

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
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UNIVERSITY OF MOHAMED BOUDIAF - M'SILA

FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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DOMAIN: FOREIGN LANGUAGES

STREAM: ENGLISH LANGUAGE

OPTION: LITERATURE & CIVILIZATION

The Colonial Legacy in Ayi Kwei Armah's Novel
"The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born"

**Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master Degree**

Submitted by:

Miss. Fahima AMMARI

Miss. Fatima Zohra GHERBI

Supervised by:

Dr. Assia BAGHDADI

Academic Year: 2016 /2017

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Declaration

We hereby declare that the dissertation entitled, The Colonial Legacy in Ayi Kwei Armah's Novel "*The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*" is our work and that all sources we have quoted have been acknowledged by means of reference.

DEDICATION

To the soul of our parents

The source of our happiness, hopefulness and joy.

Thank you for your sacrifices and love.

To our teachers and everyone who encouraged us to fulfill our dreams and wishes.

Abstract

The purpose behind the present study is to depict the changes in Ghana brought by colonialism and to describe the situations of the Ghanaian society as reflected by Armah's novel *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. The work casts light on the characteristics of people, their conditions and life before and after the British colonialism and the way in which Armah described such situation in his writings. Besides, this dissertation discusses post-colonialism as an era of struggle and challenges for the Ghanaians and how it is later represented in the African literature. As a case study, Armah's novel *The Beautiful Once Are Not Yet Born* had been the appropriate writings to portray the African condition after independence. Consequently, the post-colonial theory provides an appropriate literary device for a better understanding of the work. For a future prospective, this study can illustrate more information about Armah's literary work regarding how post-independent societies are depicted in the novel. Moreover, the results show that the British colonialism had negatively affected post colonial societies in Ghana and Africa as a whole.

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General Introduction

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Ayi kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* is one of the representative works of the African literature that depicts situation of Ghana shortly after independence. Every part of this country is affected by colonialism following several ways and dimensions. Armah uses these immoral practices to describe his hatred to the existing situation in Ghana at the time of the novel. As a result, there is a convention that Armah consideration to the situation in Ghana is represented in the novel to serve as the only means or technique through which he can effectively show his purpose or meaning.

In order to accomplish his target, Armah tries to explain in details the widespread of immorality and the European values resulting from the British colonizer. However, while many critics praised his narrative style, others like Frederickson and Wright criticized him for what Brown describes as his accusations of the prevailing values in postcolonial society. In spite of all these controversies, Armah's wishes for better governance and the fairness are unquestionable. The writers' message to the readers is to resist all the obstacles that stand in front of Africans, to liberate themselves to develop and prosper and finally change for the good.

Problem Statement

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 post-colonial legacy coined mainly with the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah the first Ghanaian president after independence. This literary work uses the country as a symbolic representation of other African countries so it is meant that the issue of colonization is broadly discussed in the novel and should not be viewed as completely localized in Ghana but rather should be generally used as a reflecting mirror of the experiences of other African countries. The novel is

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

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.

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born is a novel in which Armah uses detailed events of the Ghanaian people to reflect the prevalent post-colonial culture existed in Ghana during its first republic under Nkrumah. The effect of colonialism was so rampant and deep that every nook and cranny of Ghana showed it. This paper, through a systematic and close reading of Armah' work, examines and investigates the post-colonial legacy as a reflection to the history of Ghana at the time of the novel based on post-colonial theories.

Research Questions

Centered on what is stated before, two questions have been raised:

- 1- How every part of post-colonial African environment is decayed and deeply influenced by colonialism?
- 2- What are the author's main intentions toward portraying the Ghanaian situation after independence and how is it described in his novel?

Objectives of the study

The following study will focus chiefly on the post-colonial legacy manifested by Armah's work, a representation to the author's main intention which was to locate exactly the weakness that colonialism presented to the country. The novel largely emphasizes the moral conflicts of European exploration of Africa and represents the main social, ethical and political challenge for African independent societies in which a lot of emphasis has been paid to the political system of ruling the African countries specifically Ghana.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The general literary contention that this work will focus on will be to discuss as well as evaluate the main legacies in the novel as a pointer to the challenges African countries continue to face and its major post-colonial criticism. All these will be an attempt to question the dominant theories reflected by Armah in Ghana's societies after getting independence added to the literary description he implied to condemn the evils of colonialism.

Furthermore, since the novel centers on the post-colonial era's situations, it describes an actual image on the real circumstances during that period based on historical context, literary theories and its literal sense in order to understand the novel's messages recalling the historic moment along with the novel events. This ability to influence or control circumstances or individuals can help them defend one against being controlled, influenced, or exploited.

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born is a work that serves as an excellent representation of Armah's effort to show the African situation after independence. Thus, it should prove to be a good case study of his personal growth and development as a writer.

Significance of the Study

Over time there have been many historical examples the way that power has corrupted governments, kings, queens, organizations, individuals etc. Within the scope of West African literature we are trying to understand the post-colonial legacy and its main criticism in Armah's novel *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. How can the post-colonial legacy described in the novel through corrupted behaviors used in literature as an aesthetic device and a socio-political tool designed to bring about awareness and perhaps introduce social change. Moreover, we can suppose that Armah looked to the new independent government that brought about these social and economic changes for the betterment of the country. He would have also looked for the new

government to serve as an example to the continent although the reality was very different from hopes and the people.

This investigation will improve the readers' understanding concerning the hopelessness among Africans and the desolation caused in post-colonialism within Armah's novel and how it is described in all of its sides. Moreover, it is important to help students of English in Algeria especially master level and graduates to enhance their awareness regarding the African writer's literary works in the African literature.

Literature Review

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).

Chinua Achebe and Ayi Kwei Armah generally subscribe to the notion that independence is a source of disillusionment to most black Africans because it has failed to deliver on the key objectives that spurred the quest for independence. The two authors introduce a paradigm shift from the culture of blame shifting which characterized most polemics (defending by attacking) against colonialism towards a culture of internal focus.

The sad aspect of current African politics is blaming colonial encounter as responsible for misgoverning, yet mostly the blame lies on endogenous factors behind that such as corruption,

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manipulation of media, mass apathy, politics of lies, demonization of democratic values and naturalization of election. In a sense, it is not a fulfillment of expectations but a nightmare, an illusion that generated a false sense of arrival (Ibid).

Fage and Roland assert that the post-colonial elite of independent Africa defended the first movement of African nationalism, which forced its political demands in terms drawn from European nationalists' thought. In this light, people in post-colonial Africa are still yearning for independence.

Gakwandi proposes, "We are presented with a world in which the sewage pipes of history have been exploded and everything is polluted." (15) This is evident in the two primary texts which the author is using that African leaders are essentially not or more humanist than the imperialists they have replaced. Many wealthy African people decide to get rich whilst the farmers and the unemployed are not persuaded that anything things can be better in their lives. The corruption of post-independent leaders is prevailed over morality of humans.

Armah, in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, like other West African writers, mirrors the sense of disappointment with which writers confront divisions and separations in the new post independent administrations. In Ghana, there is degradation; everyone is concerned towards achieving their one wants. People are using their positions to fill their pocket schemes and to follow wealth where ever existed. Independence in itself does not bring effective solution to the social problems of the Ghanaian people. To be uncorrupt was seen as a crime, as the teacher in the text states, "you have not done what everybody is doing and in this world that is one of the crimes" (Armah 107)

For Armah, the destroying element in societies is to observe black people following by all means to be dark shadows of the European colonizer. He added that the Africans themselves help

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smoothly to facilitate the exploitation of their fellow black men, 'How long will Africa be cursed with its own leaders?' (Armah 143). To illustrate, Koomson has succeeded to be rich when he followed the path of immorality. He chooses to finish his people's destiny for the sake of a luxurious and comfortable life with expensive properties (Ibid).

