UNIVERSITÉ D'ABOMEY-CALAVI

****

FACULTÉ DES LETTRES, ARTS ET SCIENCES HUMAINES

Excelsior Semper Excelsior

****

École Doctorale Pluridisciplinaire « Espace, Cultures et Développement »

Thèse en vue de l'obtention du Doctorat Unique d'Études Anglophones

Littérature africaine anglophone

Ayi Kwei Armah and the Development of Africa: The Contribution of the Writer

Présentée et soutenue publiquement par
Par **Constant Yélian AGUESSY**

Directeur de la Thèse
Monsieur le professeur Augustin AINAMON, UAC, Bénin
Codirection de M. S. AtaféÏ PEWISSI, Maître de Conférences, UL Togo

Année Académique 2011-2012

DEDICATION

To:

-my late mother, Josephine Houènoussi Guezodje, who passed away in 1972 and whose death affected my childhood

- my late grandmother Tamadawuian Gounon Yaya

- my late cousin, Eloi Kpossa, who was of a great support for me

- my better half Josiane Deguenon

- my precious children, Sèmèvo Estha Marcia, Percy Sandy Sewedo Sewuidji, Dave Jake Eddy Medesse, and Basile Merry Ayihounhonsi Sedjrogande

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I give thanks to Christ Jesus, Our Lord, Who has given me strength to achieve this work.

I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to Professor Augustin Aïnamon, the supervisor of this work, who has aroused in me the taste and courage to continue this doctoral adventure. Without his clear vision and guidance, the achievement of this research work would have been impossible. He has provided me with a number of valuable and useful materials for the research. Dear Professor, long life to you!

My most sincere thanks go posthumously to Professor Noël Dossou-Yovo who had been the former supervisor of the present research work. Unfortunately, he passed away before the completion of this work. Professor, may your soul rest in peace and find in this achievement all my recognition and sincere gratitude.

I am heavily indebted to the wise man, great in spirit, Professor Komla Messan Nubukpo, who, on many occasions, gave me pieces of advice to go ahead with the work and finally arranged for my work to be jointly supervised at the University of Lomé. Thank you a lot Professor for your constant assistance to the young generation. God bless you!

I am grateful to Associate Professor Ataféï Pewissi, who co-supervised this dissertation with determination and rigor that consist in the permanent search of quality and perfection.

My indebtedness is expressed to Professors Taofiki Koumakpaï, Ambroise Codjo Medégan, and Léonard Koussouhon for teaching me and providing me with

valuable pieces of advice for the writing of this dissertation. Without their awareness raising in students at the University of Abomey-Calavi, very few would find their ways to writing doctoral dissertations.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of Dr. Patrice C. Akogbéto, who, despite his tight professional and administrative schedule, in his capacity as a lecturer and Chairperson of the Department of English at the University of Abomey-Calavi, encouraged and provided me with moral and academic assistance.

I am most grateful to Inspector Barthélémy Abidjo and his better half of secondary and high schools, my godfather, inspector Léonce K. Dossou and Dr. Romuald Mitchozounou for their advice and encouragements. This dissertation is the testimony of their constant support and love to me.

My special thanks go to Dr. Ferdinand Kpohoué, Mr. Aboudoulaye Hakibou, Mrs. Rissikatou Babalola, Mr. Raoul Ahouangansi for their personal involvement, and their kindness, friendship, and support all the way through. Furthermore, I thank all the colleagues from the English Department of University of Abomey-Calavi for their frank collaboration.

I am also indebted to my senior brother Aïssi Dieu-donné, whose brotherly and valuable support has never been unfailing. I would also want to say thanks to my senior sister Martilde for her assistance and advice.

On a special note, I want to sincerely thank my father Florentin Aguessy for providing me financial means and encouraging me in this academic adventure.

Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to all my lecturers and instructors at the Interdisciplinary Doctoral School, Abomey-Calavi, for their insightful seminars. I also

wish for my fellow doctoral students to receive through this modest work, the result of our friendship.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION ..... **II**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ..... **III**

INTRODUCTION **1**

PART ONE: THE OBSTACLES TO AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT AS SEEN IN ARMAH'S NOVELS. **22**

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND TO AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS **23**

1.1 Feudalism as a Handicap to Social Construction 23

1.2 Persecution 24

1.3 Migration 28

1.4 The Responsibility Problem of the African Leaders 33

1.5 The Pyramidal System, a Cultivation of Underdevelopment 37

1.6 Deification of the African Leaders. 40

CHAPTER TWO: AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS IN ARMAH'S NOVELS **44**

2.1 Historical Context 44

2.2 Slave Trade in *Two Thousand Seasons*, *Osiris Rising: a novel of Africa past, present and future* and *KMT: in the house of life.* 45

2.3 Colonialism, a Handicap to Africa's Development 50

2.3.1 Meaning and Justification 50

2.4 Colonial Exploitation, a Cause of Underdevelopment 51

2.4.1 Exploitation of Human Beings 51
2.4.2 Sheer Exploitation of the African Natural Resources 53
2.4.3 Dislocation of the Socio-political and Economic System 56

2.5 Religious Obstacles 62

2.5.1 Alienation 62
2.5.2 Modern Obstacles 69
2.5.2.1 Neo-colonialism, a Network of the European Gangsters 69
2.5.2.2 Capitalism and Imperialism as Grassroots of African Underdevelopment. 78

PART TWO: THE IMPEDIMENTS TO THE RECONSTRUCTION OF POST-INDEPENDENCE AFRICA **82**

CHAPTER THREE: LITERARY ARTICULATION OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPEDIMENTS **83**

3.1 The Cult of Personality as a Retardation Vector of Africa 83

3.2 Nepotism, a Social Calamity 84
3.2.1 Corruption, the Deadlock for the Development of Africa 87
3.2.2 The "brain-drain" a Bedrock of African Underdevelopment 95
3.2.2.1 Unbalanced Partnership in Terms of Exchange 96
3.2.2.2 The Retardation of the Industrialisation of Africa 99

CHAPTER FOUR: CULTURAL IMPEDIMENTS 102
4.1 Loss of Identity 102
4.2 Colonial Languages and Their Impacts on the Continent 107
4.3 The Role of the Colonial Education in the Backwardness of the Continent. 110

CHAPTER FIVE: POLITICAL IMPEDIMENTS 113
5.1 The Failure of the Ideologies and Its Impacts on the Africans 113
5.2 Political Instability 120
5.3 Dictatorship Exercised on the African People 124
5.4 War as an Indicator of Backwardness 130

PART THREE: ARMAH'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT. 137

CHAPTER SIX: FUNDAMENTAL CONDITIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN ARMAH'S NOVELS 138
6.1 Notions of Development 138
6.2 Concept of "Sphere" in the Process of Knowledge Acquisition 141
6.3 Vision of Change 145
6.4 Africa in Transition 155
6.5 Integration of the Continent 160
6.6 Rethinking of the Educational System. 162
6.7 Necessity of Literature to the Development of Africa. 166

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY TO AYI KWEI ARMAH AS A NOVELIST 187
7.1 The Return to the Past as a Way to Development 187
7.2 Connectedness of the Past to the Present as a Base of Remaking the Continent 195
7.3 Myths in Armah's Works 200

CHAPTER EIGHT: ARMAH'S PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO THE RECONSTRUCTION OF AFRICA 206
8.1 The Writer's Early Education as a Springboard to Development 206

8.2 Is Ayi Kwei Armah's Literary Message Pessimism or Optimism? 210
8.3 SomeLiterary Devices and Social Consciousness. 214
8.4 The Foundation of the Per Ankh Publication House. 219
8.5 The Fight for the Overall Liberation of the Continent 220

CONCLUSION 228

BIBLIOGRAPHY 234

INTRODUCTION

Decolonisation has been first and foremost the liberation of the African continent from European yoke. In fact, the battle for freedom had started just at the morrow of World War II. The Africans who had fought on the side of the Allies, i.e. France, the United Kingdom, the United States, China etc., against the countries of the Axis: Germany, Italy and Japan, no longer believed in the white superiority over the African peoples. The reason for that shift in Blacks' attitude was that during that atrocious war, the Africans had discovered the barbarism and the weaknesses of their masters. They helped release the "almighty" colonisers from the assailants and the mouth of death. As a reward for that saving task, the colonisers promised freedom to some of the African countries that took part in the war. But at the end of the war, these colonial powers did not keep their promise. This ingratitude affected the Africans who began claiming overtly their freedom owing to their charismatic political leaders, namely Kwame Nkrumah, Ahmed Sékou Touré, Patrice Emery Lumumba, to name but a few. Henceforth, they no longer feared their masters. As a proof of determination and intrepidity of these political leaders in the course of the march towards independence Lumumba declared:

> Dead, living, free, or in prison on the orders of the colonialists, it is not I who counts. It is the Congo, it is our people for whom independence has been transformed into a cage where we are regarded from the outside… History will one day have its say, but it will not be the history that Brussels, Paris, Washington, or the United Nations will teach, but that which they will teach in the countries emancipated from colonialism and its puppets. A history of glory and dignity.[1]

From this quotation, I can infer that freedom has a price, it is never a gift. Altogether, after the disastrous and chaotic phenomena of slave trade, colonialism and the two World Wars, African peoples got a thorny awareness of their freedom. Thereby, the élites made up of students and scholars, lawyers, trade unionists, African church, African writers, etc., engaged harsh protest movements for the liberation of their continent. The result of that commitment to political liberation was the premature independence of Ghana on the 6th of March, 1957, under the leadership of Dr Kwame Nkrumah. Sékou Touré's Guinea got its independence on

[1] http/ www Wikipedia. Com. Patrice Lumumba, October 1960, retrieved on 12, July, 2011.

the 2nd of October 1958. Faced with the drawbacks of the upheavals and all over the continent, the former colonisers were compelled to grant independence to almost all the African countries.

Broadly speaking, the liberation was almost total in the 1960s. In fact, the accession to independence had been a reality owing to the leaders' determination to fight efficiently for independence at the cost of their lives. The advent of the independences in Africa brought great expectations to the populations, who rightly thought that from that period on, the African nations should be ruled and managed by Africans. This aroused the admiration of these leaders among the African people. The hope for the betterment of the living condition of the masses graded up. It was a common euphoria throughout the continent. Africa must be ruled by the Africans themselves. But underdeveloped countries soon had to face the drawbacks of some historical after effects left by disasters like Slave Trade and Colonialism. She had been victim of colonial exploitation for at least four centuries. In addition to the above impediments, the new African nations had to face the requirements of their populations and the hard work of the populations in order to build a prosperous Africa. In fact, the new ruling classes in Africa failed in their mission of construction and transformation of the independent nations, as the new leaders have fallen into steps with the former colonisers. This state of affairs has blunted all expectations and discouraged other feats. But very soon the Africans were disenchanted, for the fruit did not bear the promise of the flowers. Patrice Lumumba called upon all the Congolese to hard work: "I called up all the Congolese citizens; men, women and children, to set determinedly to work so as to create a thriving national economy which will establish our economic independence"[2]

Unfortunately, the post-independence Africans wallow in vices such as laziness, mediocrity, favouritism, nepotism, embezzlement of the public wealth, retardation of the administrative procedures, rampant corruption which clog dangerously the effective

[2]Http/ www. Wikipedia.com Patrice, Lumumba, October 1960. retrieved on 12th July 2011. (My own translation).

transformation of the black continent. The above vices have been addressed by the foremost Ghanaian novelist Ayi Kwei Armah in his writings in order to satirise the African leaders' behaviours and show the despair of the Africans in general and the Ghanaians in particular after independence . So, after about fifty years of independence, Africa is still far behind in matters of development.

The purpose of this dissertation is to show, through the narrative strategies put in place by Ayi Kwei Armah, how creative literature deconstructs the old and inadequate political structures and suggests new ways of self-commitment and the implementation of truth, justice and equity in order to generate and sustain Africa's development.

In fact, Ayi Kwei Armah was born in 1939 to Fante-speaking parents in the twin harbour city of Sekondi Takoradi, in western Ghana. On his father's side Armah was descended from a royal family in the Ga tribe. Armah grew up in this British colonial port, in a multilingual environment. He received his early education at the prestigious Achimota College, in Accra. The alumni have included Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first president, and the writer Kofi Awoonor.

From1959 to 1963 and from September 1968 to June 1970, Armah was at Groton in USA and Harvard, and Columbia respectively, studying. From September 1964 to 1967, he was in Ghana where he wrote *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. He wrote *Fragments* during his stay for studies at Columbia University. He wrote *Why Are We So Blest*? *Two Thousand Seasons and The Healers* while he was living in Tanzania from August, *1970 to June 1976*. During his stay in Dar-es- Salaam, Tanzania, he learnt Kiswahili and researched in oral storytelling techniques.

Contrary to the views expressed by critics such as Larson, andChinua Achebe, who believes that the writer is alienated and uprooted, Armah insists that his writings are syntheses of extensive research on African history. When he writes," I have deliberately educated

myself about Africa by spending over fifteen years in different parts of Africa."[3] Indeed, Armah has lived in various parts of Africa studying the language and local culture. He has learnt the Ancient Egyptian language to enable him to decode and interpret hieroglyphic writings first hand. He made the observation that:

> The artworks of these ancient times were highly artistic products. The forms of poetic works and techniques of expressing ideas, the ideas themselves, the genre employed, the essays, forms, themes, symbols, rhetorical techniques… the ancestors have left us enormous intellectual tools to work with.[4]

I have quoted from this interview because of its relevance not only to the artistic education of Armah but also to his vision about the return to the "way", the origin. In 1974 Armah published a reviewed article entitled *"*On Sundiata*"* in *The Black World*. It was an appreciation of the thirteenth century epic. The poetics of *Two Thousand Seasons* is also a solemn declaration of Armah's progressive Pan-African stand. Then, in 1976, he published another reviewed article, "The Definitive Chaka" in *Transition*. It took a look at the life of literary genius Thomas Mopoku Mofolo of Lesotho, Southern Africa, in addition to analysis of his English translated work, *Chaka*. Armah is now a resident in Senegal. Though a Ghanaian born, he considers himself an African artist at large. For him Africa is his Home. Modin's answer to a question put to him is indeed enlightening: "You didn't say which country you were from. Were you ashamed? It is not shame. I just think of our small states as colonial things. I'm an African."[5]

With some of his literary works, Ayi Kwei Armah has gone far back in the history of Africa to single out the real beginnings of the impediments linked to the development of the continent. Through Armah's writings, about the continent, I notice that Africa established in the past some epistemic principles which would lead her to development only conceived in the African way. But very soon these epistemic principles have been interrupted in the

[3]Ayi Kwei Armah; *Sundiata, An Epic of Old Mali Black World*: an article (Heinemann, London, 1974), pp.51-2.
[4] Derek Wright "*Ayi Kwei Armah's Africa: The Source of his Fiction*": Thesis (London, New York: Hans Zele, 1989). P.92.
[5] Ayi Kwei Armah, *Why Are We So Blest?* (London: Heinemann, Ibadan 1981), p. 32. Further references are to this edition: the title will be written as *W. A. W.S. B?* followed by page reference when quoted.

passage of time. Considering Armah's vision, the return to the source, in fact, which should be the creed of the African people, Africa does not need to develop, focusing on the foreign epistemic principles, but on the promotion of the knowledge our scholars had established in ancient Africa. That is the reason why I have undertaken to research on this topic. I intend to prospect the writer's most important works to see if it is possible to begin the development of the continent by returning to the origin. As an African saying goes: "*It is at the end of the old cord that one weaves the new one* ", in this sense, it is important to seek for understanding what we did in the past and what can be taken into account for the transformation of the continent. Likewise, I identify the different handicaps, which hamper the evolution and the assets of the continent in terms of development before the incursion of the Arabs and white invaders in Africa.

I hope to give satisfaction to the above preoccupations by probing into history as Armah suggests it in his literary works. He is one of the most provocative and versatile of Anglophone West African writers. He espoused the Pan-African ideals and actively set to work for its international acceptance. He worked jointly with Ngugi wa Thiong'o for a possible adoption of Kiwahili as African regional language. In the early 1960s he epitomised the censor of the new African political leaders in his first novel *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born.* In his first try as a novelist, Armah depicted a sick post independent Africa. He has made use of symbolism to show his bitterness and disappointment with the way the state was managed. For instance, he used the image of a filthy country to prove that nothing has truly changed in the modern Ghanaian nation. To denounce the deterioration of moral and social values in which his native Ghana wallows, he has created nameless and allegorical character "the man" in *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* to show that Ghanaians are collectively responsible for this social ruin. No one is spared; everyone is concerned, for the "man" designates everybody in that Ghanaian society. He uses metaphor by depicting the rampant

corruption which was prevailing in his Ghana at that time as "national game". All the same, he uses the symbols "pyramid" and "sphere" to show the concentration and decentralization of power in the African past and the impacts of these two political systems on the populations. For his first three novels it appears to Achebe and Larson that Armah has written nothing good and generous about African intelligentsia and genius because he did not praise African values. As evidence, one can notice through the following passage his warmonger behaviour against the praise of the African traditional values as had the writers of the first generation like Amos Tutuola, Aimé Césaire, Léopold Sédar Senghor, Wole Soyinka to name but a few:

> For the decade of infamy this is: the names and doings of those who from struggling to usurp undeserved positions as caretakers, in the course of generations imposed themselves on a people weary of strife to think of halting them. Let us finish speedily with their mention. The memory of these names is corrosive. Its poison sears our lips. Odunton, Bentum, Oko, Krobo, Jebi, Jonto, Sumui, Oburum, Ituri, Dube, Mununkum, Esibir, Bonto, Peturi, Torpe, Tutu, Bonsu and lately Koranche. "Who among them was the worst would be the fitting argument for puerile fools or dotars feeling time heavy on their heads, not for rememberers. The quietest king, the gentlest leader of the mystified, is criminal, beyond the exercise of companions. Bentum had his followers seize land. For the first time among us one tried to run land into something cut apart and owned. — the air? An unknown avenger of the people sent him hurrying to face the wrath of ancestors, but that was the end of the greed kings. Krobo had the grasping spirit of Bentum. It was not land alone he craved for, but humans also as his tools to work the land. One youth he had pressed into labouring for him had felled him with iron sharpened days and days on raw stones by the farthest stream. With the still bleeding weapon of his vengeance the labourer cut out his own tongue and came again among the wondering people mute forever.[6]

The above quotation shows succinctly that kings during their past reigns had raised no positive social and moral values. On that point one can say that Armah has mistaken himself, for no human being lives on performing uniquely negative deeds, even the king Adandozan of the kingdom of Danxome known for his cruelty, performed positive actions during his reign; for every human has his or her good and bad qualities. To attack his position about the glory and praise of the African values, the Nigerian writer and critic, Chinua Achebe, discussing Armah's *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* , in the essay 'Africa and Her Writers' (1972),

[6] Ayi Kwei Armah,*Two Thousand Seasons* (Heinemann: London, Ibadan 1973) p. 64-5. Further references are to this edition: the title will be written as *T. T. S* followed by page reference when quoted.

presented at the Eliot House, Harvard University, noted that Armah is ‘a brilliant Ghanaian novelist’, but an ‘alienated native.’ The alienation associated with Armah points to the latter’s setting the novel in Ghana, not in some ‘modern, existentialist no-man 'land’. For Achebe, if "the hero is nameless, so should everything else be". As a reaction to the criticism, Armah wrote several abusive letters to Achebe.

Fortunately, from *The Healers to KMT: In the house of life,* Armah becomes aware of the cultural wealth of the African continent. Through these novels he has proved that Africa has a rich past to which he invites every African to return. For him that immense past riches must be at the core of the development of the continent. As he demonstrates it through *The Healers*, a historical fiction, these healers, medicine men, must have visions for the continent; because they have the drugs which are supposed to heal the diseases from which Africa is suffering. For instance, in *Osiris Rising*, he emphasises the redefinition of the curricula which must be adapted to the African context, not based on the teaching of the foreign knowledge and urges the African leaders to focalise their effort on the education of the children which will be the bedrock of the reconstruction of the continent. The publication of *KMT: in the house of life* confers on Armah his entire dimension as a writer when seen that he urges Africans to read and study the Ancient Egyptian Civilisation from which the world civilisation has been built. Thus, Armah becomes a writer across ages

It is my opinion that one cannot understand my topic if the terms underdevelopment and development that are central to the study are not explained. Globally speaking, the word "Underdevelopment" means the state of not having achieved a high level of economic development. For Walter Rodney; “Underdevelopment makes sense only as a means much tied to the fact that human social development has been uneven and from a strictly economic

point of view some human groups have advanced further by producing more and becoming wealthy." [7]

From this point of view, it is obvious that Africa also can develop, for she possesses available human and natural resources in order to increase her competence and capacity of production. However, for almost four centuries, Africa suffered from slave trade, the inhuman commerce carried out by the Westerners, and then from colonialism, which dehumanised Africa and alienated African people. In this respect, the slave trade and colonisation of Africa can be reckoned as major factors of the continent's, socio-political, economical and cultural predicament. To espouse the ideas of Professor Ali Mazrui:

> Europeans destroyed African institutions of authority and government and have left a major political gap. The rules of living together, which prevailed in the pre-colonial period, the values and collective responsibility of traditional life, were replaced by artificial means imported from Europe[8].

For a long time, Africa has undergone the overwhelming power of colonial rule. Such a situation of destruction, exploitation and pillaging has kept her underdeveloped. Further, it is important to define fully the term development. According to the *Oxoford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, *"Development is the action or process of developing or being developed"*[9]. In another word, it means in human society a many- sided process. At the level of the individual, it implies increased skills and capacities, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being. Some of these are virtually moral categories and are difficult to evaluate, depending as they do on the age in which one lives, one's class origins, and one's personal code of what is wrong. However, what is indisputable is that the achievement of any of those aspects of personal development is very much tied to the state of the society as a whole. So, at the level of social groups, therefore, development implies an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationships. Development in the

[7] Walter, Rodney *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa?* (London :α Tanzania Publishing House, Dar es Salam, 1972) p.13.
[8] Ali Mazrui, *African Condition* (Cambridge University Press, 1980) p. 2.
[9] Jonathan Crowther et al ed, Oxford *Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995), p.318.

past always meant the increase in the ability to clarify the independence of the social group and indeed to infringe upon the freedom of others, something that often came about irrespective of the will of the people within the societies involved. In an ample definition, the term development is used in an exclusive economic sense, the justification being that the type of economy is itself an index of other social features. What then is economic development? A society develops economically as its members increase jointly their capacity for dealing with the environment. This capacity for dealing with the environment is dependent on the fact that they understand the laws of nature, and they implement that understanding through the organisation of work.

In fact, Africa, being the original home of humanity, was obviously a major participant in the process in which human groups displayed an ever-increasing capacity to extract a living from the natural environment. Indeed, in the early period, Africa was the focus of the physical development of man as such, as distinct from other living beings. And this becomes clear in one's mind that Africa has increased considerably her capacity from the Middle Age to the Stone Age. Development is universal because the conditions leading to economic expansion are universal. Africa fulfils these conditions and possesses the criteria, which sustain development. These criteria are human beings (men and women), increase in developmental skills, competence and capacity, and possession of a larger environment with its natural resources. There is no doubt that Africa can develop.

While reading Walter Rodney, Samir Amin, Patrice Lumumba, and Ahmed Sékou Touré. I have realized that their opinion is that Africa is potentially wealthy. For this natural endowment, she is supposed to attain her development. But why is this continent still underdeveloped since achieving independence, despite the great wealth and assets she possesses remains the question to answer. Africa and the countries of South East Asia (the dragons of Asia) have nearly undergone the same situation of domination and total

colonisation. But once independent, the leaders of the dragons of Asia have stuck to their spirituality and language. They have kept their identity, for the spirituality and language constitute the fuel of developmental revolution of any given country. In the same optic, the dragons of South Asian countries strongly rejected the Structural Adjustment Programme that the West wanted to impose on them as a policy of development. By refusing the injunctions from the West they held their destiny in hands and have found the way which leads to the transformation and development of this part of Asia. Why can't the African leaders fall into step with these Asian leaders and stand for the transformation and the development of their continent? Is the past determinant today in the process of reconstruction of the continent? How far did the social misuse of the "pyramids" constitute a handicap for the development of the continent? Altogether, to what extent can the social use of the "sphere" lead to the transformation of the continent? Aren't the policies of transformation conceived abroad and applied to the new African nations dangerous to the progress of the continent? How had the kings and their caretakers in the past been responsible for the interruption of the construction process? Why is Africa still missing all the opportunities to get on the path of development after fifty years of national sovereignty? What are the social, political and economic impediments which hamper the progress of the continent? What can the African do to catch up with the missed development? Is there still any chance for Africa to develop?

To probe into these questions and see whether literature can be used to achieve the development of Africa, I have chosen to discuss the following topic: *Ayi Kwei Armah and the development of Africa: The contribution of the writer.* In that problematic situation of development and underdevelopment prominent Ghanaian writer Ayi Kwei Armah as a physician began to diagnose the impediments linked to the African development in his five novels from The *Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* to *KMT: in the house of life*. In fact, in these novels he scans the evils which slow down the pace of progress of the continent. He

shows through his novels an Africa whose peoples are disillusioned and disenchanted because of the new living conditions that the ruling classes offer them.

Among these evils one can name the cult custodian, violence, injustice, migration, corruption, embezzlement of the public funds, nepotism, mediocrity, lack of professional labour force, dictatorship, lack of democracy, inadequate education systems, and inefficient investment system for the transformation of the continent, etc…, which sink Africa into the abyss of underdevelopment.

One of my main focuses will be also to tackle through Ayi Kwei Armah's novels the question of the responsibility of African leaders in the backwardness of the continent. In short, how have African political leaders underdeveloped Africa? All these analyses will be made from a literary angle. I will also see if there can be a perspective of development in the analysis of creative writers who cannot be isolated from other social actors of the continent.

Working on a topic such as the question of development I know that I am not reinventing the wheel, for many researchers have already carried out some studies, and many colloquia and conferences have also been held about the concept of development of Africa during the last fifty years of sovereignty and a great deal of money has been invested in the continent to back up the different policies of development. Unfortunately, the continent still faces great difficulties in the path of development. This is the reason why it becomes important to explore the African history in order to identify where the obstacles lie and elaborate policies of development by taking into account the African know-how and vision. I strongly hope the present work will be of a great interest to any researcher who chooses to work on the theme of development that is still a topical preoccupation.

For this analysis, I resort to New Historicism to analyse Armah's novels. This theory suggests that literature should be studied or interpreted by taking into account the historical context, of both the history of the writer and the history of the critic. This literary theory

grounded in critical approach that developed in the 1980s primarily through the work of the critic Stephen Greenblatt and won widespread authority in the 1990s. One cannot understand Armah's novels without referring to the history that has inspired the writer. So, it is necessary to evaluate how Armah's works have been influenced by the period in which they are produced. This theoretical approach helps examine the social sphere in which the author moves the psychological background of the author. In fact, Armah's novels can be subdivided into two batches with the colour of transitional novel in between. For instance, the first batch includes *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born and Fragments* which highlight the hindrances to the post independent Africa. Thus relating to Armah's novels, there is a demarcation between the life style of the man's family and his adjuvants characterized by a surrounding poverty and that of Joe Koomson and his accomplices, members of the Socialist Party. *The Healers, Two Thousand Seasons, Osiris Rising, and KMT: in the house of life* and *The Eloquence of the Scribes*, plunge the researchers into the arcane of history. While reading Armah's novels, one notices that the return to history becomes a central factor to the development of Africa. Armah's novels in general are full of historical references that is the reason why one must have a historical background before one reads and interprets them convincingly.

The Marxist Critical Approach is the second theory I intend to use in this study. This theory derives its name from the German philosopher Karl Marx, who finds the capital as the base of social hierarchy and exploitation. His aim in engaging in Marxist criticism is "to open the door to the development of a classless society."[10] Marxist criticism hints at social classes and the different forces that interact in a piece of fiction in order to suggest a better division of power and privileges. Through my research, it clearly appears that literature is the alpha and omega of every development policy because literature raises people's awareness of the different issues of the society. Owing to the reading of the creative production of literary

[10] Kenneth Hoover et al ed, *Ideology and Political Life* (Thomson : USA, 2004), p.100.

scholars, one becomes aware of rights and reacts accordingly in order to better the living standards of the communities. Through their writings, they educate the whole society and propose directly or indirectly the path towards the transformation of the world. However, creative productioon alone cannot help develop a country, still less a continent. Therefore, we also need the other realms such as economics, politics etc of life to implement the development strategies elaborated in the literary field.

Actually, my first real contact with Ayi Kwei Armah's writings dated back to 1997 when I was in my second year in the English Department at the then National University of Benin (UNB) when the lecturer, the late Mr. Sarrè was in charge of teaching me African literature. In that position the late Pascal Sarrè introduced me to the world of Ayi Kwei Armah through the study of his first novel, *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968). In this novel, Armah depicts Kwame Nkrumah's regime wherein corruption was rampant and seen as a national game by the populations. Indeed, Armah shows an image of an Africa sick of her new leaders after independence. An Africa characterized by laziness, mediocrity, nepotism and the cult of personality on the behalf of the élites. The African peoples who were expecting the betterment of their living standards, transformation and construction of an Africa bruised and weakened by slave trade and colonialism, were thoroughly disillusioned. Hence, the title *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* which means in fact those African leaders are not ready to carry out the construction work through good governance. It equally shows that the post independent period has been a sheer failure for the new nations. There was a general unconsciousness as regards the management of the State's affairs. This state of affairs did not bring about the expected take off of the new nations whereby the political instability, characterised by the repeated coups d'état. In this condition, the conceived policies for development have never been thoroughly executed. Armarh's preoccupation here does not singularly concern his country Ghana only but the whole African continent.

Published in 1970, *Fragments* tells Baako's story as a "been-to", a person who has studied abroad and has returned to his homeland. Baako went to America in order to study and come back like a big shot. At his departure, Baako's grandmother Naana, a blind-seer, who stands in living contact with the ancestors in the novel, offered a ceremony of libation to the ancestors in order to ask him for their protection. As one reads the novel, it is clear that the relatives are very happy to have one of theirs go to America, for he is expected to bring them glory from his adventure, honor and wealth. Contrary to their will and needs, he chose to read art which offers neither glory nor wealth in the way they want it. The unique thing that the recreated Ghanaian community praises is material wealth. That is the reason why the character Henry Robert Hudson Brempong appears as a Ghanaian prototype in Armah's fictional world. Whenever he has the opportunity to go abroad, he very often returns with valuable goods such as brandnew cars from the factory, fridge of high quality in accordance with his people's needs. As an illustration, he said to Baako:

> 'It's no use,' said Brempong, 'going back with nothing. 'You may not have the chance to travel again in a long time. It's a big opportunity, and those at home must benefit from it too. I don't see the sense in returning with nothing. But you haven't had much experience.[11]

It is bad to come back home barehanded. As one has the chance to go abroad they must bring with them some materials and the relatives must also have their share. Obviously, Baako has failed this mission, for he came back home poor with a guitar and a typewriter as the only properties. In this Ghanaian materialistic perspective, his relatives, in particular his mothers in several circumstances have asked him their share of the wealth he has brought home. "When is yours coming Baako?" 'What?' he asked, surprised 'Yours, your car so that my old bones can also rest'" (Frag p. 71.) Baako has no adequate answer to this request and no wealth to offer his relatives. Under the strain of the unfilled expectations Baako finally breaks. Not only does Baako fail to meet the needs of his relatives but also has difficulty to enter Ghanavision.

[11] Ayi Kwei Armah, *Fragments*, (Heinemann: London, Ibadan, 1971), p. 53. Further references are to this edition: the title will be written as *Frag* followed by page reference when quoted.

As in his first novel, Armah contrasts the world of materialism and that of moral values, corruption and dreams, integrity and social pressure. This approach to social and political life is an attempt to call the reader's attention to how literature can be put to social and political uses, an aspect that is central to my study.

In 1998, I was introduced to the Armah's third novel; *Two Thousand Seasons* (1973) by my supervisor Professor Augustin Ainamon. His lecture on the novel drew my attention to the fact that Ayi Kwei Armah is a writer of a great dimension. Since then I have been interested in reading Armah's novels despite my narrow understanding of his works at that time. In the process, I have come to understand that in *Two Thousand Seasons*, Armah recalls history and points out that the slave trade and colonialism have been some of the remote causes of the backwardness of the continent. He has also marked out the responsibility of the African kings, monarchs, caretakers and chiefs, by satirizing the dictatorial deeds of King Koranche in the novel. Political murder in *The Healers* is another portrayal of political leaders who have people kill others on their behalf. In this novel, it is unjustly believed that Densu killed Prince Appia to inherit the throne while it is rather the ambitious Ababiou who is the intelligence behind the plot. It was in 2000 that I believe having understood Armah's vision on Africa and the mystic dimension of his personality while reading *Fragments*, his second novel.

In *The Healers*, Ayi Kwei Armah shows that Ashanti kingdom had fallen because of the prevailing disunion within its different components. Africa's weakness became then obvious because of the division between the aristocrats, commoners and the slaves. This disunity is the disease the African people suffer from. It is clear that a house divided against itself cannot stand. The healers in question are traditional medicine practitioners who see fragmentation as the lethal disease of Africa. Their task is to awaken people who have slept too long and prepare them to cultural and intellectual resistance against the colonisers. In my

dissertation I will prove that this disunity will keep African people under domination and worsen the underdevelopment of Africa. In this respect, I will propose unity and responsibility are remedies to break the chain with which Europe has entangled Africa for centuries now. To achieve performance Africa needs her healers, the best leaders who will find solution to these problems. It is the reason why I have chosen this novel as core corpus.

In *Osiris Rising* (1995), I have come across an African American lady in the name of Ast, who lusts for returning to the origin in order to find out her roots. But once she came to the Hapa airport, she was confronted with the hard useless security system of the host country, which is under Set's responsibility. Instead of using this security system to protect those who are carrying out the work of reconstruction, Set uses his security power to destroy whoever constitutes a threat to his interests and power. Here, it is the ill fate of Asar who singles him out as the liberator of Hapa on the one hand and of the continent on the other hand, considering the almost fatal work of liberation he carried out in South Africa and other parts of the continent. In the field of education, with the contributions of his African scholars, Asar reconsidered the educational system putting at a standby the colonial curricula so far taught in the African academic system, by focusing on the teaching of the African values to the young generation. There also he is faced with the rampant neo-colonialism which constitutes the first real handicap to the forwardness of the continent. In the novel he has substantiated the responsibility of the African leaders in the burden and misfortune of the continent. As a solution, he identifies the human being as a central factor of development and lays a great emphasis on the good management of the state's affairs and the education of children, the future generation that will devote their lives to the construction of the continent. Even if Armah did not praise an authentic Africa in the conception of Chinua Achebe who asserts that Armah's first novel is sick, the second that is the worst of the three, one can notice with pride that Armah's works lead to the road of the reconstruction and development of

Africa. For this reason Armah is the physician who knows the appropriate drugs likely to heal Africa from her ills.

Ayi Kwei Armah's last but one novel, *KMT: In the House of Life (2002)*, deals with Armah's whole philosophy about the transformation and the process of the development of the African continent. In the novel I have come across Lindela Imana, a smart and brilliant school girl, the round character, who is mourning her destroyed school mate called Biko Lema, a smarter than herself. In fact, Biko was rusticated from White Castle School because of his eagerness, eager desire to learn, his determination and thorny consciousness for success. Most of the time he get into troubles with his white professors when he discovered new information about African people from deciphering the hieroglyphics, the latter received his thirst for knowledge as a challenge to them. After his rustication, he can no more bear the misfortune and committed suicide. This situation upset and influenced enormously Lindela's whole existence. The question raised here is: Why can the field of knowledge which is vital to the transformation of human life and environment be hidden and delimited? Through Lindela's clandestine reading of hieroglyphics, she met Professor Jego Sipha, who sharpened and strengthened her interest in the field. They resolved to go to Yarn, to meet Djiely Hor and Astw Konate, two traditionalists who helped them search for the truth about the origin: Africa. In the course of their research, they have come to the truth that, in fact, Africa had established epistemic principles and begun the stages of progress in the past. Unfortunately, the progress had stopped, for the members of the house of life resolved to share either knowledge with everyone in the society or keep it away from the ordinary people. Therefore, the house of life lost its unity and split into two parts: the groups of keepers and sharers of knowledge. This division diverted the keepers from their function as guardians of the memory of the society. Over time, they went alongside the kings and misused the power of their knowledge. Considering the knowledge that the scribes had transcribed one sees clearly that

Africa has developed throughout her history some policies for forwardness and it will be extremely wrong to envisage the development of the continent through exogenous values and policies. That is the reason why a strategic return to the way must become a *sine qua non* condition for the liberation of the continent.

The Eloquence of the Scribes (2006) one of the latest of his books, delves Armah into the universe of his Akan tradition and history. Through it, the writer has a stronger desire to understand himself, the society in which he lives, and the whole universe. In this perspective, he makes a deep account of his own childhood, and life, and asserts his belonging to two royal families both his mother and father sides. The divorce of his parents is the direct consequence of these two cultural belongings. In his childhood, through narratives told from his mother's side, the matriarchy comes across the reality that the Akan people were the inhabitants of North of Africa in far- off Sudan, the site of a very great Black Nation. But it was because of the Arabs' invasion and cultural domination that they migrated towards the African grasslands. For him, in view these narratives, it is impossible to convince Africans that they had no history. In the novel, Armah also points out that the education that the West offers the African child is that one which had worsened and will worsen the underdevelopment of the continent. For Armah, the only way to salvation will be the sheer breakaway from the West and its institutions concerning the implementation of the educational system in the continent. In the same sense, I realize, while reading the novel that the writer has personally committed himself to the dynamics of the liberation. After many vain attempts to join the activists of liberation of the continent, he has returned to his initial lifework the creative art/literature. He also informs us about his disappointments with Heinemann publishers Institution which, for ten years has illegally printed and sold fraudulently Armah's creative works. In his commitment against the fraud and exploitation orchestrated by Heinemann, Armah in collaboration with his pan-African friends founded Per

Ankh, the African Publishing House at Popenguine in Senegal. He informs the readers about the beginnings of the foundation:

> I knew things were getting serious when I invited Ousmane Sembène to a founding partner and he laughed. Point blank, in the manner he has perfected over a long and productive life, he told his opinion. African intellectuals like me, he said, were good at seeking positions in existing institutions, but inept when it came to creating new ones. He would help me set up the cooperative, provided I promised not to ask to attend meeting after meeting. He put up a quarter of the minimum deposit required under the Senegalese law. A businessman friend, Lamine Guèye, also put up a quarter; I added the remaining half, and we founded PER ANKH, the company we prefer to call the African publishing cooperative.[12]

In the excerpt above one sees obviously the Ghanaian writer's determination to break the ties with the colonial masters and start setting up the vision of rebuilding a balkanised Africa. In brief *The Eloquence of the Scribes* is nothing but a report on the intersection of one writer's consciousness with the tradition it belongs to and assumes. Indeed, the decoding of the message of this book will contribute to writing my dissertation. So, the above novels represent the core of my research work.

