deviations are possible and the most

frequent of them are Analepsis and Prolepsis these terms are referred as a flashback and flash forward in time Ayi Kwei Armah's implantation of the character and quality of the Man who stick to his morals and ethics in the face of a corrupt society, he is proleptic of the hope of a better society which will be born in future. Corruption in Ghana as at the time of Nkrumah was at its pick. Everybody in Ghana, as may be represented by the characters in the novel seems to have no hope of a better Ghana in future and so burry themselves into corruption. In one of the quotation where the protagonist states that there is no clear person in the society. So The Man says that

He has seen corruption, public theft in Ghana. Life is so corrupt that the good ones are imprisoned while the corrupt ones who are cutting corners, eating the fruits of fraud' are surviving and are cherished too. Zacharias Lagos sells great length of healthy wood. He has written off from the saw-mill. Abednego Yamoah, in his corrupt practices sells government petrol for himself (Armah 95).

So the use of ellipsis shows although the huge spread of corruption in everyplace, time and avctivity is there a shiny side due to those two characters that Armah presented for the sake of demonstrating to his readers that corruption will not last forever as long as there are peoples who are clean in their actions and deeds. Ghana will not stay as it is by the contrary it will be better and everything will change. Hence this technique facilitated to the readers the understanding of the message that Armah wants to convey (Chukwuloo76).

The other technique that Armah used in the novel is Analepsis which indicates a dive into the past like a flashback but with a more sustained period of time, it is utilized by the writer to make a view about corruption after independence and give hoe to the future citizens of Ghana that a better change will occur, the hope that is engraved in the man's character where Ghana is seen as "an old man child" as represented by the story told by Aboliga the Frog. According to the story, the picture was of "the man-child in its gray old age, completely

old in everything save for the smallness of its size” (Armah 63). It is meant that Ghana is a newly independent country but it is drowned in corruption. However, the man’s deeds provide new hopes for good life. Just like the man child

“looks irritably old, for more thoroughly decayed than any other ordinary old man” (Armah 65).

It is always the two characters that are the man and the teacher who provide new hopes for instance in chapter fourteen of the novel, comes home happy and meets the wife in front of his hall door; being happy, he had an analeptic look into the past

“Thinking of youth and days in school when the sun had shone sweetly in the field” (Armah 160).

In another quotation where he remembers his school days saying

“In the examination hall he finds all movement impossible, so that he cannot even tell if he knows any answers” (Armah 98)

The Man remembers what the Teacher was like before, and that Teacher apparently was previously an activist, but had been disillusioned by the system and corruption that lay ahead of him,

“his soul once almost destroyed.” (Armah 78)

Now he is “unwilling to move closer to those of his old friends who were now in power.” (79)

Moreover the man could see in the wife’s eyes ‘something he could only think of as a deep kind of love, a great respect the result of the worm between the man and his wife evokes a sense of tenderness and happiness after a long period of sorrow and conflicts.

According to Ogede, this type of alliance of husband and wife, “Signals the collaborative action needed by male and female members of the society of Ghana in their struggle emancipation from the shackles of corruption”(Odege 125).

Therefore Ayi Kwei Armah used the reunion of the family in Ghana in order to prove that corruption can disappear only if every member of the society works together starting from the family that is the core of society.

The Man told the Teacher about his wife who called him a ‘murderer’ for letting ‘ten cedi’s’ which Amankwa gave as go he does not leave the life of others in the society and that “Life that one way is the path one wants to avoid” (Armah 54).

In chapter six also the Teacher bares his soul of the much he knows or has seen about the ills prevalent in his country. In a flash back, he recounts the story from the struggle from the colonial days to the independence and maintains clearly that life is an ugly rigmarole of experiences, succession of frustrations with firefly-like pleasantries as the intervening episodes; a doomed existence with hope and courage coming together(76).