The misuse of leadership is primarily represented in Koomson behaviors and his government and sometimes even from the people of low positions in Ghana like the conductor, boatman, clerks and drivers. According to Cameron Dodo's, Armah's novel *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* in an attack not only to politicians but also to all those who possess powerful positions in Ghana and the African societies as a whole. Armah makes use of the disordered environment, filth, rot, decomposition to show the amount of the various levels of corruption and the situation of societies after independence. The bus conductor is used to be corrupted person but the Passion Week look as if it is an obstacle to his dishonored intentions. The conductor cheats the clients with wrong cadies in order to fulfill his needs and fatten his pocket. The conductor expected that he we seen by the client who was sleeping with open eyes. As a result, when the conductor says "you see we can share" (Armah 148), he tries to bribe the man with the cigarette in fear of being cut (Macheka 16).

According to Palmer, the bus is like a country or a nation, which is in a state of decay. The passengers represent the ordinary citizens while the driver and conductor are deceitful authorities that try to cheat its citizens and encourage them to deal with bribery and corruption. Consequently, Armah tries to cast light widely on modern Ghanaian history. Therefore, there are several historical events related to post-colonial period that are significant in the novel. These events contributed largely to make this Ghanaian society to be so corrupt, dishonest and full of hatred. For instance, the legacy or the colonial system left by the Whites or mainly the British influence on Africans, the

growth of Nkrumah's government obliged Ghanaians to deviate and depart from its right path (Ibid 18).

Methodology

The methodology that is followed in this work is postcolonial theories because it focuses on the background of the novel, the history of Ghana in terms of theory and practice showing how the author presented the prevailing conditions of the post-colonial period.

Chapter Division

The study is divided into two main chapters; the first chapter consists of two sections; the first section deals with a historical background of the study that will provide information about the history of Ghana during colonialism and its situation after independence. On the other hand, the second section will present more data about postcolonial theory in general and its main principals.

The second chapter is mainly concerned with the application of postcolonial theory in Ayi Kwei Armah's novel *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. It shows how Armah's first novel is a highly postcolonial work since it deals with the contemporary elements of Neo-colonialism, hybridity, mimicry and hegemony which are considered to be the direct products of colonialism.

CHAPTER ONE:

COLONIAL GHANA, POSTCOLONIAL THEORY: A

SOCIO-HISTORICAL AND THEORITICAL

FRAMEWORK

Introduction

In literature, post colonialism comprises the study of different theories related chiefly to the distinctions made between the colonizer and the colonized. These theories respond to the need for postulating themselves as a theoretical attempt to engage with a particular historical condition. The post-colonial legacy is characterized by different ambivalent cultural attitudes associated with dissimilar periods of transition charged with a distinguished spirit of independence.

The first chapter consists of two parts; the first part will provide data about the historical background of Ghana during colonialism, its situation after independence and a brief overview about the Ghanaian leaders. On the other hand, the second part is primarily theoretical, it will cast light on the postcolonial theory, its main principles and concepts.

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF GHANA

During the last quarter of the fifteenth century, the history of the Gold Coast was chiefly centered on oral tradition that signifies the migrations from the ancient kingdoms of the west like Mauritania and Mali. It was later renamed Ghana upon independence in 1957. This name was extracted from the native title given to the kings of Ghana Empire.

I.1. During colonialism

Ghana's first contact with Europe starts in the fifteenth century when a party of Portuguese explorers soon joined by the British, Dutch, Danes and the French located in the region seeking to obtain more gold and to control the coastal areas. Thus, they established trade of slaves, gold and built forts in order to have a permanent trading base. In 1553, the English explorer Thomas Windham recorded the first English trading voyage into the Coast (Berry 2).

CHAPTER ONE: COLONIAL GHANA, POSTCOLONIAL THEORY: A SOCIO-HISTORICAL AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

Gold existed everywhere in Ghana, starting from the west comprising the Niger River and the forest of modern Ghana, the gold trade facilitated and helped people to establish commercial links between the west forests into the Sahara offering more material profits. Trade had the foremost influence on the state formation and the development of modern Ghana (Ibid).

By the 1800s, the British took control over the coastal areas and turned to be the legal central power which had colonial statues. From 1826 to 1900, keen to have more territories, the British started moving inland causing war against the Ashantis, a dominant tribe whose kingdom situated inland. During this period, many battles were fought. For example, the British were defeated in the battle of Nsamankow in 1826 when the leader of the British troops Sir Charles McCarthy was killed. However, it was until the beginning of the 1900s when the British succeeded to obtain a firm control over the Ashanti region making the area protectorate. Furthermore, Britain established a policy that was based on indirect rule and allowed the local leaders to manage and control these colonial administrations under the supervision of some British officials. These organizations helped Ghanaians obtain more experience with the representative government (Odotei 2).

In the late 1800s, Ghana's economy witnessed a huge change. This development was due to the cacao pods that were brought to introduce the country's own cash crop. In addition, within this period, the new western style of education was presented with the establishment of the first university that contributed to prepare a category of the people to be employed later in the colonial administrations of the Gold Coast. The same class of people wanted more economic, social development and they eventually demanded the independence for the Ghanaians (Berry 3).

In the early ends of 1946, the British authorities started to rule the four territories that were administered separately as a one united territory. In 1947, many constitutions called for more

legislative rights. As a result, the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), the Ghanaian first political party came to birth in order to formulate one unique policy that would ensure peoples' rights and self-government in the political scene. The UGCC hired Kwame Nkrumah, a young motivated and ambitious man as a responsible for its organization and a full member in this political party. Together with other leaders, Nkrumah was arrested for generating antigovernment protests (Ibid).

All these protests obliged the British government to start a new policy based on the collaboration between the British and the "Intelligentsia" as the UGCC leaders were called in order to permit general elections and innovative executive council with the majority of African ministers to take over the internal constitutions. Yet, the British government was charged with the military power, foreign policy and executive power (Ibid).

Nkrumah fought to obtain more power in the political scene as he was not clearly convinced with his role within the UGCC party. Therefore, in June 1949, Nkrumah decided to establish the Convention People's Party (CPP) to have more self-government. Nkrumah's strong personality and powerful way of transferring ideas and perspectives helped him to obtain popularity on a large scale. Moreover, in February 1951, the Convention People's Party (CPP) headed by Nkrumah won the majority of 104 seats in the new legislative Assembly leaving no alternative option to the government except to free and release Nkrumah who was a prisoner for making protests and causing public disorder after having fourteen months in prison. The government administrators late agreed to assign Nkrumah as a prime minister. These elections guaranteed for the CCP more political power (Ibid 4).

During this period, the country was divided into ten areas that are subdivided into 138 districts. The Gold Coast colony encompasses the west, central, Eastern, and Accra regions; the

Ashanti region; the northern territories and the British Togoland. After independence, the Ghanaian new government took control over all these territories.

Kwame Nkrumah the new prime minister succeeded in eliminating traditional leaders in the legislation because he believed that they are working for colonizer to maintain its control. Consequently, another party appeared called the National Liberation Movement (NLM) criticizing the government for being corrupted and oppressive. This marked a new beginning for other protests against the depressive Ghanaian government.