This research work will be articulated around three main parts. The first part of my dissertation deals with "The Obstacles to Africa's Development as seen in Armah's Novels". In this part I address the remote causes of underdevelopment and highlight the responsibility of the African traditional chiefs, kings, caretakers, priests, keepers, scribes as regards the predicament of Africa. I will also tackle the role of the foreigners in keeping African continent underdeveloped. In the second part I address "The Impediments to the Reconstruction of Post-Independent Africa in Armah's novels". Here, my main task will be to diagnose the evils which jeopardise the effective reconstruction of the continent. In this perspective, I show through Amah's writings the African élites and leaders' behaviours when they seized power and prove that Armah's novels are in the dynamics which lead to a sudden

[12] Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Eloquence of the Scribes* (Per Ankh: Popenguine Senegal 2006), p.298. Further references are to this edition: the title will be written as T. *E. S* followed by page reference when quoted.

awareness of the predicaments that hamper the progress of the continent. The third part is entitled “Armah’s Contribution to the Development of the African Continent.” At this level I have chosen to see in the realm of literature if there will be any possible transformation once the African people have returned to their origins, that is to say to their source, customs, culture, traditions, in brief, to African civilisation (ancient Egypt Civilisation) the only way to possible development. In addition, I will address the writer’s personal commitment to the liberation of the continent and finally show the potentials of Africa for a prospective development in Armah’s novels and extend my analysis to other fields of social realities.

Part one: The Obstacles to Africa's Development as Seen in Armah's Novels.

Chapter One: Background to African Development Problems

1.1 Feudalism as a Handicap to Social Construction

According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, feudalism means "the attitudes and structure of the feudal system, which is the social system that existed during the Middle Ages in Europe."[13] Under this system, people received land and protection from a nobleman, and worked and fought for him in return.

Likewise, within African societies, the caretakers, the Kings and the Emperors also practised this social system which had been used in Europe during the middle Ages. This system could not help people enjoy the fruit of their work, for they are submitted and exploited under violence and control of the kings, caretakers and the emperors. Through this social system, subjects are poor and noble men, without working, become the wealthy men. Armah condemns that injustice, that usurpation of the fruit of work and theft in *KMT: in the house of life*:

> Now any thief, better armed than his victims, can take away the victims' land. Any murderer, after a successful slaughter and theft, can find poets and priests to purify his bloody name, to call his theft of other people's lands and property a conquest, the murderer a glorious conqueror. [14]

Consequently, the subjects were economically backwarded in comparison with the other social classes. Ayi Kwei Armah denounces this social system in his *Two Thousand Seasons:* "Bentum had his followers seize land. For the first time among us one man tried to run land into something cut apart and owned. It was asked what next the greedy would think to own _ the air?" (T.T. S p. 64) This quotation suggests the people's complaints of this expropriation of land carried out by Bentum and his followers. The intention behind this grasping spirit of

[13] Jonathan Crowther et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995), p. 430.
[14] Ayi Kwei Armah, *KMT: in the house of life*, (Per Ankh: Popenguine, Senegal, 2002.), p.298. Further references are to this edition: the title will be written as *KMT* followed by page reference when quoted.

Bentum has been the exploitation and domination of his subjects. Ayi Kwei Armah's thought is clear about this intention: "krobo had the grasping spirit of Bentum. It was not land alone he craved, but humans also as his tools to work the land" (T.T.S p. 64) .From this citation, one notices that feudalism bears the germs of underdevelopment such as expropriation of land and people's exploitation and domination.

In his *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa?* , Walter Rodney made reference to Karl Marx who defined feudalism in these words: "Feudalism, where agriculture remained the principal means of making a livelihood, but the land which was necessary for that purpose was in the hands of few, and they took the lion's share of the wealth."[15] As a result, the peasants (called serfs) must work hard to enrich their masters whereas they themselves lived in poverty. This situation does not increase the social standards of people but leave them in a state of squalor. Altogether, those who rebelled against that socio-political and economic system were persecuted.

1.2 Persecution

It is the fact of treating in a cruel way somebody especially because of race, political and religious beliefs and points of view or submitting someone to great pressure. When people are persecuted, they have no possibility to conduct serious reflections on social matters. They bear within themselves a great fear, which dominates all actions they carry out. Whoever you are, once the chief, the king, the emperor and the Head of state notices that your thoughts go against the social hierarchy they declare you enemy of the clan or society. This cannot encourage any effort of private initiatives that are the bedrock of all emancipation. People do not have the possibility of creating, innovating and inventing for the welfare of the clan or society. Whoever disobeys the hierarchy and contradicts the prevalent social thought must be punished, banned or sentenced to death. That was the case in Europe of the Italian

[15] Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa?* (London α Tanzania Publishing House, Dar es Salam, 1972), p. 7.

Galileo when he proclaims, 'the earth turns around the sun'. Immediately he was tried and forced, to retract in desperation, he murmured 'And yet, it turns'. In the same dynamics, Socrates, the Greek philosopher was accused of corrupting the youth because of his teachings; then he was made to drink hemlock. In human societies, persecution exists in some way or the other. The most important thing is to overcome this inhuman behaviour and establish freedom of speech and expression of point of view, which inevitably destroys ignorance and sets up the basis of social construction. During the passage of time, European societies came over with this right to difference, which is capable of contributing to the modernisation of their countries, in one word, their continent. What about African societies?

Armah depicts persecution in African societies as one of the many fundamental causes of the plight of Africa in his novels. *Two Thousand Seasons* offers many instances of persecution, which impede Africa's take off. One of these in this novel is the destruction of the eyes of the "fundi" in charge of the weaving craft. In fact the fundi wove a magic cloth all by himself, the properties of which amaze king Esibir. He therefore became jealous of the "fundi" and had his eyes put out. So, the king out of cruelty destroyed the human industry which made the beautiful magic and colourful cloth and stopped the spread of that new way of manufacturing cloth. We can witness this cruelty which discouraged any effort at creation and invention through the following quotation:

> The king Esibir was entranced. Just as secretly, he asked the fundi if he had woven this magic cloth all by himself. Anticipating untold wealth and endless honours for himself, the fundi just nodded yes, for the earth has ears. It is as secretly the king asked the fundi if he had made any more of the cloth. The fundi shook his head: not yet. Just as secretly Esibir the king had fundi's eyes put out. No other man, if the king Esibir had his way, no other man would ever wear cloth to rival his. (T.T.S p. 102)

It appears clearly from the above quotation that the African authorities are against progress and evolution. It is the reason why they destroy automatically or persecute any man of vision and ambition who takes the road to knowledge, which leads unavoidably to development.

This shows that the people responsible for the underdevelopment of Africa are the Africans (sons/ daughters) themselves. They hamper private and individual initiatives into crippling seeds of development that should result. In fact, it is because chiefs, kings and heads of state want to protect and keep their hegemony over their subjects and their populations that they sacrifice men of great ambition. Whoever wants to challenge their authority or wants to transform the environment becomes subversive, and must be a victim of persecution. Isanusi in *Two Thousand Seasons* was persecuted, for he disobeying King Koranche's orders and afterward was banished from the clan.

In fact, King Koranche instructed Isanusi to persuade his subjects to welcome the white destroyers. However, to the general surprise, Isanusi rejected the king's assignment; for he swears never to tell lies to his kinsmen. To punish him the king declares Isanusi subversive to his power and promises to end his life any time it pleases him. Here is an excerpt from the novel that points out the contradiction between King Koranche and his truth teller Isanusi:

> Isanusi made sure he had not heard wrong: that what the king wanted him to do was to use his gift of eloquence to mystify the people. Then Isanusi rejected the assignment, pleading incompetence. After the king's begging and temptative of corruption 'The king urged him to reconsider, to accept. The people respect you. They listen to you, Isanusi, and they believe what you say.' The king promised Isanusi gifts, promised him more gifts, asked Isanusi what his heart desired, asked him what would give comfort to his tongue. (T.T.S p. 101-2)

Moreover, Isanusi resolves to speak finally but only truth to his listeners at the risk of his life. "Isanusi spoke to the people. He spoke truth to the people and the truth raised a fury of the king and his hangers on. The king and his courtiers declared Isanusi mad and had him thrown out of the people's protection." (T.T.S p. 101) From then on, Isanusi was declared subversive and persona non grata to the king and his courtiers and was constantly persecuted.

In *Osiris Rising* too, Asar, a fighter for freedom, a revolutionary and man of great ambition is persecuted by Set, the security head, because of his progressive vision. Asar is thought to be subversive because he works for liberation; he is a man of action. He is even the

backbone of the changeover of the curricula taught in the academic field in Happa Republic. It is the reason why the authorities hate him. In addition, he is very often a victim of persecution, on behalf of the security system. An instance of persecution appears clearly in the following talk between the student chairperson, the security agent and Asar. Here is the dialogue:

> One security man got out rather sheepishly through the right door. Asar followed, then the last man also came out. Asar was calm. The student chairperson said: 'you have one of our lecturers with you. Are you taking him with his consent?' No answers. The secretary of the Urama Troupe turned to Asar: 'Did you?' He asked in a loud voice, 'ask these gentlemen to come for you?' Asar answered 'No'. The first security man said: 'He is under arrest' [16].

This quotation shows the way men of progress in Africa are hunted, oppressed, tortured and even assassinated because of their thoughts, visions etc…This is acknowledgment of solo thought. The institutionalisation of the mono partysm is the opposite pole of the changeover. In his *Anthills of the Savannah*, Chinua Achebe denounces the persecution exercised on certain elites who stay away from the political sphere. That is the case of Chritopher Oriko, Commissioner for Information, wanted by the security officers. Here is how Achebe's narrator puts it:

> Then at six o'clock, came a police statement declaring Mr.Christopher Oriko, Commissioner for Information wanted by security officers in connection with the recent coup plot and calling on anyone who had information concerning his whereabouts to contact the nearest police station and warned citizens that concealing information about a coup plotter was as serious as failing to report a coup plot or taking part in a coup plot, and the penalty for each was death. [17]

On the same ground, persecution is commonplace in Africa. As proof one can mention that in Sékou Touré's Guinea that the writer Camara Laye was persecuted, wanted, declared subversive to the regime and compelled to exile. In the same vein in Nigeria, Wole Soyinka, writer and Nobel Prize for literature was sentenced to death by the Nigerian government because of his "provocative" and "aggressive writings". Furthermore, Ken

[16] Ayi kwei Armah, *Osiris Rising*: *A novel of Africa past, present and future*, (Per Ankh: Popenguine, Senegal, 1995) P.236-7 Further references are to this edition: the title will be written as *O.R* followed by page reference when quoted.
[17] Chinua Achebe, *Anthills of the Savannah* (Heinemann: London, Ibadan, 1983), p.171.

Sarowiwa was a victim of persecution and was finally executed because of his defence of the interests of his people. He claimed more equity for his people. He asked the then government to treat his people with more care. In the republic of Benin in the course of the revolution, many people were persecuted, hunted and tortured and they had to run abroad. Among these elites, one can name Mr Adrien Houngbédji who fled to Gabon, the former presidents Hubert Koutoukou Maga and Emile Derlin Zinsou to France etc…

Based on the above example related to African writers, free thinkers and politicians' tribulation, one can reasonably say that persecution is one of the causes of the underdevelopment of Africa since it prevents people from having new and good thoughts, and developing positive thought, which ineluctably leads to the changeover of individuals and their environment. So, one of the consequences of the persecution is the exile of the persecuted.

1.3 Migration

From migration comes from the verb 'migrate', which means "to move from one place to go to live or work in another"[18] according to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*.

In Ayi Kwei Armah's novels, migration is a quest for the ideal society; it is a consequence of bad treatment the masses undergo. The whole world history is that of migration. What is migration, shortly speaking? Migration is the process through which individuals, or groups of persons move from one place to go and live or work in another place. At the beginning of times, human beings migrated for many reasons. Human beings migrated in search of good living conditions, fleeing climatic extremes for good living conditions. Naturally, the first human beings migrated in search of better settlements, and food conditions. From Neanderthal man to Homo sapiens, migration was the means of life through which human

[18] Jonathan Crowther et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995), p.737.

beings found salvation. However, with the human evolution and progress during passage of time, human beings found it necessary to settle down. From then on, humans have their life environments and have dwelt there for many centuries.

Contrary to that natural movement of people in the past, in African contemporary societies migrations of people are due to the spite, malice, hatred and jealousy of men. An instance of this is seen in *Two Thousand Seasons* where people moved because of the cruelty, jealousy, greed and malice of their caretakers. Ayi kwei Armah hints at the misbehaviour of human beings in the following narrative excerpt:

> In the thirty-fourth seasons of Brafo's life his father- may like disasters strike those among our elders whose greed overwhelms their knowledge of the way-saw the amazing beauty of his own ward Ajoa and grew helpless before his dotard passion. The girl was in the thirtieth of seasons, a few seasons woman in body, in her spirit still a child. Brafo's father was close to a hundred seasons. Growing up together, Ajoa saw in Brafo a hunter greater than his father. Brafo saw in Ajoa a beauty and a skill to match his mother's. The father, surprised by the discovery, was first stuch important with rage, then maddened with a desire to destroy both son and the beloved child. The children were wiser than their elder silently-distance is the hatred of those who love they moved away. With them went Brafo's mother, together with others of the family tired of old man greed *(*T.T.S pp.5-6*)*

From this excerpt, it appears clearly that greed and misdeeds are the causes of migration, which worsens the underdevelopment of Africa. The other proof of migration in the novel is natural scourge or calamity. We notice this as follows:

> Before Anoa's utterance then, our migrations were but an echo to the alternation of drought and rain. Who is it calling for examples? The people of Antobam spared exhausted soil and moved closer to the forest. True it was the drought was fierce that season. Three baobab trees were struck at once by the same instant bolt of lightning, three trees standing far apart. In their places not one faggot of wood was left only ash. (T.T.S p.6)

In the aforementioned excerpt appear the bad environmental conditions that Ayi Kwei Armah sums up the natural causes of underdevelopment because they make people unstable, wanderers incapable of concentrating on the construction of the continent. But other causes are the misdeeds of human beings. The foreign invasions carried out respectively by the Arabs from the deserts, (the predators) and the white men from the sea (the destroyers). These

invasions rendered life difficult to the indigenous and forced them to migrate in order to escape those atrocities and harshness. In migrating Africans leave everything behind; life is for them a perpetual beginning.

This situation leads Africans to disintegration and worsens the weakness of the African continent. As illustration one can quote this:

> Better to leave everything behind and go seeking unknown places where our spirits would still have room to move. Better than to stay here in bodies emptied of our spirits, with an alien, hate-filled with spirits forced into them. For how were we, a people of friendship, a people of reciprocity, people of the way, how were we to accept a road of life constructed by a god of hate, god of unreasoning violence, a childish god who promises each of his heavy lidded dotard slave followers virgins for his final, unending lechery? (T.T.S p.42)

From the foregoing quotation, the everlasting beginning to my point of view constitutes one of the hurdles of development of the continent. It is very evident that Armah measured the importance of the disintegration through the following statement:

> We came away from the desert's edge thinking we were fleeing ruin, but its deepest causes we carried with us to new places. Within our bosom we fed a disease killing us. The other, complementary disease, blight without which the first would have remained mere irritation, that other plague came at us incredible, monstrous from sea. (T.T.S p.59)

From this quotation, it appears explicitly that the permanent instability will never allow the transformation of the continent and the growth of its economy. This motion and disintegration accentuate the ruin of the continent and weaken the Africans. Even, they are not free in their minds. They are victims of all sorts. This cannot allow them to have positive thoughts, which will be the best guarantee for the changeover of human society.

By failing to change our old manners, habits, Africans will never get out of trouble. In the same vein, the other causes of migration, which weaken every effort of development and keep the continent backward in every field, are the different armed conflicts, and certainly genocides; these constitute obvious indexes of underdevelopment. Therefore, poverty, misery, hunger and diseases such as malnutrition, malaria and HIV etc, very often strike the continent.

Many countries in Africa have been and are the seats of genocides. Among these countries, one can mention Rwanda, Burundi, Republic of Central Africa, Sierra Leone, Côte-d'Ivoire and Democratic Republic of Congo etc…

I witness the aftermath of these genocides, armed conflicts in Véronique Tadjo's novel *L'ombre d'Imana : voyage jusqu'au bout du Rwanda :* " Il faut à présent enterrer les morts selon les rites, enterrer leurs corps séchés, leurs ossements qui vieillissent à l'air libre, pour ne garder d'eux que la mémoire rehaussé de respect."[19].

Actually, in the conflicting situation where the human potential, which constitutes the engine of development, is thoroughly destroyed, the continent is reduced to poverty, a patent indicator of underdevelopment. It is a reality that during war, no one can work, produce for the economic growth. Therefore, Africa has become a beggar waiting only for foreign aids. What effort of changeover can one expect from a continent torn by war? If not, nothing but desolation, despair and a situation of cul- de- sac which is HIV, reducing the continent's chance to overcome the underdevelopment? Tadjo typifies this chaotic situation of the spread of AIDS after the Rwandan genocide in her novel:

> A la fin de la guerre, elle était retournée dans son quartier, dans sa maison. Le voisin avait repris sa vie et ses activités d'avant. Un jour elle tomba gravement malade. Elle pensa qu'elle allait mourir. Et ce fut cet homme-là, infirmier de profession, qui vint la soigner. Il s'occupa d'elle pendant plusieurs jours. A force de soin, elle finit par se rétablir. Au fil de ses visites, un amour naquit entre eux. La veuve se donna à lui. Alors, les habitants du quartier s'offusquèrent : « Comment peux-tu vivre avec l'homme qui a tué ton propre fils ? » Et elle de répondre : "où étiez-vous quand j'étais malade et quand je souffrais. Cet homme m'a sauvé la vie. Depuis la guerre je ne me porte pas bien. Qui sait si je ne suis pas atteinte du sida ? Cet homme partage le sida avec moi. Qui d'entre vous aurait fait de même? [20]

This excerpt bears the germs that destroy Africa, such as wars, genocides and their drawbacks. Thus the AIDS pandemic which strikes the continent, compromises dangerously its forwardness, for the productive population, I mean the youth is sick. As a result, the continent whose population is ill is also ill. One cannot expect in this context of despair any

[19] Véronique, Tadjo, *L'ombre d'Imana : voyage jusqu'au bout du Rwand*a (Actes Sud, 2000) p.55.
[20] Véronique Tadjo, *L'ombre d'Imana voyage jusqu'au bout du Rwand*a, (Actes Sud, 2000), p. 47.

effort from the ill people. This state of affairs affects the economic growth into reducing the possibility of Africa to develop. Hence, the rampant poverty sinks the continent into the abyss of underdevelopment.

Armah goes deeper in the past of Africa through investigations on the ancient Egyptian civilisation to depict the share of the African authorities in the destruction of the process of building the continent. For instance, in *KMT: in the house of life* the writer strips off the bad deeds of kings and their courtiers, griots and priests. The latter, to set up solidly their power tried to grasp the house of life, a free entity where knowledge lies, comparable to the contemporary universities for their selfish interests. There, people went for vocational or academic trainings. In this 'institute' the different epistemic principles were taught. After many attempts, the kings and their followers failed to control the prestigious house of knowledge. Consequently, they demolished the house, began raiding its members and compelled them to exile. The following passage is a perfect illustration of Armah's conception about the motion of Africans in the remote past:

> Here is the agreement: among sharers moving toward new beginnings there is room for those drawn east and south and west. There is room for those driven to flee the disaster in familiar homes, and those drawn by the beauty of new possibilities. Once the number is reached, twenty-one women, twenty-one men with their families and friends, the motion into new beginnings continues, the forty-two choosing their own direction. (KMT p.293)

These everlasting beginnings constraint the migrants to settle in environments new to them, environments which impose on them new ways of life. Actually, this estate of instability caused to some extent by the greed, cruelty and the lust for power of the kings and their supporters typifies the responsibility of the Africans in the disruption of the process of development in the past.

1.4 The Issue of the Responsibility of the African Leaders

Responsibility is according to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* "the state or fact of being responsible. It is also a duty for which the person is responsible." [21]

In investigating about ancient Egyptian civilisation, through *KMT: in the house of life* Ayi Kwei Armah has established clearly the role of the Africans themselves in the disruption of the process of knowledge construction. Reading his account in his last novel, but not the one, one comes across the fact that knowledge which appears as a natural gift at the very first beginning was diversely used to serve the interests of kings and their followers. In effect, in the past, Africans owing to their intelligentsia and ingenuity created knowledge centres termed as the 'houses of life'. There, people came for initiation through which they received either vocational or academic training and these houses were good references to today's universities. They constituted something like the schools of thoughts that helped human beings keep the memories of past generations for the coming ones. Armah accounts for this goal in scribe Nebt Medw Netcherw's speech:

> Words of the writer Nebt Medw Netcherw, scribe of the companions of Jehwty and Maât. She has set them down on a double roll of pressed papyrus, the inscription done in black ink with red titles, in this year Seven after the founding of the companionship in the season of inundation akhet, month one, day one, the propitious day. She says, the scribe: I was elected by the gathering of equal companions in the house of life. What they bade me do was to record the deliberations of the meeting of our hearts. Our desire is to leave an offering of living memory. It is to be made up of the best ideas marking our paths here in our time, of thoughts that moved us to action, of actions we succeeded in and of those where we fell short, of those we began but could not finish. The companions instructed me to write their hope that these thought offerings floating across time, in that bark of Jehwty that is writing, may infuse the breath of life into memory, so that the coming generations may not forget that you flow from us. May you remember us as blood of your blood, flesh of your flesh, bone of your bone, sinew of your sinew, spirit of your soul. May you know that we, in our time, breathed the same air, drank the same waters, shared the same hopes you will come to find. May you remember our names, knowing that they carry markers of our character. May you keep our names, the youngest descendant being called after the oldest ancestor, so that none of our name is lost. The loss of our ancestral name is the loss of living soul. May you remember that others left us the gift of memory, that every generation might know that the universe belongs not to it alone but to all of us dead, all alive, all yet to be born. May you treat earth and sky,

[21] Jonathan Crowther et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995),p1000.

> river and air, the universe around us, with love if you have love to give. And even if you are too tired to love, may you treat spirit, tree, grass, fowl, beast, worm, sand, soil and water with care, and press upon everyone and everything with affection, your presence light as the feather of Maât, Ankh, Wja, snb. (*KMT p.215-6)*

The quotation above points out the way the forefathers organised the perpetuation of their memories and knowledge in the past. That task of transmitting knowledge started by the scribes in the houses of life aimed at immortalising the African ways of living, culture. Regarding all this, it is important to confirm that the safeguard and sharing of this heritage should constitute the foundation of emancipation of African people and the transformation of their environment. The houses of life had to be cultural identity cards of the African continent and would have allowed Africa to build the greatest civilisation in the world as it is the force of culture that permits to set up civilisation. In reality, those houses should have witnessed the intelligentsia and ingenuity of Africans all over the world and should have been the bedrock from which the Africans will construct their continent. Unfortunately, those who were in charge of protecting and perpetuating these gems had recuperated them to serve their egoistic interests and ambitions. Consequently, the kings, the priests and the keepers (those who wanted to only share knowledge with the kings, privileges, nobles and the members of the houses of life) ordered the members of the houses to transplant their work in the kingdom in order to well set up their power, for a power without knowledge is a body without breath.

It is then clear that without the knowledge of the past, their power is unstable. The injunction from the kingdom troubled and divided the members of the house into the keepers and sharers. For the keepers, knowledge must uniquely be experienced and shared between the members of houses and descendants and the royal families. For the sharers, the great mass of people cannot be prevented from acceding to knowledge. To paraphrase René Descartes, one can say that knowledge is the thing better shared in the world. In this sense, one can say that the fact of keeping secret knowledge will extend the frontiers of ignorance and never the progress of Africa in terms of transformation. It is the reason why knowledge concerning the

continent must be taught to each of its son. The following passage typifies the contradictory position of keepers and sharers on the issue of knowledge that is the power of development:

> The sharers: 'Ours is companionship of Maât and jehwty, netchers of balance and justice. Balance is sharing, justice is sharing. It is kind of the palace to send gifts to the companions, but what is a gift from the powerful if not a cut from property stolen from the people?' The world changes, friends. Infants become hot youths. Age turns the young into elders, elders into ancestors, ancestors into spirits. The time has become for us to grow beyond the sharing of infancy into the dominance of adulthood.' 'Would you want to build power on injustice?' 'Why call it injustice?' What other name is there for the order of kings and commoners, victors and vanquished?' 'Hierarchy. Men of power will always command the ordinary men. Beside the men of the power, men of knowledge. 'Men of knowledge. Do women of knowledge not exist? Among the companions they are more numerous than men' 'The world changes, friends. In a speedier world, women will be given the slow work, answering their nature's. Why you do suppose warriors at work leave their behind? Warriors do not work. They destroy.'[…] 'Really? We shall go toward a society of men alone, ruling a larger society of men and women and children. Men of knowledge allied to men of war, commanding all.' […]'Knowledge unshared may start as mystery. It ends by dying out.' Wrong. The Knowledge we protect as keepers shall not die. We will share it, but not with the many. We shall share it with the few born to command the many to work, just as the warriors will share with us the power to command.' (KMT pp.278-9)

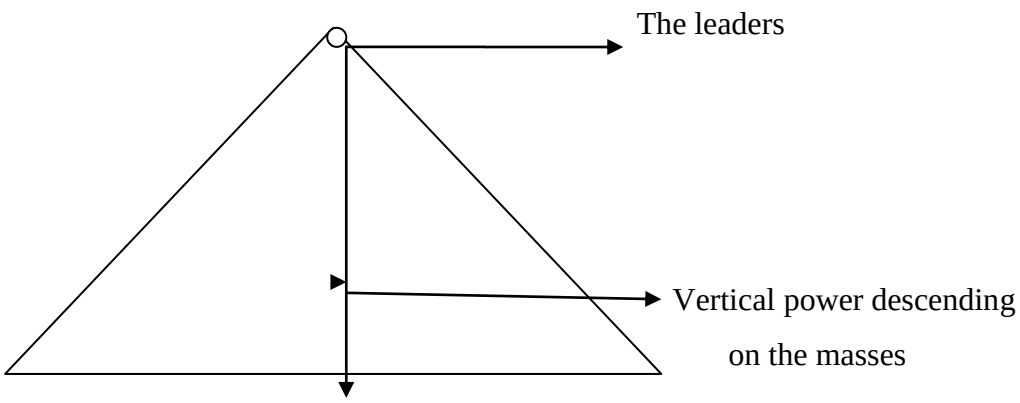
At the end of this dialogue two positions explicitly emerge: Keeping and sharing knowledge. The position of the keepers will lead to ignorance and sink the continent into backwardness whereas that of the sharers will destroy ignorance and lead forward. Here, the sharers' conception of knowledge can be compared to that Japanese. In effect, to reconstruct Japan destroyed at the end of the World War II, Japanese rulers sent very few of their youth to the Western countries in order to read vocational technologies and sciences. On their return, these experts were ordered to go through villages to share their experience with those who did not have the opportunity to go to these Western countries for their training. For this mission, each expert has to train a group of hundreds of other Japaneses on the knowledge he or she acquired through his or her training. I personally think that this medium of sharing with everybody will distance and destroy the limits of ignorance and spread light of knowledge everywhere. In fact, the result of this Japanese experiment of sharing has been the quick development of Japan in spite of its obvious weakness at the end of the war.

Indeed, the connivance between the keepers and the men of power gave a new shape to the destiny of the African continent. Thus, in the novels of the Ghanaian writer, keepers and men of power did not ensure the security of the masses. They exploited the masses, humiliated them and sold them into slavery. With the complicity of the latter, Africa had missed the opportunity to become the greatest continent of the world. The kings ordered the demolition of all the houses of life which refused to work under the control of the kingdom and the raiding of all its rebel members. This destruction jeopardised the reconstitution of African memory and cultural heritage today. In the following passage Armah informs us about these abominable deeds:

> In the first week of the second month after the sending of the reply, a swift fire started along one wall of the house of life. The watchman for that night woke those closest to him. Trying to put out the fire, they found that other fires had been lit in the house of life, making a range of flames surrounding the house of life. The awakened companions poured sand and water in outer circle to contain the fire, so it did not reach the neighbouring houses. In the morning the names were read. No one had died. But the buildings that had made up the house of life were burned to ash and coal, the work inside them destroyed. From houses of life downstream came news that similar fires had worked their destruction. (KMT p. 292)

This is the way Africa had lost her memory, past. This happening creates the vacuum in the existence of the African culture and civilisation. In the absence of evidence from the past, the first Europeans who footed the African continent, had issued the wrong assumptions according to which Africans had no past, and they had come for a civilising mission. Since then on, Africa started her misfortune. All that is said above shows that African men of power and knowledge were the cause of what happened to the continent. In the coming subtitle I will deal with the concept of 'pyramid' and prove to what extent this symbol affects Africa's development through Armah's novels.

1.5 The Pyramidal System, a Cultivation of Underdevelopment



The pyramid symbolises the social hierarchy that represented African society. From the general perspective, a pyramid has many definitions, but I am not going to waste time listing all. One must select the accurate definition in the light of what he or she is aiming at. According to *Oxford Advanced Leaner's Dictionary*, "pyramid is an organization or a system seen as structure in which the higher the level, the fewer the people or things that occupy that level." [22] In this definition lie the socio-political functions that I require to go ahead with this analysis. In a brief description, I can say that the above figure presents a triangular form with a top, a base, at least three sides and a median arrow from the top to the base. Socially speaking, the base represents the masses or the common people, the top the kings or the leaders and the median arrow, the power exercised by the top, on the base. It means that the whole world society is made up of pyramidal structure. In the pyramidal society power is

[22] Jonathan Crowther et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995), p.948.

concentrated at the top. This centralisation of power has been practised in the past and is still being practised in the contemporary African societies. No one has the right to criticise or stand against the kings or the leaders' order. If it happens, a punishment from the royal authorities will follow with the strict rigour. Through readings and relation to French Revolution, I have come to realise that French thinkers and pioneers of that Revolution such as Voltaire (François Marie Rouet 1694-1778), Diderot (Denis, 1713-1784), and Montesquieu (Charles de Leeondat,1685-1755) had been banished from their society and sentenced to death during the 'Enlightnment' because they dared challenge the social hierarchy in their time. In the African royal history, in the kingdom of Danxome, King Adandozan compelled his half-brother to exile and finally sentenced him to death. All that is said, shows that the pyramidal society cannot anyway enhance the emancipation of the citizens who aspire to freedom and possibility to private initiatives which constitute the bedrock of any development.

The relevance of the concentration of power in the pyramidal society is witnessed in Armah's literary works. From his fictional universe, the Ghanaian writer identifies concentration of power as a dangerous way of ruling that clogs the hatching of private initiatives. For instance, in *Two Thousand Seasons*, the writer has denounced the absolutism of the power of King Koranche through Idawa's rejection to the king's proposal. In effect, Idawa is a woman with a fairy beauty with whom the king fell in love. But this love becomes a platonic one since the woman opposes by all means to the king's desire and there has never been sexual intercourse between the two beings. To materialise her rejection, Idawa declared her love to Ngubane and got married with him. The drawback of that insubordination to the King's power is pointed out in the following extract:

> The rejection he had suffered at Idawa's hands pushed his soul into comfortless hole in which, alone with himself, he searched in vain for ways to run from his inner emptiness—something he had not had to wrestle with as long as he kept his life to external pomp sufficient to cover him in the eyes of the world, and therefore in his

> own. […] Idawa had confronted the king with his inferiority. The event depressed the king. In searing flashes he found at first impossible to control he was forced to see himself the way Idawa must see him: an empty, strutting fool, suffered to strut this way only because of thin social conventions. […] Anger against Idawa never stayed long attached to her shape in Koranche's mind. Another feeling crossed it out. It was not love but a devouring greed to possess this perfect being who had fled his reach. The anger turned to thoughts of the dead Ngubane. (T.T.S pp. 71-3)

Through the above extract, it appears that in the pyramidal society the individual does not blossom, emancipate, capable of exercising his or her individual will, he or she is deprived of his her rights of doing or acting. How can an individual imagine, invent and create if he is under permanent fear and anxiety? The pyramidal society in Africa offers no chance for self-construction. In such a society, contradiction and differences of opinions that lead to democracy are retaliated with strict rigour. Armah sets out the shortcomings of the pyramidal power in the way king Koranche destroyed Ngubane, Idawa's ill-fated husband. People living under power excesses are underdogs and have to stand for their rights and fight to release themselves. The Ancient Egyptian Civilization bore also the germs of social injustice where all the power was managed by a handful of people. The leaders told lies to their subjects about social facts and knowledge. Any cognizance of the subjects about their power renders them weak. It is for this reason that they keep knowledge secret. And because of ignorance, people are easily exploited. The insufficiency of such a secret power is pointed out by Armah in the coming conversation between sharer and keeper:

> What is to be the basis for the election of the commanding few, the keepers of knowledge and power? ' Nature. In the form of the nature's method, heredity'. You know too well is not natural. It's a social trap you want to build. 'A natural arrangement, not at all a trap. The children of the first generation of the keepers will become keepers in their generation, because their fathers will teach them.' 'You will use the workings of inheritance to keep the system going'.' Right' 'It will be a plain system of injustice' 'Then call the nature itself unjust.' We are to establish a system of knowledge capable of bringing great improvements to society. But instead of sharing this knowledge with the whole society, we are to do all can do to keep it within the confines of our little blood families.' […] 'A society built that way would be heavy, practically motionless.' 'Say rather stable.' 'What figure would best describe it?' 'The pyramid. Stable. The most stable of figures.' 'It would be so much easier, so much more natural, for us to create a system based on equal sharing.' 'What figure would you have in for that system?' 'Sphere.' 'Of all the funny figures

> imaginable, a sphere?' 'It is perfect figure for balance. No part of a sphere is in essence down or up. (KMT p.280)

Indeed, the writer, through the extract above poses also the problem of power in Africa. Most of the time the ruling power is hereditary in Africa. This cannot help the diversification of ideas. For decades, some African countries have been ruled according to a unique idea and thought just cast a glance at the way the contemporary African heads of states managed their nations. Here comes the resistance that does not allow sound development because crises and revolutions hamper every potential initiative for development. It is the case of the late Mouhamar Khadafi, the former Libyan president, who had ruled Libya under "Jihad", the people's revolution for forty-two years before being sadly and cruelly murdered probably by his own people. It is my belief that the logic of classes does not allow development. Under this political system, the masses are exploited, forced to do things against their will. It is obvious that the same fate awaits all the leaders who stick to power thinking that the countries belong to them only and that power is the palm grove of their father. No country can develop under a permanent monotony. Africa has to get rid of this category of mad heads of states so as to start her development. For a nation to develop, the leaders must work for change by accepting private initiative, freedom of speech, encouraging equity among their people. It is only at this cost that we can expect the transformation of our continent. Another evil that I have diagnosed through Ayi Kwei Armah's novels that hampers the development of the African continent is termed deification of the African authorities.

1.6 Deification of the African Leaders.

Deification is the fact of making someone or a god or the state of being a god. In fact, in the past, the act of considering a human being a supernatural had a great influence on the way the progress of the continent is perceived today. The African people deify all that appears to them mysterious. In *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe ridicules and unveils the mysterious

attributions name given "Evil Forest" to a forest. In fact, this forest is known as a place of death. No one can allegedly stay alive in that mysterious forest for one market day. With the intention to deadly punish the troublesome white man, the council of the elders gives him the evil forest as place where to establish his Christian church. After weeks of settlement, the gods of the evil forest proved impotent to kill church men. This astounded the council of the elders who started questioning the power of the gods. Unfortunately, there starts the complex of superiority and inferiority. The following extract from *Things Fall Apart* shed light on the above comment reads:

> 'Let us give them a portion of the Evil Forest. They boast about victory over death. Let us give them a real battlefield in which to show their victory.' They laughed and agreed, and sent for the missionaries, whom they had asked to leave them for a while so that they might 'whisper together'. They offered them as much of the Evil Forest as they cared to take. And to their greatest amazement the missionaries thanked them and burst into song. 'They do not understand', said some of the elders. 'But they will understand when they go to their plot of land tomorrow morning.' And they disappeared. The next morning the crazy men actually began to clear a part of the forest and to build their house. The inhabitants of Mbanta expected them all to be dead within four days. The first day passed and the second and third and fourth, and none of them died. Everyone was puzzled. And then it became known that the white man's fetish had unbelievable power. [23]

From the foregoing extract it appears that the way Africans view their environment (and tribal chiefs and kings) has a great effect on their beings. The permanent fear of committing insanity and fornication inhibited their capacity of transforming their environment and challenging their leaders. African kings and chiefs see their salvation through deification. This renders the power they hold over their subjects absolute. They lie to their people by saying that this power comes from the Absolute God. Therefore, all their deeds emanate from God. Armah writes:

> Yes, but that is so slow it is like doing nothing. This is our thinking. The violence of conquest has left people fragile in their mind, insecure in their feelings. People knocked by violence into such profound insecurity turn into babies. Babies want reassurance, the sweeter the better. We shall give them abundant reassurance. We shall tell them they are ruled not by mortals but by the eternal netchers. Imagine the strength that can be drawn from a people convinced their rulers are divinities with

[23] Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, (Heinemann: Ibadan, 1958), pp. 105-6.