3.5 Characterization

Armah used his characters to portray corruption in the novel he uses them to discuss the dangers of corruption and the lack of ethics in the novel where there is only hypocrisy and selfishness. There are a lot of techniques used through exposing and showing or telling or summary Abrams 1982 evolves that the “showing” and “telling” methods of characterization in narratives. One may note that the stylistic potency of the telling method over the showing or dramatic method is that the former affords a writer the opportunity to enact his evaluative remarks on the actions and utterances of the characters as the story unfolds whereas the latter only leaves the reader making inferences or deductions from what the characters say and do. For instance the teacher is a character that is revealed through his actions, he represents the upright person in the society who is alienated from others.

However Koomson the corrupt politician is described as Koomson, the corrupt politician however is described as a “suit” (Armah 36), “a glittering “shirt” (37), “flashing cufflinks” (38) gleaming in the dark.

Koomson as he shows the readers that

“Koomson himself looked obviously larger than the chair he was occupying”

(Armah 130-131).

the Man, when he shook hands with Koomson

“Was again amazed at the flabby softness of the hand. Ideological hands, the

hands of revolutionaries leading their people into bold sacrifices” (Armah 131)

Here Armah wants to say that the corrupt leaders are extremely engaged in corrupt matters caring only about filling their bells at the expense of the poor.

The teacher sees no good in either driving like koomson or walking like the man, so he withdraws himself from the society

“Running away from the national game instead of waiting for the embrace from the loved ones, which is a welcome unto death” (Armah 55, 56)

The use of characterization helped Armah in making his readers distinguish between two types of people, those who choose to engage themselves in illegal actions for the sake of gathering money and those who chose not to deviate and keep their ethics.

And the Man stays alone on the fence. He is a representation of the alienated masses through them there must always be a change in any society. However he does not keep himself fully away from the corrupt group since he welcomes Koomson to his house taking him out through the hole of his latrine after the coup. The man loves international schools and shiny cars he never degenerated into the corrupt matters of the society. He is not a god driver and this is not only because he is afraid of making an accident but that he hates driving completely.

Through the use of those characters Armah is able to highlight the nature of characters and situations that he wants to criticize taking into Consideration the lives of characters like

Koomson, Amankwa, Zacharias Lagos, Abednego Yemoah, and even that of the Man and the teacher.

It is seen that the first group is corrupt and spoiled the latter is good; again Armah uses the 'telling' or 'summary' method to reveal his characters and their corrupt tendencies in the novel. In one of the conversation between the Man and the Teacher, the teacher talks of Koomson and the nature of his job before he became a politician (77).

He says that he was a

“Railway man, a docker at the harbour, with blistered hands, toughened, calloused hands” (Armah 88).

3.5. Homodgetic Narrator

Another technique that the writer used in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* in order to portray corruption is Homodgetic narrator. This narrator is the Teacher who tells the major stories in the novel and who as well listens, as a character, to the embittered remarks which Armah shows, not just on him alone, but on all the corrupt inhabitants of Ghana. Chapter six is considered as an investigation for the whole activities in Ghana.

From Aboliga the Frog and his story of the old man-child to Maanan and initiation of people into the world of wee-wee and to Kofi Billy and his life style. Here, through the Teacher Armah speaks; although the Teacher narrates the story he and the Man appear to be individual listeners too, listening to the problems of Ghana especially as caused by the carelessness of African politicians. His conclusions from the understanding he has seem to have conditioned him so that he sees no hope in the future and only waits in nudity on his bed for the time of extinction.

Ogede argues that the Teacher is one of Armah's

“most ambiguous narrators for he is both a vehicle through whom the author’s satiric attack is directed at objects, events and people, as well as a target of the attack himself” (124).

Although Armah uses the Teacher to attack the misuse of power and the corrupt practices social individuals are engaged in. but The Teacher’s conclusions are unreliable like the Man, the Teacher disapproves of corrupt materialism but his cowardice and pessimism threaten to defeat his moral integrity due to the pressure he has from his wife and her mother.