After this remarkable success in general elections, the new Prime Minister Nkrumah suggested a proposal for Gold Coast independence. Under the pressure of the majority of the Gold Coast legislative Assembly, The British ruler decided to accept this offer and confirmed a date for independence. Ghana became an independent nation on the sixth of March 1957 where the Gold Coast government took control over all its territories (Ibid).

I.2. After Independence

In 1957, Ghana was remarkably the first African nation that succeeded to gain its independence. After this independence, The CPP government headed by Nkrumah promised to modernize Ghana via a set of ambitious arrangements and plans that would improve the Ghanaian social and economic status. For Nkrumah, The government should only work like the agent of the CPP in order to achieve the stability and productivity.

In 1960, the Ghanaian Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah was elected to be the first president of Ghana after its independence. At the beginning of Nkrumah rule, Ghana witnessed a huge and massive development in terms of infrastructure, health, education and roads. Nevertheless, this promising economy started to decline with the emergence of a new concepts related to

corruption and bribery in the Ghanaian political and social scene. Moreover, in 1964, Nkrumah established himself as a president for life and Ghana became one state banning all political parties except the CPP control. Nkrumah largely believed that Ghana is a “star of black Africa” which would direct and change their struggle toward Africa from western colonialism (Berry 6).

On February 24th, 1966, the Ghanaian Army headed by Emmanuel Kotoka overthrew the president Kwame Nkrumah government and started a new era of ruling. Those coup leaders dissolved the national assembly, dismissed all ministers and banned the CPP party. In 1968, a new constitution was established allowing a multiparty system that would lead for more individual rights and liberties. In 1969, the power of administration was handed to an elected civilian government (Ibid).

The Ghanaian post independent government saw different economic policies; socialist oriented under Nkrumah, capitalist under the peoples’ government and World Bank prescribed policies. In this sense, the Ghanaian economy aimed at achieving rapid evolution depending either on a state or private enterprise. These policies and plans were not always successful in stimulating the economy. In many cases, the military power that followed these plans weakened the economic institutions and damaged the Ghanaian infrastructure (Macbeath 11).

Before independence, education in Ghana was existed only in churches brought by Europeans situated mainly in forts and castles. This kind of education centered largely on literacy and numeracy neglecting any analytical skill of individuals. After independence, the government issued new reforms and introduced free education in mainly rural areas (Ibid).

Ghanaians were chiefly influenced by the European missionaries during the colonial period though they were extremely religious with strict beliefs. These Christian missionaries contributed to

the progress of the Ghanaian country as they fought to abolish slavery and provide more freedom to all people. In addition, the Bible and dictionary were translated into the local languages; the European missions also initiated new crops and enhanced farming rising food production (Odotei 7).

II. Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial theory emerged due to the anti-colonial movement and the response of the independent nation-states after colonialism all over the world. The period is accompanied by the desire to forget the colonial past. Regardless to the will-to-forget, the intention to create a new start is the basic principle of the colonial aftermath. Postcolonialism can be seen as a continuous struggle between cultural identity and the historical past. Therefore, postcolonial theory looks at literature, the social and cultural changes come out with colonialism and post colonial era through different angles; how a writer and his context epitomize the colonial past and how this paved a way to a new thinking and understanding to the outside world (Allen 5).

Postcolonial era covers all the cultural changes resulted from the moment of colonization to the present day. The major theoretical works in postcolonial theory include *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) by Franz Fanon, *Orientalism* (1978) by Edward Said, *In Other Worlds* (1987) by Gayatri Spivak, *The Empire Writes Back* (1989) by Bill Ashcroft et al, *Nation and Narration* (1990) by Homi K Bhabha, and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) by Edward Said.

II.1. Conceptual Framework

This section aims to shed light on the most basic concepts and principles of postcolonial theory that can be found and applied in this study. Though what will be mentioned are not the full dimensions of the theory, it reveals the main focus of postcolonial theory that needs a better understanding for the study.

II.1.1. Neo-colonialism

Neo-colonialism or Neo-imperialism is considered as one of the crucial elements in postcolonial theory that was originated with Ghana's first president Kwame Nkrumah. In this case even though Ghana and many African countries got their political independence, the ex-colonial powers and especially the United States which dominates the scene through the ongoing control over their cultures and economies and especially through ruling the native elites. In fact in his book "Neo-Colonialism, The Last Stage of Imperialism", Kwame Nkrumah declared:

Neo-colonialism is... the worst form of imperialism. For those who practise it, it means power without responsibility and for those who suffer from it, it means exploitation without redress. In the days of old-fashioned colonialism, the imperial power had at least to explain and justify at home the actions it was taking abroad. In the colony those who served the ruling imperial power could at least look to its protection against any violent move by their opponents. With neo-colonialism neither is the case (3)

Believing that the fighting against classical colonialism is less difficult than new colonial dependence that come with the neo-colonial system (Ibid 146).

The term is widely used to refer to new and indirect forms of control through political, cultural and political oppression and domination. For example, it was universally acknowledged that the native elites brought to power after independence were often educated and trained by

colonial superpowers, so as if they will serve as compradors or agents. Hence in broader terms this concept came to prove the inability and failure of the native elites to rule their own economic, political and even social affairs (Ibid 147).

II.1.2. Mimicry

Mimicry is an important concept in post-colonial theory. This concept is mainly derived from the influence of the colonizer into the colonized, i.e. to 'mimic' the colonizer in all aspects of life by adopting his cultural habits, assumptions, institutions and values (Ashcroft et al. 124).

In his book *"Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse"*, Hommi Bhabha states "Mimicry emerges as one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge. [...] colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed recognisable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (153). As Bhabha illustrates, the colonial power aimed at overpowering the colonized nation through highly sophisticated strategies. It is also in need with several means of control that can guarantee its economic, political and cultural endurance. To sum up the process of colonial and post colonial mimicry in literature is most commonly seen when members of a colonized society imitate the language, dress, politics, or cultural attitude of their colonizers. Mimicry is seen as an opportunistic pattern of behavior; most probably, while copying the master, one has to intentionally suppress one's own cultural identity (Singh 2).

II.1.3. Hybridity

The term hybridity has become one of the most recurrent concepts in postcolonial cultural criticism. Commonly hybridity resulted when colonization leads to the creation of cross cultural values. Hybridization takes several forms from linguistic to cultural, political and racial forms. For

instance pidgin and creole languages that used to reflect the disruptive and changing power of the multivocal language situation. That was established by the linguistic and cultural theorist Mikhail Bakhtin (Ashcroft et al 109).

In the other hand Bhabha's studies of colonizer and colonized relationship mostly asserted the term hybridity with his analysis of the interdependence and the mutual values of their cultural constructions. Bhabha argues that all cultural systems and constructions are included in the world he called "Third Space of enunciation". For him to overpass the cultural diversity existed among different people we should recognize the ambivalent space of cultural identity. And that can be resulted from the recognition of an empowering hybridity within which cultural difference may operate:

It is significant that the productive capacities of this Third Space have a colonial or postcolonial provenance. For a willingness to descend into that alien territory [...] may open the way to conceptualizing an international culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity (Bhabha 38).

This transmits the 'in-between' space of the broader distinction existed between cultures. This diversity of cultural values, distinctions, attitudes, and beliefs creates a sense of importance to the notion of hybridity. Consequently hybridity in post-colonial studies refers to simply cross-cultural 'exchange' in relation to western nations under colonialism, cultural Hybridity can be seen as a close cousin to mimicry because it is difficult for an Indian or African to mimic British values and manners in separation to his own way of being (Ibid).