> the protective power of gods, covering them against all dangers earthly and supernatural. (*KMT* p.286)

In this situation of everlasting reassurance like babies, can people think of constructing the environment in which they live? The efforts of development of Africa are compromised by hyper deification of her environment by her peoples because this state of affair does not allow the edification of the continent. For instance *The Fetish Tree* by Danhomean novelist Jean Pliya addresses the issue of deification of the environment which has nearly blocked the construction of a public road in the district of Agbome. Jean Pliya illustrates this anti-developing way of living in the following passage:

> La construction d'une nation modern peut exiger la destruction de certaines reliques du passé. […] –Tout cela est bien beau, dit-il, mais difficilement vérifiable. En plein XXe siècle nous ne pouvons plus croire aux fétiches. Sans quoi, malgré notre indépendance, nous n'édifierons jamais une nation moderne et civilisée. Nous devons abattre cet arbre pour cause d'utilité publique, et rien ne nous arrêtera. Il faut donner à la ville d'Abomey un aspect neuf et moderne.[24]

It is a fact that the reconstruction and modernisation which bring about the evidence of any development require the destruction of some relics of the past. After the release of the twenty initiated young people from the enslavement imposed on them by the connivance between greedy king Koranche and the white men thirsty after the human being commerce, the young initiates receive the help to completely drive out the slave dealers and this hideous commercial activity from their community. At first the enterprise seems to be good and encouraging, for the continent needs the efforts of each of its children for its liberation from the European gangsters' yokes. But in the midst of the struggle for liberation Kamuzu turns into a megalomaniacal being who wants the young people to call him the governor of this stone place forgetting the work ahead. Armah pictures his maniac ambitions in *Two Thousand Seasons* through this extract: "Kamuzu wanted to live forever in this hard stone place; more, he wanted to become a copy of the chief of the white destroyers we had found in this place, the one they had called the governor." (T.T.S p. 169) To continue the liberation work, the

[24] Jean Plya, *L'arbre fétiche, (*Editions Clé : Yaoundé, Présence africaine 19 71),pp. 6-7.

young people decide to deify him so as to mislead him and deceive him about their new resolution to deviate from the initial option. Armah writes:

> We took turns composing, took turns singing the most extravagant praise songs to Kamuzu's vanity while every night secret lines of women and men carried out what we need out through the smallest of the gates in the back wall of the stone place, across shadowy open spaces, across the groves around Poano and to canoes waiting on the neglected arm of the long lagoon Essei. What spurious praise names did we not invent to lull Kamuzu's buffoon spirit? Osageyefo! Kantamanto! Kabiyesi! Sese! Mwenyenguvu! Otumfuo! Dishonest words are the food of the rotten spirits (T.T.S p. 170-1)

All these orgiastic behaviours of the African kings, chiefs and leaders retard the continent with regard to its development. Considering all that is said above one can say that deification of leaders is one of the causes of the underdevelopment of Africa. The next chapter will diagnose the symptoms of the backwardness in the colonial period.

Chapter two: Africa's Development Problems in Armah's Novels

2.1 Historical Context

Reading Ayi Kwei Armah's novels, I have come across two historical events that are among the remote causes of the underdevelopment of the African continent. At first, Armah seems to ignore these events in his first try as novelist. He is too hasty to satirise the behaviours of African leaders and highlight the evils that undermine the contemporary post-independent Africa. However, from his third novel *Two Thousand Seasons,* he goes far back in history to diagnose these historical events. Historically, Africa has been victim of two important phenomena, which have been the source of her depopulation, retardation etc… These two phenomena alien to Africa have influenced life on the continent, broken and destroyed the social fabric. This critical stance corroborates the ideas of Professor Ali Mazrui:

> Europeans destroyed African institutions of authority and government and have left a major political gap. The rules of living together, which prevailed in the pre-colonial period, the values and collective responsibility of traditional life, were replaced by artificial means imported from Europe[25]

In fact, the phenomena that had chronologically knocked at the door of Africa and heavily struck her are slavery or slave trade and colonialism. Armah, in the two novels *Two Thousand Seasons* and *Osiris Rising,* depicted the two phenomena. As one notices, *Two Thousand Seasons* is to some extent evocation of history. From then on, one notices a kind of awareness raising in Armah's novels with regard to the past of the continent. Armah shows that Africa's predicament has its grass root in the Slave Trade and Colonisation.

[25] Ali Mazrui, *African Condition,* (Cambridge: University Press, 1980) p. 2.

2.2 Slave Trade in *Two Thousand Seasons, Osiris Rising: a novel of Africa past, present and future* and *KMT: in the house of life.*

The Slave Trade imposed a severe loss on Africa. Her young and valid people, the very populations who would grow up in the future and decide on the continent's destiny for ages to come, were and shipped across the Atlantic Ocean to the New World. The effects of slave trade were very destructive for African peoples. Apart from the physical depopulation, there was also the mental and cultural vacuum created by the shipping of so many millions of people to the New World. The Slave Trade had rendered the African peoples under-men. The peoples who only worked for the emancipation of others. Africans have never had the time for the edification of their continent. All they had done so far was their active contribution to the construction of the foreign continents such as Europe and America because the custody men deported from there, who had worked for the construction of these two continents to the detriment of Africa. To denounce these inhuman treatments, and hideous crimes against humanity, Walter Rodney cites Ahmed Sekou Touré, a Guinean trade unionist and the first former president of Guinea who condemning this catastrophic destitution in Africa has this to offer:

> The relation between the degree of destitution of peoples of Africa and the length and the nature of exploitation they had to endure is evident. Africa remains marked by the crimes of the slave trade: up to now, her potentialities are restricted by under-population.[26]

Writing about the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade as a basic factor in African underdevelopment, Walter Rodney says:

> To achieve economic development, one essential condition is to make the maximum use of the country's labor and natural resources. Usually, that demands peaceful conditions, but there have been times in history when social groups have grown stronger by raiding their neighbors for women, cattle, and goods because they then use the 'booty' from the raids for the benefit of their own community. Slaving in Africa did not even have that redeeming value. Captives were shipped outside instead of being utilized within any given African community for creating wealth from nature. It was only as an

[26] Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa?* (Howard University Press: Washington, D.C. 1974), p. 100.

> accidental by-product that in some areas Africans who recruited captives for Europeans realized that they better off keeping some captives for themselves.[27]

Armah raises in his three novels the thorny issue of slave trade. In fact, the slave trade was the illegal and inhuman commerce organised and carried out by the Europeans among the three continents of Europe, Africa and America. The persons involved in it were the Europeans slavers and African kings or authorities. During that inhuman commerce, many Africans physically valid, strong and intelligent were embarked and deported to the New World, America. Through that sea voyage, the African ancestors were subjected to several atrocities, cruelties, inhuman treatments. Such conditions were expressed with bitter regret by one of the twenty young initiates in the following terms: "His words were true. We were being turned into destruction, taken from our land to be broken up in strange places, and none of us knew of ways to halt this fatal progress." (T.T.S p.121)

This turning into things is clear in the white destroyers mind and philosophy. As they said, we Africans are too many in our continent. Since they need labour force, Western slave raiders came and embarked us from our land towards a new place against our will to makje us work to satisfy their needs. This inhuman philosophy is pointed out and stressed through Isanusi's utterance when he was denouncing the white men's wishes at the risk of his life:

> The white men say they have heard we have many people here, too many, they say and that our women's fertility is reported a wonder among them. It is their wish to take numbers of our people away from us. They say these numbers would in the new places beyond the sea, work on land as fertile as ours here. (T.T.S p.83)

In my point of view, I think that the situation that Africa had undergone has sunk her into backwardness in every realm of development. Actually, the slave trade had found ground and partnership in African clans and tribes owing to the African leaders' greed and folly prompted by attraction of the white men's shoddy goods in the form of gifts such as whisky, rhums, clothes, sugar, mirrors, necklaces, binnacles, bicycles, guns and weapons eventually to

[27] Ibid, p.108.

raid and capture African people. The questions to be put are: Why were kings, chiefs and caretakers the first to fall to the material presents offered by the slave traders? Why did they easily grant the white men the permission to stay in their midst? Why the willingness of these African authorities to hand over Africa's sons to the white foreigners? Here, Armah sheds light on the enticements of the African rulers through king Koranche's meeting with the white destroyers at shores of the sea:

> The white destroyers came to land. The king greeted them with affection. The king was taken aboard the white destroyers' ship. He returned with whole canoe-loads of things, and had them loaded on the bank on to the heads of his servants, and preceded them to his palace. These goods were announced as a gift, a present to the king and his court, and a prelude to negotiations, the white men having come to renew their request for permission to set up on our land a factory, a hunting station and a church. (T.T.S p.100)

It might have been because the rulers had a certain status and authority on their peoples in the society. The tragedy is that when they were cheap goods by the Europeans, they started to use that stance not only to grant the white destroyers lands for their installation, but also supply some of their subjects as slaves to the Europeans. It appears obvious that the African leaders had taken an active part in the sale of their own people. We witness the African leaders' responsibility in that gruesome commerce through the following character's grudges against the then African chiefs:

> No one sold us but our chiefs and hangers-on. 'The sea is strange to my people. We live far, very far from it. It would take a strong man many days, walking with the energy of his determination, to reach the sea. But what would such strong come down so far to seek? We were caught and sold. Our buyers, whites who came from the desert above us forced us along unknown paths and strange rivers till we reached the sea. There we were sold to other whites. 'These white destroyers, they searched among us with shrewd eyes, took whom they needed and offered us a choice not open to the rest: 'you can escape the worst sufferings of slavery if you will become askaris for us. (T.T.S p. 146)

The above quotation states explicitly the African leaders' role in the slave trade and how certain Africans are used against the welfare of their brothers despite their own will. In the way, the plot of *Osiris Rising* begins with the aftermath of the Slave Trade through the bitter

realisation of Ast, the round female character of the novel that is from a different origin but as an American. The narrative informs the reader that Ast is a descendant of slave ancestors. This can be seen through her question. *"Home… do you know our people were sold into slavery?*" (O.R p.1)

This revelation has provoked a very bitter effect on Ast, and consequently, she has made up her mind to return to Africa, her home. This gives us the opportunity to understand the severe and dehumanising condition that slave trade represents for Africans. It means that the deported slaves in America were reduced to nothingness. In a word, the Slave Trade is the greatest humiliation that the black community has ever suffered. Professor Ali Mazrui informs: "Africans are not in the modern history… Africans have been humiliated in history in ways that range from the slave trade to being segregated against as third-class citizens in parts of their continent to the present day. Being numerically the majority"[28]

Moreover, the humiliation mentioned in Professor Ali Mazrui's utterance above is well stressed through the dialogue between Ast and her grandmother Nwt. For them, black people's history is that of commodities. They clearly stated that they got to that new place in the form of sold products. This is how the writer puts it.

> It's our history, but you make it sound like a commodity in the supermarket.' The author's smile broke into a slight laugh, gentle in spite of its sarcasm. 'My dear saint', he said, 'a commodity is precisely what our history is. Everybody's history, everybody's present. You and I don't live in some peasant society where such matters are still obscure. We've been here for centuries, and hey, this is the late twentieth. Whatever has any value is a commodity. Your sweet soul is commodity. If it's poorly packaged no one notices it. It stays invisible. (O.R p. 6)

The issue of the Slave Trade or slavery appears to be topical in Armah's three novels. Slavery is the state of being or being sold as slave. In his investigation of the Ancient Egyptian civilisation collected as *KMT: in the house of life*, the writer informs us that the kings in connivance with the keepers converted into priests had instituted slavery so as to exploit

[28] Ali Mazrui, *The African Condition*, (University Press Cambridge: 1980), p.1

people and satisfy their interests. It is very important to highlight that slavery is sustained by the Hamitic myth.Thus, the term Hamitic originally referred to the peoples believed to have been descended from the biblical Ham, one of the sons of Noah. In effect, when Ham dishonoured his father, Noah pronounced a curse on him, stating that the descendents of his son Canaan be 'servants of servants.' In addition, these verses of Genesis below give legimacy to European slave raiders during the Atlantic Slave Trade "Cursed be Canaan! The lowest of slaves he will be to his brothers. He also said, 'Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem! May Canaan be the slave of Shem. May God extend the territory of Japheth; may Japeth live in the tents of Shem and may Canaan be his slave.' " [29] The verses serve as the foundation for the Hamitic Myth. Thus, the Eurocentric scientists have shifted it from representing the mankind to the group of Negroid peoples i.e. the undermen who could serve the Westerners in every realm of life without payment. Therefore, this band of gangsters raided people, turned the Blacks into slavery, created hard work, payment of tribute. In the literary universes of Armah, the news confused the members of the houses of life who believed that all this is a way of the ideals of the houses of life. Here is what Armah writes about the new plight through the exchange of words between the representative of the priest and that of the sharers:

> There shall be washed and purified to make their bodies, alien to water agreeable to the royal touch. They shall be trained to set hostesses to My Majesty as I visit my domains to shine on them. Ten able men nomads shall be sent to labour in the garden of the great houses. And to the residence of life at Nekhen shall be sent a gift of forty strong nomads, thirty men and ten women, the men to work the fields recently awarded the priesthood there, the women to be trained to clean and sweep and cook, all belonging to the priests in perpetuity. (KMT pp. 312-3)

From the narrative of the aforementioned excerpt, the novelist blames the African authorities on accepting slavery. This economic system set up by the Lords Monarchs, Chiefs, etc… compelled the subjects to work gratis for the welfare of the African authorities. This state of

[29] : http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_is_the_Hamitic_myth#ixzz23zOXQUoB Genesis 9:25-27. Retrieved on 19th August 2012.

affair did not favour the emancipation of the individuals and in a roundabout way compromised dangerously the development of the whole.

All these inhuman treatments meted out to the black community either inside or outside the continent reinforce its complex of inferiority, for without self-confidence African peoples cannot envisage the transformation of the continent. Such state of affairs keeps Africa in the state of underdevelopment. In addition, colonialism offers no room, later on, to Africa to develop.

2.3 Colonialism, a Handicap to Africa's Development

2.3.1 Meaning and Justification

The word "colonialism" derives from the verb "to colonise" which, the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of current English*, defines as: "To establish a colony in an area, to establish as a colony, the latter being a country or territory settled by migrants from another country, and controlled by it".[30]

In this sense, almost all African countries were colonies of Western countries such as Great Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Italy etc…

As a matter of fact, Europeans needed large quantities of raw materials to run their growing industries, new ventures for the finished goods and new and vast areas to "house" their surplus of population; one immediate result of the positive impacts of the Industrial Revolution. As it is said, Africa is geographically a solution to these tremendous needs. To colonise the vast and wealthy continent properly and to succeed in their mission, the Europeans persuaded the international or world opinion that Africa was a vast territory of the haunt of savages, a territory riddled with superstitions and fanaticism, in a word, a territory of cannibals.

[30] Jonathan Crowther et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995), p.221.

In his *Introduction to the Writing of Ngugi,* G.D. Killam quoted Frantz Fanon who accused the Europeans of dehumanising the African people and in short the continent. Here Frantz Fanon is clear about the Europeans' understanding in the following accusation:

> Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people and distorts, disfigures and destroys it. For colonialism this vast continent was the haunt of savages, a country riddled with superstitions and fanaticism, destined for contempt, weighed down by the curse of God, a country of cannibals- in short the Negro's country[31].

After this worldly psychological persuasion, the Europeans then unveil their real intention that is the exploitation of Africa's human and natural resources so as to supply their industries, and factories.

2.4 Colonial Exploitation, a Cause of Underdevelopment

2.4.1 Exploitation of Human Beings

The idea of open exploitation comes from the fact that Europeans believed that Africans were cannibals and did not deserve to own the natural resources of the continent, ranked low in the hierarchy of humankind. That is one of the assumptions that sustain Europeans' belief in Ayi Kwei Armah's fictional world whereby the exploitation motives are associated with whites.

To start with, they created colonial administration everywhere on the continent. The latter was composed of the police and the military. The colonial administration was full of people appointed from the metropolis. Their mission was to maintain order and keep the Africans in the position of inferiority and by-peoples. In this respect, they instituted the hard work which became the daily practice that the populations had to undergo. Fanon describes the colonial world in these terms: "The colonial world is a world cut into two. The dividing

[31] G.D. Killam, *Introduction to the writing of Ngugi (*Heinemann: Nairobi), p.20.

line, the frontiers are shown by the barracks and police stations. In the colonies, it is the policemen and the soldiers, who are the officials, instituted go-between, and the spokesman of the settler and his rule of oppression."[32]

This quotation borrowed from Fanon's writings to illustrate my argument points out the intimidation strategy that the colonizers set up to exploit Africa. In the same vein, in *Two Thousand Seasons,* one reads from Akole's narrative in which she blamed the white destroyers for inhuman deeds. Here is the way the narrator makes an account of her complaint:

> This woman— Akole was her name—said we the people were tired of lies, and the lies that we had just heard that day were more dangerous than all the previous lies together. She said it was true enough the whites were strangers here, but we had already heard of them and their deeds were known to us—deeds of thieves, deeds of killers all of them. Akole reminded us we all knew the white men from the sea were homeless, brigands and soulless too, men roaming the seas till they came upon a people they could exterminate, whose lands they could rob, whose spirits they could scatter into an endless, barren emptiness. Monsters they were, and even if we did not have in us the courage of truth to execute them outright as punishment for their crimes against all people of the way we should at least have the wisdom not to welcome them among ourselves. (T.T.S pp. 78-9)

The reaction of the woman underscores Armah's becoming aware of how much crucial should be women's participation in the process of taking decisions within her society. It is also the beginning of the awaking of the women in the community. In fact, in the quotation it clearly appears that the Whites did not come as friends for the welfare of the continent and its people, but as destroyers, brigands, gangsters exterminating people showing awareness and resistance to their undesirable installation, and pillaging African wealth on their passage. Once this persuasion is achieved through the complex of superiority and inferiority, which characterizes the social status of the Whites and Blacks, the Europeans started the exploitation of Africa.

[32] Frantz Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre (translated into English as The Wretched of the Earth*) Penguin Books: Great Britain 1965),p.31.

Consequently, they turn the African population into unpaid labour force. The people work, but their work do neither profit them nor serve their community. Armah depicts the situation through Isanusi, the round character, the spokesman of king Koranche, who betrayed the king's confidence by unveiling to the people the white men's wishes:

> On this their cut-off land they would like to have crops grow. But the white men are not accustomed to doing their planting and it is not in their minds to get accustomed here. They would have the king give them men to work the land— I use their language, for they think the king owns men he can give away to them— so that to speak truth ours would be the planting and the caring, theirs the harvest and its profit. In return they would reward the king and his courtiers with more gifts. (T.T.S pp. 82-3)

At any moment in the extract above there is an instance of the working populations' payment. The latter constitute for them the best free exploitative source of free labour. The subjects of the king who work for the white destroyers do not benefit from their work. How can people change and change their environment without benefiting from the fruit of their work? Regarding all this, one can state that the sons of Africa have only in their lifetime to improve the living standard of Europe. After the establishment of their domination through any kind of intimidation, the white men address the phase of the material exploitation that will thoroughly dispossess Africa of her riches and sink her in the abyss of underdevelopment.

2.4.2 Sheer Exploitation of the African Natural Resources

The nineteenth century's industrial revolution begun in Europe has jeopardised the African economy and almost pillages all her riches. In effect, Europe could no longer face the requirements of factories in term of raw materials. The best continent to turn to is Africa because she possesses a vast quantity of natural resources to supply the European factories with. To this international theft, she offered no resistance because she has already been weakened by ages of deportation of her sons through the practice of slave trade and very beginning of the colonial domination of her remain population.

This was operated and effective in the field of the extraction of mines and minerals, exportation of raw materials to Europe to satisfy their industrial and vital needs. The African people constituted also free, good and cheap labour force. During the two world wars, the Africans were compelled to hard labour in order to back up the effort of wars. Indeed, the Africans at no time have worked for the welfare of the betterment of their living conditions.

For instance, in Dahomey, the people produced the palm trees, groundnuts, cotton crops in order to export to France palm nuts, cotton fibers through sea voyages. In the same way, in Côte-d'Ivoire, it was the production of coffee and tea, in Belgian Congo, it was the extraction and exportation of natural resources, in Ghana, the Akan people exported gold to Great Britain, and timbers were run in Gabon and exported to France. The following description by Rodney confirms what has been said a bit above:

> During the war, the Congo was able to finance all the expenditure of the Belgian government in London, including the diplomatic service as well as the cost of our armed forces in Europe and in Africa, a total of some 40 million pounds. In fact, thanks to the resources of the Congo, the Belgian government in London had not to borrow a shilling or a dollar, and the Belgian gold reserve could be left intact.[33]

In *Two Thousand Season*, Armah puts a particular stress on the wishes of the white destroyers coming from sea. These wishes were denounced through the disobedient speech of a true son of the continent whose name is Isanusi the round character of the novel, a visionary for the future. This happens when King Koranche pleads Isanusi to persuade the subjects in his court to welcome the white destroyers despite his opposition. Then, Isanusi disclosed the white destroyers' objectives while uttering his speech as follows:

> The wish of the white men is this: they have heard of our Land, of the beauty of the mountains and plain's fertility here, and of the metals our earth contains –iron in abundance, gold, silver, and our pure red copper these metals it is the white men's wish to take away from us, to take them to their home beyond the sea. In return they promise to give the king and his courtiers' shiny things, entertainment for their eyes. They would have us break up the mountains; take out what is good in them to give them, leaving ourselves here the waste send. [….] This is the white men's second wish; Isanusi continued. They have been

[33] Rodney Walter, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa?* (Howard University Press: Washington, D.C. 1974), .172.

> told of the forests here and of the grasslands; of the birds and animals we have roaming the land. It is the white men's wish to have us help them to kill these birds and these animals. They do not want their flesh for food. The elephants they say they want destroyed, but only for their tusks. There is a hunter among the white men, and a trader. These two say tusks can be sold for riches. Leopards they want dead for their hides. As for our gazelles, they would kill them to use their heads for decoration. "You have heard me. The white men, guests of the king, would have us destroy our mountains, then our animals and give them what is of use to themselves leaving here the offal. (T.T.S pp. 82-3)

To some extent, the quotation above shows that colonialism is the phenomenon through which the white men have orchestrated the theft of the wealth of Africa. Actually the growing of the commercial cash crops for export and the exploitation of mineral resources were all for Europe's benefit, not for Africa's. In Britain for example, the well-known and notorious slave trading port of Liverpool was the first to switch to trading in palm oil early in the nineteenth century when Slave Trade faced many difficulties. Such a situation actually meant that Liverpool factories were no longer exploiting Africa by shifting its labour physically to another part of the world. Rather, they were exploiting the labour and the raw materials of Africa inside of Africa. Here, Rodney typifies:

> Colonialism was not merely a system of exploitation, but one whose essential purpose was to repatriate the profits to the so-called 'mother country'. From an African view point, that amounted to consistent expatriation of surplus produced by African labour out of African resources. It meant the development of Europe as part of the dialectical process in which Africa was underdeveloped. By any standards, labor was cheap in Africa, and the amount of surplus extracted from the African labourer was great. The employer under colonialism paid an extremely small wage —a wage usually insufficient to keep the worker physically alive—and, therefore he had to grow food to survive. [34]

The best known and most notorious firms installed in Africa were Compagnie française de l'Afrique Occidentale (CFAO), Société commercial de l'Afrique de l'ouest (SCOA) and the British-controlled United Africa Company. They were responsible for expatriating a great proportion of Africa's wealth produced by the peasant toil. African continent, victim of a great and vast network of vultures, predators and destroyers, has

[34] Rodney Walter, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa?* (Howard, University Press: Washington, D.C, 1974) p. 149.

unwillingly participated in this theft through her leaders' collaboration and cooperation with Europe.

In such a situation, Africa passively and resignedly accepted that theft and cooperated with those robbers, which situation caused its retardation in every realm of activity. It appears therefore that one of the causes of the underdevelopment of Africa is colonialis*m.*

2.4.3 Dislocation of the Socio-political and Economic System

Before the incursion of the Arabs predators and Europeans destroyers in Africa, the African communities, kingdoms and chieftaincies were socially, politically and economically organized into hierarchy. According to J.E.Casely-Hayford, 1922, African (Gold Coast) Nationalist in *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa?* "Before even the British came into relations with our people, we were a developed people, having our own institutions, having our ideas of government." [35]In effect, in the past within the society there was a vivid and prevailing solidarity among the African people, which constituted the means of production. Unfortunately, as Kofi Awoonor puts it: "The dislocation of our original social, political and cultural institutions… has imposed on us a certain degree of dislocation"[36] that disturbs the sound development of the continent. That beautiful and genial idea of sharing work and creating riches is termed as *"dokpwe"* or work team in Danhomey, allowed a son to participate in carrying out a task of some magnitude for the father of his wife. That way of living could be contrasted with the colonial period where money was in the centre of everything and buys labour. Having been produced on land that was family property and through family labour, the resultant crops and other goods were distributed on the basis of the kinship ties. This shows that the African communities lived on the basis of the principles of egalitarianism. For instance, if a given man's crops undergo destruction by sudden calamity,

[35] Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa?* (Howard, University Press: Washington, D.C, 1974) p..33.
[36] Kofi Awoonor ed. *The African Predicament, Collected essays* (Subsaharan publishers: Accra, 2012/ 2006), p. 254.

relatives in his own village help him. In the same way, when it happens that the whole community was struck by a natural catastrophe, and was in distress, people moved to live with their kinsmen in another area where food was not scarce. All this underscores to some extent the social dynamics of the people of Africa. Moreover, a careful glance at Akan community in Ghana shows that the clan system was highly organised; so that a man from Brong could visit Fante many hundreds of miles away and received food and hospitality from a complete stranger who happened to be of his own country. In this respect, in the realm of social hierarchy, in all African societies during the early epoch, the individual at every stage of life had a series of duties and obligations towards others in the society as well as a set of rights. As a result, in such society, age was a most important factor determining the extent of rights and obligations. The oldest men of the society were highly respected and usually considered an authority; the idea of seniority through age was seen in the presence of age-grades and age-sets in many great African societies. As far as the youth were concerned, circumcision meant initiation through which they grew into the community and into adulthood. At that stage, groups of young men and women of the same age retired from the society for sojourn in the remote area in the great forest with their fundi that is to say the masters of art where they were given social norms and instructions, in brief received education. Armah suggests an instance of this in his *Two Thousand Seasons:*

> All this was before the time when we of our age began our initiations —for us a beautiful time, time of friendship, time of learning, when in the blindness of childhood, we knew only of own growing powers but of the weakening, the destruction of the power of our people we were completely ignorant. Before everything came the games of childhood, games and dances we loved for themselves. In fuller growth afterwards we discovered sharp, sweet surprises hidden in each to help us at every succeeding level in our quest after the fundi's mastery. We moved first to the skill of protection. Here almost all reached the beginnings of the fundi's mastery. The teachers told us before the dances of recapitulation and rest:' you are welcome to deepen yourselves here if it is in you to make yourselves experts in the arts of protection. (T.T.S p.85)

But all this glorious African past has been disorganised and quasi destroyed at the European inroads in the African societies. It is a fact that Europeans had no ideas about the ways of living in Africa. In their ignorance, they began despising the African, his cultural values, "his traditions and his beliefs…"[37] As a result of their ignorance, they have imposed on the Africans the Western ways of living which according to them is the best. Thus; the contact with the Whites brought a radical change in the agricultural production and in the way of ruling the African communities. Kofi Baako hints at the shift in the African institution. In his own words: "During the colonial period our traditional instution of chieftancy naturally underwent a change, mainly because of a system known as the indirect rule, but also because of a change from subsistence economy to cash economy, and because of the development in education"[38]

Through Armah's *Two Thousand Seasons* the white men, confident in the superiority they embodied, imposed on the indigenous people their culture and knowledge. This is no longer acquired through initiations, but in the white men's schools through formal education. Talking about king Koranche's son, the prince Bentum renamed Bradford George, Armah writes:

> When then his son Bentum reach the age of the first initiation the king decided it would be better for future kings to have an upbringing entirely different from others of the age. The king sent the boy to the coast, to Poano where he arranged for his raising in the largest of the white destroyers' stone places. (T.T.S pp. 90-1)

The white men at their onset had disrupted those institutions which constituted the bedrock of the African continent development and established the new ruling institutions. One can notice this through Armah's bitterness which reads as follow:

> We had been to Poano, seen the white destroyers from the sea already settled there, more settled than among us at Anoa, living in the strong stone houses they had built for themselves, and the people of the place standing helpless,

[37] Kofi Baako, "Nkrumaism ─African Socialism: Ghana's conception of Socialism" (191-210) in T.Peter Omari, *Kwame Nkrumah: the Anatomyof an African Dictatorship* (Sankofa Educational Publishers: Accra 2000/1970), *p.192.*
38 Kofi Baako, "Nkrumaism ─African Socialism: Ghana's conception of Socialism" (191-210) in T.Peter Omari, *Kwame Nkrumah: the Anatomyof an African Dictatorship* (Sankofa Educational Publishers: Accra 2000/1970), *pp.191-2.*

> some forced to help the white men build more houses of the heavy stones, not comprehending what medicine the white destroyers had used to poisoned their king's mind. (T.T.S p.77)

Here the writer is implicitly referring to the very beginning of the colonial administration, a strategy to keep the continent under the European yoke. Concerning colonisation, Chinua Achebe too addresses the issue in his first two novels differently. *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God* talk about the past of Africa and the advent of colonialism. However, in both of them the effects of colonialism on the political and economic development of the African continent are not highlighted. Rather the concentration is on what disruption colonialism brought to the community on the social and religious front. Both Okonkwo in *Things Fall Apart* and Ezeulu in *Arrow of God* come to tragic end as a result of their inability to sustain and balance themselves in a society into whose values colonialism has made inroads.

The connection between the disruption of social and religious life and their effect on the political and economic systems in Africa can be seen when one realises that among her people, religion and society, politics and economics were intertwined one with the other. Religion has a strong hold on the society going right up to the economic and political realm. When in Achebe's two first novels referred to, religious and social life was disarranged, and it adversely affected the political institutions and the economies of the African people at the time. The community spirit was broken, and the people entered into a new relationship with their colonial masters. Things were no longer the same. Here Achebe informs us about Obierika's accusation of the white man and his concern about the disruption of cultural values, political and economic institutions of Umuofia:

> It is already too late,' said Obierika sadly.' Our own men and our sons have joined the ranks of the stranger. They have joined his religion and they helped to uphold his government. […] Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put the knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart.[39]

[39] Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart, (*Heinemann: London, Ibadan, 1958), Pp 124-5.

Another way of disrupting the African institutions and hierarchy is the public humiliation of the authorities of the chieftaincy, kingdom, and the sages of the communities. Before I carry on with this strategy and policy of destitution, I have first of all to give a brief definition of 'humiliation'. In fact, according to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* the word humiliation comes from the verb "to humiliate" which means, "to make somebody feel ashamed or foolish; to injure the dignity or pride of somebody." [40]

Indeed, humiliation is the most efficient and effective weapon that the white destroyers used to succeed in colonising Africa. First of all, African people were convinced through the white destroyers' falsehood that they were savage, cannibals; murky characters in short, a people without history and civilisation. In the same sense, the white men convinced us that our cultural values and gods were impotent and useless. I have noticed that Africa had been culturally and psychologically insulted and humiliated through a dialogue between Rev. Brown and Wiseman Akunna in *Things Fall Apart*. Chinua Achebe writes:

> You say that there is one supreme god who made heaven and earth, said Akunna on one of Mr. Brown's visits. We also believe in him, and call him Chukwu. He made the world and the other god. There are no other gods said Mr Brown 'Chukwu is the only God and all others are false.' You carve a piece of wood- like that one he pointed at the rafters from which Akunna's carved Ikenga hung) and you call it a god. But it is still a piece of wood.[41]

Humiliation in the African communities is also through the physical whipping and flagellation of the wise persons who stood ground against the colonial abuses and injustices. This happened when Bakari, Ahouna's father, a sage of his village in *Un piège sans fin* by Olympe Belly Quenum, was whipped and put to shame publicly during his invitation to carry out hard labour. Here is how Olympe Bhêly-Quenum describes the scene:

> Il paraît que tu as refusé d'obéir à mes ordres, Bakari? Cria-t-il en haoussa qu'il parlait fort bien. —Je n'ai jamais vu un homme de ma sorte s'abaisser au genre de travail que vous m'inviter à accomplir, dit mon père avec sang-froid qui dût vexer le toubab. — Eh bien ! tu seras le premier à le faire ! J'ai des travailleurs que je paye, ils peuvent me remplacer.' A ces mots, la cravache du

[40] Jonathan Crowther et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford, University Press 1995), p. 582.
[41] Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, (Heinemann: London, Ibadan 1958), p.126-7

> commandant cingla à six reprises le visage de mon père, il voulut se défendre, mais les gardes s'emparèrent de lui. Le commandant donna des ordres et déshabillèrent mon père, le mirent nu devant tout le monde, puis le poussèrent dans sa chambre où ils l'obligèrent à mettre un des vieux boubous qu'il enfilait pour aller dans ses champs. Ils sortirent avec lui quelques minutes après ces humiliations.[42]

This reaches its climax in *Things Fall Apart* when the elders and men of title in Umuofia were arrested, handcuffed, imprisoned and had to pay for their freedom. Achebe shows this shameful scene in the following statement:

> As soon as the District commissioner left, the head messenger, who was also the prisoner's barber, took down his razor and shaved off all the hair on the men's heads. They were still handcuffed, and just sat and moped. Who is the chief among you? The court messengers asked in jest. "We see that every pauper wears the anklet of title in Umuofia .Does it cost as much as ten cowries? The six men ate nothing throughout that day and the next. They were not even given any water to drink, and they could not go out to urinate or go into bush when they were pressed. At night the messengers came in to taunt them and to knock their shaven heads together.[43]

Furthermore, the white men also show an instance of humiliation in *Two Thousand Seasons* when the twenty young initiated were chained, turned into slaves in complicity with King Koranche. This appears clearly in the following statement: "His words were true. We were being turned into things to be moved for use elsewhere, into bound destruction, taken from our land to be broken up in strange places, and none of us knew of ways to halt this fatal progress." (T.T.S p.121) One cannot deal with the disruption of the socio-political and economic system without referring to the sufferings and humiliation undergone by the South Africans under the regime of Apartheid in the south of the continent. As a matter of fact, at certain time of the history of humanity, the Blacks of South Africa became strangers, persona non grata in their native country. They were outlawed. Every Black had to possess their passbook and regularly sign for the required employment they applied for, for the area they were moving into and for the place they were leaving. If Blacks were found in the supposed

[42] Olympe Bhêly -Quenum, *Un piège sans fin*, (Editions Présences Africaine, 1985), p. 52.
[43] Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, (Heinemann: London, Ibadan 1958), p.138.

wrong places they would be arrested and put in jail. The horrible and inhuman situation is described by Oliver Tambo, one of the freedom fighters, in the introduction of *No Easy Walk to Freedom* written by Nelson Mandela:

> To be unemployed is a crime because no African can for long evade arrest if his passbook does not carry the stamp of authorized and approved employment. To be landless can be a crime, weekly we interviewed the delegations of grizzled, weather-worn peasants from the countryside who came to tell us how many generations their families had worked a little piece of land from which they were now being ejected. To brew African beer, to drink it or to use the proceeds to supplement the meagre family income is a crime, and women who do so face heavy fines and jail terms.[44]

In fact, this state of being debased impedes the African peoples from thinking positively of their living conditions in order to operate a rewarding change for their future, which can inevitably lead to the forwardness of the continent. However, because of the perfect work of humiliation, the African elites nowadays imitate white men in everything. In short, they are alienated. This situation keeps Africa in the abyss of underdevelopment.

2.5 Religious Obstacles

2.5.1 Alienation

The concept of Alienation suggests the idea of rejection of the African religious practices and the adoption of the Western religion in Africa within the logic of the "The Manichean myth of the prime principles of light and darkness."[45] In this binary opposition, *light* stands for Europe while *darkness* is for Africa. In other words, Europe is "the bringer of light and civilization."[46] On this issue of opposition Simon Gikandi has made the observation that "Confrontation is what defines the works of Ayi Kwei Armah."[47] Thus, I intend to address cultural and land alienation that constitutes a great handicap to development in Africa; the alienation being the result of the confrontation between African values and

[44] Nelson Mandela, *No Easy Walk to Freedom*, (Heinemann: African Writers Series, 1965), P xi-xii
[45] Kofi Awoonor ed. *The African Predicament, Collected essays* (Sub-Saharan publishers: Accra, 2012/ 2006), p. 289.
[46] *Ibid.*
47 Simon Gikandi, Reading the African Novel (James Currey: London, 1988/1987), p.3.

Western values. Before I go deeper in this reflection, I have to define briefly the concept of alienation. Cultural alienation can be defined as the loss of the indigenous cultural values, the support or domestication of the foreign culture at the expense of the old local one.

Indeed, after the white implantation in Africa, the Europeans have taught civilisation through religion and education. So, the Africans have to learn and adopt the white man's ways of living. In Armah's work, there is a symbolic use of the names. Personal names especially, frequently serve as keys to the cultural and social identity of the characters. The loss or retention of a true African consciousness and identity often indicate the name a character bears. Isanusi in *Two Thousand Seasons* foretells of a time " When we have lost our way completely, lost even our names; when you will call your brother not Olu but John, not Kofi but Paul; and our sisters will no longer be Ama, Naita, Idawa and Nigome but creatures called Cecilia, Esther, Mary, Elizabeth and Christiana." (T.T.S p.83) In short, the white invaders have begun westernizing Africa. All Isanusi's disciples, the children of the way, retain, their African names, a testimony to their identity. Those already lost to the white man's world come with their names that testify to their alienation. In midst of them is a being like the prince Bentum, renamed Bradford George. Sometimes one or two such names are not enough. In *Fragments,* there are the honourable Mr. Charles Winston Churchill Kessi and Henri Robert Hudson Brempong, the 'been-to' whose whole soul is blasted by any insatiable thirst for the shiny things of the white man's world:

> Oh, no. No. but I understand you I have learned to take precautions, myself. There are important things you can't get to buy at home. Every time I go out I arrange to buy all I need, suits and so on. It's quite simple. I got two good cars on this trip. German cars,from the factory, all fresh. They're following me. Shipped. (Frag p. 45)

Armah suggests in The *Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born:*

> There is something 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. Men who had risen to lead the hungry came in clothes they might have been hoping to use at Governors' Balls on the birthday of the white people's queen,

> carrying cuff links that shown insultingly in the faces of men who had stolen pennies from their friends. They came late and spoke to their servants in the legal English they had spent their lives struggling to imitate, talking of constitutions and offering us unseen ghost of words and paper held holy by Europeans, and they asked us to be faithful and to trust in them. (T.B.O.A.N.Y. B p.84.)

We share such terror with the man in *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* as he moves through the government residential area on the hills:

> … enough names of black men with white souls and names trying mightily to be white. In the forest of the white men's names, there were the signs that said almost aloud: here lives a black imitator.Mills-Hayford…Plange-Bannerman…Attoh-White…Kuntu-Blankson. Others that must have been keeping the white neighbours laughing even harder in their homes. Acromond…What Ghanaian name could that have been in the beginning, before its civil servant owner rushed to civilize it, giving it something like the sound of a master name? Grantson… more and more incredible they were getting. There was someone calling himself Fentengsonin this wide world, and also a man called Binful. (T.B.O.A.N.Y. B p. 126)

With Armah's central characters, names begin to take on special significance beyond the expression of identity. They lead us into the very centre of the character's being, his fundamental conception of the self as basis for action or inaction. One can state that names are the compass to human beings' destiny. It is a bitter notice that Africans fail to give the names of their forefathers who had been great men in the history with great achievements by only choosing to give European, Arabian names to their children. If Africa wants to develop, she has to return to her authentic cultural values. The late president Sese Seko Mombutu of the then Zaire, and Eyadema Gnassingbé of Togo proposed in their time, the return to African authenticity. Africa has a great cultural riches that she can value and export all over the world as a masterpiece of her development. But one notices with a great regret that not only do the Africans themselves ignore these cultural riches but also debase it in the face of the world. This attitude of despise toward Africa and her culture is a factor of underdevelopment. *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* tells us about the Minister Koomson and his wife

Estella the fact that they prefer the consumption of the refined English whisky to the domestic manufactured beer:

> This local beer,' she was saying does not agree with my constitution. […] Really, the only good drinks are European drinks.' [….] 'You should have brought European drinks; Estella pressed on, 'and not have wasted your money like this.' 'Ah,' Estella said with a sight, 'if you had asked me I would have told Uncle Asford, and he would have brought you some. (T.B.O.A.N.Y. B p. 131-2)

If Africans do not break with this alien attitude, Africa will never emerge from backwardness to forwardness, for the development of the continent lies in producing and selling the manufactured goods either on the local or international market.