Armah has used what is called projection characters [characters into whom the novelist projects aspects of himself or herself, often aspects which cannot be acknowledged either to others or to the author]. Characters like Koomson, Amankwa, Zacharias Lagos and Abednego Yamoah are all projected to expose corrupt and illicit life style and this is what ruined Ghana during its first republic The novelistic is not happy with these characters and so exposes them for the world to see. The Teacher is also a projected character. He cannot stand firm to fight corruption in Ghana but only withdraws in disgust and lives a solitary life, which neither helps him nor the society. Armah uses this to avoid evil which is dominating in Ghana (79).

Individuals who are corrupt but hiding their real truths are known as hypocrites and cheats. And they are proud of the life they live and the wealth they enjoy The Teacher after picturing the author’s position, and after thinking on the African problems reach to conclusions that the African leaders are not doing their best for the country this is because they are interested in showing

“The white master how reasonable, how faithful, how unlike ‘ekpeteshi’ drinkers they are and how desiring to have power over their people shared with them”

(Armah 82)

The Teacher concludes that there is no way out, hence his death as symbolized by his nudity which symbolizes the death of Ghana until the Beautiful ones who will save the country from its state of deterioration and ruin are born. The Teacher says to the Man that

“It is not a choice between life and death, but what kind of death we can bear in the end. Have you seen there is no salvation anywhere?”(Armah 56)

Some critics claim that the new members who will provide hope to the society are those who resemble to the man character and one of these critics is Ogede who argues that

“the thrust of the new members of the society who will save them from the sword of Damocles must be similar to the Man’s vitality – his ability to stand firm despite all odds, and not to ‘take a jump and arrive like others’”(Armah 56).

Armah’s uniqueness as a novelist appears in the way he tells stories. Mainly his narrator is conscious of themselves as story-tellers so they function as a mediator between the reader and the writer in most of his works. he always indicates a receiver for the story. In the novel the narrator is depicted to be speaking and addressing someone else which evokes an encoded character who lives and feels the story his character or characters are seen as receivers of the narrator’s story as found in the novel. The Man on one hand, and both the Man and the Teacher on the other hand are the encoded characters (79).

Through this technique the writer feel sure that he is addressing someone who shares the same predicament with him. Like in oral rendering, the speaker is assured of continued attention so that he tells his stories till the end. Armah tells stories of filth, corruption as well as releasing his soul from the ills of the society talking out loud, expressing what he thinks and sees.

3.6. Vulgar Language

The Beautiful Ones is Armah's weapon to describe the amount of corruption that existed in Ghana; the writer criticized heavily the deviation of political individuals as it is stated by Ode in his study saying

“In *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Armah makes his stand against corruption pointedly clear. He thus asserts a moral power never before seen in African fiction”

Although most of the satires depends on humor but Armah preferred to use the vulgar language in order to show the heavy corruption that existed in Ghana, The Collins Coubid Advanced Learner's English Dictionary states “If you describes something as vulgar, you think it is in bad taste or of poor artistic quality” and continues “If you describe pictures, gestures, or remarks as vulgar, you dislike them because they refer to sex or parts of the body in a rude way that you find unpleasant”.

So in the light of coubid definition Armah's language is very vulgar because he sometimes refers to parts of the body that can be found unpleasant. However the theme of corruption is Armah's main reason behind the use of vulgar language that fits the African society after independence, the language is a tool used to draw the reader's intention to shocking and repulsive issues and it reflects the characters vulgar behavior and serves as an interpretation of historical events (Kakraba 306).

In an incident from the novel where the writer informs the reader that in the lavatory where the man works an inscription written “Vagina sweet” in which the term refers to the female genital that is considered as rude and impolite. However this image is a taboo that Africans avoids to mention, from this expression it can be deduced that there is a wide range of moral decay and the language is used by the writer to offend the widespread of corruption

in the society where filth is all over the place. An example is when the character talks about the banister neglected by the railway administrators and says

Apart from the wood itself there were, of course, people themselves, just so many hands and fingers bringing help to the wood in its course toward putrefaction. Left-hand fingers in their careless journey from a hasty anus sliding all the way up the banisters as their owners made their trip from the lavatory downstairs to the offices above. Right-hand fingers still dripping with the after-piss and stale sweat from fart crotches (Armah101)

The above extract is Armah's strongest example who he use of words such as "putrefaction" "fat" "crochet" "after-piss" and aid sin formulating the offensive image and reveals the extent of decay that Africans reached. In the novel Armah intend to shock his readers and make them feel the loss that the society is gone through and the rottenness that substituted ethics and morals (307).