II.1.4. Hegemony

One of the most widely employed and most essential terms in postcolonial theory, Hegemony that initiated in the 1930s by Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, who illustrates the term as the spread control of one state over a confederation; this dominance reflects the successful strategies of the ruling class in prompting their interests that seemed to be the interests of all. Fundamentally, such domination is not necessarily exerted by military force or active persuasion, but rather in an intelligent way and a subtle manipulation over the sensitive aspects of life including economy, education and media, in terms of asserting the ruling class's interest as the only accepted and common concern and thus comes to be taken for granted (Ashcroft et al 106- 107).

This concept mirrored the tricky success of the imperial power in asserting their control over the colonized people more than any occupying forces. Hegemony plays a major role that derived from its strong and powerful influence on the thought of the colonized over the colonized regions. Indeed, hegemony comes across with the colonial domination by consent. This consent is resulted from the fact that Euro-centric values, assumptions, beliefs and attitudes are the most and only originated and accepted nearly everywhere. One of the examples of this control can be seen in the education system adopted by the British government in India after the Charter Act of 1813. In which Britain assumed to assert the western values to Indians and avoiding their Hindu sensibilities. This strategy perhaps found reveals the power of English literature in asserting the imperial authority. As Viswanathan puts it "the split between the material and the discursive practices of colonialism is nowhere sharper than in the progressive refraction of the rapacious, exploitative and ruthless actor of history into the reflective subject of literature" (22–23). This refraction represents the extremely sensitive subject of demonstration of hegemonic control (Ibid).

CONCLUSION

Post-colonialism is largely manifested in various interpretations, uses and meanings. It is mainly connected to the study of different theories that are mentioned earlier in order to analyze a particular situation in a historical context described by multiple standpoints. Armah's novel *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* marks the beginning of a major talent in the African literary scene determined with its individuality and by the consideration of many traditional forms, sense of oppression, practices and intentions. It is considered to be the first Ghanaian novel that clearly identifies the image of newly independent African situations and represent an example to a contaminated African country suffering from arrested development and confusion mainly due to colonization.

CHAPTER TWO:

THE COLONIAL LEGACY IN *THE BEAUTYFUL*

ONES ARE NOT YET BORN

Introduction

Post colonialism refers to the breakdown of the oppressed colonial invasion by westerners. Consequently, postcolonial literature resulted from colonialism can be considered as a vehicle to express the aftermath period of social, cultural and political changes, which is often depicted as a fragmented, rot and corruptive society.

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born is a novel that reflects the life in Ghana before and after colonialism particularly during the regime of Kwame Nkrumah. Armah purpose is to describe the Ghanaian elite after independence through portraying the corruptive activities of all officials and the president in focus. Most characters represent the moral, social and physical decay that occupied the period after independence. This chapter will provide data about the postcolonial theory in relation to Armah's novel *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*.

I. The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born as a postcolonial work

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born recounts the journey of an unnamed man struggling with the decay of his society. "The man"; the protagonist of the novel witnesses all kind of corruption, filth and rot which become a "national game" that he rejects going through. But his wife Oyo and his family blame him for his failure in providing enough money in order to buy the European products as koomson and his wife do. That is why he and the teacher; the man's friend, decide to isolate themselves from the current decayed society. And refuses to take part in the "game"(Awitor 47-48).

I.1. Neo-colonialism in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born is a novel written to depict the post-colonial era of Ghana immediately after the 1960s. It reflects how the protagonist goes through the events of the

novel portraying a social, economic and political decay after independence especially during the regime of Kwame Nkrumah, the president who reveals the ironic representation of the Ghanaian leadership (Annan 16).

I.1.1. The failure of the Ghanaian leadership

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born is a more richly and evocative product. Its publication ranked Armah at the forefront of the modern generation of African writers when Armah established a very disturbing picture of the foibles of all decadent political system ruled by Kwame Nkrumah the first President of Ghana.

The novel also examines the cruel and inflexible image of corruption, egocentricity in Ghana and the reflection of people who consider power as the only solution for one to be successful by being a liar and a thief. The book is categorized by the self-centeredness of leaders who governed after the colonial government. Gakwandi states: "in the world of the novel, wealth and power have become the principal pursuits and the inevitable result of the situation to satisfy individual desires" (Macheka 15).

These sad characteristics of the African politics is resulting largely out from colonial encounter as responsible for their misgoverning and other factors such as corruption, politics of lies and deceptions, degradation of democratic values. In this sense, colonialism permitted capitalism and its system of exploitation and repression, it is realized that the African oppressors replaced colonialists and there was mere substitution. According to Ngugi, "African leaders run their economies according to the American standard and the governments have been taught the system of self interest." (63). To illustrate, independence brought nothing but suffering. Any high expectation after independence is frustrated by the corrupted activities of the Ghanaian political leaders. According to Fraser (1980), Ayi Kwei Armah describes independence as the basis of

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disillusionment to the majority of black Africans since it was unsuccessful to convey on its main objectives (Sithole 10).

The misuse of leadership is mostly realized in Koomson actions and his government and even from the people of low positions such as the conductor, boatman, clerks and drivers. *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* tends to attack both politicians and individuals who had important statues in society. Armah involved messy environment, filth, and excreta to portray the intensity of the various ranks of corruption; the conductor for example tricks the clients in order to fulfill his own desires and wishes. This conductor tries to bribe a man in his bus with a cigarette when he says: "You see we can share" (Armah 103). For Palmer the bus is like a country, which is in a state of decline. The passengers symbolize the ordinary citizens whereas the driver and conductor are authorities planning to deceive citizens. This struggle between the hope for change and the betrayal of that hope by his nation's leaders is dominant in Armah's fiction (Ibid 16).

Armah expresses another theme of political betrayal and cultural disruptions which are mainly represented in Koomson and his kind of leaders are famous for taking their positions as means of getting girls. In this sense, Armah shows his view through using symbols of sexual drawings on the toilet, which indicates that corrupt men are associated with sexual activities. A very pathetic example of sexual abuse by politicians is when the government is paying for hired places for prostitution (Macheka.16).

Throughout the novel, Armah reveals that independence brought nothing but corruption, rot and destruction. In this sense, Armah rises many questions about these cursed African leaders; "We were ready for big and beautiful things, but what we had was our own black men hugging new paunches scrambling to ask the white man to welcome them on to our backs." (Armah 79). Those new black African leaders grow to be darker shadows or ghosts of the European white man in the most terrible way. However, Armah tries to show less interest in Nkrumah government in more

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symbolic form, Gareth Griffiths remarks: "Nkrumah is only a name. He represents nothing. To name him is merely to reinforce the sense of namelessness, the falsity reinforces in a world where over thrower and overthrown are engaged only in a formal reversal of role."(Ibid).

Armah, in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, like many African writers, reveals the sense of disappointment when writers challenge the corruption and divisions in the new post independent systems. To be uncorrupt was as considered as a crime, as the Teacher in the novel states, "You have not done what everybody is doing and in this world that is one of the crimes" Armah (96). Those corrupted leaders are responsible for the miserable conditions of their countries. In this sense, Fanon claims that the African leadership is, 'the national bourgeoisie strung to defend its immediate interests, incapable of bringing national unity'. Koomson, for instance, has risen from being a humble office cleaner to a pampered government minister through stealing money that belongs to state coffers. Thus, in order to be successful in Ghana, one needs to be a liar and a thief. In Armah's narrative, greed, corruption, and ethnocentrism were presented as being some of the cultural problems that is responsible for destroying the people's postcolonial hopes and opportunities (Ibid 17).