In *Two Thousand Seasons*, Ayi Kwei Armah denounces this cultural alienation. In the novel, it is reported that King Koranche and his courtiers had eyes only for the white men's shoddy goods. They lusted for a plethora of shining things that the white men placed around them, this, at the cost of loss of the life of their people.

> Around us, they have placed a plethora of things screaming denial of our nature, things welcoming us against ourselves, things luring us into the whiteness of destruction. We too have drunk oblivion, and over flowing it have jointed the exhilarated chase after death. (T.T.S p. xiii)

The direct drawback of such behaviours is the loss of origins, the loss of way leading to the realisation of one's existence as a human living in an environment that he or she is in charge of changing. This is clearly stated in the following quotation: "A people losing sight of origins is dead. A people deaf to the purposes are lost .Under fertile rain, in scorching sunshine, there is difference: 'Their bodies are mere corpses, awaiting final burial.' (T.T.S p. xiv) Such debasement, on the side of the African people, favours the underdevelopment of the continent.

In *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe writes about this cultural alienation. The novel reports that Enoch, who is the son of a python priest, violated the cultural taboo by killing and eating python: "The story went around that Enoch had killed and eaten the sacred python, and

that his father had cursed him."[48] Cultural alienation reached its summit when the zealous Enoch unmasked an Egwugwu in public. This heinous crime and abomination aroused the wrath of the Egwugwu on all Christian installations in Umuofia. For the egwugwu it was incredible that a son of Umuofia unmasked and reduced the immortality of Egwugwu, which stood for taboo in the whole clan: **"**One of the greatest crimes a man could commit was to unmask an Egwugwu in public or to say or do something which might reduce its immortal prestige in the eyes of the uninitiated and this was what Enoch did"[49]

The second alienated character in this novel is Nwoye. He denies his father in his lifetime. He also rejects all the cultural values of his community. For he is shocked and psychologically affected by the misdeeds of those cultural realities. As a matter of fact, Nwoye accepts and adopts Christianity and white man's civilisation. In *Arrow of God*, Oduche who had gone to the white man's school had become alienated, for he imprisoned a royal python in a box.

All these few references show that the coming of the white man with his culture and civilisation in African society has diverted the African people from their own cultural values and broken the cultural fabric everywhere in Africa. How can a man dare change his environment if he or she ignores his or her own identity? It is for this reason that Ayi Kwei Armah invited every African people to return to the way, in short the source, to the origin. It is only at such a price that African people can identify who they are and what they can do to change their status. Such an attitude will inevitably lead to the changeover of the soul and spirit, the way of thinking a good guarantee for leaving the state of underdevelopment.

In the course of my reading, I discovered in *The Interpreters* by the Nigerian Nobel Prize Wole Soyinka, many scenes of alienation clearly described. In effect, Mrs Faseyi and Egbo started dancing a piece of a classical music "Swan lake big bird". But Oguazor was

[48] Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, (Heinemann: London, Ibadan 1958), p.126.
[49] Ibid, p.131.

offended by how Mrs. Faseyi and Egbo were dancing the good European music and he stopped the music abruptly. Mr. Oguazor is an alienated black man like his fellow Dr. Adjilo.

In fact, they are black "white" people who want to do everything in the European ways. Here, Wole Soyinka deals with a universal theme though the setting is Nigeria. In the same logic, in *Under the Storm*, Seidou Badian describes an episode through which Birama, a young schoolboy, alienated from the white man's institution, proves to his father that it is abnormal that every member of the family drinks in the same calabash, for this must contain microbes which cause great damage to the human body. In the book, the alienation reached its climax when Kany went against the will of Benfa, her father, to marry the wealthy Famagan. In *Les bouts de bois de Dieu*, Sembène Ousman portrays a beautiful literate girl named N'Deye Touti who is thorough extrovert. Indeed, she is alienated, she has made her Western values, refusing and denying the African ones. She bitterly and sadly expresses her shameful feelings as follows:

> Un jour, s'étant trompée de programme, elle était entrée dans un cinéma où l'on projetait un film sur une tribu de Négrilles. Elle s'était sentie rabaissé au niveau de ces nains et avait une folle envie de sortir de la salle en hurlant : "Non, ce ne sont pas de vrais africains". Un autre jour, alors qu'étaient apparus sur l'écran les ruines du Panthéon, deux hommes derrière elle s'était dressée comme une furie et leur avait crié en français : Taisez-vous donc ignorants ! Si vous ne comprenez pas sortez ! "En fait, N'Deye Touti connaissait mieux l'Europe que l'Afrique ce qui, lorsqu'elle allait à l'école, lui avait valu plusieurs fois le prix de géographie. Mais elle n'avait jamais lu un livre d'écrivain Africain, elle était sûre d'avance qu'une telle lecture ne lui aurait rien apporté. N'Deye Touti, tout en s'approchant de la porte de la palissade, se souvenait du jour où pour la première fois elle avait senti s'opérer en elle ce qu'elle nommait son "évolution vers la civilisation[50]

The above paragraph shows the misfortune of Africa, an Africa spiritually and culturally ruined by Western values. It is a striking and disappointing fact to see an African in Africa who is completely out of his own milieu and realities through the disdain shown by N'Deye Touti when an African film was projected, on a screen proves that she is acculturated. Indeed,

[50] Ousmane Sembene, *Les bouts de bois de dieu, (le* livre contemporain : Achevé d'imprimer sur les presses de Brussière Groupe CP1 à Saint Armant Montront (cher) en juillet 2001), P.100-1

I can say that the Western education brought by the white man has been fatal to African culture.

Though Armah does not say a lot about the land alienation trhough his novels, he hints at the issue of usurpation of land in *Two Thousand Seasons.* At the very white men's onset, they required the possession of land the word possession thoroughly contrasts with the indigenous conception of land. Not only did they possess land but also started cutting it into something private that an individual could own. This is the way Armah describes the white destroyers' policy of dispossession of African people of their lands:

> The land they want from us, but not the way guests ask the use of land. The white men want land cut off from other land and set apart for them, as if land could ever be a thing belonging to any but the people as whole. On this their cut off land they would like to have crops. (T.T.S p. 82)

Formerly in Africa of the then wealth of a person or the economy of a whole community was based on the possession of land and land running. In this case, how can the individual emancipate or the community develops if he or she, or the community, is deprived of this key material in the growing of economy? As a result, this mutilation and usurpation of land constitute a key factor in the underdevelopment of Africa.

Subliminal instance of land alienation is seen in the Kenyan realities. First and foremost the ownership of land before the onset of the white men is a birth gift and Kenya people have birth right on land. Ngugi typifies this natural truth in the myth of the creation of the earth "This land I hand over to you. O man and woman. It's yours to rule and till in serenity sacrificing. Only to me, your God, under my sacred tree…"[51] However, the Kenya people were deprived of this birth right. But after their establishment, the white men stole this right by dispossessing of their land. It is a reality in general that Africans and particularly the Kenya people without land are nothing, spiritually, politically, and economically dead. Without land the Africans of the depicted community are poor. In this case, how can Africa

[51] Wa Thiong'o Ngugi, *Weep not, Child* (Heinemann: London, Nairobi 1964) p. 24.

develop? Nevertheless Kenyan people are attached to the land and treat it with great affection and love. They don't want to be separated from it, for it represents their spiritual being, their contact, and communion with the ancestors.

> Ngotho rarely complained. He had all his life lived under the belief that something big would happen. That was why he did not want to be away from the land that belonged to his ancestors. That was really why he had faithfully worked for Mr. Howlands, tending the soil carefully and everything that was in it.[52]

A man cannot come into contact with his ancestors or sacrifice to them when he is severed from the land of the latter. There lies the cogency of the fight committed by Jomo Kenyatta and his counterparts through the Mau Mau movement. In fact, the recovery of the lost land becomes the priority of the Kenya people. It is the first condition for the improvement of their living standards, and reducing the daily poverty.

To crown up, I can say that the different sequences of alienation mentioned above prove that alienation favours the underdevelopment of the continent. For this state of affairs cannot allow Africans to think of what is good for themselves and their vital environment. It is necessary and imperious for African people to identify themselves and adapt their condition to their environment, choose and decide according to their social laws, norms and needs in order to satisfy their aspirations and ambitions. It is only at this cost that Africans will leave the abyss of underdevelopment. Not only did historical causes keep Africa underdeveloped and destroyed her social fabric, but the modern cause also strengthened her underdevelopment.

2.5.2 Modern Obstacles.

2.5.2.1 Neo-colonialism, a Network of the European Gangsters

As *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines: "Neo-colonialism is the use of economic and political pressure by powerful countries to obtain or keep influence over other

[52]Wa Thiong'o Ngugi, *Weep not, Child* (Heinemann: London, Nairobi 1964), p.39.

countries especially the former colonies."[53] It is my contention that the new-colonialism is the new ways in which colonial ideolody and socio-political organisations continue to the present in Africa.

It is a fact of history that under colonialism political tutelage is established over an indigenous people. Once this is done, as was the case with France, Britain, Belgium and Portugal in the scramble for and partitioning of Africa, a colonial administration, which oversees the governance of the colonised peoples, is put in place. The colonial administration appointed people that can ensure the exploitation of the colonies from all perspectives.

Fanon describes the colonial world in these terms:

> The colonial world is a world cut into two. The dividing line, the frontiers are shown by barracks and police stations. In the colonies, it is the policeman and the soldier, who are the official, instituted go-between, the spokesman of the settler and his rule of oppression[54].

Here, it is important to show the background to neo-colonialism before reflecting on its impact on the process of the underdevelopment of the continent.

In the course of time, colonialism introduces commerce and the colonialists' brand of civilisation to the colonies. Very soon, the local elites that emerge from this system come to see that with their level of education, there is not much to choose between them and their local masters. They begin to want a share in the governance of the people and to resent foreign ownership of their land. They form alliances with militant patriots and national resistance is born. As the combined might of the nationalist forces press their demands, the colonialists are forced to grant independence. They leave the country, a new flag is hoisted and the reigns of government, the use of power and authority are handed over to nationalist leaders. But that is not the end of the story. A political system, as already stated is under girded by economics.

---

[53] Jonathan Crowther et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford, University Press 1995), p. 779.
[54] Frantz Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre (translated into English as The Wretched of the Earth*) Penguin Books: Great Britain 1965), P.29.

When the political agitation by nationalist forces has forced the colonialists to grant independence, many a time they have done so but continue to maintain a firm grip on the economy of the emergent nations. They have granted independence, but the economies of the new countries have been still dominated by them. Owing to this domination, they are also able to control the politics of the new emergent nations. This constitutes the grass root of the neo-colonialist network. The mechanism of neo-colonialism has made what started as the scramble for and partition of Africa continues to hamper socio-economic and political development in Africa.

As a matter of fact, Ayi Kwei Armah depicted a great deal of scenes of the influences coming from European super powers over African countries in *Osiris Rising* after independence. This is the way Armah criticised European countries' domination in Africa:

> I'm tired. Consider the situation in this country. At independence, a patriot talked of helping make a society where people would share everything, benefits and pain. His people loved him. The Americans, Germans, British and French called him a communist and had him killed. They put hired assassins at the head of the government. Since then, the business of this government has been to grab commissions for the cheap sale of the natural resources; to embezzle the state funds and divide up international aid money. (O.R p. 130)

From the above quotation, Armah clearly denounced the policy of the European countries in Africa after independence. Former colonial powers established and destabilised governments of newly independent countries. They set ruling teams as executives everywhere in Africa in order to control natural resources, and well buy them at cheap prices. They shaped these new leaders at their images only to serve their interests. Whenever they noticed awareness on the part of some of these leaders, they declared that they were communists or socialists, and perfectly and secretly organised the overthrow of these rebel governments or leaders. Such was the case of Patrice Lumumba in former Belgian Congo where the latter was assassinated by Belgians and Americans with the support of puppet Mombutu who was against all ideals of changeover. Likewise in Burkina Faso, the progressive, young revolutionary Thomas

Sankara was assassinated, for he was dead against the interests of the former colonial power. He was also accused of subversive attitudes vis-à-vis France, which tended to awake the consciousness of a whole continent. For this the coup d'état of his murder was carried out efficiently owing to his close friend and fellow soldier.

The same fate almost befell the Beninese president Nicéphore Dieu-donné Soglo at the advent of the democratic rebirth in Benin Republic. The latter's weakness or sin was to tip the interests of country towards those of America. In this atmosphere of suspicion and fear African leaders have had no occasion to exercise their own will as heads of state. Africa has sunk into following the policy of underdevelopment planned for her African countries through the International Financial Institutions such as World Bank, International Monetary Fund and Structural Adjustment Programmes.

At no moment, have African leaders freely elaborated and decided the policy of development of their countries. They have governed according to outstretched hand policy. This situation of subordination of African nations plunged into a state of retardation.

Another striking fact with neo-colonialism is the privilege granted to expatriates who come to work in Africa. Between the jobs they have carried out or services they have offered and the salaries they have had, there is disequilibrium. We witness this disequilibrium and injustice in *Osiris Rising* with professor Wright Wooley's satisfaction and jubilation, when he receives a confidential letter offering him a position as an advisory operative in the new State Security Service. Here is how Armah satirised the situation:

> A few months after independence, a change modified his attitude. He received a confidential letter offering him a position as an advisory operative in the new state security service. There would be no salary attached to the position, the letter said causing a jolt above professor Wooley's diaphragm. The next sentence brought balm in lieu; there would be a regular monthly honorarium, tax free. It turned out to slightly more than Professor Wooley's take home pay. He felt like a man surprised under a savage down-pour money. He reconsidered his assessment of the new security service. He remembered reading in a professional security journal that modern intelligence methods

> tended to be deliberately flashy. The reason was that the accent in intelligence work had shifted from detection to deterrence. In any case, the honorarium began flowing into two bank accounts, one in a local currency, the other in foreign exchange. Fears that had recently clouded his vision of the future now seemed infantile. The duties attached to the honorarium were gentlemanly. Professor Wooley had to report on any development, however insignificant on the surface, that could pose a threat to the government of the former colony, now an independent state. He was also urged to suggest steps to be taken to isolate, neutralize or destroy potential threats. (O.R pp.274-5)

Above all, this reinforces the hegemony and the importance of the white men in the new African independent nations. In his *Quand on refuse on dit non*, Ahmadou Kourouma denounced this importance, influence and hegemony of European countries during the post-colonial period through the salary gaps between aid expatriates and intellectual in newly independent countries.

Though aid officials and African intellectuals have the same qualifications, the latter earn five times less than their white colleagues. Kourouma points out this injustice as follows

> Après dix ans, quinze ans et vingt ans, les coopérants ne pouvaient plus avoir la main sur tout. La Côte-d'Ivoire avait formé une pléthore d'Ivoiriens capables d'assurer la relève. Ils avaient fait les mêmes études que les blancs qu'ils relevaient. C'était la relève générale, l'africanisation des cadres en Côte-d'Ivoire. Cette africanisation ne se faisait pas au rabais au niveau intellectuel mais au rabais dans les salaires. Le nègre touchait quatre à cinq fois moins que le blanc qu'il relevait**.**[55]

Such bad living conditions cannot allow the African intellectuals to achieve a good output at work and enjoy themselves. The situation invariably creates a discontent. All these are patent signs of poverty.

Condemning the role of neo-colonialism established and carried out by France in independent Africa, the historian Arslan Humbaraci says this, "From a revolutionary point of view that French influence after independence inhibited radical, social and economic

[55] Ahmadou Kourouma, *Quand on refuse on dit non* (éditions du Seuil, septembre 2004) p. 91

policies"[56] Like Arslan Humbaraci, Armah's disaffection with the aftermath of independence comes out very strongly in his presence Africaine article, as he writes:

> As the Algerian revolutionaries have so sarcastically noted, the African politicians love flashy scenes and highfalutin words. That is only a partial fact that in a very radical sense the nationalist leader of Africa have found themselves sucked into the role of hypocrites, actors involved in a make-believe situation African socialism: Utopia nor scientific[57]

The two quotations above clearly show that the African leaders are not free in taking decisions concerning the changeover of their countries. They also put into relief the great deal of influence exercised over the African nations which has destroyed all radical, social and economic policies defined to be carried out by African leaders. In a nutshell, one can assert that the Westerners discourage any effort for change by organizing the murder of the men of brilliant future. They establish international robbery by putting assassins at the head of government through which they run the natural resources at cheap costs. It appears clearly that neo-colonialism sinks Africa into the hole of underdevelopment. To analyse the phenomenon of the neo-colonialism and well evaluate its repercussions on the post-independent Africans, it becomes imperative that one glances at some Ngugi's works. It will enable me as a researcher to approach Armah and Ngugi's visions on the fact.

Ngugi throws some light on the phenomenon of neocolonialism through his works. It is a few days to independence in his novel *A Grain of Wheat* and various characters pause to reflect on the events leading to the coming independence. This is because all of them are going to be affected by it. For the Thompsons, independence for Kenya brings nothing but pain. Power is going to pass out of their hands to local people. Margery's garden is bound as she sees it, to go to waste and the husband's illusion of a civilising mission in Africa are coming to an abrupt end.

[56] Arslan Humbaraci, *Algeria, a Revolution that Failed.* (London: Pall Mall, 1966), p 205.
[57] Ayi kwei, Armah, article, Présence Africaine. Ayi Kwei Armah," The Wrirter in Modern Africa Per Wästberg" p. 20.in *Criticism and Ideology: Second African Writers' Conference* (1986) ed, by Kirsten Holst, Petersen, Stockholm.

For the nationalist fighters and patriotic forces they can carry on the fight and endure the hardship of detention because they know the cry of Uhuru will bring liberation to Kenya. Cleary independence is something to look forward to. For these people of the Tabai ridge their preparations towards independence are characterize"d by haunting fears about how to expose the traitor who betrayed Kihika, one of the most charismatic of the freedom fighters in the forest and led him to his death. What should turn out to be a fitting climax to a celebration of victory turns out to be an anti-climax because the traitor is someone they last expected. But at least independence has been achieved if even Kihika's traitor is the people's hero, Mugo. The only glimpse of the new Kenya is that offered by the MP who through trickery buys off the very land that Gikonyo and the people he is representing as an MP are trying to buy.

> For Ngugi the independence movement has been betrayed and the peasant and worker for whom the war was fought have been further alienated from the land, the source of life, duped and made pitiable by a growing Kenyan middle-class of entrepreneurs in league with international finance capitalism.[58]

The multinational corporation like A. Lang, Lonrho, SCOA, John Holt, Japan Motors, British Layland, Lever Brothers and several oil companies like BP, Texaco, Shell, Total are all over Africa. They are found in every sphere of economic activity" Because of their access to international capital they are able to organise better their production and distributive activities. However, since these multinational concerns are foreign owned, they need local people who act as their representatives and with whom they work. Neo-colonialism is aided in its workings by the local elite. Franz Fanon offers an explanation:

> In the colonial countries, the spirit of indulgence is dominant at the core of the bourgeoisie: and this is because the national bourgeoisie identifies itself with the Western Bourgeoisie along its path of negation and decadence without ever having emulated it in its first stages of exploration and invention stages which are an acquisition of that Western Bourgeoisie whatever the circumstances.[59]

[58] G.D Kilam, *An Introduction to the Writings of Ngugi (*Heinemann: London, Nairobi 1980), P.97.
[59] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Penguin Books: Great Britain 1965), p.123

Rather than leading their people towards integrated national development with self reliance as bedrock, they were merely willing to assume political power, taste the wealth it brings and allow the economic exploitation of their people to continue. In this connection, Ayi Kwei Armah tries to show in his novel *Why Are We So Blest?* how African leaders ape the former colonial masters, instead of bringing about a fundamental restructuring of their societies. This is seen in the dependence of governments in Africa on Western powers and the subsequent neglect and betrayal of the people they govern.

> The main political characteristic of African leadership since the European invasion is its inability and unwillingness to connect first organically with the African people because it always wants first of all to connect with Europe and Europeans. (W. A. W. S. B? p. 221)

Instead of being good stewards of the people's property, the African bourgeoisie, and by implication independent African nations, are dependent on Europe, a dependence which is inimical to Africa's interests, seeing that it inevitably leads to dangerous economic control. Africa's flirtation with Western Europe is symbolised by the love affair between Modin and Aimée. It corresponds to the post independence neo-colonial relationship between the West and Africa. In such a relationship the industrialised Western world is better for it and Africa worse off. Modin Dofu in spite of himself is unable to disengage from the clutches of Aimée, though from the outset it is clear that Aimée is ill-suited to him. The fact is that Modin loves her.

Europe and the Western world are devouring Africa's vital life forces and yet African clings to Europe. "Europe hurled itself against us, not for creation, but to destroy us, to use us for creating itself. America, a growth out of Europe, now deepens that destruction." (W. A. W. S. B? p. 231)

And yet Africa appears unable to disengage herself from the embrace of Europe. Solo, the frustrated writer who meets Modin and Aimée in the offices of the People's Union of Congheria, sees more clearly the dangers of Africa's flirtation with Europe than Modin.

He clearly perceives the love relationship of Modin and Aimée as that of, "The African absorbed into Europe, trying to escape death, eager to shed privilege, not knowing how deep the destruction has eaten into himself, hoping to achieve a healing juncture with his destroyed people." (W. A. W. S. B? p. 232)

Solo describes their love relationship, and in this sense the neo-colonialist situation as "what is this love but hate smilingly embraced by the hated" (W. A. W. S. B? p. 208)

He goes on to ask: "Of what other use have Africa's tremendous energies been these many centuries but to serve the lusts of whites". (W. A. W. S. B? p. 208)

He adds; "Sucked-out men, should our bodies survive our murdered souls, we float between the blessed and the damned attached to none but our specific murderers, caught in the deep-hating embrace." (W. A. W. S. B? pp. 208-9)

The book, evidently, is set in Algeria. Says Robert Fraser in his book *The Novels of Ayi Kwei Armah:*

> The Algeria towards which these distracted exiles have gravitated is a country, which would seem to lend its support to their highest ideals. It is independent, but poverty, degradation, mutilation are so observable everywhere. The sense one has is that this dislocation is due, not simply to the inevitable dislocation of a recent war, but rather to a sell-out by the new national government which is so anxious to court French and international favour that it has neglected the more pressing task of revitalizing the economy.[60]

Once again the actual heroes of the struggle for independence are disregarded once independence is achieved. This is the bitter lament of the man with the amputated leg that Solo encounters at the hospital when he is on the verge of a nervous breakdown. "L'essence de la révolution, c'est les militants". (W. A. W. B? p. 27)

He asks Solo whether it is fair that they have been neglected by the new Cadre of leaders. "Mais c'est juste? Cest juste?" (W. A. W. S? B p. 27). In the end Modin loses out. He is castrated and left to die in a desert. To Armah neo-colonialism appears to be colonialism in disguise. He sees African countries as having allowed neo-colonialism to dictate the pace

[60] Robert Fraser, *Novels of Ayi Kwei Armah* ,(Heinemann: Ibadan Nairobi 1980),pp.50-1

of their development. The foot soldiers of the struggle for independence are neglected once independence is attained. The new leaders are the beneficiaries of a System where foreign interests and their local front men ensure that economies of African countries are stagnant and their development is arrested.

2.5.2.2 Capitalism and Imperialism as Grassroots of African Underdevelopment.

It is an economic system in a country's trade and industry controlled by private owners for profit, rather than by the state. Even though capitalism is not well stressed in his novels in my analysis, I have chosen to carry out research in the field; for it constitutes one of the greatest systems, which has worked for the underdevelopment of the continent. In fact, in the word capitalism, one has the root "capital" which means wealth, property that can be used to produce more wealth or a sum of money used to start a business, all the wealth owned by a person or a business. Therefore, the owners of capital are capitalists and the rich countries are called capitalists. In effect, the main aim of any capitalist country is the unrestrained search for capital. In this respect, European countries created two categories of countries such as wealthy countries and poor countries or northern countries constituted of developed ones and countries of the Third- World and African ones.

In the course of the evolution of capitalism, countries of the Third-World and those of Africa have been "satellite", countries where the developed countries can come and exploit the natural wealth of the African continent in order to supply their industries. To steal and exploit the riches of Africa properly these European countries require democracy from African nations.

Also, the industrialised European countries had created the developed "market economies" and "the developing market economies", disguising the fact that market means

capitalist market. It is important in a way to point out the relations between those countries that are together within the capitalist market system.

The things, which bring Africa into the capitalist market system, are trade, colonial domination and capitalist investment. Trade has existed for several centuries; colonial rule began in the late nineteenth century and has almost disappeared; and the investment in the African economy has been increasing steadily in this century. Throughout the period that Africa has participated in the capitalist economy, two factors have brought about underdevelopment. In the first place, the wealth created by African Labour from African resources was grabbed by the capitalist countries of Europe; and in the second place, restrictions were placed upon African capacity to make maximum use of its economic potential, which is what development is all about.

Those dominant countries establish between them and dominated countries such as the African countries, an unequal trade system where the terms of exchange are unbalanced and inadequate.

Armah points out this disequilibrium in his prologue to *Two Thousand Seasons* through two natural antithetical elements such spring water and desert, which respectively stand for Africa and Europe. It appears clearly in the metaphorical use in Armah's prologue that spring water is in touch with desert, and that no chance for regeneration, only destruction, is awaited.

Ayi Kwei Armah is tender with all about these relations while depicting metaphorically the system of exchange between the spring water and the desert. The writer puts that as follows:

> Say it is the nature of the spring water to give, it is the nature of the desert's sand to take. Say it is the nature of your given water to flow; it is the nature of the desert to absorb. It is your nature also spring, to receive giving, receiving, giving continuing, living. It is not the nature of the desert to give. Taking, taking, taking, the desert blast with destruction whatever touches it. Whatever gives of itself to the desert part from regeneration. (T.T.S p. xii)

These relations between dominated Africa and dominant Europe will never help Africa for her progress; furthermore, they will strengthen her underdevelopment for a very long period.

Above all, the contact between Africa and Europe has brought chaos and disaster as well as it will bring to the destruction of indexes of development through exploitation, and theft of the natural resources and the establishment of the capitalist system where only what matters is the reckless pursuit of profit strengthening the proletarians' poverty. Armah unveils the white men's capitalist attitude through Isanusi in *Two Thousand Seasons*:

> The white men, the guests of the king, would have us destroy our mountains, then our animals, and give them what is of use to themselves, leaving here the offal.[…] They would have the king give them men to work the land-I use their language, for they think the king owns men he can give away to others-so that to speak truth ours would be the planting and the caring, theirs the harvest and its profit. (T.T.S p. 82-3)

This proves that capitalism is and will be responsible for the retard, backwardness, in short, the deepening of underdevelopment in Africa.

Furthermore, imperialism is to be taken into account as regards to the analysis of causes of the underdevelopment of Africa. In fact, what is imperialism? It is the policy of extending a country's power and influence all over the world through political relations or military force, especially in the past by acquiring colonies. In a wide sense, imperialism is itself a phase of capitalist development in which Western European capitalist countries, the U.S.A, and Japan established political, economic, military and cultural hegemony over other parts of the world, which were initially at a lower level and therefore could not resist domination. Imperialism is in effect, the extended capitalist system which for many years embraced the whole world-one being exploiters and the other the exploited. It was through the imperial system that the European countries mutilated and disintegrated the African nations during the conference of Berlin from November 1884 to February 1885, in order to satisfy their interests. Regretting this mutilation of the African continent Armah writes: "Now we

live in neo-colonies called Nigeria, Botswana, Senegal, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Mozambique. We'll have to work against stiff odds to turn our dismembered continent into a healing society, Africa." (O.R p.112)

In fact, Africa becomes a "bone of contention" for colonial powers. To settle the dispute caused by the rush for the richest possessions, and in order to avoid chaos, the richest parts of the continent were divided and distributed to these powers, regardless of the ethnic and linguistic realities.

This balkanisation of the African nations led to the cohabitation, and coexistence of heterogeneous ethnic groups, which for most of time live in a total confusion and alienation to each other. This very often leads to ethnic conflicts, wars and genocides. We witness these wars and genocides in Burundi and Rwanda where the Hutus and Tutsis confronted each other; in Côte- D'Ivoire, the Beté opposed the Dioula or Baoulé. All this state of affairs weakens and fragilises the precarious living conditions of Africans and pushes the continent into underdevelopment.

To round off this part concerning the backwardness in terms of African development, I would like to quote Ngugi when he expresses his anger and opposition to capitalism and imperialism. For Ngugi, indeed

> Capitalism and imperialism are the root causes of evil. Our economy is dependent on international capitalism. And capitalism can never bring about equality of peoples. The exploitation of one group by another is the very essence of capitalism. The peasants and workers are very much exploited in this country. They get very low pay, very poor housing, and unemployment affects them more than anyone else. Now, women form the majority in this category of peasant. Women are doubly exploited and oppressed. It's a general third- world problem.[61]

The above passage contains all the indicators such as exploitation, poverty, and unemployment that consolidate the underdevelopment of the African continent. In the next part, I will diagnose the evils inherent to Africa's development after the accession to independence.

[61] G. D. Killam, *An Introduction to the Writing of Ngugi* (Heinemann: Nairobi, Ibadan), p. 107.

Part two: The Impediments to the Reconstruction of Post-Independence Africa

Chapter three: Literary Articulation of Social and Economic Impediments

3.1 The Cult of Personality as a Retardation Vector of Africa

One of the evils that Africa is confronted with, after her independence as regards her development is the cult of personality. In fact, a cult of personality is the excessive admiration of a famous person such as a political leader. In effect, the praise of authority is by essence a social fact in the African community. And these African authorities like it. This attitude helps lull the popular consciousness to sleep. It helps them build their authority and power and exercise it over their people without any other form of resistance. The nation is built through the praising of its big shots. The political leaders' names are always mentioned with reverence and worship some praising qualifications precede them. The teacher draws the man's attention on this social consideration "Careful, man. Big names must not be mentioned naked. His Excellency Joseph Koomson, Minister plenipotentiary, Member of the Presidential Commission, Hero of the Socialist Labour." (T.B.O.A.N.Y.B p. 56) This sentiment of divination indirectly, created and backed up by the African leaders hides their real incapacity to offer the nations a better tomorrow. After the independence Kwame Nkrumah the great defender of the African populations' welfare and a pursuer of the reconstruction of Africa, liked himself being called the "Ossagyefo." By being called so, the African leaders live upper their peoples and thoroughly ignore the sufferings of the latter. When one goes through Armah's *Two Thousand Seasons*, it appears clearly that the young initiated enslaved by king Koranche to the white destroyers in the midst of their liberation, found some praising words or expressions to lull Kamuzu, their key godfather in the stone places. "*Osageyefo! Kantamanto! Kabiyesi! Sese! Mwenyenguvu! Otumfuo*" (T.T.S p.171) As much as the African people cannot give up such worship and veneration, and work hard, the continent will always live in ignorance and miss her walk toward transformation and emancipation. In addition,

Armah in his works addresses the theme of nepotism which constitutes a hindrance to the reconstruction of Ghana in particular and the whole Africa in general.

3.2 Nepotism, a Social Calamity

When one reads Armah's works, it appears explicitly that nepotism is a recurrent theme and becomes then one of his preoccupations in the context of the analysis of the evils which hinder the reconstruction of African continent. In fact, what does nepotism mean? And how does it affect the new independent African nations as depicted in Armah's novels? According to *Wikipedia encyclopedia*[62], "nepotism comes from the Italian neptismo; nepote meaning nephew, emanating from the former papal practice of granting special favours to nephews and other relatives. The " *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines nepotism as "the practice among people with power or influence of favouring their own relatives especially by giving them jobs." [63]In actuality, this social practice is rampant in the newly independent African countries; it is the reason why Armah has capitalised in the situation through his works. This social behaviour cheerfully tramples underfoot the meritocracy which is one of the many social principles leading to hard work, a guarantee for the reconstruction of the continent. Therefore, it brings about a general mediocrity in the administration of the new African states. The chronic mediocrity has repercussions on the treatment of the current administrative files. For, the men of power recruit their professionally unqualified relatives or friends in the young administration which needs much more professional, experience, and dynamic employees for its functioning. Thus, the new African administration becomes a familial enterprise or that of friends. Such a labour is not ready to work for the reconstruction of the destroyed Africa. In the new independent Republic of Hapa, here is how Armah satirises the ongoing social habit through the dialogue between Ast and Asar:

[62] Wikipedia, encyclopia, WWW.thefreedictionary. com .retrieved on 8th of January,2012.
[63] Jonathan Crowther et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995), p. 779.

> I went down to the registry on the way out.' 'You saw files living on the floor. Clerks are taking rest cure.' The problem isn't just the top, then,' she said.' It's the top all right,' he said. 'Filing clerks have to have a sense of responsibility on their own, surely?' 'They are not filing clerks.' 'What are they?' 'Relatives. Concubines. The people at the top are playing big. In theory they should dip into their pockets to support their relatives and hangers-on, since that's part of their feudal show. They can't do that. So they give government jobs to incompetent relatives.' 'Is there no supervision?' 'The supervisors are the people at the top.' 'You think the solution is to replace the people at the top?' 'No. A different system would shake them out. (O. R p. 159)

Indeed, this tribal staff administration described in the above quotation by the writer will offer the young nation nothing better than incompetent labour. Just at the morrow of the independence, Armah addresses this topical issue through which opportunities are illegally offered to persons who normally do not deserve them. Those who merit them are simply put aside. To me, these partial behaviours that the Ghanaian writer raises in his novel undoubtedly clog the development of the continent. Like a physician, the writer diagnoses social injustice and satirically condemns the phenomenon in terms:

> I was a tight friend of your sister Regina, when we were in school,' Oyo said. 'She is in London now.' What is she doing?' 'She has a scholarship. Joe arranged it for her.' 'Is she in a university, then? Asked the man. 'No,' Estella said.' She's specializing in dressmaking. She says she's going to name her establishment after me when she comes. Estie Models, London Trained.' 'She is very lucky,' said Oyo. (T.B.O.A.N.Y.B pp. 148-9)

In the dialogue above, one notices that the writer pinpoints the irresponsible behaviour of the African political leaders who are invested with the heavy mission to lead their countries to prosperity. It is absolutely incredible that the scholarships which are normally destined to back up the training of the students and fellows must be negotiated and attributed to a dressmaker. Logically speaking, in what ways can a dressmaker use a scholarship to be quantitatively and qualitatively an active contributor to the reconstruction of his or her country? What does he or she know about a scholarship? Is he or she prepared to receive an intellectual training? Does his or her training require years abroad to be achieved? The answer is in the negative because the training could be conducted at home.as such ti has been a waste

of money; and denial of intellectual enhancement in the country. Yet, for a country to develop philosophical or intellectual thinking is the key factor. It is my belief that the growth of a nation starts in the mind.

In principle, a scholarship is got after a hard work at school or at university, but in this quotation Regina, Joe Koomson's sister-in-law gets scholarship, obtained owing to a negotiation on behalf of the Plenipotentiary Minister, active member of Nkruma's political party. Here, in the extract Armah is raising the issue of social and intellectual ethics. The assertions according to which 'the right person should be at the right position', 'to each one his merits' are thoroughly tread on by inconsequent and dishonest politicians and men of power. The direct negative impact of this social behaviour is that the men of the top set nepotism as principle with regard to the recruitment of labour in the administration. In the play *La secrétaire particulière*, Jean Pliya addresses the issue of nepotism through the sloppy and dishonest Chadas, the administrative boss of Nathalie and Virginie. In effect, Chadas constantly rewards the lazy, boastful, incompetent and mediocre Nathalie and offers her some illegal professional favours in recognition to the sexual facilities he has from her, at the great displeasure of the humble, competent and hard working Virginie. For the unconscious and sloppy boss, merit and promotion are only achieved when one is in the good books of his or her boss. Unfortunately, the professional examination organized for the employees by the government, only the hard worker Virginie succeeded, Nathalie and her boss are disapproved, and for merit and promotion are fruit of hard working.

This state of affair cannot help people to transform their living standard, and thus change their environment .To put an end to this section; one can say that nepotism appears as great hindrance to the evolution of the African countries. Another great issue that hampers the development of the African Continent is corruption.

3.2.1 Corruption, the Deadlock for the Development of Africa

Corruption connotes both moral deterioration, perversion of something such as language from its original state and the use of practices such as bribery. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* defines the word "corrupt" as rotten, depraved, wicked, influenced by bribery. Corruption can be referred to in two ways. First of all, the broad meaning of deterioration and perversion and then the narrow legal acceptance. Achebe tackles corruption in these different ways as he has described diverse aspects of deterioration of the traditional way of life through the adoption of western civilisation. But this new facet of life has been experienced in his home village and has yielded new ills disastrous for African society during both colonial and post-colonial periods, and the linguistic barrage between the two races brought the white man to appoint some intermediaries between him and the natives. This linguistic power possessed by the white man's interpreter created in the mind of the latter the idea of corruption. Therefore, when the leaders of Umuofia were arrested and jailed after destroying the Christian Church, the District Commissioner asked them to pay a fine of two hundred sacks of cowries for their release. But while interpreting the white man's will the interpreter who was at the same time the court messenger, added fifty sacks which constituted his own share. Thus, Umuofia had two hundred fifty sacks of cowries to pay instead of two hundred sacs of cowries asked by the white man. "I have decided that you will pay a fine of two hundred bags of cowries"[64] , but the court messenger told the people of Umuofia: "as soon as the six men were locked up, went into Umuofia to tell the people that their leaders would not be released unless they paid a fine of two hundred fifty bags of cowries." [65] This shows the depravation and deterioration of the moral values of African societies. Another instance of corruption in *Things Fall Apart* is that about land dispute between Aneto and Oduche. As a matter of fact, Nnama's family had given much

[64] Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*, (Ibadan: Heinemann,1958),137.
[65] Ibib.p.138.

money to the white man's messenger and interpreter and they that decided the land became the property of Nnama's family: "The white man's court has decided that it should belong to Nnama's family who had given much money to the white man's messenger and interpreter"[66]

In the title of this section, I viewed corruption as deadlock. Why do I have this conception? In fact, corruption is a social phenomenon. It is steadily rooted in people's mind as a social practice. Any fight against corruption is doomed to failure. Fighting corruption means fighting society and the people living within it. It is the reason why despite the many combative actions against it, the phenomenon is still prevailing and becomes then a topical preoccupation for the leaders of the world in general and those of Africa in particular. Even the great democracies are not without reproach. For instance, in France, Bettencourt affair has tarnished the reputation of French democracy and the French president Nicolas Sarkozy. In the core of this affair, the French president is accused of scandal of corruption which affects and roils the political scene in France. Altogether, all the great democracies in the world have experienced their case of corruption. My goal here is to point out how corruption jeopardises the development of the African continent.