Another incident is when the narrator talks of the boxes that are placed at strategic points all over the city to serve not only as containers for waste matter, but as symbols of cleanliness:

In the end not many of the boxes were put out, though there was a lot said about the large amount of money paid for them. The few provided, however, had not been ignored. People used them well, so that it took no time at all for them to get full. People still used them, and they overflowed with banana peels and mango seeds and thoroughly sucked-out oranges and the chaff of sugarcane and most of the thick brown wrapping from a hundred balls of kenkey. People did not have to go up to the boxes any more. From a distance they aimed their rubbish at the growing heap, and a good amount of juicy offal hit the face and sides of the box

before finding a final resting place upon the heap. As yet the box was still visible above it all, though the writing upon it could no longer be read (Armah 140)

In the quotation above hints on Armah criticism of people's bad habit which assure that corruption exists even in their spirits and behavior it is engraved in their breath in what they eat and drink .another quotation where Armah is criticizes the corrupt and rot minister (307) Koomson he says

His mouth had the rich stench of a rotten menstrual blood. The man held his breath until the new smell had gone down in the mixture with liquid atmosphere of the Party man's farts filling the room. At the same time Koomson's insides gave a growl longer than usual, an inner fart of personal, corrupt thunder which in its fullness sounded as if it had rolled down all the way from the eating throat thundering through the belly and the guts, to end in further silent pollution of the air already thick with flatulent fear. Oyo had remained silent all this time, standing close to the door. But now, with choking sound, she retreated into the hall.

(Armah 96)

This is a unique passage, in the narrative. The expressions "rotten menstrual blood," "Party man's farts," "an inner fart of personal," "silent pollution of the air" and "air thick with flatulent fear" are inelegant or indecorous expressions. They are, therefore, very offensive. Jones in his review of the novel in 1969 in *African Literature Today* prior to its publication by Heinemann extracts the above passage and comments "This is a specimen of the deliberately coarse language that Armah has chosen to express the coarse corruption the novel treats. Somehow it is unpleasantly apt."

In other words Jones emphasizes the form and content relationship in the novel. The vulgarity shows Armah's anger at koomson's corrupt attitudes that put an impact on people the inappropriate expressions show the reality in a post- colonial African society .

Armah's vulgar language Ogede (2000) rightly and strongly contends:

The tone of disgust in the passage conveys Armah's outrage at the erosion of the values he cherishes; contrary to the views of critics like Aidoo (1971), Achebe, Awoonor, and Obumsele, this is not the aesthetic discomfort of a foreign tourist, but the anger of a nationalist at his country's degeneration. Indignant at the mismanagement of the Railway Administration in particular, the narrator desires to expose and curb the inefficiency and unproductivity that typify the public service in general. Thus, he sanctions the cleaner who hardly performs his duty as well as the other workers who seldom on duty; we see that, with such dereliction and absenteeism, it is not surprising the nation is hardly making much progress (Ogede 54)

Teacher's foul expressions continue when he attacks the civil servants and the poet who all wait to serve power to get their stomachs filled and he passes judgment on them

“He will no doubt jump to go and fit his tongue into new arses when new men spring up to shit on us”(Armah 89).

The outrage appears when teacher verbally assaults lawyers, merchants and the party men

“No difference at all between the white and their apes, the lawyers and merchants and now the apes of the apes, our party men” (Armah 135)

In the above extract, Armah's vulgar words shift from the abuse of the carnal parts to pure insults. The narrator, no doubt, shows his superiority through his high standards and moral integrity.

3.7. Symbols of Corruption used in the Novel

Corruption is a central theme in the novel and it appears to be the author's way of illustrating the ruling bourgeoisie whose chief concern is the protection of ill-gotten wealth and the investments of the entrepreneurial. It is such an important undertaking for which the author opts to use an anonymous protagonist The Man. The novel is full of depictions of a people who are so caught up in 'whiteness' and an attempt to adapt western way of life and mannerisms that drives them to corrupt dealings to amass resources to live that kind of a good and ideal life.