I.1.2. Corruption and bribery

The man's journey takes place in a bus throughout the novel; the story is not about the man but rather about the bus itself. That reflects the cruel image and situation of all society as it is portrayed through the conductor, the man, the driver, and other passengers. As the man shifts from the bus, he enters to his current hell, in terms of rot, destruction and sterility, a modern waste land adopted by contemporary Ghana, a corruptive society at all levels. Filth, depression, despair, decay, lost, excrement and misery are the overwhelming reflections in the novel (Firtzgerrard 2).

Throughout the novel places changed but corruption is always there to stimulate the writer's bitterness and attitude of protest and disapproval towards the government of Ghana. *The*

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Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born depicts the cruel image of corruption and bribery and the unacceptable deeds that seemed to be the only road any Ghanaian citizen must walk through to achieve his goals and the stable life he dreamt of. Never forget the leaders who benefited from their positions to spread their power over Ghana and its ordinary people (Ibid).

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born reveals a cluster of ideas associated with post-colonialism, which a positive view of evolution on the one hand with a cynical view of the impossibility of real change. The theme of corruption runs throughout the novel and the Ghanaian people alike. Hence bribery is considered as the railway of enrichment, this reflects bureaucracy in the African society. For instance the protagonist of the novel "the man", regardless to his normal life and a boring daily routine and job in the railway service and modest life, he refused to walk through the dirty road each person enjoyed going through. And because of his upright values he is incapable of being a corruptive person, and that's why he was despised by all. This can be seen in the novel when Amakwa asked the man to get his timber transported from the bush for a reward. And the man used to refuse all such offers. This due to the bureaucracy and the crucial time in history that each one must have a 'kitu kidogo' or never gain success (Ibid 3).

As Amakwa said to the man when he refused his service " You, you are a very wicked man. You will never prosper..."(Armah 107), his wife also blamed him and refers to him as "Chichidod"; a 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). But another man in the same office takes it. This is what is meant by Modernisation that led to the corruptive deeds in all African countries to such an extent that if one refused to embrace a bribe, you will be mocked and despised by all. Furthermore, Armah depicts that one cannot live without offering and accepting bribery 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).

This quotation reveals how the responsible people and the country's leaders are engaged in bribery the most. And it seems that this kind of practices is accepted by all except the upright people who seemed to lose war against corruption (Shaban 1).

On the other hand money plays another important role in post colonial Ghana that's why Armah arises it constantly throughout his novel. The first chapter shed light on the the Ghanaian currency, the Cedi, this is revealed in the minibus when the conductor tries to collect the large amount of money from riders as much as possible. One rider gives him more Cedies than it costs, and he does not ask for the remaining charge. As the conductor hopes to not be asked for the rest so he would profit more in a time when currency is scarce. Whereas in the second chapter, when a messenger wins a lottery and officers refused to give him the money. The messenger worries about his money as he knew a lot of people who had not yet benefit from their winnings. The protagonist proposes to ask for a police help. The messenger decides to wait until something happens since going to the police officer would cost more money (Ibid 2).

I.1.3. Significance of the title

The title of the novel was taken from an inscription in the back of a car a policeman has stopped. In Ghana, car inscriptions are commonly used as in most of the African countries because it is seen as an art that reflects the beliefs of people and what they stand for. The inscriptions the author saw when he was looking for a title for the novel reflect what the driver believes; its unusual

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spelling was also a spiritual message to the Ghanaian people. In addition, birth for Armah is no longer an occasion for joy, but for regret and despair, since the newly-born comes already exhausted and decayed. In the writer's vision, Africa's new birth lacks brightness and clarity. It is a vision of helpless people with unformed bone and exhausted blood (Shaban 1).

In reality, the word "Beautiful" itself is wrongly spelled to symbolize evil in society. This means that the beautiful ones are being born every day in our societies but they are nearly being engaged in filth and corruption and shows the failure of the upright people to continue as they were thought to be, so they earn themselves luxurious style of life while others left to suffer in poverty. Moreover, in this novel Armah blame the Ghanaian leaders for their misuse of power using the presidency of Kwame Nkrumah as a focal point. He also depicts the circle and the cycle of corruption in African societies particularly in Ghana where every person seems to be filled with stench, rot, filth, and decay (Ibid).

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born is significantly an ironic title which means that the beautiful people are present but they are hiding behind their backs as they are afraid to be eliminated. All these present not only the physical actions but also the spiritual beliefs and the advanced ways of knowing the truth paving the way for the extensive spread of corruption, and for leaders who have dreams to take the country's wealth for their own (Ntlhe 1).

Armah also used such an attractive title "*The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*" to reveal corruption in the novel, hence the "The Beautiful Ones" of Africa who would stand corruption and fight it at the expense of their lives are not yet born. The author seems pessimistic from the beginning but at the same time he has a dream that the African countries will be a better place to live, in his saying "an end to this...a beginning to something else." (Armah 169). The ambiguous end of the novel raises the question whether the beautiful ones will ever be born (Ibid).

I.2.The Ghanaian society as a reflection to Europe

The post independent period is highly marked by a shift in the representation of African literature highlighting the existed situation in African and largely in Ghanaian societies in more profound manner. In *The Beautiful Once Are Not Yet Born*, Armah signifies a wide range of westernized, immoral and decayed societies. Ordinary people within the novel seek for different ways to elevate themselves and uplift their life even by following western cultures and traditions, as Bhabha states: "From such a colonial encounter between the white presence and its black semblance, there emerges the question of the ambivalence of mimicry as a problematic of colonial subjection"(131).

In *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Armah suggests that the situation of despair and decay is mainly caused by African leaders who worked to eradicate people's wish and hopes for better future. Instead, they served as a continuation to colonialism when he states: "We were ready for big and beautiful things, but what we had was our own black men hugging new paunches scrambling to ask the white man to welcome them on to our backs." (79).In the novel, those African leaders are described as darker shadows of the Europeans:

There is something so terrible in watching a black man trying at all points to be the dark ghost of a European, and that was what we were seeing in those days... How could they understand that even those who have not been anywhere know that the black man who has spent his life fleeing from himself into whiteness has no power if the white master gives him none? ... We knew then, and we know now, that the only real power a black man can have will come from black people (80).

Throughout the novel, several characters contribute to the European Neocolonialism. For example, Koomson is manifested by Armah as a corrupted politician who is largely affected by European manners; he is designated as a "suit" (36) and glittering "shirt" (37) shining in dark like a

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white man. Accordingly, Homi Bhabha describes this colonial mimicry as "... the desire for a reformed, recognizable other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (122). To illustrate, the protagonist or the "Man" in the novel is surprised with the softness of his hands when he said, "Was again amazed at the flabby softness of the hand. Ideological hands, the hands of revolutionaries leading their people into bold sacrifices" (131). In this sense, "Estelle" Koomson's wife is a wealthy arrogant woman who wants to mimic Europeans in everything. This is clearly shown when she does not want to drink the local beer saying: "Really, the only good drinks are European drinks. These make you ill" (130) (Briebe 65).