After having failed in the realm of the liberation of the continent, Armah has invested himself into literature which is his lifework. Since his ambition is to militate within the movements of liberation to free the continent, and he has failed it, for his first trial as a novelist, he has satirised the evils which hamper the reconstruction of Africa, among which corruption is singled out. Through his first novel, Armah has typified Kwame N'krumah's regime as crippled by corrupt practices.

In *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Ayi Kwei Armah overtly condemns the prevailing corruption in the Ghana of N'krumah's time. Many times, the protagonist of the novel, the man, is forced to accept bribes. In fact, he resists Amakwa's bribe, an Ashanti

[66] Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (Heinemann: London, Ibadan1958).p.124.

timber contractor by refusing to provide the wagon space necessary for transporting his rapidly decaying logs from a neglected siding in the forest.

> I am sorry,' the man answered,' but I have nothing to do with allocations. […] 'Look, they tell me all the time, no wagons, no space. But many times I see wagons coming down here, carrying nothing but stones. But sometimes empty, my good friend, empty. Is it that how to do it? ((T.B.O.A.N.Y.B p. 29)

To force the man to an agreement, Amakwa brings out from a wallet two notes and offers him one and the other one to his co-worker.

> Then the fingers brought out two carefully held-out notes, two green tens. The man said nothing. The visitor put the ten-cedi not under a stone paperweight on the table behind the man, on his right. The visitor drew his hand back from the table and the notes and stood staring at the man in front of him. The man said nothing.' Take it,' the visitor said. 'One for you, one for him.' 'Why should I? (T.B.O.A.N.Y.B p. 30)

From the first excerpt above it comes clearly out that the allocation clerk purposely retards the allocation of the timber in order to compel them to give graft or bribe. This explicitly appears in Amakwa's complaint about the paradoxical attitude of the allocation clerk who tells him about the lack of space and wagons, eventually, the train arrives unloaded or loaded of stones. This situation is similar to what frequently happens in the different African administrations and public services where one must put a stone on his or her file for fear that the wind, may carry it away. Such a situation slows down the work of transformation of the continent. The second citation offers two possible attempts of analysis. At one level it shows a desperate timber contractor trying to corrupt in vain the man, who opposes a strong integrity to the illegal behaviour. At the second, despite the prevailing and strict poverty in which the man and his family live, he has refused the money the contractor offers him. Here, the writer as a psychologist raises the issue of ethics and professional consciousness at work. The man prefers to sacrifice the betterment of the living conditions in order to keep at high grade his dignity and integrity. This sort of individual within society is very scarce. The man's wife, Oyo despises him because she heard that her husband once again miss the opportunity to

better the living conditions of their family. He then undergoes the pressure of his wife and his mother in-law. They are very impatient and want him to comply with the corrupt agents. Overwhelmed under this social and familial pressure the man goes and confesses the situation to his friend the teacher, the latter reacts as follows "you have not done what everybody is doing', said the naked man, ' and in this world that is one of the crimes. You have always known that." (T.B.O.A.N.Y.B p. 54). However, the man stands ground and maintains his refusal to corruption. Altogether, he informs us that this is not the first time he has refused the fruit of graft and greed what everybody is willingly accepting in the Ghana of N'krumah. Corruption becomes a 'national game'. If it is national game every native is supposed to learn how to play. It is the reason why after winning at lottery the messenger sees his joy vanishing into worry, for the Ghanaian lottery is corrupt and he has learned the rule. "'I hope some of the officials at the lottery place will take some of my hundred cedis as a bribe and allow me to have the rest'" (T.B.O.A.N.Y.B p.19). The whole Ghanaian society was corrupt; even within the family, corruption is dominant. Minister Koomson embodies the existing corruption in the Ghana of Nkrumah. He lives in opulence; he is called his Excellency Joseph Koomson, Minister Plenipotentionary, member of Presidential Commission, hero of socialist labor.

In fact, Koomson arbitrarily uses the wealth of the nation to show his high living standard. He now lives in one of the brasher residential estates that previously accommodated the envied coloniser. His coarse Docker's accent is thinly disguised by an assumed hauteur. With the money of corruption and embezzlement, Koomsons have bought private boats in order to run fishing activities. Besides, to hide their illegal activity from the eyes of the jealous, they found clever way—borrowing names for ownership. Effect,the Koomsons start negotiation with the man's wife Oyo and her mother to use their name so as to camouflage the ownership of the boats. For compensation they will receive scanty fish from time to time in order to better their poorly cooked sauce. His wife is bedecked with imported finery, his

sister-in-law studying in England for high court, his life is irradiated by that dazzling gleam the man's own so conspicuously lacks. Sailing along in chauffeured Mercedes Benz, he is a living reproach for what the man's wife interprets as her husband's fundamental lack. It is Koomson rather than the man who is seen as epitomizing the moral outlook of the nation for, despite, his wealth and prestige Koomson's ideals correspond to the triumphant average.

It is also reported through Bailey's utterance in *Osiris Rising* that the governmental authorities misuse political power by embezzling the public funds for personal purposes. Armah puts his satire as follows: **"**Partly government mismanagement", Bailey said. "It's all true, the rumours about the government here. They use state power to enrich themselves, personally. In the crudest ways, like printing money." (O.R p.134) The embezzlement which African leaders orchestrate thoroughly paralyses the economic growth which constitutes the first indicator of development.The issue of corruption is also addressed in *Two Thousand Seasons*. Ayi Kwei Armah puts into relief the deterioration and depravation of African cultural and traditional values which are truthfulness, integrity, self- confidence and confidence from the whole society, through an act of corruption from king Koranche's void and empty mind and soul. Indeed, Koranche had tried in vain to bring Isanusi the eloquent, true speaker to tell falsehood to the subjects of the royal court and persuade them to welcome the white destroyers. He was commissioned to say good things about the white man to their people, in a word, to praise the white man. But Isanusi is opposed to this shameful mission, despite the fact that the king promised him more wealth and prestige. Here one reads about the king's promise:

> Isanusi made sure he had not heard wrong: that what they wanted him to do was to use his gift of eloquence to mystify the people. Then Isanusi rejected the assignment, pleading incompetence. The king urged him to reconsider, to accept. The people respect you. They listen to you, Isanusi, and they believe in what you say. The king promised Isanusi gifts, promised him more gifts, asked Isanusi what his heat desired, asked him what would give comfort to his tongue. (T.T.S.p.101)

Through the above quotation, one can dare say that Africa needs someone like Isanusi to stand his ground against Europeans, Americans and the African leaders. Africa, to leave her poverty, needs men of hope, of vision, of great ambitions in order to break this guilty partnership and this complicity between Europe and the African leaders. It is only at this cost that Africa can hope to come over its backwardness, in a word, its underdevelopment.

At independence, Ayi Kwei Armah said that corruption was a national game but one dares say that today corruption has become "a continental game". In real life, in Benin, Mrs Anne Cica Adjaï, a chairman of an anti-corruption institution, referred to the task of sensitization as "Moralisation de la vie publique" after serious and long investigations declared that ministers in governments of General Mathieu Kérékou were ninety-five per cent corrupt. Even more recently Marie Elise Gbedo, the Minister of Law of Benin accused the board of magistrates of corruption in the face of the whole world. In this case, it will be very hard for my country and then for the whole continent to take off in terms of development, for where there is corruption the economic investors run away. The drawbacks for the country are the disinvestment and the retardation of the economic growth that constitute the indicators of prosperity. Therefore, corruption is the serious handicap to the prosperity of my country in particular and the continent in general. Moreover, the former South African vice-president; the current president of South African Republic, Jacob Zuma, was dismissed from his position as vice-president, because he was charged with corruption.

According to some members of political parties in the case of Benin Republic, politics influences the electorates. In effect, the system works more quickly if notables such as Imams, church priests and tribal chiefs receive money from governments and materials to build or fit out palaces, churches, or mosques. As we know, kings have a great influence on their subjects, mainly in remote parts of the country. Disobedience to his Majesty according to public opinion may drive his anger against the population. Retaliation may be a kind of

disaster. The fear of such retaliation compels people to conform to the king's will. The danger here is that thieving politicians, who succeed in winning kings support by dint of deliberate bribery, may rule the country for their solo interest forever. Frequent scenes of the kind are observed during the election periods when the electorate have their conscience thieved. In short, the mischief continues in an underground form.

In return, groups of individuals or ethnic groups are well treated or ignored according to their support or their opposition to such or such political parties depending on who happens to win or lose the elections. Such social atmosphere leads inevitably to the deepening of social cleavages or cracks relating to language, ethnic and regional differences. Consequently, no president who is elected thanks to rigged elections process will have the courage to combat the mafia, which helps him or her accede to power, hence the generalisation of impunity in Africa. It is the reason why the fight against the system of corruption always treads on. Normally, when the case is accurately proved, the authorities or the president in person will have to punish with strictness the culprits to reduce the prevalence of corruption on the continent. *The Eloquence of the Scribes* offers a good instance of punishment. In effect, a peasant on his way to market was waylaid and his goods despoiled by a corrupt official. The dishonest official expected the poor peasant to capitulate under his different tortures and atrocities. Unfortunately, for him, the peasant stood ground and the case was brought to a higher boss and finally to the pharaoh at each level he was whipped many times to see if he will keep the same critique against arbitrary and corrupt power. What he did with perseverance and eloquence. At the end, the pharaoh sacks the corrupt boss and appoints the eloquent peasant in his place. Here is the story:

> According to the story, a peasant on his way to trade his produce in a city market was waylaid by a corrupt official who forced his donkey off the road, then confiscated his goods as a fine because the donkey chewed some growing barley. The state official expected the peasant to capitulate and go home. When he protested vigorously instead, he had him jailed and whipped. The more the official tortured the peasant, the more the peasant protested, not screaming and

> yelling but describing and analyzing the official's corruption and injustice so accurately that other officials chatted about the event. As each superior in the state hierarchy heard of the verbal skills of the courageous peasant, he arranged for the fellow to be brought to him so that he could listen. The eloquence of the suffering had become entertainment for the aristocracy. Thus from boss to higher boss, the peasant was finally taken to the pharaoh. To keep him talking he was whipped some more, and he kept delivering his critique of arbitrary, corrupt power, based on explication of the cultural principles of balance and justice. […] Nine times various officials whip the peasant just to hear him speak, but the story ends in a reversal. The pharaoh sacks the corrupt boss and appoints the eloquent peasant in his place. At this point listeners presumably dried their eyes and cheered the peasant who made it, the good pharaoh and the system; their faith affirmed that the anti-corruption campaign really worked.[67]

Furthermore, this excerpt, shows that the fight against corruption is and will be everyone's concern, either victim or high political authority. To succeed in combating this social evil, as a victim, one needs to resist and report the case with proof to the authorities without fearing retaliation on behalf of the zealous corrupt agent, in return. If the proof of the case is evident, they shall have to take the right decision by punishing the guilty. Every action undertaken to fight the phenomenon must be backed up. It is only in this way that one must pretend to reduce the rate of corruption in African countries. Once again, to conclude this section, one can dare say that corruption has been and is still the great and major evil Africa is suffering from, for it impedes the real development of the continent. This environment of rampant corruption offers little chance for the creation of employment for the African youth. In this hopeless situation, the African labours emigrate to the West where they believe life is still easy whereas the continent, through the system of brain-drain, continues lacking valid young people for its transformation.

[67] Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Eloquence of the Scribes* (Per Ankh: Popenguine Senegal 2006), p. 205-6.

3.2.2 The "brain-drain" a Bedrock of African Underdevelopment

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English defines 'brain-drain' as "the loss to a country when its skilled, competent and clever people leave it to go, live and work in other countries."[68]

In fact, many people leave their countries for many reasons. The African people are very often victims of oppressions, tortures, cruelties, political persecution, lack of political freedom, inadequacy of the living conditions; compel them to abandon their native land. These realities constitute what one might term a 'brain haemorrhage'. In a way, the effect of the 'haemorrhage' is similar to that of 'brain drain', in that, in both circumstances, the available national skills are not placed at the service of, or put to proper use by, the country.

Therefore, the conditions sustaining ineffective use of professional labour, well-educated and highly trained people undoubtedly spark off or sustain the 'brain drain' in various African countries. In search of good working and living conditions, those who normally will work for the development of the continent, leave it and work to develop their host countries to the detriment of the African continent. This statement of affair, leads to the underdevelopment of Africa. In addition, the colonial system of exploitation established by the white men renders life unbearable to the African youth that has no other solution than move to the West in searching of the *El Dorado*. In *The Eloquence of the Scribes* the field of professional artistic production, the standard system reduces the African writers to poverty and then constrains them to migration. As a proof Armah declares:

> The system of payments is usually so iniquitous that famous African writers who have spent decades making millions of profits for European publishers, and would themselves be multiple millionaires if their business accounts were honestly managed, are constrained to go hustling in America or Europe as migrant workers well past any sensible retirement age[69]

[68] Jonathan Crowthe, et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995),p. 132.
[69] Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Eloquence of the Scribes* (Per Ankh: Popenguine Senegal 2006), p. 277.

The citation above clearly highlights the way Westerners swindle and exploit the African artists and oblige them to turn to the West to better their living conditions. In fact, the brain drain leads to the depopulation and jeopardizes the economic growth of the African continent. Such depopulation and the decline of the economic growth deepen the gap of the underdevelopment of the African nations. Altogether, nowadays, one witnesses a massive migration of the African youth towards the West in search of good living conditions. To achieve their dream, the African youth illegally and clandestinely undertake perilous voyages to European countries thus risking their lives. Many African youth have drowned into the Mediterranean Sea in the course of their adventures towards the 'promised West.'

It is to stop this haemorrhage and loss of the African population that European authorities instituted residence permits migration on selection in order to compel them to stay in their native countries to work for their development. This migration to the neighbouring countries and the West renders more difficult and complex the growth of the economy of Africa. The next section will discuss the economic impediments.

3.2.2.1 Unbalanced Partnership in Terms of Exchange

According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* a partnership is, "the state of being a partner or partners especially in business"[70]. So, the West and Africa have been partners since they are involved in common history and business. The West and Africa take part in the same activities that can be profitable for each of them. But, one bitterly notices that this relationship between Africa and the West has been and is still characterized by a real inequality in terms of exchange. The partnership between Africa and the West is a distorted one because the West does not respect the conditions of this common relationship. The links between West and Africa are these of dominants and dominated exploiters and exploited. There has never been between West and Africa any frankness, sincerity, openness. For the

[70] Jonathan Crowther et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995), p. 844.

West, Africa is a continent which will serve to solve the socio-economic problems it has been confronted and is still confronted with. These fake relations are obvious in the field of trade. For the most part, the nations of Africa fall into the group of exploited countries inside of the capitalist or imperialist system.

The inequality in the partnership appears clearly through the subdivision that the imperialists made as far as market economies are concerned. This subdivision gives birth to two markets 'developed market economies' and 'developing market economies.' Therefore, African economies are integrated in a manner that is unfavourable to Africa and insures that Africa is dependent on the great capitalist countries.

Indeed, structural dependence is one of the characteristics of underdevelopment. The most recent economists divide the capitalist or imperialist system into two parts. The first of which is the dominant or metropolitan section, the countries in the second group being often called "satellites", because they are in the orbit of the metropolitan economies. This dominant position of the West enables it to exploit the natural resources and wealth of Africa fully at low costs. They meet no opposition while running these resources because they are strong and powerful. The partnership between Africa and the West is an international theft plotted against Africa and her people. An unequal exchange in the field of trade will never lead to the development of the African continent.

Above all, one can say that African development is possible only on the basis of a radical break with the international capitalist system, the major agency of underdevelopment of Africa over the last five centuries.

In the same respect, Ayi Kwei Armah denounces this capitalist behaviour through his metaphorical prologue in the opening of *Two Thousand Seasons*. In effect, he has used in this historical novel, desert and spring water representing respectively, the dominant West and dominated Africa.

In fact, the desert receives life from the spring water but it never gives anything in return for compensation. The desert dries the spring water, nothing vital comes out from their contact if not death. It is what Armah's narrator expresses in the coming lines,

> "Spring water flowing to the desert; where you flow there is no regeneration. The desert takes. The desert knows no giving. To the giving water of your flowing it is not in the nature of the desert to return anything but destruction. Spring water flowing to the desert, your future is extinction" (T.T.S p.xi)

The above quotation says that contact between the West and Africa has been disastrous for the latter, in fact, this contact will never generate any hope for a better future. To leave behind underdevelopment, Africa must work out a new partnership with the west, insisting on equality of opportunity and chance in business and trade. In the statement below, Ayi Kwei Armah suggests a way for Africa to overcome her underdevelopment. The narrative focuses on reciprocity. "Reciprocity. Not merely taking, not merely offering. Giving, but only from those to whom we give in reciprocal measure. How easy, how just, the way yet how easily, how utterly you have forgotten it. You have forgotten that justice is not ease." (T.T.S p. 17)

What Ayi Kwei Armah moots in the above citation is to balance the exchange between Africa and the West. This partnership is definitely one of the causes of the underdevelopment of Africa. As Armah points out in *Two Thousand Seasons* through a public intervention of Isanusi, who denounces this unbalanced partnership between White destroyers and King Koranche,

> The white destroyers came to land. The king greeted them with affection. The king was taken abroad the white destroyers' ship. He returned with whole canoe-loads of his servants, and preceded them into his palace. These goods were announced as a gift, a present to the king and his court, and a prelude to negotiations, the white men having come to renew their request for permission to set up on our land a factory, a hunting station and a church. (T.T.S p. 100)

The immediate consequence of those negotiations was the subsequent exploitation of the wealth and resources of Africa. One witnesses in the novel that the white men exchanged their shoddy goods for many valid and strong people of Anoa, capable of hard working for the

transformation of Anoa in particular and Africa in general. These men and women were taken to another place to work and transform it to the detriment of their own area, Africa. Isanusi satirizes the white destroyers' wishes during the deceitful speech that king Koranche had commissioned him to deliver to the public:

> The first wish of the white men is this: They have heard of our land, the beauty of the mountains and the plains' fertility here, and the metals our earth contains─ iron in abundance, gold, silver, and our pure, red copper. These metals it is the white men's wish to take away from us, to take them to their home beyond the sea. In return they promise to give the king and his courtiers shiny things, entertainment for their eyes. They would have us break up the mountains; take out what is good in them to give them, leaving ourselves here the waste sand. […] The white men say they have heard we have many people here- too many- and that our women's fertility is reported a wonder among them. It is their wish to take numbers of our people away from us. They say these numbers would in the new places beyond the sea work on land as fertile as ours here." (T.T.S p. 82-3)

Considering this unbalanced business between the Westerners and the African people, I can say that the latter has great interest in changing the way of dealing with their countries affairs vis-à-vis the foreigners, unless they want to sink into underdevelopment forever. Africa and her leaders must say no to the fake cooperation and the policy of assistance and outstretched hands, for the white men will never favour the construction and transformation of the continent. Africa needs to elaborates the policy of her partnership and impose it on the white men because it is the white men who badly need our natural resources and other raw materials most necessary for their industries.It is my belief that Africa much badly needs the construction of heavy industries in order to catch up with retardation.

3.2.2.2 The Retardation of the Industrialisation of Africa

From industrialisation derives the root "industry", which means, according to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 'the making or production of things in factories'. It appears clearly in this definition that industries are very important for economic forwardness. At the first sight, one will think that the industrialisation of Africa will not present any obstacles

because Africa has the advantage of raw materials and natural resources of all kinds necessary for the implantation of industries.

Begun belatedly in Africa, industrialisation constitutes one of the preoccupations after independence. The industrial potentialities of Africa are numerous in spite of the continent's weakness in energetic resources that need funding.

Indeed, Africa has great possibilities in natural resources, which will favour its industrialisation. This is assessed in *Two Thousand Seasons*, through Isanusi's speech to king Koranche's subjects, when he denounces the white man's wishes publicly: "The first wish of the white men is this: they have heard of our land, of the beauty of mountains and the plain's fertility here, and of the metals our earth contains. Iron in abundance, gold, silver, and our pure, red copper…" (T.T.S p. 82) Despite the great endowment, the implantation of industries in Africa is still facing many difficulties. That explains the fact that Africa is the least industrialised continent. Her share in the world industrial production does not reach 2%.

Furthermore, industrialisation faces the insufficiency and mediocrity of the means of transport, the narrowness of the market, for it excludes its consumption of poverty of the population is confined to the manufactured products. Another important obstacle is the paucity of capital. In addition, I can say that the insufficiency of professional training in the field of industry is a great problem to solve.

Without the implantation of heavy industries, which make the machines and different equipments useful for agriculture, which represents the key African economic activity, the economy of Africa will be retarded. The African continent will remain underdeveloped for many decades if its leaders do not fight to implant heavy industries, which can transform its raw materials.

Today Japan has become a leading country in science and technology and the envy of many societies including Western industrially developed countries. Africa needs to cope with

the experiences of the scientifically and technologically advanced countries of the World for true development. In making this advocacy, I have been guided by the words of Dei Anang, that:

> Much of the talk about the African developing countries along his own lines is dangerous. Much of this would cut the African off the mainstream of world civilization altogether. But the African must be wary and learn to discriminate. With all the power at his command, he must acquire and control the techniques of Western science. With all his acquisition, however, he must still retain his own attitude to life and his independence of thought. That is the way to true and sure progress[71]

This quotation shows that the achievement of African industrialisation depends on the endeavour the will and the determination of our leaders.

No one will develop our continent in our place. It is the reason why our political authorities must have a clear vision about the modernisation of the continent. And the modernisation passes necessarily through the building of industries. It is only at this cost that Africa will overcome her underdevelopment. The next chapter will deal with cultural impediments that hurdle the development of Africa.

[71] Dei Anang, "Ollenu" in Sweet & Maxwell ed *Principles of Customary Land Law in Ghana* 1962, 1974, p.8

.

Chapter four: Cultural Impediments

4.1 Loss of Identity

One of the many preoccupations of Armah at the morrow of the independence is the loss of the African identity. This loss of the African values becomes an obsession in him so that in his first novels he has given no good image of Africa. Actually, after the independence, the writer has made a metaphorical representation of his native Ghana where everything is under ruin and even her authentic intrinsic values. In one word, Africa is losing her root. Armah's work offers a symbolic value to the use of the name. Individual names, to a large extent, serve as keys to the cultural and social identity of characters. So, the loss or retention of a true African consciousness and identity is often indicated by the name a character bears. In *Two Thousand Seasons*, Isanusi, a character of a great vision, predicts of a time

> When we have lost our way completely, lost even our names; when you will call your brother not Olu but John, not Kofi but Paul; and our sisters will no longer be Ama, Naita, Idawa, and Ningome but creature called Cecilia, Ester, Mary, Elizabeth and Christiana (T.T.S p. 83)

In the novel all the twenty young initiates under Isanusi's guide, children of the way, retain their African names a testimony to their identity. This knowledge of their intrinsic values helps them a lot in the process of their liberation from the enslavement in which king Koranche and the white destroyers trapped them. Those scattered from the way and lost to the white man's world come with names that prove their alienation. Such is the case of the prince Bentum renamed Bradford George. Sometimes one or two such names are not enough.

In *Fragments*, I encounter "the honourable Mr. Charles Winston Churchill Kessie" and Henry Robert Hudson Brempong, the 'been-to' whose soul is blasted by an insatiable thirst for the shiny things of the white man's world. Here is the way Armah's narrative ridicules Brempong :

> Oh no. No. but I understand you I have learned to take precautions, myself. There are important things you can't get to buy at home. Every time I go out I arrange to buy all I need, suits and so on. It's quite simple. I got two good cars on this trip. German cars, from the factory, all fresh. They're following me. Shipped. (Frag p. 45)

Armah, informs his readers about something terrible in *The Beautyful Ones*, "in watching a black man trying at all point to be the dark ghost of a European." (T.B. O. A. N. Y. B p.95.) One shares this terror and humiliation with the "man" in *The Beautyful Ones* as he goes through the government residential area on the hill:

> Enough names of black men with white souls and names trying mightily to be white. In the forest of white men's names, there were the signs that said almost aloud: here lives a black imitator. MILLS-HAYFORD … PLANGE-BANNERMAN…ATOH-WHITE…KUNTU-BLANKSON. Others that must have been keeping the white neighbours laughing even harder in their homes. ACROMOND… What Ghanaian name could that have been in the beginning, before its civil servant owner rushed to civilize it, giving it something like the sound of a master name? GRANTSON… more and more incredible they were getting. There was someone calling himself FENTENGSON in this wide world, and also a man called BINFUL. (T.B. O. A. N. Y. B p.147)

In Armah's novels and with his central characters, names begin to take on special significance beyond the expression of identity. In fact, the names born by Africans have a great importance in their lives. The name in African context is the fundamental conception of the self as a basis for action or inaction. As Africans the names we bear must recall us our past, ancestors and forefathers. In a great extent, their names inform us about the great things that they achieved in the past. In this optic, the African people investigate on the significance of the names great men have born and why offspring continue to bear the same names. This helps the Africans to roll back the limits of ignorance and continue with the great achievements of the past in the sense of the reconstruction of the dismembered continent. In this logic, in the years seventies and eighties the former presidents Mubutu of Zaire and Eyadema of Togo have attempted a return to the African authenticity by imposing the endogenous African names on their peoples. This attempt of the return to the origin goes perfectly with the break with the white domination on the African peoples. Armah also urges

Africans through his *Two Thousand Seasons* to return to the way whose despise constitutes a handicap to the development of the continent. In effect, after the colonial exactions and destructions, it becomes a necessity for the people of the continent to go back to the origin in order to carry out the great task of the construction of their land. Here, Armah focuses on the matter. "A people losing sight of the origins are dead. A people deaf to the purposes are lost. Under fertile rain, in scorching sunshine there is no difference: their bodies are mere corpses, awaiting final burial." (T.T.S p xiv) Through the above citation one must explicitly understand that the abandonment of our identity at a great pleasure of the extrinsic values is suicidal to the development of the continent. As an African saying goes "it is at the end of the ancient cord that one weaves the new one." In other words, the true developmentstems from what genuine culture has laid as foundation.

In this perspective, *Fragments* appears as a good illustration of such worries. As a matter of fact, the novel opens with Naana, Baako's Grandmother, who is endeavouring desperately to safeguard this African authenticity. But no one in her environment seems to be preoccupied seriously with this disappearance of the cultural identity of Ghana and that of the continent as a whole. This struggle for safeguard of the traditional beliefs is seen through the way she strongly requested Efua, Araba and Kwesi to respect the norms of tradition as the performance of the naming ceremony of the Araba's new born in order to retrieve the spirit of the baby from the world of the ancestors. Yet, nobody takes seriously this urgency expressed by Naana. Unlike, the parents of the baby dragged on for ages seeking for the material wherewithal to organise a grandiose naming ceremony, the result is that after few days the baby return to the world of the spirits. Here Naana is expressing her astonishment "'Five days,' the old woman whispered in her astonishment. 'Five days. The child is not yet with us. He is in the keeping of the spirits still, and already they are dragging him out into this world for eyes in heads that have eaten fresh to gape at." (Frag p.97)

Through this quotation it appears clearly that paramount importance in the new African nations is no more the traditional beliefs but the material that governs the new society. In this statement, Naana, the depository of the tradition, is pointing out the disregard for the traditional stages concerning the naming ceremony from the young generation's behalf. Even during the dialogue between Naana and Baako, the latter shows his ignorance to the oncoming naming ceremony through the answer he gave to his grandmother's question. "'And you, what do you say to all this masquerade?' 'Nothing,' Baako answered. 'I do not fully understand the ceremony itself.'" (Frag p.97) It's a pity! This is how Baako like all the other African intellectuals unveil his acculturation to the African beliefs. In fact, can we, Africans achieve progress by ignoring what makes our essence to life? Naana as the guardian of the African beliefs sees her grandson's traditional disconnectedness like a shame and adds that it is a must for him in particular and the Africans to understand their traditional performances:

> 'Ah, that is a shame. The ceremony you ought to understand, or where do you get the meaning of it, even if it is done right? Don't you see? You know that the child is only a traveller between the world of the spirits and this one of the heavy fresh. His birth can be a good beginning, and he may find his body and this world around it a home where he wants to stay. (Frag p.97)

The excerpt above informs us about Naana's perfect knowledge of the tradition and her consciousness on the loss of it. She seems to represent the values of the old Africa being swept away under the influence of the Western ideas. It is then significant that Naana encloses the story of a grandson who falls a victim to the irresolvable tension between the two value systems, Western and African in the sense that her voice is heard at the beginning and the end of the novel:

> EACH THING that goes away returns and nothing in the end is lost. The great friend throws all things apart bring all things together again. That is the way everything goes and turns round. That is how all living things come back after long absences, and in the great world all things are living things. All that goes returns. He will return. (Frag p.1)

And the closing paragraph of the novel puts into relief once more Naana's inalterable belief in her ancestral tradition. "I am here against the last of my veils. Take me. I am ready. You are the end. The beginning. You who have no end. I am coming." (Frag p.201)

This strong consciousness has the effect of restoring the lost balance by placing the story of Baako's rapid decline into madness within the context of the traditional ideology, which, although in fact neither timeless nor changeless, contains a cyclical worldview. Naana believes not only that those who go away will return, but also that there is a continuity of life in death, and that contact with the dead must be maintained for the sake of the living.

Fragments once again gives us the evidence of the search for material when Baako comes home with a guitar and typewriter, almost bare hand, his relatives are waiting for him to bring them material wealth and fill them with joy. "'The member of the family who goes out and comes back home is a sort of charmed man, a miracle worker. He goes, he comes back, and with his return some astounding and sudden change is expected.'" (Frag p.130) When a member of the family goes abroad the rest of the family lives in idleness and laziness waiting for the one who has gone abroad to bring wealth to change their lives. If he fails everybody fails with him. Such an attitude is not only typical to Ghanaian people; it is spread to the whole continent. This explains clearly the state of underdevelopment of Ghana. Without hard work and a concern for cultural backup in the development initiatives, the country cannot prosper economically. In much more concise understanding the identity I am referring to here has nothing to do with the national identities which are a strategy to keep permanently the continent under the *status quo* established by the white men. These national identities reinforce the barriers set up by the colonizers.The white man's development structures alone jeopardise the integration of the continent and thereby affect Africa's development. Furthermore, *The Eloquence of the Scribes* by Armah addresses the issue with acute interest:

> What, with this focus on historical truth, might cultural workers contribute to the construction of an African identity? Our contribution to the future might begin with a hard-eyed look at the shaping structures we inhabit.[…] Beyond that, we need to think of the nature of human movement on the continent before it was divided up into the slave pens Europeans called colonies then, and unimaginative Africans are urged to call nations now, to constant detriment. How did Africans see the land? Where on this continent were there lethal barriers to the movement of persons, ideas and things? If it is true that before Berlin, human groups and individuals were free to move over the length and breadth of this continent, is not time we looked again at our space as free, instead of forcing our minds into straitjackets made in Germany? The first step is to get out of the slave boxes we call our national identities. Then we can begin thinking as Africans. That is message from the ancestors we cannot see, though they are around us, and from the unborn, equally invisible to us, though they are in us. We can hear it if we care to listen to the griots, and to read the scribes[72]

The quotation above traces back to the way African people used the territory of the continent. They did not put barriers to their freedom while moving. They went everywhere they wanted to go. There was total absence of borders within communities. Formerly, the identity was once in Africa, we move as Africans. But unfortunately, with the fragmentation of the continent through colonisation, the European rogues set up barriers everywhere on the continent in order to consolidate their hegemony over the endogenous and safeguard their interests. What disrupts the social status in Africa and complicates any effort of construction? To overcome this situation, Armah suggests the Africans to look back into their history by listening to the griots and reading and analysing the works of the scribes. But there too, a difficulty still exists, for how many of Africans can nowadays understand the exoteric speech of the griots and decipher the scribes' hand writing. The same, the existence of so many dialects constitutes a major hurdle to communication among the citizens of the continent. My next section will deal with the disparity of language, a primal hurdle to development.

4.2 Colonial Languages and Their Impacts on the Continent

After the decolonisation of the continent one of the major hindrances that sink it into the abyss of underdevelopment is the disparity of languages. In the context of my study,

[72] Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Eloquence of the Scribes* (Per Ankh: Popenguine Senegal 2006), p. 240.

disparity means plurality of language i.e., a large number of different languages. In fact, language that is known as the engine of development does not favor it in the African context. The reality is that the continent has come from colonialism weakened and divided in every realm of life; and is incapable to present a mighty linguistic unit that can resist the hegemony of European languages. In addition to the colonial languages, each country has its communal dialects what one calls the African languages. In Africa, the working languages are these providing from abroad, and which are learnt and read by the very few privileged, the elites. In this case, the great masses of people live aside of the reconstruction work, then reducing the chance of the continent to develop. How can a country or continent develop in using the others' languages? Is it possible for Africa to develop in foreign languages? I think that the answers are in the negative, for it is much easier to invent and create one's own native language than any other foreign ones. The influence of the imported European languages hampers the possibility of adoption of regional and continental languages whose teaching rolls back illiteracy which is the enemy of development. It is in this perspective that the Senegalese scholar, professor Cheikh Anta Diop suggests in his book *Les Fondements Economiques et Culturels d'un Etat Féderal d'Afrique Noire* the choice of a great linguistic ensemble for the whole continent. Thus, Anta Diop no longer doubts the achievement of the gem for his dear Africa. Here is what he proposes:

> Lorsque nos démonstrations seront suffisamment avancées en walaf, la preuve sera faite que, le moment venu, on pourra choisir d'une façon appropriée l'une des principales langues africaines afin de l'élever au niveau de langue de gouvernement et de culture à l'échelle du continent ; elle couvrira toutes les langues territoriales de la même façon que le russe se superpose à la langue de chaque république soviétique. Le choix d'une telle langue incombe à une commission interterritoriale compétente, inspirée par un très profond sentiment patriotique, à l'exclusion de tout chauvinisme déguisé. La langue ainsi choisie sera d'abord enseignée dans le secondaire, dans tous les territoires, au même titre qu'une langue vivante obligatoire. Au fur et à mesure que les manuels des différentes disciplines seront rédigés en cette langue, que les programmes du secondaire et du supérieur y seront intégrés, elle se substituera dans l'enseignement officiel aux anciennes langues européennes comme support de notre culture nationale moderne.[73]

[73] Cheikh Anta Diop, *Les Fondements Economiques et Culturels d'un Etat Féderal d'Afrique Noire, (*Présence africaine 1974) P. 23-24.

The scholar's proposition ineluctably aims at solving on the one hand the issue of the multilingualism that undermines the evolution of the continent and on the other hand debases the hegemony of the European languages. By doing so, the Africans can fall into line with the Asian peoples who understood earlier the importance of the sustainability of their cultural identity. For instance, either in Japan, China or India, a unique language choice is made by these peoples, which has boosted the development of these countries. Language is a means of creation, value transmission and exchanges. It is the only thing that continues to fertilise experiences through creativity with past, present and future.The selected African language will be introduced into the African educational system in order to teach how to read and write a guarantee for the rapid metamorphosis of the continent.

Like Anta Diop, Armah denounces the negative impact of the colonial languages on the whole life of the African peoples. Demonstrating that Africa is in a great transition as regards literature, Armah underlines the fact that Africans are passive consumers of other peoples' languages and cultures. The fact is that this language consumption cannot favour the development of the continent. The situation obviously dehumanises the peoples of the continent:

> First, we are still using languages that are not ours, or not in any meaningful sense African. For the moment the most widely used of these languages are not merely not ours; they also happen to be the cultural property of Europeans and Arabs long-range projects were intended to dehumanize Africans as a way of enhancing their own claims to human and superhuman status.[74]

In the same perspective, from the quotation above, the writer deplores the fact that Africans are still using colonial languages that constitute the source of African underdevelopment. To overcome this handicap the Ghanaian novelist wishes the adoption of the language of Africa which will help break with the European material, intellectual and artistic exploitation all over the continent. Here is the expression of his wish, "It would be a great relief to be able to use

[74] Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Eloquence of the Scribes* (Per Ankh: Popenguine Senegal 2006), p. 241.

an African language, but the hard fact is that the adoption of a common language is a social fact, and African society is so far too disorganised to choose a language of its own."[75]

The balkanisation imposed on the African countries the notorious disorganisation with them will forever hurdle the choice of a common language. To conclude this section, I can strongly assert that the imposition of the European languages in Africa provoked the underdevelopment of the latter. In the next subtitle I intend to discuss the colonial educational system.

4.3 The Role of Colonial Education in the Backwardness of the Continent.

I will begin with a discussion of the historical background of the colonial education before I delve into the role played by this education in the retardation of the development the continent. Indeed, after the conquest of Africa and the establishment of colonial administration, it became necessary to educate some Africans so that they could help the white colonisers to carry out the civilising mission in Africa. At the beginning, this education consisted in teaching the peoples of Africa the religious precepts to kill in the Africans the animality and install in their minds humanity. In this context of debasement and reversal of the social hierarchy, the Africans were made to believe that they were callous, savage and murky characters, without past, history and culture. After this psychological exertion on the endogenous peoples' minds, the white men urged and compelled the Africans to send their children to the colonial schools. However, the teaching in the new education said nothing good and generous about the continent and its culture. The loophole in this instruction is that it does not teach the African values but put them aside and only emphasize those ones of the European universe. Through my reading of *The Eloquence of the Scribes* I share with Armah,

[75] Idem.

the experience of his schooling at Achimota in which experience he is stating that young Africans at school are driving thoroughly away from their African realities.

> The school system offered Africans an invitation into the European universe. So our teachers tried to equip us to discuss snow and European flowers and cities as if we lived among them, while remaining silent about African traditions we had left behind. The European invitation was, in essence, a welcome into psychic and mental alienation, a deliberate, and often quite charitable, enticement into an officially supported form of lunacy.[76]

For Armah there is something wrong with the type of education offered in Africa because this does not take into account the African realities that revealed to be the foundation of the development in the African context. He questions the educational structure and asks whether intellectuals in Africa have contributed their maximum to the development of their societies, obviously not. The white men did not train them for anything grandiose, but they were expected to do the clerical jobs, be messengers of District Commissioners, and facilitators etc…Their training has never acceded the stage of subhuman. It is training on the third-rate. In this the Europeans viewed Europe and Africa respectively as the centre and periphery. Thus, Africans are trained to help the white men exploit materialistically, artistically and intellectually Africa. It does not edify the development of the continent rather it is education of underdevelopment, for it teaches Africans strategies for keeping under domination. It is true that this educational structure appears like the starting point to awaking consciousness. To a large extent the colonial education becomes at the same time asset and weakness to the liberation of the continent. Insofar as it serves to regain the freedom for the continent. It is thanks to the universal principles and norms that convey the European education that the first elites become aware of the rights and fight for it. It is the case of

[76] Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Eloquence of the Scribes* (Per Ankh: Popenguine Senegal 2006), p. 10.