This can also be seen as a reflection of the fact that all people in the country from the highest to the lowest are caught up in this vice. For instance, as the novel opens, there is the depiction of the behavior of the bus conductor who does not give full change to the passengers as well as the traffic policemen who eagerly wait for the buses so that they can get something for themselves (wright 66)

The symbolism of the struggle of the country with corruption is best brought out by the man's constant struggle to maintain his integrity at his work place even when there are numerous opportunities to be compromised. He is constantly under the pressure of traders who wish to give him.

There are several images that indicates corruption in the novel

7.1. The Chichidodo bird

This bird "hates excrement with all its soul. But the chichidodo only feeds on maggots, and you know the maggots grow inside the lavatory" (Armah 45).

The man resembles the chichidodo he appreciates Koomson's money and wealth, but not the way he gathered his money. The man dislikes to engage himself in corrupt and filthy practices, in other words. This hideous element .i.e. the excrements will pay a crucial role in finding a way out. In a literally sense and from a situation that has gone out of hand. The tale

will end with the image of a single flower, metaphorically growing from dung, and the writing “*The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*”, both painted by the driver himself. This image stands for the hope of a few honest people growing out of the horrible situation of the country. The mistake in the spelling of “*Beautiful*” perhaps implies that Africa or Ghana at least, has rejected European rules and is able to create something outside of western philosophy and politics.

The novel becomes a satire on corrupt practices like bribery, abuse of office, in this perspective the man is represents everyman especially the elite who has continued to prove unheroic in the face of overwhelming corruption. A hero is a person who stands against the undesirable forces in the society. He can fail, but the implicit defiance is sufficient statement, is enough success. But our prototypical elite dramatized in the Man offers only feeble resistance to the corruption boat deal, the Merchant’s offer of bribe, He offers no philosophy to the Merchant why his bribe is rejected. His answer to “What is wrong?” is “I don’t know”, therefore he does not give any reason in his bribe refusal.

It is not surprising therefore that he is despised by the loved ones as a bird that abhors faces but feeds on the maggots. The bird symbolizes his willingness to share in the fruits of corruption while seemingly posturing as a moral stand. So he is freely insulted by the mother-in-law, the corrupt merchant, the bus conductor and the taxi driver who says to the man that he is a

“Worthless life” (Armah 9).

Thus the message is that corrupt people won the battle against those Beautiful ones “*The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born.*”

7.2. The Banister

The description of the banister which is filthy from the hands contact with excrement and left overs of food, this image symbolizes the African society that is already doomed by

colonialists, it's people are incapable to clean or to heal the symptoms of colonialism or even to get rid of corruption. The wooden banister is very old with deep cracks in which rot and decay is everywhere.

7.3. The Benighted and rusty bus

Armah used the bus as a symbol for the country Ghana and how it's rust hold it together and how the passengers are disgusting and unclean this appears when the conductor

“Sees the man has a stream of spittle running down his mouth, he chases the man off the bus and spits on him” (Armah 6)

7.3. Shit

Where the reader is in the beginning of the novel, he is met by the extensive spread of shit through excrement, vomit, rot and spit. Thus the clean-up campaign in the town shown to be totally ineffective and everywhere the man runs into

“The unconquerable filth”. (Armah 23)

There is a constant reference to the spread of corruption and moral decay that became apparent after Ghana took the independence.