The main character is manifested by Armah as a symbol of hope and change or as an "Onward Christian Soldier" as described by his wife "Oyo". This "man" chooses to live separated and isolated from this corrupted world as he notices that the African Blacks are trying by all means to be just like the white at all levels when he states:

About nine-thirty the Senior Service men come in each with his bit of leftover British craziness. This one has long white nose, that one colonial white. Another has spent two months on what still "he calls a study tour of Britain, and ever since has worn, in all the heat of Ghana, waistcoats and coats (108).

This main silence toward dishonored activities can be understood as a silent challenge or defiance against the European beliefs and tradition. This man does not accept to be like those corrupted politicians and chooses to live in isolation, he is instead angry to the ruthless conditions existed in his society caused mainly by colonialism (Guven 85).

The Ghanaian society is characterized by social, political and economic corruption which is largely perceived as a legacy inherited before achieving independence. The dream of getting full independence is fed by corrupted leaders who imitate westerners in almost every aspect. In the novel, these leaders are seen as copies to Europeans and the British colonizer who helped to create a

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sense of disillusionment and conflict between ordinary people who have no expectation for better future and their uplifted governors. In this sense, the teacher who is another important character in the novel is obliged to comment on the situation founded by his society claiming: “There is no difference ... No difference at all between the white men and their apes, the lawyers and the merchants, and now the apes of the apes, our party men.”(88). The teacher is disgust with the Ghanaian situation brought by colonialism since he is convinced that both the Europeans and those corrupted leaders are ultimately working to destroy the African nation and eradicate the African culture (Wright 15).

By the end of the novel, Armah describes Ghana as a modern wasteland transported to contemporary Africa. This land which lacks morality and values is the “man’s hell” represented in the bad images of filth, rot and fragments. This pessimistic vision of post independent Africa serves as a metaphor to the Ghanaian failure to change the cruel conditions inherited from the British colonialism, evidently Armah wrote *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* to let the Europeans consider the realities brought by colonialism because it works just as a murder to the African values and traditions. This novel also reflects the truth of colonialism imposed by the west in Ghana and Africa in general (Briebe 16).

I.3.The Syndrome of Hybridity

The arrival of the British troops to Ghana created a sense of cross-cultural values. This what lead to the Ghanaian people to be aware of whether to follow their ancestor's culture or adopting the colonizer values and institutions. Even after independence, the combining elements of the two different cultures still confusing natives between the ongoing present and the painful past. *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Armah’s first novel is a highly postcolonial work in that it deals with the contemporary element of hybridity which is a direct product of colonialism

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The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born is implemented mainly in an intertextual template. Throughout the novel, Armah develops quotations that consist of both national and foreign materials. This is showed at the beginning of the novel when some foreign intertexts are used to signify a high sense of linguistic and cultural hybridity.

One of the most notable double-voiced quotations is represented at the very beginning of the novel when he states:

The light from the bus moved uncertainly down the road until finally the two vague circles caught some indistinct object on the side of the road where it curved out in front. The bus had come to a stop. Its confused rattle had given place to an endless spastic shudder, as if its pieces were held together by too much rust ever to fall completely apart. (1)

The old bus stands for the decaying of the post-colonial nation and the disillusionment. On the other hand, this quote “to fall completely apart” is a metaphor that is borrowed from both William Butler Yeats’s verses in “The Second Coming” and Achebe’s first novel “Things Fall Apart”. In this sense, Armah cites Achebe who uses Yeats words to represent the declining of western civilization to contradict him and indicate the decline of the African culture and tradition after independence which is celebrated and preserved in most of Achebe’s works (Bouteldja14).

In *the Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Armah illustrates a cultural hybridity which is clearly showed in the juxtaposition of some quotations extracted from both African and western cultures. This is mainly shown in the narratives that are unfolded within carnivalesque setting made from Christian rituals. In the novel, Armah describes the traditions hold in the “Passion Week” to which the novel refers, to the tradition forms of the Christian Easter “holy week” known as the Risus Paschalis. The common thing in both of these rituals is that they continue for a whole week during the month of April. In addition, both of these rituals are connected to “passion” a Christian term related largely to the death and resurrection of a divinity. More significantly, both of these

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rituals offer an occasions for destroying the social system and insulting the governors who hold the reins of power (Ibid).

Armah also uses similar parallel in the arrival of “the man”, Armah’s main character into Takoradi and Jesus’s arrival into Jerusalem during Easter Week. The old crumbling bus *In The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* has a jingled voice which is similar to the jingles of Jesus’s donkey in the Christian ritual. Furthermore, it is difficult to see that there is no difference between Jesus values and the man morality in which they follow the same path with honest and ethical beliefs. (Ibid 16)

Another important element that signify the cultural hybridity is represented at the end of the novel, exactly when the man hears about the coup, the man at this point meets Koomson who is a corrupt leader. This character is respected by the majority of public especially by the man’s wife who consider him as a hero because he accepted to take bribery and to be rich following an illegal ways. This hybridized characterization looks as a mock with different faces imitating foreign characters traits and behaviors such as Joseph Conrad’ s character Kurtz who represent the European humanity and the Great Gatsby in the same novel. To illustrate, the name Koomson itself is extracted from a Christian hymn “come soon,” referring to Jesus Christ. Nearly at the end of the novel, Armah show Koomson as a hybridized false hero who escape in the man’s house from the police officers. This character even agrees to go through the dirty latrine and later guided in a small boat with cheated money. These events indicate the expulsion of western traditions whose models are immoral European figures. These different hybridizations indicate the writer’s wishes to follow and belong to the carnivalesque tradition and a culture depends mainly on the combination of the foreign and African quotable materials (Ibid 18).

I.4.Hegemony in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*

The sense of power existed through the African societies after colonialism. In this sense Armah depicts in his novel the ultimate power of the Ghanaian elite. Actually this power has no social base and it is not accepted by society. In his text *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* Koomson plays the major role in portraying such kind of overpowering through embezzlement of the government funds and other illegal ways (Nichols 6). Indeed, Koomson's behavior reveals the tricky success of the imperial power in asserting their own values and cultures in the colonized people and these customs are still imitated in the colonized nations even after independence.

Joseph Koomson is a political leader in the novel who represents the new social power that existed in Ghana after gaining independence, this kind of power that is affected by the west almost in all aspects. As Werlin states in his article about the definitive influence of the colonizer under the colonized:

Those with professional qualifications or foreign training are especially desirous of having the same standard of living as their Western counterparts. Consequently, I.K. Gyasi points out, they feel it necessary to acquire a big car, television set, a stereo, and 'a bevy of fawning women'. 'We need all of them, and our pay is not enough (55).

In this quote Werlin insists on the need of a big car, television set and a stereo. Those things represent the closest thoughts to the western civilization. Unfortunately, this led to the Nkrumah's government to be corrupted by power, And the Ghanaian elite to become the only persons who benefited from independence, and their need to acquire material things and usually at the expense of the poor class (Ibid 7).

Armah's sense of despair, disillusionment, and disappointment to the African elite and the loose of Ghanaian hope run throughout the novel. This can be seen in the discussion between the teacher and the man about the current government:

There were men dying from the loss of hope, and others were finding gaudy ways to enjoy power they did not have. We were ready here for big and beautiful things, but what we had was our own black men hugging new paunches scrambling to ask the white man to welcome them onto our backs. These men who were to lead us out of despair, they came like men already grown fat and cynical with the eating of centuries of power they had never struggled for (Armah 94).

The passage above reflects the Ghanaian elite who want social power without offering any help for their people. To sum up this reflects the extremely sensitive subject of hegemonic control over the African elite (Ibid 12).