Patrice Lumumba, Kwame Nkrumah, Ahmed Sekou Touré, Nasser Gamal, Jomo Kenyatta to name few, have fought for the liberation of the continent at the risk of their lives.

In the line of my study it appears obvious that education is in the upstream and downstream of every progress but that one experiences in Africa does not work for the transformation of the continent. For the narrator of the foregoing quotation, it is good however what is the best is the land because its possession refers to the indicators of development.

In the forthcoming chapter, I intend to diagnose through Armah's novels the political impediments to the reconstruction of the dismembered continent.

Chapter five: Political Impediments

5.1 The Failure of the Ideologies and Its Impacts on the Africans

In the years 1960s, the great African rulers had the choice of the ideologies which would make it possible to lead their peoples well. In fact, what does ideology stand for? What does it mean in the African context? What are its consequences on the socio-political and economic fields?

Ideology is a set of ideas that convey one's goals, expectations, and actions. Taking into account this definition, an ideology can be considered as a comprehensive vision, a way of looking at things (worldview), as in several philosophical tendencies (political ideologies), or a set of insights proposed by the ruling class of a given society to all members of this society, 'a received consciousness' or product of socialization. In fact, the concern behind an ideology is to offer either change in society, or adherence to a series of ideals where conformity already exists, through a normative thought of process.

Moreover, Ideologies are systems of abstract thought applied to public matters and thus make this concept central to politics. Implicitly, every political or economic tendency entails an ideology whether or not it is propounded as an explicit system of thought. It is how society sees things. In this sense, one understands the raison d'être of the different ideologies after the independences in Africa. It is in the perspective to bring a social change and to improve the populations' living conditions that the African leaders have made the choice of this political and economic insight that will normally allow them to achieve their ambitions for the continent. Referring to Ghanaian historical background and in accordance with the vision of the improvement of the living status, Kwame Nkrumah, the former Ghanaian President, also known as Osagyefo, adopted *socialism* as the best political system of ruling. Kofi Baako highlights this critical stance when he writes:

> The only political ideology which allows the maintenance of our own traditional beliefs and attitudes appears to be the socialist idea that all men are equal and must have the same opportunities, and must contribute to the general well-being of the community according to the ability of each member and receive in return for their labour according to their needs.[77]

The quotation states the advantages of this political ideology that fits into the aspirations of the masses. Consequently, the implementation of the socialist vision will generate and sustain development of the individual and that of the nation from the overall perspective. But that socialist ideology is reduced to *Nkrumaism*. According to the Kwame Nkrumah Institute of ideology at Winneba:

> *Nkrumaism* is the ideology of the *New Africa*, independent and absolutely free from imperialism organised on a continental scale, founded upon the conception of one and united Africa, drawing its strength from modern science and technology and from the traditional African belief that the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.[78]

However, the euphoria brought about by the adoption of these socialist ideals did not meet the expectations of the populations. For instance, in Nkrumah's Ghana, the socialist ideology chosen as national policy of orientation does not solve or roll back the social evils that emerge in the new African nations. As a proof, in *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born,* Ayi Kwei Armah has presented Ghana as the place where people were disappointed, for the socialist ideology has strengthened the mass' poverty and demarcation of the social classes. From the positive idea associated with socialism or Nkrumaism; there is a shift to a negative connotation of the novel. One notices in the following statement the bitterness in which lies the disillusionment and the disappointment of the Africans. "The sons of the nation were now in charge, after all. How completely the new thing took after the old." (T.B.O.A.N.Y.B p.10) A deep and meticulous analysis of this quotation allows us to assert that the socialism acknowledged after the accession to national sovereignty did not change the daily living

[77] Kofi Baako, "Nkrumaism ─African Socialism: Ghana's conception of Socialism," *p.193.*
78 Ibid, p.121.

condition of the Ghanaians. It is the reason why Armah seizes his quill to show the chronic poverty in which Ghanaians in particular and those of Africa in general wallow. Furthermore, the defenders of socialism create the disparity among the peoples within the society that leads to the existence of two classes: the haves and the have nots. The proletarians and the bourgeois live in two antithetical environments. One sees in *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born,* (the man and his family, teacher, Naanan, Kofi Bily) the woman attempting in vain to borrow little sugar from the man's household embody the prevailing poverty whereas Mr. Koomson and his wife, and the party members epitomise luxury, bombastic life, aping exactly the white man's way of life. Political impediment is about the antisocial, humiliating ideas and conventions that hamper the reconstruction of the continent. Here the writer stresses briefly the poverty of the lower classes through the begging woman:

> Knock on the door. Answer from the woman, and an old woman with her breast barely covered by her clothes comes in holding a little chipped enamel bowel at the tips of her fingers. 'Good evening' she says. 'Here I am again. Sugar. Would you be pleased to lend me a little sugar? Just for the children.' The wife answers, "we have just finished our last packet ourselves.' On the old woman's face appears a smile halfway between scepticism and triumphant belief. As she disappears through the doorway she looks at the couple within and says, 'Ah, this life!' (T.B.O.A.N.Y.B p.43)

However, at the same time, the representatives of the socialism who are supposed to work for the reconstruction of Ghana fall into vices that slow down the development of the country.These vices are topical in the rest of the continent.

The leaders impose on the people, the glorification and praising of the big shots of the continent; and believe that they can build the continent through glory and praise. It is the reason why in *Fragments,* Armah satires the lazy and mediocre attitude of the Africans and their leaders by insinuating that "A nation is built through glorifying its big shots. That's our job, anyway." (Frag p.133)

This passage describes anti-development behaviors and lays emphasis on the responsibility issue that is central socio-political development of the continent. No nation in the world is

constructed through glorifying its big shots. Accordingly, a nation develops through the hardworking of its sons. What crushes the emancipation of Africa is the cult of personality I have discussed above. In fact, in general the African ideologists are opportunists; they claim their belonging to the political parties. And under the covers of the latter, fawn on the ideals of parties what helps them steal and embezzle freely the funds of the countries. Armah draws our attention to this anti-progressive behaviour through the following passage:

> Men who know nothing about politics have grown hot with ideology, thinking of the money that will come. The civil servant who hates socialism is there, singing hosanna. The poet is there, serving power and waiting to fill his coming paunch with crumbs. He will no doubt jump to go and fit his tongue into new arses when new men spring up to shit on us. Everybody who wants speed goes there, and the only thing demanded of them is that they be good at fawning. Is that the place that changed the dock worker Koomson? (T.B.O.A.N.Y.B p. 89)

Actually, the African ideologists instead of being activists who must carry out the transformation of Ghana that represents Africa prefer to behave as climbers. Nobody wants to work hard to pay the price for development. African nations cannot develop if they do not really work to meet their chance. This state of affair has led to the stagnation of the evolution of the continent in every realm of life particularly in Ghana and on the continent in general. In *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, the writer used symbolism to denounce the stagnation of the African progress, through the case of the fictionalised Ghana. To fulfill his dream, which is to show that after the independence of Ghana nothing truly has changed, Armah presented his native Ghana as a country under ruin, rottenness and decay. In this perspective he described the Ghanaian environment as filthy and dirty one. In this approach the Ghanaian novelist creates a correspondence between the physical pollution and that of the psyche. The aim is probably to corroborate the idea that a sound mind produces sound ideas and marshalls good actions. Regarding, this argument above, one becomes conscious of fact in the way Armah depicts the man's washroom and shower:

> When the man had switched on the light within the bathroom and shut the door, he could not for a time take his eyes off the door where it was rotten at

> the bottom, and the smell of the dead wood filled his nostrils and caressed the cavity of his mouth. He tried to breathe in only small, saving breaths of air, but when the cold water hit his back he sucked in a huge voluntary gulp, and there no more point in his continuing his efforts to keep the rot out from himself. While he soaped himself he felt the growl of his bowls, and in a momentary panic he wondered if it would be necessary for him to use the home latrine. (T.B.O.A.N.Y.B p. 101)

In the quotation above, the hyperbolic picture of the insight of decay and putrefaction is also omnipresent in the man's office. And this is an obvious indicator of underdevelopment. Armah depicts here the latrine of the man's office the description of which is not different from what exists in the home of the common people:

> For some reasons, the lights of the latrine are brighter than anywhere else, making the cement platforms stand up like old monuments. The man leaps up on the cleanest he can find, near the far end of the latrine, passing his eyes over the row of cans encrusted with old shits. When he chooses the one he will use he is careful, in letting down his trousers, not to let the cuffs fall into the urine grooves in front. The thing that makes this place better than home, is that here there is air, even if this air also rises from the holes below and is misty with the presence of familiar particles suspended in it. Squatting up, there, he lets the air from the below blow a cooling draft against his buttocks, and he looks at the crowded wall opposite, with the ceiling wall is still a dazzling white where there are webs to hide the paint. The color does not really change until about the level of the adult anus. There the wall is thickly streaked with an organic brown, each smear seeking to avoid smears, until the dabs have gone all around the wall. There were places where, it seems, men have bent down to find an unused spot to use, and in a few incredible places men seem to have jumped quite high and then to have accomplished a downward stroke. (T.B.O.A.N.Y.B p. 105-6)

Allowing the fiction works of the Ghanaian novelist to address the failure of the ideologies in the real life, Armah substantiates the big bottleneck to the reconstruction of the continent. In effect, after the years of independence, the African new nations have clearly defined with the agreement of their populations, the policies of national orientations so that they could achieve the construction of their nations as the burning problem of the day. In this optic, after having groped for ages in Dahomean Republic during the years 1960s to define a good policy of development, the young intellectuals of the army put an end to the ongoing politics in 1972. They chose later on the ideology of Scientific Socialism and Marxism- Leninism in order to

catch the country retard as regards the evolution of the Danhomean nation. Thus, to compel every son of the nation to hard work of reconstruction, President Mathieu Kerekou launched the following quip, 'Count first and foremost on our working force.' Unfortunately, that orientation equally has been deviated because of the ill will of the careerists who grabbed the ideals of the revolution at their profit through chants, slogans and glorification of the top leader of the revolution, forgetting the task of edification awaiting them. Therefore, this lazy and mediocre behavior provokes the climax of Beninese Marxism-Leninism Socialism, which leads to the advent of the Democracy that almost blows off the other ideologies on the continent. Soon at dawn of the year 1960, in Ghana, the Pan-Africanist, Kwame Nkrumah, has adopted the Scientific Socialism on the Soviet Union model in order to achieve the development of the country. Indeed, he achieved great things as regard his ideals in Ghana and at large in Africa. For instance, there were vibrant achievements and development once Nkrumah took office as the leader of Ghana. Ghanaians supported Nkrumah's building of schools, clinics, village and town centres, roads and so forth. Between the years 1957 and 1959, Ghana experienced a massive outpouring of productive energy. It was seen as the developed model for upcoming African nations. All the same, because of the pertinence of the ambitions, ideas and the visions for the future of Ghana and at large of the continent, BBC acknowledged Kwame Nkrumah as the African of the millennium. Here is the content of his ideology:

> We shall measure our progress by the improvement in the health of our people, by the number of people in school, and by the quality of their education; by the availability of water and electricity in our own towns and villages, and by the happiness which our people take in being able to manage their own affairs. The welfare of our people is our chief pride, and it is by this that my Government will ask to be judged[79]-

However, Ghana began to suffer severely from Nkrumah's government as the years progressed. His political order began to fail because he thought he was the man of destiny

[79] Broadcast to the Nation, 24 December 1957 (Credit: AEON International- Kwame Nkrumah: A Story from CIA files).

who alone held the key to Africa's future. He lacked interest in domestic affairs; in the affairs of the country he had just achieved independence for Ghana. Although he was the president, he looked beyond Ghana's frontiers. It is often argued that Nkrumah probably thought that Africa's unity would follow right after Ghana's independence. However, after independence, it seemed as if he had been unsure what to do next, and Ghana suffered an economic strangulation in 1965. The political principles he proclaimed, after independence had little connection with what went on in the daily lives of Ghanaians. Ghana suffered from Nkrumah's rule in the later stages because he gathered all political power into his hands, forgetting that Danquah, his political companion, had provided him with the first real part in 1947. Another flaw that can be associated with Nkrumah is the failure to focus on domestic affairs. In the long run, Ghanaians did not share Nkrumah's belief in power of politics. The situation in terms of ideology in the African countries appears to be almost the same. Besides, the real difficulty linked to the African leaders' ideology is that they are not creative. This may be due to the fact that they focused their strategies of development on the foreign ideology. Thus, roll back this lack of imagination and creativity, one must go along with Ayi Kwei Armah, who suggests the Africans should return to the way, the origin, for Africans to have all they need for the reconstruction of the continent. "This should be the lifework of spirits still open to the remembrance of the way, capable already of visions of its rediscovery, willing, determined, to make it a living way again. Vision is the aim of this vocation:" (T.T.S p. 58) It is an imperative duty for all Africans to look in the rear mirror because the past must become a permanent present in the existence of the African.

To conclude this section, I can assert that I do not intend to address all the problems that the African ideology raises, but to name few which will help to analyse the germs of the African underdevelopment. Eventually, the despair noticed on behalf of the African populations because of the failure of the African ideologies favoured the different coup d'état,

rendering political instability of the continent uncertain. The next section will be about this instability in Africa.

5.2 Political Instability

Through my reading of the writer's works it appears clearly that it is only in his first novel that Armah addresses the great issue of political instability. Indeed, what does it stand for? What are its causes and impact on the African continent? Instability means the state of not being steady or stable. History teaches us that Africa is the most instable and unsteady continent, for she has undergone grave phenomena on the whole planet, such as slave trade, colonialism and some other dominating politico-economic systems such as, imperialism, socialism and capitalism. Her instability also lies in the ethnic and political conflicts after the elections of the political rulers. The conflicts in Africa emerge when national wealth is unfairly shared or distributed among people. It is obvious that the major problem that Africa has is that of leadership. Leaders care for themselves and forget about other masses.

Nowadays, almost every country in Africa is still haunted by historical injustices and oppressive structures that were bequeathed to the post-colonial leadership. This is an aspect which informs the feeble institutions of the state, flawed legislative systems and constant struggles for political power to the detriment of the well-being of many nations. This corrupt adventurein the self glory weakens the chance of development of modern societies. As the international community, whose geo-security and resource interests seem to benefit from the *status quo* in Africa, has not been pro- the establishment of functioning systems in Africa, instead, their involvement, continue to undermine Africa's stability through the militarisation of conflicts for accumulative purposes.

Indeed, political instability in Africa may owe much of its cause to internal factors. However, the interpenetration of internal and external factors, especially geo-political and

economic interests of the international community, constantly plays a significant role in undermining the very processes and institutions that are expected to give birth to democracy and to instil a sense of stability for societal development in Africa. In conjunction with such factors as unequal development, poverty, disease, violence and the manipulative tendencies of the local elite, political and economic stability in Africa is constantly under threat. This threat however is not emanating from within the continent but from external interests whose thirst for African resources continues to shape the faked dynamics in areas such as economy related to governance.

In the realm of kingship, succession has rendered everything unstable in Africa. Once enthroned, each king worked out his own policy with the help of new courtiers, turning his back thoroughly to his predecessor's policy without taking into account the aspirations and expectations of their subjects. Such a policy may be sometimes either good or bad for the kingdom. In the kingdom of Danxome, from the king Agonglo the father, via Adandozan to Guézo the sons, the kingdom of Danxome had adopted different ruling policies. Each king implemented his vision of life.

So, in the course of the reign of Adandozan, Danxomenu had experienced horror, atrocities, oppression, in short, the negation of existence. Under his reign, Danxome achieved nothing good for the welfare of Danxomenu. On the other hand, king Guezo at his enthroning, focused on increasing the level of the economy of his kingdom. To better reach his goal, he encouraged and developed the cultivation of palm trees. This interest placed on the development of agriculture as the basic factor of the economy of Danxome led to the slowdown of the raid on human beings and provoked the decline of slave trade in the kingdom. This thriving economy made Danxome the most powerful and successful one in its environment at time as regarded economic growth.

On accession to the throne, Glèlè and Béhanzin, respectively the father and son in turn carried out and developed the policy of resistance against the white conquerors; this warlike attitude disorganised the economy of the whole kingdom. The only thing to praise was the war. The people did not have time to work, to cultivate, to sustain and satisfy their vital requirements.

Furthermore, literature has shown us that instability is one of the causes of African underdevelopment.

In *Two Thousand Seasons*, the succession of kings favoured the instability of the people of Anoa. So, from Odunton to Koranche, Ayi Kwei Armah presents the doings of these kings which can be summed up into atrocities, cruelties, oppressions, constraints of various kinds, reinforcing the retardation of the Anoa kingdom in particular and the other African kingdoms in general.

For instance, Noliwe and Ningome with their followers escaped the kings' whims by starting a great trek towards strange and unknown places. The movement during which many of them died even caused one of the pathfinders to dismember the kingdom. It is the same with almost the African kingships. In such a situation, the instability becomes the first enemy of the emancipation of African peoples.

In contemporary Africa, African writers in general have diagnosed instability as one of the major causes of the underdevelopment of Africa. However, the independences of African nations in the 1960s for almost all of them have been bearers of hope and of a better morrow and future. There is nothing better than African leaders ruling African business. The elites in charge of leading the countries have failed, for the majority of them. Their reigns were characterized by the prevailing and rampant tortures, oppressions, embezzlement and corruption. They worked out no good programmes for the forwardness of the continent. The

economic situation has been very severe. Thus, the economic growth has completely fallen down.

Therefore, the military got frustrated, resolved to hand over and control from then on the political issues in Africa. It is right for this reason that from the 1970s the political power fell into the hands of soldiers. Not only had the latter thrown the regime tortured, oppressed and killed the majority of its members but they also rejected and abandoned in block the ruling policy of the former.

Ayi Kwei Armah describes in his *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* that complex political atmosphere through the regime to which belongs Koomson, an influential and efficient politician after a coup d'état. In fact, Ayi Kwei Armah alluded to N'krumah's corrupt regime, which got overthrown just after almost nine years of self-rule.

In total, desolation and disappointment, overhearing news of the February coup, the man's response is glum "What, after all, could it mean? One man, with the help of people who love him and believed in him, had arrived in power and used it for himself. Now other men, with the help of guns, had come to this same power." (T.B.O.A.N.Y.B p. 157)

Then, Armah is denouncing in his novel the instability which was current in the African countries after the independences. Achebe staring at the socio political situation in his Nigeria has also denounced the instability in his novel *Anthills of the Savannah*. In effect, Sam has led a successful coup d'état by overthrowing the civilian regime of that time and instilled unprecedented dictatorship in Kangan the imaginary setting of the novel. Later on, towards the end of the novel, Sam and his regime became victims of another Coup d'Etat.

It becomes clear that this perennial instability reinforces the backwardness of Africa, for no government or regime ever executed thoroughly its policy of development before its overthrow. In real life, one witnesses the spectrum of instability in the former Republic of Danhomey, the present Republic of Benin through several Coups d'Etat which ruined all

efforts for leaving the state of retard. It is the reason why Benin has been termed 'the sick son of Africa.'

However, the advent of the revolution of 1972 put an end to the series of coups. Then the power was concentrated and headed by a single man for seventeen years. During that period, the daily ''diet'' of Beninese was oppression, torture and murders of all sorts. That revolutionary regime having reached its heyday gave way to pluralistic democracy in the 1990s.

In the same respect, Nigerians experienced similar situations of instability characterised by several Coups d'Etat. Such an atmosphere in Nigeria at that time started laying the foundation of democracy.

In democracy, one notes another form of political instability. In reality, in parliament, some MPs had hardly any political conviction, or vision for development; what they drive at is only their interests. They can establish and destabilise parliamentarian groups or strengthen the way leading to their interests, slowing down or jeopardising efforts towards the development of a given country or the continent.The next issue to be discussed is dictatorship, which weakens African countries and jeopardises their material and moral growth.

5.3 Dictatorship Exercised on the African People

From the word dictatorship, there is "dictator" which, according to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* stands for "a ruler who has a total power over his country, especially one who has obtained it by force and uses it in a cruel way."[80] It is a person who insists that people do her or his will. In other words, dictatorship is defined as an autocratic form of government in which the government is ruled by an individual called a dictator.

In fact, in a dictatorial system, the chief, king or head of state tyrannises subordinates in order to set cruel, horrible power.

[80] Jonathan Crowther et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary,* (Oxford University Press 1995), p. 321.

In a dictatorial system, the ruler crushes every possible opposition. People of the clan, kingdom or the nation are very often banished, declared subversive to the royal or central power.

As a political thinker, Thomas Hobbes, an English philosopher (1588-HardWick, 1679) asserted: "It's dog eat dog in this world" to justify the cruelty, tyranny or oppression that the rulers or leaders impose on their subjects or people under their control. Society itself is like a jungle where the strongest are always right and the weakest wrong. It is therefore an eye for eye, a tooth for a tooth law that prevails in human beings' type of society. The strongest overwhelm the weakest. So, in society, rulers crush, oppress, torture and outcast people

In this respect, in *Two Thousand Seasons*, King Koranche uses his power in the cruellest way. He and his courtiers banish the truth teller Isanusi from the clan, for the latter has constituted an opposition to the King's will. In fact, Isanusi contradicts publicly Koranche's decision by disclosing the plight and atrocities linked to the partnership between the white man and the king against the people's welfare. For this heinous crime, King Koranche has expelled him from the clan, describing him as felon, and treacherous, and forbidding anyone's help towards him. Armah writes about this tyrannical attitude: "Isanusi spoke to the people. He spoke truth to the people and the truth raised a fury among the king and his hangers-on. The king and his courtiers declared Isanusi mad and had him thrown out of the people's protection." (T.T.S p.102)

Following upon this challenge to the king, his courtiers hired some mercenaries in order to seek his whereabouts and bring him beheaded. However, the mission of the different mercenaries was unsuccessful. Isanusi killed them all. These unfortunate mercenaries were Fosu and Bofo. During his reign, Koranche with the assistance of the white destroyers trapped the twenty young initiates, chained them, turned them into captives and then into slaves of the

white destroyers. “We were being turned into things to be moved for use elsewhere, things bound for destruction, taken from our land to be broken up in strange places, and none of us knew of ways to halt this fatal progress”.(T.T.S p.121)

Assigning his tyranny and dictatorial power over his people, king Koranche showed openly his anger towards the arrowmakers and wrongdoers who dared attack his friend white destroyer’s ship. These arrowmakers and wrongdoers deserved a severe punishment, asserted king Koranche:

> The king was angered. He tried all ruses to find out who had brought together the arrowmakers. But the king did not find an easy path. For what purpose was the search, Isanusi asked in the court. The king in the rashness of his anger was drawn into an admission he wanted to inflect a punishment upon the arrowmakers, wrongdoers, (T.T.S p. 97)

All that has been said above shows that there is no room for contradiction, opposition, expression of opinion; in brief, for freedom of speech; in clans, kingdoms, countries or nations where the ruling credo is oppression, tyranny and torture. There, every effort for private or individual initiative is discouraged and nipped in the bud. This misuse of power cannot allow a chance for alleviating the underdevelopment of Africa. In *Osiris Rising*, the connection between chieftaincy and dictatorial regime leads to the manipulation of power. Judging from the way the political power is operating as presented in the novel and how Cinque’s authority is founded, some similar features are displayed. So, manipulating something means to use it skilfully with one’s own influence in such a way as to get a result that satisfies one’s ambitions. As such, manipulation may change the real image of things at every level of the society. Ayi Kwei Armah addresses this issue in his latest novel. In fact, recruited to protect the enslaving regime Set disrupts the basic objective of politics as defined by Plato. A society needs being governed, which means it should provide all citizens with happiness through the availability of laws and any other means that might contribute to social balance. What Armah describes here is much more contrasting. The society is not governed

according to the norms of democratic power. The individual is deprived of freedom of speech, opinion and free undertaking. That is what the Deputy Director of the President's security centre means, stating that the country is a 'mine land'; meaning that politics has become a privilege for him that one can use to dispose the fate of others.

In the environment where power is concentrated only in the hand of individuals, the hope to catch up with retard, change of the people's living conditions and attainment of a possible forwardness is and will still be meagre and weak, for individuals have no opportunity to create, invent, and think of how to change over their environment in the future. If they do so, they will be automatically submitted to oppression, cruelty, atrocities and tortures. In short, they will be victims of assassination. Thus, toward the end of *Osiris Rising*, Armah has described an instance of this Asar's cold assassination. Here, he writes:

> In that instant the Deputy Director of Security shouted the order: 'fire'. The world around Ast turned ashen. She heard the metallic stutter, then a scream of bullets close to her seeking the single target. Between the two boats, the paths traced by burning metal looked like a mesmerizing night photograph of a city street. She saw Asar raise his arms to cup his hands round his mouth; to repeat his query. The first bullets struck, giving him no time to register. His body pivoted left. Other bullets reversed it. For a moment he stood suspended, like a figure treading water. It seemed that the ceaseless bullets would turn him round again, they only immobilized him on the stuttering vertical axis. (O.R pp.304-305)

This forgoing extract substantiates the crude assassination. To my point of view, such a situation discourages people in their determination towards progress.

Asar, a liberator, a man of vision, a man filled with the virus of changeover has undergone that sad reality in *Osiris Rising*. At the chieftaincy level, the same pattern of disruption of reality is repeated. In effect, the Ankh symbol that Cinque shows to legitimate his authority does exist, but only it does not make one person a ruler that might assume supremacy over the others. Besides, the society to which Ankh belongs to is one of these rare societies with a high moral value operating to prompt human fulfilment as a whole. The

danger arousing from this make-belief is that those who are ignorant of the source of power at whichever level will rely on the wrong interpretation to act in future. It appears then that the misinterpretation of politics leads onto falsehood through corrupting reality.

In this case, there is a serious evil at stake. The pursuit of raw ambitions leads people to use all the means that can help. It means that what matters is not how unfair the process is leading to the attainment of the goal. This fact is an evil insofar as the manipulators know that what they are doing does not benefit the society. Referring to the case of Set, the Deputy Director, he will always threaten the group of the innovators, mainly Asar; and all the country is aware of this danger.

Consequently, lack of freedom and fear of assassination deter people from carrying out good initiatives, unless one accepts like Asar to venture one's own life. The heinous crime here is that the foes of progress are rather concerned with their own welfare at the great dissatisfaction of the collective one. Hence, the evil whose aftermath led to the murder of Asar, devoted to bringing positive changeover.

So, working to innovate in an environment where collaboration with the political body is almost impossible, it becomes a rather risky undertaking, when local chieftaincy after being corrupt works alongside political leaders with privilege. I owe this conviction to the process of Asar's assassination. Asar's death is a proof that dictatorship constitutes a handicap to the development of the continent because it does not allow contradiction of thoughts to occur and, in the process, destroys automatically every challenger on its way. He has been introduced to the reader as an enemy of the regime to justify his death. Through his humanitarian actions, he has become a danger for the regime. He should therefore be eliminated. Cinque's right hand man played out the plot that made him suspects. In effect, Wossen, the fake Ethiopian, has succeeded in introducing a suitcase containing rifles while pretending he wants to escape Cinque's excesses. Therefore, Asar's house would help him as a hiding place.

At the same time, a fake Coup d'Etat is committed to threaten the president's life. Profiting by Asar's absence, Wossen leaves the house abandoning the fatal suitcase. The Coup d'Etat is attributed to the group of subversives.

After investigation by the Deputy Director of the Security Centre, who, in fact, is the very one who organises all this mess, they find the suitcase in Asar's house. The guns found in the bag (2AK47) are identical with what they have found on the premises of the coup. Whatever he has done, Asar cannot find any proof to justify his innocence despite his own protest. From manipulation to manipulation, they murder Asar. This is to show how far dangerous local chieftaincy may be for individuals in case the chiefs accept cooperation. The way the event occurs proves that the Deputy Director is the true instigator of the president's assassination. If not, how could he have known as by magic the exact five digits that composed in a right order to open the case, if he himself had not used the same suitcase before? As Ast puts it: "you know who brought your carefully prepared suitcase and planted it here… I think you and the New York hustler calling himself Ethiopian prince know each other very well'' (O.R p. 294)

As regards dictatorship, many African writers have denounced and satirised it through their literary works just after the era of independence, which coincides with the multiple revolutions staged on the continent in the 1970s.

I witness the existence of a dictatorial regime while reading *Le Cercle des tropiques* by Alioumn Fantouré. In fact, in the novel, the writer has depicted an imaginary republic where the totality of power is exercised by the tyrannical Messi coi. The direct consequence is the compulsory nature of the hero Bohi Di; his departure into exile; for he cannot prevent himself from contradicting the heinous practices of "messicoism"

Many citizens living under this regime were oppressed, terrorized tortured even assassinated.

Indeed, from 1972 to 1989, Benin experienced a dictatorial regime whose failure led to the holding of the "National Conference of all the native forces" which results in restoration of pluralistic Democracy.

In the 1990s, Sanny Abasha headed a dictatorial regime and incarcerated many of the opponents to his power in Nigeria. Among these opponents, we can name the emblematic Mushud Abiola, and Olu Segun Obasenjo whom he had imprisoned under international pressure; he had compelled Chinua Achebe and the Nobel Prize Wole Soyinka to exile. A patent proof of dictatorship is currently witnessed in Zimbabwe of President Robert Mugabe who has been in power for 32 years. He has stuck to power and expressed the wish to die on power. It is the reason why, after losing the last presidential elections, he did all his best to impose the second round through which he is presumed to have had a fraudulent victory. This situation brought violence among different ethnic groups.

Briefly, we can say that the dictatorial regimes are obvious causes of underdevelopment in Africa, for these heads of state discourage every effort of invention, private initiatives, creativity very necessary to the take-off of the continent. In truth, Africa needs every one of her children for her construction and transformation in every realm of life.

However, this hold up of power on behalf of political authorities in Africa is largely explosive during the long period of war on the continent, which does not favour and foster development. Then why war? And what are its consequences on the African transformation?

5.4 War as an Indicator of Backwardness

I see it important to identify the causes of war in order to analyse the impact of the conflict on the development of the continent. Actually, the greed of the African rulers is one of the evils from which conflicts emerge in Africa. In fact, greed is a strong, excessive envy or desire for something especially when one is not hungry. It is also an excessive or intense

desire or envy for wealth, power for oneself, without considering the needs of the other people.

Indeed, greed is current and rampant in African clans or tribes. In fact, greed is one of the greatest diseases in Africa today. It has negative consequences on the evolution of the continent. It is the reason why many African writers denounce it through their diverse literary works. Among these writers, one can mention the Nigerian writer Elechi Amadi who has denounced these tribal and clannish ills. In *The Concubine,* one reads this about Madume's greed:

> Madume had one fault most villagers dislike. He was big-eyed, that is to say he was never satisfied with his share in anything that was good. He would roar until he had something more than his companions' shares. Consequently, he was always quarrelling over land, palm wine trees, plantain trees and other such things. That was how he came to quarrel with Emenike. But he had other reasons for not liking Emenike; the old men always cited Emenike as the ideal young man. He was good- looking and formed, a favourite with the girls. He was just an average wrestler but had the devil's luck of throwing people in spectacular ways, which onlookers remembered long afterwards. He had won the old men's confidence and they always let him run errands that required intelligence and the extensive use of proverbs. Perhaps Madume's hatred for Emenike might not have been so great if only the latter had not snatched from him…[81]

Sometimes, the greed is coloured with jealousy, which leads to the fatal fight between two individuals or the war between two neighbouring villages. I read about this kind of fight between Emenike and Madume; as follows:

> Madume leaped for a flying tail. His opponent sank on one knee, collected him on his shoulder and flung him heavily on the ground. Emenike disengaged himself and waited. He would not close in yet. Madume got up and decided to come to grips with his man. For several minutes they pushed each other about treading down bushes like antelopes caught in a rope trap. At last Madume got his two arms under his opponent's armpits and began to push him back at full speed hoping that some undergrowth would entangle his legs and made him fall."[82]

[81] Amadi Elechi, *The Concubine*, (Heinemann: Ibadan Nairobi) p.2
[82] Idem P.2

This fight is the direct result of Madume's greed vis-à-vis Emenike. In *Two Thousand Seasons,* Ayi Kwei Armah depicted an episode of greed on behalf of Brafo's father. The old man aged of hundred years old fell in love with his ward who offered her love to Brafo. To avoid the old man's wrath, the two young men decided to flee, for distance is the hate of lovers. Armah writes:

> Growing up together, Ajoa saw in Brafo a hunter greater than his father Brafo saw in Ajoa a beauty and a skill to match his mother's. The father, surprised by the discovery, was flirt struck impotent with rage, then madden with a desire to destroy both his son and the beloved child. The children were wiser than their elder. Silently distance is the hatred of those who love- they move always (T.T.S p. 82)

So, because of the greed of elders, the youth is persecuted and compelled to exile. In addition, Kamuzu in *Two Thousand Seasons*, after assisting the young initiated during their work of liberation and destruction of destruction, raged against them and turned himself into a black copy of the white destroyers. For him **"**power, […] was a thing always to be taken as it was found, just whichever way it was found, not as the taker would wish it to be. We now had power in our grasp. If we were interested in finally moving away from vital situations, we should not be hesitant to step into the white people's shoes" (T.T.S p. 172)

Like Kamuzu, in real life, many political leaders thirst for power and stick to it in Africa. Among these political leaders, I can name the late Omar Bongo of Gabon who has been in power four decades and more; Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe for 32 years, Blaise Compaoé almost for 28 years etc… These heads of state are greedy. They desire to die in power. However, there is a great danger in the greed for power I came across when I was reading *Osiris Rising.* While Asar was increasingly gaining popularity with his concern in the masses daily problems, Set was becoming unpopular together with his associates in spite of high life they enjoyed and all the privileges their position provided them with. This can be noticed in the way Ast has turned down his entire offer, the way she has rejected him and through Netta's disdain for them all.

Actually, any honest person would openly comment on the members of the security centre with much scorn. Consequently, this unpopularity of those who stuck to power has caused them to be jealous.

Ways are then found to eliminate any person whose action is likely to cause their disgrace. So, sudden deaths become frequent. An atmosphere of dread weighs over all the whole country. Under this climate of suspicion, Asar who is the spirit of the organisation has become a victim of manipulation and subsequently gets assassinated.

When I allude to African political realities, such events can be seen in countries under dictatorial rule. Until the 1990s and up to the 2000s such crimes were committed in various African countries, sometimes without the President and top authorities of the countries being informed. More recently, in Nigeria, Wole Soyinka took to his heels into exile under the reign of the late greedy president Sanny Abacha. When the wealth of the nation is unequally distributed among its sons or when the minority usurps the riches of the countries at the great displeasure of the majority, it always degenerates into genocide and civil wars. All this behaviour has greatly impacted the progression of the continent.

Simply, I can define war as a state of fighting or conflict between nations or groups within a nation using military force. In terms of war, the world has been a victim of two great conflicts, which created several great havocs and damages to human beings. Assessing the consequences of these two world wars and conscious of their psychological influence on humanity as a whole, the white men have set some general principles and norms for the welfare of human beings and different nations all over the world in order to avoid war on their immediate environments. As a shelter from another great war, the two super powers USA of America and Russia have invented and possess the nuclear arm in order to control each other's position. This perennial fear of the use of the nuclear arm by one of them, leads to the cooling down of their ambition, thereby cursing the risks of a third world conflict. However,

these super powers are confronted with one important preoccupation which embarrasses them. What will industries manufacturing guns and weapons become? Then come other complementary questions such as: Where will they sell their manufactured weapons and guns? How are they going to sell them? How are they going to prove the usefulness to buyers?

To find answer to these different questions, they have turned their eyes to the Third World, in general, and to Africa, in particular. Africa becomes the hub of their commercial project.

Indeed, from 1985 until today, Africa has become a focal field of confrontations or armed conflict. Europeans have set fire on Africa because of their odious and unmeasured undertakings. So in many parts of Africa; there is the spectrum of rebellions. In central Africa, precisely in Chad we witnessed the war of interests between the rebellion led by Husein Habre and Gougouni Wedeye. Many people were killed during this war and there was much material havoc. The perennial rebellion in Chad weakens and reduces its chances to catch up with its retardation despite its great potentiality in natural resources. The rebellion impedes populations from working to satisfy their vital requirements, for they very often move around and live in permanent psychic war of. The war alluded to causes the destruction of the country. Suffering, poverty, hunger and starvation have become the daily lot of these populations. They have no time to think of the betterment of their living conditions.

It is the same thing with Angola where the rebellion set booby traps and mines. This environmental atmosphere, particularly difficult, cannot make people work.Therefore; it compromises chances of moving the country forward. It is almost the same disastrous, catastrophic situation in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi, Rwanda etc…

Investigating the causes and consequences of the war in Rwanda Véronique Tadjo Writes in her novel *L'ombre d'Imana, Voyages Jusqu'au Bout du Rwanda:*

> L'horreur de la terre souillée et du temps qui passe en déposant des couches de poussière. Les os des squelettes- carcasses se désintègrent sous nos yeux. La pesanteur infecte les chairs, infiltre le cerveau. Même plus tard, plus loin, cette odeur restera dans le corps et dans l'esprit.Des gerbes de fleurs desséchées ornent les ossements. Vus à travers les trous laissés par les grenades dans les murs de l'église ; tas d'os, crânes, vêtements terreux, objets épars, brisés, meubles renversés. C'est le 15 avril 1994 de 7h30 du matin à 14 heures que le massacre s'est déroulé à Nyamata. Plusieurs milliers de personnes avaient trouvé refuge dans l'église et ses annexes. Des gens occupaient aussi le bureau du prêtre et les locaux administratifs. Beaucoup dormaient à la belle étoile dans la cour, serrés les uns contre les autres. Non loin de là, certains s'installèrent dans une maternité parmi les femmes enceintes et les nouveaux nés. Les autorités avaient demandé à la population de se regrouper : Rassemblez-vous dans les églises et les lieux publics, on va vous protéger » A la fin de la guerre, ce sont les rescapés qui ont ramassé les squelettes et les ossements éparpillés. [83]

These countries struck by genocides, bruised and weakened by the war, need assistance for their reconstruction. Such a situation profits much certain categories of people and institutions such as humanists, NGOs, IMF and World Bank. Therefore, the humanitarian crisis, though not beneficial to the nations, appears to be a situation that some prefer because it can serve as a shortcut to profit from the tragic situation in Angola. For instance, it reveals that many individuals would like the war to continue because under this crisis they draw many advantages. As Antonio Carlos Neto reports:

> The war has always been a very profitable business for many in Angola, both on the rebels and government's side. Top government officials, military personnel and others have made fortune thanks to the conflict. According to the investigations carried out by Global Witness, a Uk-based NGO, individuals connected with Angola presidency have been benefiting financially from nearly every single consumed in the war against UNITA. Almost US $ 1.4 billion in oil backed loans and oil revenues nearly the third of total state income went missing in 2001, with top government officials profiting through the military procurement process; oil revenues constitute between 80% and 90% of Angola's income[84]

[83] Véronique Tadjo, *Lombre d'Imana,, Voyages Jusqu'au bout Du Rwanda,(Actes Sud, 2000) pp. 21-2.*
[84] Antonio Carlos, Neto in *People* 2002; May-June, p. 5.