“Occasionally the naked bulbs of street lamps shed a little light on holes in the back walls of bathrooms.” (Armah 93)

It is perhaps in the latrine that a real insight may come. (Goldie 102)

The sea

It is an image that evokes two meanings .i.e. on the first hand the man sees in the sea

“this clearness, this beautiful freedom from dirt. Somehow there seemed to be a purity and a peace here which the gleam could never bring.” (Armah 23)

He feels “the breeze blowing in from the sea, fresh in a special organic way that has traces of living things from their beginnings to their endings.” (Armah 77)

Thus it is seen that the sea represents a clean place and is a part from the natural process of the environment .However in the other side there is a sense of ambiguity where it is seen that there is an evil side of the sea which linked to the decay of the land. The man sees a deadfish

“dancing quite violently up and down with the little waves. When he looked closer he saw a whole lot of little fishes eating the torn white body, breaking the water’s surface at dozens of small points.” (Armah 123)

It is meant that the sea resembles to an ideal but that is filled with impurities. For the man

“The thoughts rising from the sea all have a painful hopelessness.” (Armah 111)

Thus one can see that filth, decay; corruption and rot is everywhere and that there is a constant spread of unethical behaviors that the Ghanaian people adopted in their daily life.(103)

3.8. Conclusion

As conclusion, Ayi Kwei Armah had used many techniques of narration in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* and these enable him to clearly discuss the level of corruption that has replaced the moral values of Ghana after it gained independence and ruled by Nkrumah. Through the use of Prolepsis and Analepsis he is able to flash backwards into the different memories of his sad times and even projects into the future of the society. Here, he sees people with life style of the Man as a center point for unity. The narrator indicates the inadequacies and immoralities that eat up the country. Also through the use of the progressive tense, Armah keeps his readers moving on as corruption in the country goes on unabated. This paper therefore deduces that Armah realizes his artistic goal in the novel through the use of

techniques of narration such as Analepsis and prolepsis and so many techniques used to demonstrate how Ghana's society is corrupt and decayed.

General Conclusion

Armah's novel speaks to the heart of the realities of African experience the continent over. It is a careful attempt to depict the immense challenges of post-independent Africa as well as the struggle of people undergoing tremendous transition socially, politically and economically. His work speaks to the experiences of any African since no single country in the continent appears to be immune from these realities. Of particular importance, the theme of corruption is excellently presented as being intertwined with other governance related ills. This work shows that there is a lot of historical wealth in the experiences that African countries have gone through. It provides a deeper concern for reflection as one ponders on where the continent stands today more than half a century since independence calling for many African countries. As a thematic focus of this study, corruption is shown at its best; a deep rooted form of a cancer.

Many appear to be in denial of its existence but the evidence is there for all who are interested to see. It acts as a starting point for which Africans can refer to and collectively assert that *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. One may even ponder on whether these will ever be born. One may critically reflect on this reality. The sincerity in this classic work therefore calls for all people to purpose to clean this all pervasive filth in society.

Although the *Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* focuses on post independence period of the Ghanaian society, it is symbolic of many African countries where corruption remains a major problem at all the levels, this attack is used by Armah to sensibilise and awaken the population as a whole to see the truth and work hand by hand in the dismissal of any evil issue that can affect the country.

Hence the current work did examine the issue of corruption and the total embrace by each member of the society who did not do their best to overcome this issue. So what first appeals the reader's attention to Armah's novel *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* is the

heavy concentration on the theme of corruption after colonialism i.e. armah's fiction has illustrated the variety of issues basically the continuous spread of corruption that pushed him to compose such work using the vulgarity and rudeness of the language as a vehicle to pinpoint the exact and specific symptoms and results of corruption on the society.

What Armah stated in the novel is not as a result of emotions only but it is the outburst of real facts and stories that Armah witnessed after colonialism and that the novel traces back to the period of ghana's president Nkrumah. The novel reveals both the hope for new people to be born and heal the society from corruption decrease of corruption substituting the flourishing ideas of those politician the laziness of individuals and the carelessness of both groups.

Armah mocks with great forcefulness and misshapen language all that is rotten in the world of hypocritical people, lost opportunities and the enormous gap between the few with all the money and power, and the masses without anything at all. It depicts the sad surroundings of filth and corruption, but there are also moments of laughter in his observations. Good can be found in the vitality of his characters, who are prepared to search for something beyond that of everybody else. So the paper answered the question raised before about armah's main focus in the novel that is the writer's only and prominent intention is to reveal the facts that corruption caused to African societies.

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