I.5.Critical Responses to Armah's novel

The Beautiful Once Are Not Yet Born serves as a kind of liberation means for African scholars in their continent and for those in the Diaspora. It tries to find that Armah's novel is not for aesthetic purpose, but rather an endless, conscious and struggle against the forces of colonization in the past, neo-colonialism and mainly globalization at present which troubled Africa for so many years (Kakraba 1).

Ayi Kwei Armah has continuously concentrated on the pre-colonial and post-colonial periods in the history of Ghana as a modern wasteland and in the African continent as a whole. Hence, he had a controversial reputation among African literary critics which placed him as more severe and direct than many other African writers in criticizing the African situation. Moreover, his anger, indignation and moral enthusiasm toward the Ghanaian conditions placed him as a literary leader in the African scene (Ibid).

Many critics praised his significant skill, narrative style and technique that remarkably worked as a tool for resistance and liberation. According to Chidi Amuta Armah's novel is "a novel of historical reconstruction" (4). *The Beautiful Once Are Not Yet Born* tends to fight the injustice and prejudice held over the years of colonialism or the former colonial power and by the African themselves. In addition, Ogede confirms this by saying:

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With the exception of Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka and Ngugi wa Thiong'o, no other African writer has confronted and dealt so honestly and courageously with the problem of contemporary Africa as Armah has. Armah's fight can be defined as a radical quest for new for a new direction that can change the fortune of Africa and the black people.

More importantly, *The Beautiful Once Are Not Yet Born* registers a revolution against human corruption. Thus, it is full of disillusionment and disappointment that reflect the African situation. As Gerald Moore notes, "there is a marked therapeutic value to much of Armah's work ... he is concerned fundamentally with the ethical quality of a nation's life, a potential for exuberant health he sees as having been strangled by an infection of foreign origin." (Ibid).

Armah, in his novel indicates in more realistic terms the African persona through direct exposition of the everyday life and culture. Margaret Folarin compares *The Beautiful Once Are Not Yet Born* with Soyinka's work *The Interpreters*. She claims that *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* is more explorative ambitious novel and the writer introduces a work of fiction about the undermining immoral effects of corruption on economic, political and on spiritual life (Annan 16).

Throughout the novel, the protagonist is unnamed and simply referred to as "the man." In this sense, Larson associates the hero or the man of Armah's novel with Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* in which the main character is also unnamed. It is just same as Ellison's *Invisible Man*, the man in *The Beautiful Once Are Not Yet Born* realizes all over the novel that this corrupted society has lost its values while he is the only moral individual in a society which traded its soul to the devil. On the other hand, Ellison's protagonist gradually realize his society is out of joint. To illustrate, Armah's awareness and consciousness from the very beginning that makes the man's voyage so painful (Ibid 17).

Another critic suggests that Armah's novels are a "searing novelistic indictment of postcolonial society" (Brown 41). Emphasizing a society that is largely materialistic, Ayi Kwei Armah portrays how dishonest leaders have frustrated their citizens, leaving them in a state of horrible poverty and hopelessness (Ibid).

Conclusion

The colonial aftermath reflects the most essential changes happened during and after colonialism. Indeed, one might said that colonialism is all about the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized as Lois Tyson states: "colonialist ideology [...] was based on the colonizers' assumption of their own superiority, which they contrasted with the alleged inferiority of native (indigenous) peoples, the original inhabitants of the lands they invaded" (419). Such ideology of maintaining the difference between the two umbrella cultures, the western civilized culture in contrast to the undeveloped or savage native culture. Actually based on the beliefs of the ultimate superiority of the colonized people who divided the imagined world into the "us" and the "other", different, distant and apart and even less than full human , These binary oppositions are clearly reflected throug Armah's novel and characters.

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The current research paper overviews and examines the Postcolonial African literature that developed as a response to colonialism in terms of theory and practice. Its main concern is to observe the different changes linked to the progress in the African societies especially Ghana. However, Many postcolonial writers like Armah worked chiefly to depict the reality of colonialism and express the Ghanaian situation.

Through his novel, *The Beautiful Once Are Not Yet Born*, Armah intended to establish and reflect to the readers a realistic image about colonialism so that they would have effective response for Ghana's condition, attitude, and experience in an attempt to reconstruct the Ghanaian history. Thus, he tried to engage descriptions about post-independence problems related mainly to corruption, fragmentation and the abusive practices of the Ghanaian leaders who became even worse than their previous colonial masters.

Armah's novel depicts the main situations existed in Ghana shortly after independence. In every corner of this country, corruption is existed following different dimensions. Armah uses these dishonest practices to describe the existing situation in Ghana at the time of the novel. In spite of all these events, Armah's wishes for better governance and fairness in the political, economic and social scene. The writers' message to the readers is to fight all the obstacles that stand in front of Africans, to liberate themselves and finally change for the good of Africa.

Armah also portrays in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* the unrestricted immorality and the effects of colonialism on the society and on the people of contemporary Ghana that is the first African country to gain independence from the British governor. To illustrate, this novel celebrates a strong sense of hope in the midst of savage adversity.

The focus of the story is built on a desire to revive the Ghanaian society, for future generations or the beautiful ones that are revealed in the novel's title. Although the future of the

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country is undecided, Armah displays the power of the human spirit and the values of society as being of utmost importance for the future of postcolonial Ghana.

In this perspective, Armah centers the idea that African writers should use their indigenous writings in order to obtain more political power that would transform the Ghanaian situation and all the African countries and achieve a better vision about their societies.

The study of this novel *The Beautiful Once Are Not Yet Born* can be a learning model to develop students' university knowledge. This research works as a contribution for history studies and helps researchers to deal more with studies related to African literature especially Ghana in more detailed scope.

As a future perspective, the present work can function as means for locating some problems caused by colonialism and its effect on mainly the African societies showing not only to the African nation but also to the world the African suffering and pain caused by European colonization

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Appendix

1. Authorial Background

Ayi Kwei Armah, a Ghanaian writer who gained international fame from his fiction in the late 1960s and 1970s. Although critics disagreed about the literary merit of his English language, his six novels and numerous short stories gave him an international fame. Nevertheless, he kept his life in secret and rarely gave information and made interviews about his craft.

Ayi Kwei Armah was born in 1938 in Takoradi, a seaport on Ghana's coast, he belongs to fante, one of the ethnic groups in Ghana; he belongs to an elite family. At the time of his birth, his country was a colony of Britain but after twenty years, Ghana witnessed the national long battle of independence. At that time Armah was a student at Achemota College and worked in the radio of Ghana, then he went to the United States to finish his study in Massachusetts as well as at Harvard University where he gained a degree in sociology, then he came to Algeria working as a translator for *Révolution Africaine* magazine in 1963 (Brennan.1)

Additionally, coming back to Ghana gave him another chance to experience another type of work that is a scriptwriter for its television then an English teacher at Navrongo School in 1966. Later on he travelled to Paris to edit *Jeune Afrique* (Young Africa) a French-Language weekly news magazine, for one year. With the unsettled political conditions, Armah moved to the United States once again and taught at the University of Massachusetts in 1970 and later that year he moved to Tanzania where he settled there for four several years working as a teacher of African literature and creative writings at the college of National Education in Dares Salaam. He kept working as a teacher at the National University of Lesotho, he also produced several literary and political essays for many journals such as *Black World* and *West Africa*. In the 1980's, Armah lived in Dakar Senegal and taught at Amherst and the University of Wisconsin Madison (Ibid).