It clearly shows that the nation loses tremendously in the Civil Wars. I can infer that conflicts would not have lasted so long, if they were not seen as springboards to personal profit. The case herewith mentioned shows that not a penny has entered public coffers.

In the same way, Central African Republic, though rich in diamond happens to be ranked among the poorest countries in the world, according to the human Development Index. Isn't it a situation of that kind which led Professor Ali Mazrui to oppose to the view that Africa is poor? For him, the continent has been endowed with large potentials ranking from minerals, forestry to water powers. What threatens the continent is then the bad circulation of wealth, hence the paradox of underdevelopment marked by three evils that he calls the pathology of technical backwardness, the pathology of maldistribution (since there are rich blacks as well as rich whites), the pathology of fragmented economy. In short, Africa has all that she needs to develop in the same way as the West. Ways are to be found out to correct these pathologies that ruin the continent's rise through new policies on the political agenda.

Part three: Armah's Contribution to the Development of the African Continent.

Chapter Six: Fundamental Conditions for Development in Armah's Novels

6.1 Concept of Development

When I choose to diagnose the causes of the underdevelopment of Africa, I do intend to address the possible chances for Africa to reach her development. But beforehand, it becomes necessary to understand the full meaning of development. What therefore is development?

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary,* "Development is the action or process of developing or being developed."[85] In other words, it means in human society a many- sided process. At the level of the individual, it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being. Some of these are virtually moral categories and are difficult to evaluate depending, as they do, on the age in which one lives, one's class origins, and one's personal code of what is wrong. However, what is indisputable is that the achievement of any of those aspects of personal development is very much tied in with the state of the society as a whole. So, at the level of social groups, therefore, development implies an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationships.

Development in the past has always meant the increase in the ability to clarify the independence of the social group and indeed to infringe upon the freedom of others something that often came about irrespective of the will of the person within the societies involved.

In an ample definition, the term development is used in an exclusive economic sense, the justification being that the type of economy is itself an index of other social features. What then is economic development? A society develops economically as its members

[85] Jonathan Crowther et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995), p. 318

increase jointly their capacity for dealing with the environment. This capacity for dealing with the environment is dependent on the extent to which they understand the laws of nature, on the extent to which they put that understanding into practice by devising tools, and on the manner in which the work is organised.

In effect, Africa, being the original home of man, was obviously a major participant in the process in which human groups displayed an ever-increasing capacity to extract a living from the natural environment. Indeed, in the early period, Africa was the focus of the physical development of man as such, as distinct from other living beings. Development is universal because the conditions leading to economic expansion are universal. Africa fulfils these conditions and possesses the criteria which favour development. These criteria are human beings (men and women), increase in skill, competence and capacity, possession of a larger environment with its natural resources. There is no question that Africa can develop. How can Africa exploit all these assets to come across her development? Does the development of Africa pass necessarily through a great metamorphosis of the ruling system and of the policy of the continent as whole?

To my knowledge, Africa is a rich environment endowed with great potentialities of development. Only mismanagement stands as her deadliest disease when seen against scholarly studies on the issue. Thus, the United Nations Survey of Economic Conditions in Africa up to 1964 had this to say about the Continent's natural resources:

> Africa is well endowed with mineral and primary energy resources. With an estimated 9 per cent of the world's population, the region accounts for approximately 28 per cent of the total value of world mineral production and 6 per cent of its crude petroleum output. In recent years, its share of the latter is increasing of sixteen important metallic and non-metallic minerals the share of Africa in ten varies from 22 to 95 per cent of the world production.[86]

To some extent, actually, African potential is shown to be greater every day with new discoveries of mineral wealth. On the agricultural side, African soil is not as rich as the

[86] The United Nations Survey of Economic Conditions in Africa up to 1964

picture of tropical forests might lead one to believe, but there are other climatic advantages so that with proper irrigation, crops can be grown all the year round in most parts of the continent.

That is for instance the case of Egypt, which uses irrigation techniques during the year owing to the conditions that Nile River offers. Then seeing all these possibilities which can surely lead to the development, I can say that the underdevelopment of the continent is a great paradox.

It is obvious that Africa has not yet come anywhere close to making the most of her natural wealth and most of the wealth now being produced is not being retained within the continent for the benefit of the Africans. For example, Zambia and Congo produce vast quantities of copper, but that production is for the benefit of Europe, North America and Japan. Even the goods and services which are produced in Africa are confronted with no crucial problems other than the leadership carried out all over the continent.

The indispensable conditions for Africa to develop are the change of mentality of her leaders. They must become aware of the stake and review their behaviours and position in a concert with other nations.

In another way, I agree that development decisions are basically investment decisions, investment of people and resources. But more important is ideally, those who identify the problems, assess the risks, set the priorities, and make the decisions, should be the people of the society where development is to take place.

It is for this reason that African authorities must be aware of their duties as regard the transformation and construction of their nations.

6.2 Concept of "Sphere" in the Process of Knowledge Acquisition

In one of my foregoing subtitle I have discussed the theme of "pyramid" that is the wrong conceptualisation of power according to Ayi Kwei Armah. In the current section I intend to deal with the concept of sphere. In fact, sphere according to its nature epitomises the acquisition of knowledge because in a spherical community it is not hidden, every member of the society has the right to learn and acquire it. "Sphere" is defined by *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* as "a solid figure that is entirely round, i.e. with every point on the surface at an equal distance from the centre."[87] From this definition, knowledge is on the surface of solid and can reach everybody within the circle. So, using these two geometric figures, the Ghanaian writer develops two antithetical philosophies around the notion of knowledge. These two philosophies are the keeping and the sharing of knowledge emerged the scission of the scribes because each group stands ground on its stance. The birth of the keepers and the sharers results from this division. The former chose as symbol 'pyramid', within which they stipulated the safeguard and the protection and hiding of knowledge from the ordinary people, whereas the latter believe that knowledge must be disseminated to everybody through the metaphorical use of image of 'sphere'. In my opinion through the perception of sphere, members of the society will receive horizontally knowledge i.e. equitable chance to accede to it, for it will spread and circulate like blood into the whole body of even the child of the society. The followers of this philosophy wanted to share knowledge even with the commoners. For them knowledge is not something to hide. Its sharing will help the education of a lot of people and once the people are educated, this status will roll back the limits of illiteracy and ignorance. In the coming extract from *KMT,* the novelist emphasises the importance of the sharing of the knowledge from the sharers' position. Here is the argumentation of the narrator "Knowledge shared is not lost wealth. Knowledge shared is

[87] Jonathan Crowther et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995), p.1144

knowledge gained. Knowledge with a thousand is knowledge multiplied thousand fold, probably more." (KMT p. 280-1)

In the real life, this quotation reminds me of my personal experience with my former Japanese employer about how knowledge is disseminated among Japanese. In effect, through our conversation he informed me that after the Second World War, the then Japanese leaders sent their nationals abroad to acquire technological knowledge in order to catch up with the retardation of their country bruised and weakened at morrow the armed conflict. At their return, as experts each of them went to the remote villages of their country to share their expertise with those who remain at home. Obviously this strategy rolls back the frontiers of ignorance and establishes the cardinal principles to development. Since the holding of knowledge is synonym with power it becomes necessary to share it with others to avoid the concentration of power. So the sharing of power at the local level is logically inscribed in the democratic process of decentralisation. This is strongly recommended to avoid the throes and consequences of the absolute power on the populations into hampering the development of the continent. Once the power is in the hands of the people, it ensures stability in every field of life. Furthermore, sharing power strengthens cohesion and unity among the citizens of the countries. Here, in the utterance of the scribe, from the house of life through *KMT* emerges the indispensability of unity and shows how much sharing knowledge is the bedrock for the reconstruction of the continent:

> …talking of transformation of absurdity into meaning through work? There was no single answer to my questions. Instead, from the conversation of days I heard answers. From the shared over the years I saw the parts of the answer converge in my mind as understanding. This is what I heard: We are many, but without you we are as nothing. In the end the best we offer is linkage —the connection between your mind and heart and the hearts and the minds of everyone you need to reach. (KMT p.247)

According to the Ghanaian writer the edification of the African continent undoubtedly passes through the unification and mutation of fatality into hope through hard work.

This philosophy is, doubtless according to the sharers' argumentation, the good governance that is *sine qua non* condition to emancipation and development of the African continent. For the writer, through good governance, the leaders will manage the affairs of the continent well by promoting equity and justice.

Furthermore, Astw Konate, one of the writer's traditionalist female protagonists in *KMT* explained to Lindela using the seven circles on the pendant sign of their friendship she offered the latter, the different stages of the evolution of knowledge within human society that, suggest that contrary to the keepers' view, knowledge is not to be hidden because it grows from the ego to the general consciousness.

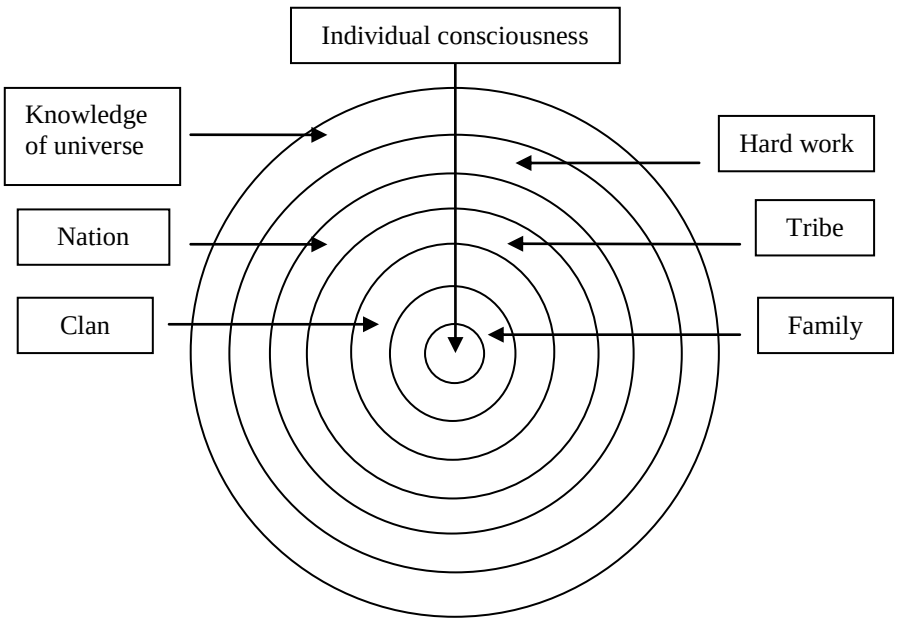


Figure 2: From the individual consciousness to knowledge of universe. (My own drawing)

Through the schema above, I have translated Astw Konate's conception of the evolution of the individual consciousness to knowledge of the universe. For Lindela's interlocutor, there are seven keys that are the expression of the dynamics of the human consciousness. At the stage of the smallest lies the home of a single soul, it is also the perfect resting place of the individual spirit that lacks the vital overflow of energy that leads to generosity. To my mind this instance symbolises individualism, which suggests self-knowledge and constitutes mico-

condition to development. From the comment on the qualities of this stage it clearly appears that it never engenders development of human society that is the reason why the individual will move into a sphere larger. As the speaker explains the second stage refers to the family as base of the other social organizations. There, one discovers the existence of the African values such as solidarity, generosity, and heredity, brief, communal life. However, this level of the human consciousness cannot lead to emancipation because social values here are only shared on a few groups of persons. That is the reason why the narrator thinks of the next level that is more perfect than the precedent. In fact, the third circle refers to the clan that is the extension of the family into community. The characteristics of this social organization is ignorance that is life inside family breaking outward, into knowledge of the great potential hidden in the widening world outside self and blood. As for the fourth circle, it represents the tribe that is wider than the foregoing. There also, sufficient energy is released which means the departure of eradication of illiteracy. Aftermath, the fifth stage opens the gate to the field of nations. Within this circle the task ahead is immense and twin work is privileged before one attains knowledge that can lead to hard work indicator of development. The sixth circle is the expression of sublime work leading to knowledge of universe synonym with development. In the seventh circle Astw Konate points out that sufficient energy is released and the work of edification of the society can begin. There appears the key to the field that opens the way to the knowledge of universe, total freedom. In a nutshell, I can say that the growth of the society depends on the dynamics of the human consciousness of every realm of life. I equally dare say that sharing knowledge is, first and foremost, a strategy to change.

6.3 Vision of Change

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines it as "the action or an instance of making or becoming different."[88] Personally, I think that the evolution of any human society happens owing to constant changes in every realm of life. It is obvious that no human society stays static and stable. The different social movements show its dynamism that reads through the constant notice that human beings acquire knowledge that determines their change of behaviour. This change affects the society they live in through revolution. So, when human beings change, the societies also change accordingly.

All societies experience a certain amount of change in their social institutions and cultures over time. "Societies" says Margaret Peil,

> … cannot remain stable because they are in contact with other societies which do things somewhat differently; ideas, norms and institutions spread from one society to another. Even the most isolated society must have some change from time to time as its members adjust to varying environmental conditions (such as prolonged drought) or invent new ways of doing things.[89]

Therefore, every change within the society occurs through revolution, either peaceful or violent; as proof, I can name the French revolution of 1789, Chinese Revolution carried out by Mao Tse Tung in 1949 and then the fights for African independences in the 1960s. Furthermore, I can define according to the social researchers' points of view, change as revolution, because revolutions are social facts and phenomena. What is then change in this respect?

From the point of view of sociology, change refers to all historical variations in human societies; these variations can be upward or downward movements, forward or backward movements, good or bad, desirable or undesirable, unidirectional or multi-directional movements. In this respect, change can be either evolutionary or revolutionary; the former is the antithesis of the latter.

[88] Jonathan Crowther et all ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995), p.184.
[89] Margaret Peil, *Consensus and Conflict in African Societies* (London Press: University of California,1977), p. 336

For Karl Marx and his disciples, revolutionary change in society is possible only through violent upheavals. It is a change, which is brought about by force and through armed struggle. Such a change would appear to be abrupt, discontinuous and a total break with the past. But total break with the past is a dialectical impossibility; every change is a dialectical process, a synthesis which is the result of the coming together of opposites- thesis and anti-thesis. Indeed the difference between societies, as far as change and development are concerned, is to be sought not in the form but in the kind and the rate of change. It is obvious that some societies change and develop faster than others develop. As proof, the introduction of motor transport in Ghana has given rise to a series of changes as remarked by Margaret Peil in her book, *Consensus and Conflict in African Societies*. For her:

> The vehicles needed roads rather than footpaths, so people had to be organized to build these roads. New jobs were introduced, such as driver or fitter; goods and people could now move more easily from place to place; this aided centralization, government control and the development of cash crop farming. This in turn affected the roles of men and women within the family (set up) because the cash crop was usually the prerogative of men. Easier travel encourages migration of people and the spread of ideas, language, (values) and material culture (food, clothing styles, housing and architectural designs and music) from one group to another. Whole villages moved nearest to the road and villages with good access to motor transportation often grew into towns. This involved changes in the way of life of the people; they had less time for festivals; book on new jobs, improved their standard of living, built larger and better houses and travelled more from place to place[90].

As a result, the foregoing citation logically leads to the rejection or at best modification of old beliefs, ideas, values, norms, patterns of behaviour and social organisations, which are no longer functional, or to a fusion of the old with the new.

What much appears necessary in contemporary Africa is the radical and positive change of minds and mentalities of her elites. Such behaviour is a bearer of hope and will lead ineluctably to development. In fact, change is a process; and man is at the centre, for man is only capable of changing his life, his living environment and improving, in a notable manner, the conditions of his existence. Man being endowed with reason, is capable of thinking and

[90]Margaret Peil, *Consensus and Conflict in African Societies* (London press: University of California, 1977), p 336.

choosing his thoughts. Then a man is the only being whose future does not depend on anybody else but himself.

Therefore, the future of Africans and Africa will depend on nobody foreign to Africans and Africa. Since the Africans also think and have the power to choose their thoughts, I can say that Africa can change and must change. It is my belief that nothing is fatal when it comes to raising development. Africa can cause her change, if as Shatto Arthur Gakwandi put it, creative writers accept to take up the challenge of "defining their duty in their community"[91] and reject every idea of fatalism. Then the only and unique actor of change is the individual. To operate change, man must change himself; change his manner of thinking and his mental habit. In this sense I can refer to the man, the protagonist in *The Beautyful one Are Not Yet Born* whose steady refusal to involve in case of corruption gives a proof of his honesty and integrity, has stood ground to Amakwa, the Ashanti timber contractor's attempt to corrupt him, in order to show that the change is still possible in this corrupt Ghanaian society where corruption, ironically like football, has become a 'national game'. In the following the Ghanaian novelist implicitly informs the readers about his character solo's fight for change in this sickened West African country:

> I beg you, let us stop joking now,' the visitor said. ' They are waiting for me and I must go. A man is a man. I tell you what I will do. Take that one for yourself and give the other one to your friend. I myself will find some fine drink for you. Take it. Take it, my friend. […] 'I will not take it,' he said, too quietly perhaps. The visitor did not touch his money. He did not even look at it. He only said, 'Look, I mean it. I offer you three times. Is good money.'
>
> 'I know.'
>
> 'Then take it.'
>
> 'No.' The man shook his head very gently, but there was finality in the gesture even visitor could no longer mistake.
>
> You refuse?'
>
> 'Yes' (T.B.O.A.N.Y.B pp. 30-1)

To me of view, the man's strong refusal to take the timber contractor's bribe in the forementioned excerpt is a strong sign leading to change of mentality even if he appears like

[91] Shatto Arthur Gakwandi, *The Novel and Contemporary Experience in Africa* (Heinemann: Ibadan, 1977), p. 128.

the only almost one good tomato among many other putrefied ones; as a saying goes, I know that 'One swallow does not make summer'; however, I steadily believe that one day this dream will become a reality that shall foster the development of the continent.

Concerning Africa and her leaders, change requires from Africans to get rid of their negative, paralysing, destructive and devastating thoughts. This imposes on them the duty to free themselves from ugly feelings such as spitefulness, hate, envy or resentment, in a word, jealousy. In addition, Africa must cease considering herself an eternal victim, with slave trade, colonialism, then the terms of exchange being the unique causes of difficulties hampering her development.

Furthermore, Africans must also avoid thinking their destiny must be taken into account by foreigners. They must act, react and break the chain of eternal beggary, the *status quo* and overcome the prejudices of history and banish fundamentally the mechanism of tele-nourishment and tele-financement which foster the relation of domination and dependence.

From what precedes, it is clear that change does not require a time or fitted duration to occur but it happens as soon as the process is ripe; for that reason, Africa can change, she can operate it owing to her proper genius, depending on her objectives and priorities, according to her choices and rhythms of evolution.

Africa will rely on no model or idol before her transformation. Change imposes itself as the natural future of Africa. From then, change means for Africa to convert, to think new and positive. This required new behaviour is already ample evidence in certain African countries, such as the Republic of Benin among other African countries where the people opted for the 'regime of change' with "Emergence'' as the slogan.

Altogether in the real life, almost over ten years ago Republic of South Africa, which was once, a victim of the system of Apartheid, started great, deep transformations, which led to the election of the first Black democratic president in the name of Nelson Mandela.

Logically, South Africans understood that they ought to make an event; they therefore created a "Commission of Truth, Pardon and Reconciliation". In any event, the process went its own way, to the majority's satisfaction. The occurrence of the change appears to be the beginning of the reconstruction of South Africa that impacts the whole continent.

The predicament that African has been experiencing, far from being a fatality, may be redressed if African Leaders are ready to take up the challenge. That is the reason why I find it essential to find a great emphasis on African leaders' role in the shaping of the destiny of the continent. At first sight, one may be tempted to believe that the relation between the Western World and Africa truly concerned the development of the latter. If one considers for instance the cases of Africa's debt relief and organizations and meetings such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) created after the Tokyo International Conference on Africa organised in 2001, one can say that it is time African authorities corrected their behaviour and review their position while deciding on the great policies concerning Africa, for the West will never protect Africa's interests. A report on the African relation to the world shows that the West is hypocrite. If I allude to the White Bishop Daniel Camboni's statement "I would like to have at my disposal a hundred tongues in order to speak about Africa that part of the world that is least known, most abandoned"[92] I clearly see that it is a great mistake to think that Africa's development is the affair of the Western world.

In this quotation, the white Bishop Danial Camboni would like to say that Africa's problems are immense and multiple but nobody really cares about the continent's fate.

Indeed, the church appears today as one institution which defends and compassionates to Africa's problems. If the Westerners are really concerned with helping Africa out of the abyss, how can the Africans then account for the fact that they talk of a new partnership for Africa's development while at the same time these Western powers; chiefly the USA, are bent on subsidising some cash products commonly sold on the international market, though they

[92] (St Daniel Camboni in New People in all his publication).

know that most of African countries' economies rely on farm produce? In the same vein, why do they want to impose patents on Africa's green gold by raising arguments of the "Trade related Aspects of Intellectual Property Right?" Isn't this another way to make big profits through the biotechnological advances they have over Africa?

One more evidence of the West's trickery, as I can see it, is that even the financial assistance of the West to Africa appears as a counterpart. What they give with the right hand is withdrawn with the left hand. To corroborate it, overall aid to Africa has declined from US $19 billion a year to US $ 12 billion today from 1990 in the same way it has been reported that Africa's share of global aid has dropped from 37% to 27%. It becomes evidence that African leaders and elites should be aware of these realities in order to cope with them more seriously as from now.

As one can see it today, Africa's predicament is far more serious to be corrected overnight. One way to cope efficiently with the problem is that the immensity of the task ahead must teach us the lesson that *clear vision* and *hard work* will be the motto of the African people and their leaders. The duties of the African authorities and elites today is and will be the teaching to their populations the keen sense of success and make sure that they have set all the strategies that will be beneficial to future generations. Indeed, as the saying goes, 'He who plants a tree before his death has not lived a useless life'. This excerpt means that one must consent the sacrifice and achieve unforgettable thing that can imortalise him or her.

In this way, it is not surprising that some elderly people nearly at the threshold of the grave still struggle to achieve great accomplishments, though they are aware that they cannot enjoy the fruit of their work. Actually, the ideas that beset their minds are that their off springs will benefit from them and take care of what they have installed for the ever glorious

repute of their name; that is, what must be our motto and that of our leaders in Africa if we consider the continent as our home.

In Osiris Rising, Ayi Kwei Armah seems to see the problem in this light but presents change as a kind of revolution, which is not static but dynamic. He seems to compare the task to be done with the undertaking that consists in catching an unharmed black cat at a moonless night of a Friday in a January month. The capture alive will be boiled until all its parts are mixed. Conditions for operations are so hard that one would wonder whether the whole thing is possible. Indeed, it is, if one accepts and is committed to being wounded by the cat, and sacrifice oneself by conforming to the principles stated. This means that in the face of the task ahead, Africans should right now set to work, bearing in mind that the good results will come sooner or later. What is obvious is that our efforts will be profitable to future generations. In short, Africans must know that if they expect immediate fruits of which they can taste now it will not do. For instance, France, England, Germany, USA, Japan, to name only a few could not show their good image of today, if their first inhabitants had not suffered. Therefore, working hard to redress Africa today is a great project and all Africans should participate in this task, as their own business.

However, the deterioration of the political arena in Africa characterised by evils such as corruption, nepotism, libels, embezzlements, ethnic discriminations, open violence, causes many people to lose hope in a possible change. If these evils should dominate, the situation cannot be redressed. That is the reason why, civil society must be very vigilant to curb the excesses of parties involved. In the World Bank document entitled *La Banque Mondiale: Aspects Essentiels de sa Politique* published in September 1995 by the Board of Ali Bourham, the then Administrator of the Bank, it was pointed out that civil society, through NGOs, is more efficient and reliable in the management of public affairs than the State [is]. This shows that even civil society or political authorities must breed a new, honest generation of

individuals who can understand and carry out the process of change in Africa. Whether it is the role of civil society or that of politicians that must dominate, what matters undeniably is the nature of persons involved in the process. Therefore, I can see once again that human beings are central, correcting or transforming an unjust society into a fairly organised one, where everybody can be put on an equal footing at all times, means to model the human conscience or personality on good manners. A person's conscience is like a computer that operates on data. The result reflects the data; the output depends on the input.

Here, the breeding of a model generation requires the real need to promote moral values in new generations of children by showing them the assets of good conducts and also by showing these generations all that may befall them in case they fail to be faithful to the norms, laws and prescriptions of society. It is to corroborate this insight that the Ghanaian novelist, Ayi Kwei Armah emphasised children's education in *Osiris Rising*. In effect, through Asar, the hero of the novel endeavours to turn society into the best, I can see that his actions in the education field are mainly targeted towards children's education. Afterwards, when he has noticed his beloved Ast's desire to have a child from him, his utterance seems to have a child for the time being is bad, given that the social atmosphere is bad and grave for a good child to be brought up. The work to be done is not to act and rely on current adults or young, but to devote more energy to children who are still innocent by infusing in them the values of integrity, hard work and the seeds of good behaviour. This means that children need to be educated thoroughly to become sensitive to moral values taught them by their parents. It will be strengthened by civic education at school. Therefore, if we should let the children consider the mess that is going on as a reference, the future of the continent is undoubtedly doomed to chaos. Conseqently, African leaders and authorities at different levels can see that what is important is that, as far as we are concerned by change these days, their care must be directed towards the future. They must place more emphasis on the highest interests of the

nations. They must also educate people involved in the political arena. A leader nowadays must wonder what future he or she guarantees to the new and coming generations in terms of the well- being of a worthy Africa. What Africa needs most for now is her leaders being fully and becoming more aware of their responsibilities.

As former colonialist and imperialist countries such as France, Germany, Great Britain orchestrated international holds-up. In nineteenth century, with advent of industrial revolution, Africa became a good source of raw materials and natural resources, which supply European, Japanese and North American industries. They bought our raw materials and natural resources on cheap terms of exchange, leaving us in debts and poverty.

Indeed, what motivated the West's scramble for Africa, which eventually led to its portion, was the endowment of the continent with abundant natural resources.

For instance, Japan today has 60% of materials needed to run its industries imported from Africa. In recent decades, China has also been present everywhere in Africa in search of natural resources in order to run its factories and new industries. In the same dynamics, Ali Mazrui shows in his book *The African Condition* that if Nigeria stops selling its petroleum products to the USA for example, this will cause its complete economic fall. This situation connotes that the growth and prosperity of most advanced nations in the West have much to do with the exploitation of raw materials and natural resources in Africa.

In this case, conscious of their force with regard to the natural resources and the high interest that Africa represents for these industrial countries, African leaders must impose themselves on them, fixing the prices of these raw materials and natural resources. They also generally must fix terms of exchange. In the reality every African nation must follow the good example of the Republic of Niger. As a matter of fact, the authorities of Niger, aware of their importance for France as far as Uranium is concerned, to the exploitation and the theft France orchestrated on this natural resource, had a clear cut claim, i.e. they wanted to control their

uranium and diversify its movements on the market. In a word, they wanted to deal with foreign (American) companies. This decision angered the French authorities who threatened Niger; but that African country stood its ground.

In *Two Thousand Seasons,* Ayi Kwei Armah expresses that Africans' need and will to control and manage our raw materials and natural resources through one of his chief character named Isanusi.

In effect, the narrator informs the readers that Isanusi has denounced this swindling and exploitation and condemned this vast deceit between white destroyers and King Koranche, which stand for the partnership between Africa and West. African leaders must have the courage to definitely break with this looting of their wealth and manage this according to their requirements. Here follows what the narrator says:

> I have been unwilling to speak at. The king persuaded me I would be betraying our people if I held back my voice at such a time. I will betray our people.
> It is about the white men. You have seen them. They have brought to the king and his courtiers greetings and presents. Those also you have seen. And they have brought requests, which the king bids me lay open to you for your thinking on. The king wishes you to know beforehand that as far as he himself is concerned and that goes for his courtiers too-his heart responds kindly to all the white men's wishes, and he is of a mind to grant them. […] our land, of the beauty of the mountains and the plains' fertility here, and the metals our earth contains-iron in abundance, gold, silver, and our pure, red copper. These metals it is the white men's wish to take away from us, to take them home beyond the sea. In return they promised the kings to give the king and his courtiers shiny things, entertainments for their eyes. (T.T.S pp.81-2)

It appears important today for Africa to go about this control and management so that the dependence of the West on such resources must be an asset and a profit for the continent, not for the West. It is only at this cost that we must expect true development for Africa. Despite all this, one can notice that Africa is not a static continent, obviously things are changing, and progress is being carried out willy-nilly in every realm of life. Contemporary Africa is in great transition.

6.4 Africa in Transition

Contemporary Africa is faced with a great mutation. It is what just characterises its dynamics. In fact, transition means the process or a period of changing from one state or condition to another. It equally means being between two things or events.

Indeed, in the cultural field, Africa has emerged bruised and weakened, from the colonial assimilation aping system. She is shared between her traditional, cultural values and the acquired European ones. In Africa, everything is floating. African societies are characterised by inequality of some sort. African culture after colonialism has shifted from solidarity to individualism the latter leaning towards European cultural values. Since African countries were colonised by Europe, they have thenceforth lived between two series of cultural values divisible between communalism and individualism. Surfing on the road to modernity Africa also has, in addition to her consanguinity, copied European conjugality. Therefore, Africa finds herself between traditional society and modern world, based on individualism. Culturally, contemporary Africa has moved and is still moving from the extended family, the bedrock of African society, to the nuclear family, one European index of modernity. The above demonstration shows that Africa is culturally in transition. Living standards are also instable, which equally implies that Africa is economically in transition.

In fact, Slave Trade and Colonialism were two stages that brought Africa into Western economic system. So, the existing African economic system has been badly hindered. At the introduction of the European economic system, cowries and barter were replaced by the use of coins and paper of money in transactions. Later on, with evolution, Africa had to choose between economic systems of the globe. The two main economic systems are capitalism and socialism; the former being characterized by market economy and the latter by control of the economy by the State; on behalf of masses.

Therefore, for decades, African nations have had to line up either behind "developed market economies" or "planned and controlled economies". However, after the collapse of the Eastern Bloc in the later 1980s most of African nations moved from socialist economic system (planned economy) to developed market economies.

Evidence of this transition in Africa is for instance the creation of WAEMU (West African Economic Monetray Union) in Western francophone Africa, consisting of free exchange and increased production among its members. Like CCAS, EAC (East African Community) and SADS (South African Development Society) ECOWAS (Economic Community Organisation of West African States) created in 1975 constitutes also an economic community expected to lead to development. All this explicitly shows efforts of the economic integration on the continent, which is inevitably the bedrock of the development of the African continent.

No doubt, Africa is economically in transition. Politically speaking, the independent African countries are now back to multiparty system, freedom of speech, free undertakings, private initiatives, liberty of creativity, in a word, principles of democracy which surely lead to development whereas the party system is characterized by dictatorial regimes in which populations are submitted to oppressions, tortures, assassinations. Moreover, in 1990 with the collapse of Eastern bloc, the majority of African nations have slid progressively to the multiparty system. Therefore, one can see clearly the democratisation of the continent, which is the bedrock of transformation and construction of African nations. These metamorphoses in every realm of life justify the fact that the African continent is in transition.

In this respect, it is my belief that, since 1990, the Republic of Benin has become the torchbearer of Democracy in Africa. Thanks to its intelligentsia and the political atmosphere particularly disastrous in the East where we witnessed the collapse of the Eastern bloc and the heyday of its ideology all over the world, Benin has shifted from absolutism to pluralism. In

effect, after general upheavals, in February 1990, Beninese authorities under pressure, summoned the "Conference des forces vives de la Nation" in order to find solutions to crises which had shaken the country. From that conference, Benin has starting laying the foundation of a new political system. In this democratic wave in Benin, West Africa; local elites have shown their genius, dexterity, their capacity of transcending, invention and creativity. That strong wind took away the majority of dictatorial regimes of the African countries. Democracy is according to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* "a system of government by all the people of a country, usually through representatives, whom they elect, thought of as allowing freedom of speech, religion and political opinion. [In addition, it is] a fair and equal treatment of each other by citizens, without social class divisions."[93] In this respect, the people govern, decide and manifest their will and desire as for the life standard that they need, the relations that they need to keep with their neighbours and the exchanges that they would like to establish. Democracy is the political system, which has brought hope, vision and ambition to Africa as a whole. In a democratic country, the different powers function in mutual collaboration, complement one another in order to forward the country. Furthermore, human rights are respected while human integrity is also defended and safeguarded; all this is a guarantee for a true democracy.

The democratic countries in Africa encourage private initiatives and support businesspersons. Once the laws of the countries ensure and protect the expatriates and their capital, one sees the boom of the investments which constitute the tripod of development. Democracy seems to be one of the primary conditions to development, for; it requires *hard-work* and *clear vision*. This is true in the sense that from 1990, the year of democratic rebirth, Africa has thoroughly been forwarded in every realm of life.

[93] Jonathan Crowther et al ed ,*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995), p.309.

Indeed, in *Osiris Rising,* Asar puts great emphasis on private and good initiatives. As single-minded fighters, Asar and his group initiate many things; the creation of cooperations in the field of fishing:

> How did you get to be a member? I took some first year students to do an economic and social survey of the village. Very limited, just to collect data for an essay assignment. From the interviews we learned the fishermen worked for one man. He didn't fish, but he owned the boats. He got 75% of the catch. The others hated the arrangement, but they didn't have the capital to change it. After the survey we talked matters over. Someone suggested we established a cooperative and get a bank to buy a boat. It worked. Who suggested it? Aba. Now there are two boats. Paid for. And the housing scheme is half paid for, ahead for schedule. (O.R p. 108)

This cooperative association releases the fishermen from the yoke of the owner of the fishing boats and helps them to build their own houses. It participates in the emancipation of these fishermen and their co-operators. Asar is also very active in redefining the issue of the change of the curriculum and this is to his credit. Most people of his age share his spirit and join him in his fight with their support to him. This can be noticed through the way each person of the group volunteers to play a particular role in order to curb the influence of Eurocentric studies on the Campus at Mandan:

> The Mystic Comrade offered: 'We have to organise in a way we haven't done before. Around precise objectives. With specific volunteers taking charge of each project. The rest of us would form permanent support and resource group.'
> 'What do you mean specific objectives?' Bai Kamara asked.
> It was Asar who answered: 'since we're talking of designing new syllabuses and curricula, which means ultimately redesigning the entire educational system, I think that our first specific objectives would have to be a set of position papers'
> Starting what? Bai Kamara probed.
> 'The new principles we propose. On that basis we'd spell out a new syllabus for each discipline. Of course, before that we need to clear the ground: outline principles and the assumptions governing the old system. We should show why the old system has lost whatever values it had, and needs replacing. Then we'll have to spell out the underlining principles of our new system.' (O.R p.190)

This scenario may be compared with a group of artists where the title role is played by the singer who can fail, however nice the song, if the other members fail to play their roles. The album produced bears the name of the singer whose success makes the pride of the whole group. In the special case of the novel, Asar's genius is widely praised, which prompts into

him more dynamic force to keep on. Therefore, in the majority of African democratic countries, good initiatives of public interests need to be congratulated, praised and encouraged without any discrimination. For the time being, I believe that democracy as a political system can and must lead African nations towards development.

In the religious and cultural field I believe that syncretism in today's globalising world will be very helpful to the African development in many regards. Cultural syncretism is the combination of the positive aspects of two or many different cultures to construct a new culture, which transcends time and space dichotomies.

In effect, in the era of globalisation, it is imperious for Africa to open up her culture to allow the incursion of the foreign cultures and rebuild a new cultural influence that will be efficient, attractive and persuasive in the global market since, for her development, Africa has an attractive culture to sell on the international market. Indeed, culture constitutes one of the key elements to the development of the continent. It is the reason why Africa must preserve her culture against negative and destructive foreign influences. Africa must select from foreign cultures what is positive and combine it with her own, to improve the quality of her cultures.

However, it is equally necessary for the African people to safeguard their cultural heritage against cultural invasion.

Though cultural syncretism appears very important for the development of Africa, Africans must be cautious as regards cultural influences, they receive in order to avoid alliterating their own cultures.

It is the reason why we must permanently encourage and advocate some cultural festivals and celebrations like FITHEB (Festival International du Théâtre du Bénin), FESPACO (Festival de production des arts et de la culture de Ougadougou.), 'Quintescence'.

In the same way, we must rebuild and protect the different African museums that constitute declared centres of culture of the globe and offer global touristic potentialities.

To make their cultures efficient all over the globe, Africans need to know the remaining cultures of the globe and appreciate their weaknesses and assets.

Seeing all I have discussed above, I can say that cultural syncretism might lead to change of mentalities and ways of life as a tool for African development. The coming discussion will be about the integration of the continent.

6.5 Integration of the Continent

The word "Integration" derives from "integrate" which means combination of two things in such a way that one becomes fully a part of the other. History has taught us that during the conference of Berlin in November 1884 to February 1885, European imperialists balkanised and shared out Africa according to their interests.

For many decades, they imposed their hegemony on the African continent. Africa was cracked and disunited. It is to put an end to this division and disunion that only few years after independence the integration of contemporary Africa became a hope for African evolution. Many efforts of integration have been made all over the continent. So, the need to unify all the fragmented African countries was the ultimate and chief objective of some Pan African movement pioneers, namely Marcus Garvey, Anta Diop, Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta and Sekou Toure. To my mind, this unification, if achieved, would have positively affected the economy where resources would be combined and managed, for the benefit of all.

Every person can draw a profit from the experiences resulting from this achievement. Aware and concerned with the fact that all the nations shaped by the colonial order do not have the same measure of ownership of natural resources, Nkrumah the former president of Ghana saw that the socialist ideology was the best answer to the problem of inadequacy in the management of our resources. Even though his dream is not so far reached because it has

faced obstacles emanating from the determination of the former colonizer to keep the continent under domination, its relevance to Africa's sub- regional organisations like ECOWAS, WAEMU, SADEC, COMESA and even some customs unions, is very telling as to the impeding need, as there is adequate emphasis on economic issues.

In the same respect, one of the contemporary issues raised about Africa, frequently alluded to by African and international media, is the creation of the United States of Africa, which has already stepped forward from the OAU to AU; which indeed is a springboard to putting an end to many evils such as the pathology of fragmented economy, the triumph of ethnicity, board conflicts, in short the road to the wholeness of Africa, as evoked by Ayi Kwei Armah before the prophetic utterance about the unity of Anoa in *Two Thousand Seasons*.