The writer's works including *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) as his first novel, *Fragments* (1970) and *We Are So Blessed* (1972). These first three novels, for their literary

style and themes, depict the pessimistic point of view of Armah toward the conditions of his country during and after colonialism and the misuse of power by corrupt leaders. His other three novels including *Two Thousands Seasons* (1973), *The Healers* (1978) and *Osiris Rising* (1995) reflect the changing of Armah's views, which reflects the African past, present, and future (Ibid).

2. About the Novel

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).

The book was based on the experience of Ghanaians in the late 1950s and 1960s under the administration of Kwame Nkrumah. The nation's first leader after independence, he mismanaged the economy and was overthrown two years before the novel's publication. The work is considered to be among the key novels that began to reflect criticism of newly established native African governments following the exhilaration of freedom from colonial rule (Ibid).

2.1. Summary

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born is the novel that catapulted Ayi Kwei Armah into the limelight. The novel is separated into two parts. The first part demonstrates the daily routine of the man as a traffic control clerk. However, Armah illustrates the novel with gloomy descriptions of the atmosphere and smells of human immorality, filth, and graffiti, relieved only occasionally by the beauty of some natural phenomena the sky or the sea. In the afternoon, a timber man comes to offer the man a bribe, but he leaves unsatisfied. Later, the man encounters an old friend, now a

government Minister, Joseph Koomson, with his wife, Estella. The man invites the Koomson for a dinner.

The second part of the novel starts when the man returns home after a workday. Relations with his wife, Oyo, are strained because she wants him to experience with her three children the good life. This pressure drives him to live with his compassionate former teacher, also nameless, who is in the same problematic situation as the man, except that he is single. He also rejected to follow the easy path to material comfort. Armah explains in a large chapter the Teacher's monologue about his experiences, his past events, hopes and his enlarging despair. Additionally, the first part of the novel ends when the man awakes from a nightmare. He chooses to take the train instead of the bus, but he is surprised by a young colleague who volunteers to take his place. The man went to walk along the sea, which temporarily puts him in touch with hope, freedom of nature and beauty.

The last two fifths of the novel center on the man's relationship with Koomson and his visit to purchase a fishing boat for his wife with corrupt money although she will never actually own that boat. The climax starts when Kwame Nkrumah's government falls and Koomson loses everything. He comes to the man's home in order to evade arrest. The man helps him to get out and escape from police officers to purchase the boat in order to leave the country. The man is now respected by his wife, but recognizing that he will find relief from living daily in a corrupt society. Consequently, this new government will be the same as the last one. ("Summary Critical Guide to British Fiction").

2.2. The Plot

Armah depicts in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* the unlimited corruption and the effects of colonialism on the people of contemporary Ghana which is the first African country to

gain autonomy from the British control in 1957. This novel has a simple and direct plot that tells the story of unnamed rail clerk and his relations with his wife and family (Killam 9).

The novel begins with an incident in an old bus. Later it shifts to other events. Some incidents are narrowly associated while others are not connected, but they completely contribute to the molding of the whole story. The incidents are organized in chronological order with some flashbacks. In addition, the author applies entirely literacy language showed by many artist features such as symbolism, satire, style and cycle. Armah in "The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born" remarks the circle and cycle of corruption in African societies, mainly in Ghana. He introduces a society occupied with, rot, filth, and disorder. Within the novel, everyone is corrupted which is a straight note on human essence (Ibid).

2.3. Characters

The Man

The protagonist of the novel is unnamed and simply referred to as "the man." This man is a railway clerk carries the terrible burden of principle in a climate of ethics that permits advancement only under the table. He is confused between accepting bribery as a common method of Ghanaian upward mobility and retaining his personal standards and communal commitment with his neighbors. The central image of the novel, human excrement, serves as a metaphor for the corruption and moral decay of his country, and by extension of Africa (Kayode 2).

The Teacher

The teacher is another significant character within the sequence of the novel because he was deeply sensitive to the impact of colonial occupation. At first, he was convinced that Kwame Nkrumah is the savior of the country. Nkrumah, conversely, went the way of other leaders when

they lost their socialistic ideals and principles for the white colonizer (Kayode 4). Moreover, this teacher spends most of his time sleeping, depressed and isolated from society. His only contacts are through radio and books in order to keep himself away from disgust of his atmosphere. Furthermore, both the man and the Teacher knew each other before the war and hoped to change the corrupted activities (Kayode 4-5).

Koomson

He is the Man's classmate before becoming rich. This wealth rises from his shady activities and corrupt deeds. Koomson the illiterate man decides to live luxurious life at the expense of other's sufferings in a society with immoral regime that will easily produce more Koomsons (Kayode 5).

Estella Koomson

Estella is Koomson's wife. She and her husband are accustomed to comfort and gadgets that they have become uncaring to human undergoing as they have neglected the dirt and decay out of which their luxuries come (Ibid).

Oyo

Oyo is the man's wife who is full of greed and hope for a prospered, wealthy and luxury life, she is morally compelled to her mother ideas who drives her to think negatively about her husband and make choices that affect her life and the children. In addition, she always ignores her husband because she is no more satisfied with his honest attitude and wishes him to be like the corrupt and the wealthy Koomson that's why she describes him as a "chichi dodo (Kayode 3).

The novel is generally a satirical attack on the Ghanaian society during Kwame Nkrumah's regime and the period immediately after independence in the 1960s. In this narrative, Armah

demonstrates his eloquence and establishes his trademark as a profound moral. Armah's novel celebrates a strong sense of hope in the midst of savage adversity, the small but not insignificant victories that enable "the man" to live from day to day -- such existential Africana is a philosophy forged on the anvil of hard toil and experience. It is set during the last days of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first president and noted exponent of Pan-Africanism, this book chronicles the fortunes and misfortunes of "the man," the nameless focalizer of Armah's finely crafted novel, who struggles to retain some semblance of integrity, barely surviving in a country where corruption is "the national game." Intense, introspective, darkly melancholic but never misanthropic (Ibid).

ملخص

الغرض من الدراسة الحالية هو تصوير التغيرات التي جلبها الاستعمار اضافة الى وصف أوضاع المجتمع الغاني كما يتجلى من رواية الكاتب أيي كوي أرماء " الأشياء الجميلة التي لم تود بعد" ، هذا العمل يسلط الضوء على خصائص الناس، ظروفهم وحياتهم قبل وبعد الاستعمار البريطاني والطريقة التي يصف بها أرماء مثل هذه الوضع في كتاباته. علاوة على ذلك، هذه المذكرة تناقش مرحلة ما بعد الاستعمار كحقبة من النضال والتحديات للغانيين وكيف تم تمثيله لاحقا في الادب الافريقي. وكدراسة حالة، رواية أرماء الأشياء الجميلة لم تولد بعد كانت العمل المناسب لتصوير الظروف الأفريقية بعد الاستعمار لمعرفة كيفية تعامل الادب مع هذا الموضوع. نتيجة لذلك، النظرية الاستعمارية توفر الأداة الأدبية المناسبة للحصول على أفضل توضيح للعمل. هذه الدراسة تضيف معلومات جديدة لأعمال أرماء الأدبية فيما يتعلق بالمجتمعات المستقلة الموجودة في الرواية. كما ان النتائج تظهر ان الاستعمار البريطاني أثر بشكل سلبي في المجتمعات المستعمرة سواء في غانا او افريقيا بشكل عام.