Showing the importance of unity for the African continent, Ayi Kwei Armah wrote in his *Two Thousand Seasons*:

> Our way, the way is not a random path; our way begins from coherent understanding. It is a way that aims at preserving knowledge of who we are, knowledge of the best way we have found to relate each to each, each to all, ourselves to other peoples, all to our surroundings. If our individual lives have a worthwhile aim, that aim should be a purpose inseparable from the way. (T.T.S p.39)

It is only from this unity that African nations must emerge. As the soul cannot operate separately from the body, the creation of African unity with a fair distribution of interests would be a way to bring the soul back to the body. In fact, it cannot be achieved overnight, but we can start now and from somewhere. As far as I am concerned, division or disintegration as emphasised by the Ghanaian novelist in *Two Thousand Season* is death, tension sites throughout the continent are but net results of less care to the remark. Therefore the slogan must be 'down with guns and bombs and disintegration'.

To sum up, one can assert that integration of contemporary Africa is and will be the chief, most secure part to the development of the continent. All this cannot be achieved if one

does not redefine a perfect educational policy in order to prepare the future generations to face the challenge.

6.6 Rethinking of the Educational System.

To begin this section it becomes imperative to clarify the meaning of education. According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, it is "a process of training and instruction, especially of children and young people in schools, college, etc, which is designed to give knowledge and develop skills."[94] From this definition, education is the root of every change. It must be referred to as the chief instrument, which can lead to emancipation. As a researcher it is my duty to glance at the fiction works of some writers who address the issue of education and view it as the key for emancipation of the people psychologically shattered by the white man's lies before referring to the Ghanaian novelist's trend of what should be the education in African context. In my point of view, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o is the writer that I have identified to achieve my goal regarding the endeavours of Waiyaki, his protagonist in *The River Between.* In effect, Waiyaki, the chief character has committed himself to laying the foundation of education by establishing schools everywhere in Kameno and Makuyu. The Kenyan writer perceives schooling as a basic factor for unification from which the wanted change can emerge. Here, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o expresses the importance of education through his chief character's determination:

> The day for the gathering of parents from all over the ridges was approaching. Waiyaki wanted to press for more schools, although he did not know where he would get teachers. He thought he might be able to persuade some to come from Siriana, otherwise he himself would go to Nairobi and try to get some. Another thing was coming into his mind.
> Every day he was becoming convinced of the need for unity between Kameno and Makuyu. The ancient rivalry would cripple his efforts in education.[95]

[94] Jonathan Crowther et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995), p. 369.
[95] Wa Thiong'o Ngugi, *The River Between*, (Heinemann: London, Ibadan, Nairobi, 1965), p. 104.

In the same respect, in *Things Fall Apart,* Mr Brown presaging the key role of school in the modern African communities asserts that the future of Umuofia in particular and that of Africa in general will be in the hands of those whose children will have gone to school. However, did that school training respond to the expectations of Africa? Can the white man's education the way it is offered to Africa favour her development?

In fact, for the Ghanaian novelist, going to school and having trainings are good but adapting these trainings and knowledge received from schools to our own realities is better. Therefore, it is most important for African nations to adjust their education to their environment so as to satisfy their needs. So, the preoccupation of redefinition of syllabi and curricula, and the reorientation of the educational system in the academic field is clearly expressed in *Osiris Rising.*

As a matter of fact, Asar, Ayi Kwei Armah's chief character in the novel has proved how it is an imperious duty for him to change the colonial educational system and work out new curricula, which can respond to the needs of his people. So, with the help of his mates Asar has made great mutations in the field of academic education. The necessity for change is perceived in Bai Kamara's argument, which leads to creating a superior system:

> So far it's been our work. From the time I began teaching, all we Africans have done is to find stuff readymade-syllabuses, curricula, the whole educational system. We haven't created our own system. We have operated within this old system. Sometimes we grumbled. We suggest modification here and there. Low energy dabbling. What we're facing now is different. High energy work. Not just attaching something conveniently available. But creating a superior system. Working to replace the old with it**.** (O.R P. 189)

For the scholars in the novel, the irrelevance of the current educational system is basically the raison d'être of the urge to change it. So, changing it, as the author demonstrates, is not synonymous with banning European studies from it. Plainly, a selective work that must be based on relevant needs on the continent is to be done. It seems that any knowledge can never

be strong enough for development if its substance is not focused on key aspects of this development.

Reading his novel *Fragments*, I realised that Ayi Kwei Armah has deplored the fact that too much emphasis is placed on European drama. It sounds as if African literature is not worthwhile. Also, when I probe into the content, the curricula, I hardly notice any syllabus about Asia. This proves some inadequacy in the system that reinforces its euro centricity. The concern for a worthwhile system in Africa is to make actors familiar with every aspect of their own society and environment, so that they can discover her potentials. For instance, the geographical position of the continent - between the tropics offers opportunities for large scale crop cultivation that gives Africa comparative cost advantages over the West. First and foremost, African countries' economies depend on the primary sector. For this reason, particularly one should introduce in our syllabi the teaching of the farming techniques and strategies of conservation of the glut of the crops. In this perspective here is what the Ghanaian novelist writes in *KMT:*

> "Ways had to be invented of spending the abundance Conversations among companions turned more frequently on the question of what to do with the new knowledge and the protection it brought. Some were for sharing; they saw sharing as the solution, the new way to forestall disaster." (KMT p.264)

Another aspect of the educational system is worth discussing that of professional training. Universities; in francophone Africa, the new academic institutions are as young as independence itself. Therefore, both the new independent nations of Africa and many of the African Universities in that zone have shared the same period of their existence, development and progress, facing several difficulties, due to their young age. What are the implications of such contemporaneousness, especially with respect to fundamental questions of the impact of one (higher education) on the other (young African Nations) vice-versa, in the overall quest for the transformation of Africa? There can be no doubt that the common need in the

countries of Africa, as elsewhere in the so called developing world, is the need for development; the questions that immediately arise then are: What constitutes the development of a nation? What are the factors or conditions that affect such development? And in what way can a university most effectively and positively influence these factors or conditions and thereby contribute to continental development? As I have mentioned, beyond universities in the new African nations were blunted by several realities.

First, many of the universities were themselves as new as the nations they were expected to serve, and, therefore, could not and had not gained sufficient experience and maturity to participate effectively in the transformation of the African societies. Despite these factors or conditions, people still believe or are made to believe that university is one of the great world institutions that has taken root in modern Africa. It is generally admitted that every nation agreed with the three universal missions of the university i.e. acquisition, transmission and application of knowledge as crucial in the development and progress of the continent.

It is in this regard that the narrator and his colleagues i.e. scholars, intellectuals and elites have done their best to operate reforms in every field of the educational system. Here is the account that the writer has given of the results of their commitment for change:

> Ast asked for the floor. The adoption of the new proposals by Humanities Faculties, she said, was just a first step. A lot of work would have to follow. She offered, with help from Asar and other interested colleagues, to design and mount courses in Egyptology, from the introductory to the intermediate level including practical courses in the reading of Egyptian texts. She pointed out it would be necessary to give the initiative a continuous base through a five-year staff training program that would send at least one graduate student each year to advanced institutes of Egyptology. The aim: to build up an Egyptological section structurally linked with the department of African Studies, History and Literature to start with, and eventually with other interested departments. The new proposals were adopted. (O.R p. 237)

In reality a quick glimpse at these reforms already visible to some extent in the REESAO environment, (a space composed of fifteen national universities in West

francophone Africa with the introduction of Bachelor-Master and Doctorate system in their teaching and training systems), show that the Ghanaian novelist's fiction works have met the aspirations and ambitions of this network of some universities in West Africa. In the same perspective they advocate a new policy of academic cooperation based, in priority, on modernisation of the university training demand in order to facilitate mobility and professional insertion of actors. Furthermore, to be thorough with the reforms, African intellectuals must work out curricula and syllabuses in secondary schools, which can be efficient and effective, and respond to the needs of African environment.

Nowadays, the unemployment rate is increasing because of paucity of vocational training. Many young university graduates become jobless because of the inadequate nature of the training they have received. To solve this preoccupation, schools of practical and vocational training need to be popularised. Students should be oriented towards more practical technical and vocational schools, as a priority.

To my opinion, it is only by initiating and implementing this approach that African leaders will drive African nations towards true development. In the following section I will discuss the assets and weaknesses of literature to the development of Africa.

6.7 Necessity of Literature to the Development of Africa.

The insight gleaned from the material covered so far will now be used to make some projections on the African situation. These projections will go beyond Arrnah's novels. Before then some of the questions raised earlier on in the introduction to this thesis would be settled. These questions have to do with the link between literature and development.

From the works of the Ghanaian writer considered in this thesis it can be said that there is a link between literature and society. These works encompass the living history of their peoples from the time of colonialism to the present day. Through the works there has been an understanding of dynamics, the interacting forces that have been at play and that

have been determining Africa's future even to the present time. Writing on 'National Liberation and Social Reconstruction' in *Criticism and Ideology*. Emmanuel Ngara informs us that "Literature does not only reflect and reproduce society; it also passes judgment on society and helps to shape social development."[96]

The answer to the question on whether literature is well suited to the task of arousing popular reaction against social abuses can be seen when one considers the power of the pen. The very fact that governments of the world over at different points in history have banned publications and forced certain writers who were, unsympathetic to their misdeeds to flee into exile is an indication of what potential power literature has to change history.

Most of South Africa's "radical" black and colored writers as well as a number of performing artists are forced in exile. For instance famous persons like Miriam Makeba, Alex La Guma, Dennis Brutus and Lewis Nkosi have been forced to make their abodes outside South Africa. The System of Apartheid which denies the human dignity of the majority of the people there cannot contain the likes of them. What is suggested, from the songs and pens of these people is considered very unpalatable to the status quo.

For the writers who stay in South Africa, as the younger generation of poets do, they can be described as courageous fighters. They want to meet the enemy on his own battle field. However, they would have to work within certain limitations because the System of Apartheid makes no concessions. All those who stay and pursue their literary activities must devise their own means of survival. If they are prepared to go beyond the limits imposed over them by the System of Apartheid, then they must also become prepared for persecution.

Taken together, Ngugi and Armah have shown in their works how disruptive and destructive colonialism as a force has been to Africa's traditional body politic and her social arrangements. They have shown how colonialism came in and entrenched itself among the

[96] Ngara Emmanuel, *Criticism and Ideology:" National Liberation and Social Reconstruction* "(Heinemann: London, Ibadan, Nairobi 1984), p.137.

people and how in certain instances a campaign of resistance was put up against it. In *Two Thousand Seasons* by Armah for instance, one is presented with the Trans-Atlantic slave trade where Africa's human resource material was depleted, where able-bodied young men and women were shipped off to the New World to the economic advantage of imperialism but to the disadvantage of Africa. Colonialism also led to the stealing of the people's wealth as the mention of the people's stolen lands shows in *Weep Not, Child* by Ngugi. It also gave birth to informers and collaborators, traitors who mortgage their people to the colonising powers.

The writings of Armah also reflect the dawn of independence. These writings mirror the years after independence, when nationalism has broken the back of colonialism and local people now govern their own countries. One is shown horrors of modern states where nothing has substantially changed and everything has gone wrong. Those charged with overseeing the development and welfare of the people have failed because they do not have the correct attitude to leadership. The result is a small cluster of people in the society having everything while the majority of the people suffer in deprivation.

In *Why Are We So Blest?* the writer shows how even in a revolutionary situation (Algeria) traces of bourgeois living still appear on the national front. Independence has not improved the material conditions of the people. In its anxiety to court French and international favour, the new national government neglects the vital tasks of social reconstruction and economic revitalisation. Beggars line the streets and the veterans of the war of liberation are forgotten.

The plight of workers like the hero in *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* by Armah as well as the farm labourer Kigunnda in *I Will Marry When I Want* by Ngugi is shown to be something that is disturbing to the two authors. Ngugi also particularly highlights the lot of the peasants in today's Africa. The same people who suffered under colonialism are still suffering today.

While in the main Ayi Kwei Armah does not actually in the art form show how an end can be put to the state of chaos, Ngugi especially in his works after *A Grain of Wheat* explicitly calls upon the down trodden and oppressed classes not only to be aware of their historical and material condition but through organized militancy seek to overthrow it. The nearest Armah comes to prescribing a solution in his works appears to be the call to revolutionary internationalism that concludes his novel *Two Thousand Seasons*. Here is a coming together of "people of the way" drawing their strength from the links that bind them and forging a concerted struggle to put an end to their domination and exploitation, reclaiming their very humanity that has been denied them.

Ngugi makes it clear that his vision of a new heaven and a new earth is a world in which the dispossessed peasants and disenchanted workers have been freed from the manacles that maim them socially, economically and politically, where they are masters of their own destiny, where they are dictating the pace of their own history. They would be producers and reapers of the wealth that comes from their labour. He makes this explicit in these words "My thesis, when we come to today's Africa, is then very simple: a completely socialized economy collectively owned and controlled by the people, is necessary for a national culture: a complete and total liberation of the people, is necessary for a national culture."[97]

From the exploration of the works of Ayi Kwei Armah, it becomes crystal clear that there is a link between literature and development, especially if it is accepted that development is that socio-economic as well as political process that frees the people from the things that militate against their progress, transforms their lives and enables them to achieve their highest creative potential. That is if the literature captures a realistic enough picture of the people's condition, if it effectively reflects the historical nature of their aspirations and in the process provides the enlightenment that they need to better their material conditions.

[97] Ngugi WaThiong'o, *Homecoming* (Heinemann: London, Ibadan, Nairobi 1984), p.2.

The question to be asked is: if there is a link between literature and society; if literature can be used as a tool to foster development, what actually is the methodology by which it achieves this? How does the African writer reach his audience? Would his message not be more effective as an instrument of change if it reaches a wider audience?

It is a fact that much of African literature of Africa does not reach the people because it lacks a popular base. If the works mirroring social reality cannot reach the very people whose condition it is mirroring how can it affect their lives and change their situations? The answer can be seen in three ways: writing in the local languages, using the media of oral literature and encouraging the local book industry in Africa. These options will now be elaborated upon. The first way of letting African literature reach a wider audience would be to write in local languages as Ngugi has done with GAITAANI MUTHARABA - *Devil on the Cross* and then in the case of drama producing again in the local languages as Ngugi did with NGAAHIKA NDEENDA. Gerald Moore writes in *Twelve African Writers:*

> Like Sembene Ousmane, Ngugi seems to have decided that the novel has peculiar weaknesses as well as peculiar strengths. These must be compensated by the use of theatre or film, and that choice in turn leads almost inevitably to the use of a language which can unite a rural African audience in the way that English or French never can.[98]

The fact that this production was stopped and the license for performance withdrawn shows the potential it held for making the disenchanted people of Kenya aware of their place in history.

Secondly, oral literature, which has not formed a subject of serious study in Africa's centres of learning must be seen for what it is: a powerful but hitherto ignored art form for bringing the people to the place where they would take steps to preserve what is good in their past, as well as divesting themselves of the things that hold them down. Writing about oral literature in Africa, Kofi Awoonor says:

[98] Gerald More, *Twelve African Writers,* (Heinemann: London and Ibadan, 1980), p.288.

> In discussing oral literature in Africa, it must be understood that we are discussing a large body of material which can have its total integrity, impact and realization only within the scope of performance, transmission and occasion..... This is the total cultural context of this literature which we can classify broadly as drama, prose, narrative and poetry.[99]

Oral literature in Africa needs to be, in addition to its traditional functions, used as a tool for social and economic development in the medium of direct communication, oral literature has certain advantages over written literature. In the first place it is in the local languages which the people understand. In the second place it is always assured of an audience because there is always a context in which it is performed, either in masquerades, funerals, festivals, or ceremonies pertaining to the secret societies or story telling; there is always an audience. The communicator is visible and the people in the context have the chance of consuming what he is saying directly. This is unlike written literature where the author only indirectly communicates with the audience through the pages of his book.

Oral literature encompasses the people's history, their world view, their belief System and helps to weld the community together. In addition, to encompassing all these, the art form can be given redirection and used to promote the people's economic, social and political advancement

The potential that oral literature holds as a means of social transformation is enormous. Political songs for instance can be effectively used to mobilise people and provide the kind of fillip that would spur them to become patriotic and development conscious. An example or two will next be brought in to show oral literature's potential as a tool of social transformation.

In the rural communities of Africa, people tend to rely largely on face-to-face oral channels. What is being talked about here are traditional modes of communication which include proverbs, songs and drama. Popular Theatre in the form of drama, puppetry, singing and dancing as well as story telling holds great potential as a vehicle of social transformation

[99] Kofi Awoonor, *The Breast of the earth* (New York: Anchor, Doubleday,1975) , p. 69.

especially in the rural areas of Africa. These popular art forms in the local languages and expressing local concerns, if given the right direction, can be used to create self awareness in rural dwellers that is so necessary to get them to both take the initiative and participate in their own development programmes.

This is because in most developing countries as it is the case in Africa, rural people often become passive observers of transformation. Development programmes are planned without taking cognisance of the fact that they must be involved. They must take action for development themselves. This is where these popular art forms come in. In combination with rural extension work they can play an important role in rural education and development. Botswana is a case in point:

> Botswana's adult educators have been experimenting with a combination of popular theatre and extension work since the mid-seventies. In her northern Bokalaka region extension workers have been organizing an annual drama festival known locally as 'Laedza Batanani'. This festival seeks to promote participation and self-reliance in development by bringing people together to discuss their problems (reflected in the performance), collectively agree on reconstruction that need to be made and take action on them.[100]

For people to participate fully in something, they need to understand the implications of what they are doing and be committed to it. Brazilian writer Paulo Freire calls this "education for national consciousness", the kind of education that develops the understanding of an issue and the commitment to tackle it. It is the community that plans the festival. The community comes together and through their leaders lists problems that have to do with village development, agricultural production, value conflicts and family relationships. These listed problems provide the material for another workshop later, this time by actors. They identify the most important problems facing the village that year and set out to turn it into performance material. Drama is the main vehicle for presenting the festival issues. It is however buttressed by puppetry, dancing and singing.

[100] For Full Account, See *Ross Kidd & Martin Byram: "Popular Theatre and Development: A Bostwana Case Study" Convergence (The Journal of the International Council for Adult Education Vol. 10 N° 2 1977), p.12.*

Problems featured in the first three festivals from 1974-1976 include youth problems, nutrition and sex education, village development and sanitation. The community context of the performance creates the condition for discussion after the performance. The people do this discussion with the help of the adult educators and extension workers and action strategies are evolved to tackle these problems. Local people have recognized the importance or relevance of Laedza Batanani "The problems in the drama reflect the problems we are facing in our community. The drama is educative- we can learn from seeing the mistakes of others.[101] In evaluating the festival, the local people discovered that it is significant in its use of Popular Theatre in the following areas:

(a) As an entertainment medium capable of attracting large numbers of people many of whom had not previously participated in development activities.
(b) As a mirror of local problems which can be helpful in developing self-awareness and focusing community analysis.
(c) As a catalyst for discussion and action, rather than as mere spectacle and
(d) As a community education programme planned and run by the community supported by an inter-agency extension team.[102]

The festival demonstrated that:

Popular Theatre can be an important tool in third world nations, notably in rural areas where underdeveloped mass media and low levels of literacy require an almost total reliance on face-to-face extension work.[103]

In Ghana, the folk media has been used in communicating family planning information to the rural population. According to a study by K.N. Bame[104] the channels used in communicating family planning earlier on before the study was conducted had been radio and television broadcasts, mobile cinema shows, newspaper articles and hand-outs in English and local languages as well as individual personal contacts by family planning field workers.

[101]For Full Account, See *Ross Kidd & Martin Byram: "Popular Theatre and Development: A Bostwana Case Study" Convergence (The Journal of the International Council for Adult Education Vol. 10 N° 2 1977, p.12.*
[102] *For Full Account, See Ross Kidd & Martin Byram: " Popular Theatre and Development: A Bostwana Case Study" Convergence (The Journal of the International Council for Adult Education Vol. 10 N° 2 1977) p.12*
[103] Ibid, p. 12.
[104] For a Full Picture of the study See KN.Bame: Comic Plays in Ghana: An Indigenous Art Form for Rural Change. Rural African Vol. 27, 1975.

Though these seemed to have achieved some measure of success, with the exception of the last medium, the other media posed some problems in their usage in the large rural populations of Ghana. The study was done with the view of overcoming some of these problems by using traditional modes of communication in place of the modern mass media. The Concert Party form of folk drama was chosen because apart from using both visual and oral effects in communicating their message, they are familiar to and very popular with especially the rural population in Ghana. The Concert Party is a comic play in local languages accompanied by music.

At the end of the study it was found out that the experimental communities, i.e. those who were exposed to the concert party plays which had as their subject the importance of planning families, were more receptive and seemed to show some commitment to family planning than those in the communities that did not receive any treatment of family planning methods.

In Mali, according to another study by Nicholas S. Hopkins[105] during the period from 1958 to 1968 when Mali was ruled by the Union Soundanaise -Rassemblement Démocratique Africain, theatre was the principal way in which the ideas and programmes of the government were put forward. The ruling party had an orientation towards modernisation.

The party decided to use the theatre as a strong enough forum in which the central government's view on mobilisation and social revolution was put forward. Here again there was a certain measure of success because in the theatre, the ideas of the government reached women, labourers and other categories of people who would be less likely to attend rallies or other party meetings.

The third way of making African literature more accessible to Africans would be that the local book industry should be funded and vigorously encouraged. To corroborate this insight, Armah, in his *The Eloquence of the Scribes*, informs the readers about his endeavours to the foundation of the 'Per Ankh Publication House', which is typically African book industry. It aims at promoting the African researcher's works in the fields of the African studies. It is only at this cost that the continent will attain the cultural development. The main publishers of African Writers, Heinemann Educational Books Limited (African Writers Series) and Longman Group Limited (Drumbeat Series) are all foreign owned and foreign based.

When they publish these books they have to be imported into African countries and since the importation involves the use of scarce foreign exchange these books cannot be bought in very large quantities. Generally speaking, the local book industry has not flourished much. The East African Publishing House for instance had only a very limited success and has had to fold up. To even the literate population in Africa, the writings are not easily available. For the African writer wanting to influence his society by his writings, he would be able to achieve this in a very limited sense. Governments in Africa can help fund the local book industry and those in the literary establishment can through private initiative and enterprise work towards the setting up of local publishing houses. Armah thinks that as long as, "major African writers are happy to depend on Western Publishers or their local placemen; we shall remain blocked at pre-professional levels".[106] Coovi Innocent Datondji expresses this view in an article to *Présence Africaine*:

> Among the many other problems related to the teaching of our literature, we must mention the shortage of books which is a direct consequence of either their high price or the unwillingness of students to buy them. To remedy this situation, educational authorities, when designing curricula, should provide schools and universities with sufficient material. They could even launch a policy aimed at

[106] Ayi Kwei Armah," The Wrirter in Modern Africa Per Wästberg" (17-25), p. 20.in *Criticism and Ideology: Second African Writers' Conference* (1986) ed, by Kirsten Holst, Petersen, Stockholm.

establishing publishing houses or devising various ways to make books available and accessible whenever needed.[107]

Still discussing the link between literature and development, if literature has a link with society as one sees it does, then before it can actually change the society for the better it needs to be assimilated by the leaders, intellectuals and men of position in society. If literature can effectively make them have a correct picture of the society, then they can in turn set plans in motion by which progress and development can be achieved. If written literature reaches these leaders and intellectuals and it considerably affects them to initiate action for development, then it has in part achieved its aim as being a tool for development.

Politicians, intellectuals and men of position in the society cannot see themselves except with the help of a mirror. These are the ones whose decisions and actions determine the direction in which a nation heads; either towards the path of national prosperity or national doom. Literature acts as a mirror to those people by diving into the under skin of the society, touching the very pulse beat of the people and holding it up for them to see. That is why Ngugi says that every writer is a writer in politics. "It seems to me that the African writer of the eighties, the one who opts for becoming an integral part of the African revolution, has no choice but that of aligning himself with the people: their economic, political and cultural struggle for survival."[108]

Writers and politicians, intellectuals and leading men are together in the same place building society, with different emphasis and roles but linked together irreparably.

Amilcar Cabral writes this:

> The colonial situation neither allows nor invites the meaningful existence of vanguard classes (an industrial working class and rural proletariat) which could ensure the vigilance of the people over the evolution of the literature movement. On the contrary, the generally embryonic character of the working classes and the economic, social and cultural situation of the major physical force in a national liberation struggle- the peasants -do not allow these two principle forces or that

[107] *Coovi Innocent Datondji, "Literature and Development: "*How the Study of Literature in Schools and Universities Help Social Development in African Countries" Présence Africaine N° 153 3 Quarterly p.93.
[108] Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, "Writing against Neo-colonialism" *Criticism and Ideology* (Heinemann: London Ibadan Nairobi 1988) p. 10.

> struggle to distinguish on their own genuine national independence from the fictitious political independence. Only a revolutionary vanguard, generally an active minority, can have consciousness ab initio of this distinction and through the struggle bring it to the awareness of the mass of the people.[109]

This active minority which brings awareness to the majority of the people is the partnership between the politicians and intellectuals and the seers of the society, the writers. Writers are both writers in politics and builders in society. In order to play their meaningful role in society, the writers concerned must take the right ideological positions that are in line with the people's aspirations. But portraying these 'correct' ideological positions through the art form has certain limitations. There is the danger of producing something that has good content but that is artistically inelegant. Characters are deliberately twisted to reflect certain ideological view-points. This narrows the appeal of the literary work and brings it to the level of political pamphleteering.

Literature is an art. It has its canons. By the use of these canons, critics are able to determine what good literature is and what it is not. Every writer then must be careful in presenting his message not to lose his artistic elegance. Otherwise, a writer may have something important to say but because his work fails to measure up to artistic excellence, not much will be made of it.

Ayi Kwei Armah's *Two Thousand Seasons* has loud racial overtones. In trying to explain the scramble for and partition of Africa, he draws a political divide; white stands for death, destruction and everything evil. The tone of the novel is nasty and as Soyinka has observed "the humane sensibility tends to recoil a little".[110] Armah's political message looms large over the novel and in the end the work looks like a piece of tract in support of black racialism.

Sometimes some of Armah's characters tend to be overdrawn. An example is Koomson in the author's *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born.* Because Armah is

[109] *Amilcar Cabral, Unity and Struggle: Speeches and Writings of Amilcar Cabral: Translated by Micheal Wolters p. 132*.
[110] Wole Soyinka, *Myth, Literature and the African World*,(Heinemann: London, Ibadan, Nairobi, 1976), p.111.

castigating the politicians of Nkrumah's Ghana, Koomson as a character is drawn up in such a way as to evoke condemnation when he appears in the pages of the book. His actions are exaggerated to the extent that he no longer looks like a real character but a caricature. Aimee in the same author's *Why Are We So Blest?* is portrayed as a one dimensional figure. She is like a leech just out to suck Modin's life forces and drain him of his manhood. She equates revolution with dirt and does not appear to understand the deeper dimensions of social transformation. In using her to show how dangerous Africa's flirtation with Europe is, Armah exaggerates her actions and her character remains rigidly fixed on a one dimensional level.

For literature to affect society, as has already been said, it must mirror social reality. But the writers must do it in such a way that leaves the art form intact; there is need for a delicate balance between the content of their works and the art form.

There is a point to be clarified further. Literature, though it has a link with society, does not actualise development. It cannot. Literature in itself does not lead to an increase in the material well being of members of the society. It can at best rouse people to take action but it does not take the action itself, the exception is in these cases where in addition to being a writer, a person becomes a politician. Wole Soyinka for instance joined the National Redemption Party of Nigeria in the political party era leading to the rise to power of Shagari, meaning that he approved of the party's political programme.

In mid 1987 world famous novelists Nadine Gordimer and J.M. Coetzee, both South Africans, lent their backing to a bid to launch a new writers' movement in their country committed to a South Africa free of Apartheid discrimination. So that not only will they try and write about the tensions in the South African society but through this organisation take political action themselves in an attempt to dismantle the Apartheid system.

Apart from these instances where the writer also becomes a politician and initiate direct action towards the development of the society, literature alone cannot concretise development.

Literature alone cannot transform society. It can only do so in connection with other social and political forces which are more pragmatic.

Some writers are realising this and are exploring other avenues. For instance, in addition to writing plays, both Ngugi and Soyinka also produce some of them. Through these productions, they try and meet the people directly. Sembene Ousmane has turned to the film media with the production of *Ceddo* and *Xala* among others as a way of more directly influencing his society. Soyinka has also ventured into the cinema by producing a political satire; *Blues for the Prodigal.* Christopher Okigbo went as far as entering the political arena and died supporting the Biafran secessionist cause.

In seeking to "go beyond" Armah, "vision of progress", proper for Africa would now be offered. In this, the material already covered would be used as the basis for making the projections. These projections go further than some of the issues relating to political and economic development in Africa that Armah raises in his works. The limitations imposed by literature not going as far as offering prescriptions make these projections necessary.

Iin the area of education, it is very necessary that the inherited colonial educational structures in Africa be over-hauled. These educational structures have been built around the world of the departed colonial masters. The major powers that colonised Africa: France, Britain and Portugal created an educational stream that turned out people flexible to the dictates of colonialism. Most of these structures have hardly changed.

The question of education in Africa can be tackled along these fronts. This would eliminate or at least greatly reduce the kind of situation that creates the realisation that hits

Modin in Ayi Kwei Armah's *Why Are We So Blest?* He sees the educational stream as being too narrow and closed so that only a few are able to make it to the top.

Before a society is developed economically and politically, people must be knowledgeable. Ignorance and illiteracy hold back attempts at national development. The people must have knowledge of themselves, their place in society the scientific laws which govern the operation of the universe and nature, and facts about human behaviour and social relationships. The purpose of education is to enable people to understand better the world in which they live.

Education by itself will not lead automatically to the attainment of economic development. Only if it becomes closely integrated into a comprehensive plan of development including all levels of the society its link with economic development, can it be well felt. When education is part of a well coordinated development plan, it makes the education relevant to the needs of the society. Relevant education is a priority for Africa's economic growth. How relevant education in Africa can be concretised would now be examined further?

In the first place there is the need structurally to increase the number of schools at the primary and secondary level. This would make primary education available to more people in Africa, especially to those in the rural area: these schools must be well staffed with teachers having good conditions of service. It is essential that more resources be pushed into the educational sector in the fight to eliminate ignorance from the continent. A great increase in educational establishment will ensure that there are equalisation opportunities for self advancement for all.

Apart from this, there should also be a progress in the content of education. Literature as a subject should be introduced very early in the life of the school going child. It should be made compulsory up to the level of the first five years of secondary education. Through the

subject of literature many students would acquire the reading habit so necessary for the consumption of literature. In addition to that, these students in their formative stages of their lives would have a broad world view as well as grasp the essential elements of their historical condition. Armed with this knowledge, they can later branch to other specialized areas of study to grow up as useful citizens in the society.

In this light, the creation of literary activities in the schools, colleges and institutions of higher learning should be encouraged. Literary/writers' clubs and Theatre groups should form a part of the extra-curricula schedule of educational institutions. This would expose students to the world of literature. The resulting cultural oasis that it creates would bring the kind of enlightenment that is vital to the development process. Then also is the need for more technical and vocational institutions which would train people to fit in the middle level manpower requirements of the various countries of Africa. More Nursing schools and Polytechnics to turn out para-medics and industrial functionaries are urgently required.

The fixation on things European and foreign (i.e. industrial Western) needs to be broken. Just because Africa was colonised by Europe does not mean that even in the years after independence, Europe should continue to be the centre of its educational and learning processes. Any discerning visit to the kindergartens and primary schools shows the image of "white is progress" even at the crucial and formative stage in the lives of Africa's children.

Nursery rhymes like "Baa Baa Black Sheep" "Jack and Jill", "Little Boy Blue", and stories like "Little Red Riding Hood", "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs", "Sleeping Beauty", "Beauty and the Beast" and "Cinderella" are imprinted through the mechanism of the educational process on the consciousness of the children very early when they go to school. The net result is that unconsciously and imperceptibly a child grows up always wanting to go to the Western world, away from Africa. The Western world is always

associated with wealth and happiness. There is the loss of confidence in Africa and its destiny. There is this loss of confidence in its creative potential. This needs to be rectified.

The curricula of study have to be changed to reflect Africa's place in the world. A call is not being made here for a narrow exclusivist mode of education where only things African would be taught. Half baked intellectuals are a menace to society because they are pretentious and lack great vision for the reconstruction work. Education should by all means be comprehensive. What is being proposed is that the kind of education that is offered must be one which seeks to portray Africa to the world and the rest of the world to Africa. A kind of education that draws from the body of knowledge acquired about people from all over the world. This learning process can therefore be also encompassing what is a rope in all knowledge of academic merit from all over the world. This kind of content in education will make it harder for Africans to want to connect first with Europe before wanting to connect with themselves and Africa and the rest of the world.

A third point can be made concerning education in Africa. Adults are as much a part of any transformation process as the youth. In discussing education in the framework of political and economic development in Africa, in order to have a total picture, adults, especially the illiterate ones, must be included and here governments would have to accelerate the establishment of adult education schools. These schools would be basically pedagogical centres where adults would be taught how to read and write. Then new ideas from the learning process can be disseminated to them, thus broadening their world view. In the urban centres this can be organised on the basis of evening classes with courses and the completion of which would merit certificates.

In the rural areas, apart from helping the literacy drive, these adult education schools can be used to teach the farmers and rural dwellers things like new farming methods, the community and development and the dynamics of the rural/urban drift, among

other things. Basic skills like carpentry, metal work and masonry can also be taught. Nothing helps the economic and political development of a nation better than when its citizens are knowledgeable, skilled and informed. Where there is ignorance and mass illiteracy economic and political development is retarded.

From the examination of the critique of economic and political development in Africa in the works of Armah, what is seen emerging is a kind of development that eliminates imbalance in social relationships and harnesses the resources available to a country for the benefit of all. They advocate a kind of development that is not exploitative but rather humane and just, where human beings live out their fulfilled roles to the very optimum. They see a kind of development for Africa where producers have a chance of enjoying the fruits of their labour, where workers are adequately housed and children have a future.

To them, a developed African society would be one without alienating and disorienting forces that drive the individual to lose his identity and become his own enemy as well as an enemy to the society. In such an African society, Baako in Armah's *Fragments* would be able to play his role and not be driven to madness. People would no longer be like devotees of the cargo cult, in haste to consume things they did not produce. The Man in the writer's *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* would win admiration and respect for his conscious approach to work instead of scorn and abuse from his loved ones. The African people would be able to understand the forces in their history, militating against their progress and not be led on to their destruction as Modin was in Armah's *Why Are We So Blest?*

The whole of the developing world with its similar economic characteristics has a common experience pool that Africa can draw from its benefit. The solidarity should have an economic basis because they are well organised. Groupings like the African, Caribbean and

Pacific countries (ACP) are a better position to negotiate with bodies like the European Community (EU).

The African grouping at international forums and on political bodies like the Non-Aligned Movement should be strengthened. African states should continue to press for a New International Economic Order at the United Nations and its allied agencies. This economic order would essentially seek to correct the imbalance in the economic relations between North and South.

This call for a New International Economic Order would take some time to materialise; the industrialised North would not readily want to offer producers of primary products higher prices. At the same time, the North would not want to shrink the foreign market for their exports by cutting back on their dumping activities in Third World markets. They would also not readily reduce the prices of the technology they export to the same Third World markets.

So, while Africa, as well as the Third World presses for the coming into effect of a new International Economic Order, they can in the meantime be exploring South-South trade. They would first need to protect their markets from the products of the North by the imposition of high import tariffs and quotas and then open these markets to trade with each other. When the economies of Third World countries are more stable through South-South, Cooperation and trade, then they would have stronger leverage when dealing with the industrialised nations of the North.

Cultural exchanges between African and other Third World countries should be encouraged. They would broaden the creative experience of African countries. Some examples that can be drawn in this direction are Ayi Kwei Armah himself, Franz Fanon and Edward Braithwaite among others. Since the publication of his first novel *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* in 1968, Ayi Kwei Armah has lived and worked in different parts of

Africa. Some of these places are Senegal, Tanzania, Algeria and Lesotho. The experience that he has as a writer has not been limited to his native country, where he has seldom worked. Instead he has shared his knowledge with the peoples of various African countries. He has learnt from other African people and they have also learnt from him. The benefit is mutual.

Franz Fanon, born in Martinique, moved to Algeria and identified himself with the seven year Algerian war of liberation against French colonial domination that forced France to grant independence in 1962. In the process, he became a leading voice in the international struggle by Third World countries against colonialism.

Another Caribbean native, Edward Braithwaite, gained immense experience as a writer when he lived and worked in Ghana in the 1960s. Uganda poet Okot p'Bitek worked in both Kenya and Nigeria. The instances of writers working in other countries in the Third World apart from their own needs are to be encouraged.

Regular international conferences, involving writers in the Third World should be stimulated. At these conferences the various writers can discuss their works, their role in society as well as the ties that bind them even though they may come from different geographical regions of the world. They would then be in a better position to transmit the widened knowledge they gain from these conferences to their various audiences. In mid 1987 there was an international conference in Congo under the theme ‘African Writers Accuse Apartheid’. The conference brought together a vast array of African writers and politicians and their counterparts from the African Diaspora. Together they sought to take a common stance against the System of Apartheid.

Literature then, holds great potential in helping in the development process. If it is given the appropriate direction by the various writers concerned and combines effectively with more direct agents of progress and development, its role in the society can be more

pronounced. Written literature would not have to give way to other forms of literature as an effective tool of development. What has to be done, is to expand its audience in the ways that have been already suggested in my dissertation. A bigger readership would no doubt mean the message of author like Ayi Kwei Armah would get to more people. Under the present prevailing conditions of small readership and a flagging local book industry, the author does not succeed comprehensively in reaching the African people they are aiming at.

Though written literature would not have to give way to other forms of literature as a vehicle of social progress, the other forms must be given equal impetus to run alongside written literature. In addition to their written literary works, African writers who seek to influence the socio-economic and political direction of their countries should with great seriousness, incorporate other literary forms like theatre productions; poetry recitals and traditional art forms like comic plays, story-telling, music and dance into their works. The aim would be to reach as many people as possible.

When the various African writers are reaching a wider section of the people, mirroring their social realities and helping them to understand themselves as well as taking action for their economic and political development becomes self-evident.

Chapter seven: The Importance of History to Ayi Kwei Armah as a Novelist

7.1 The Return to the Past as a Way to Development

From *Two Thousand Seasons* to the most recent novel *KMT: in tne house of life*, Armah has orientated his fictional productions to the recounting of the past of the continent. For the Ghanaian novelist, the Africans had been taken away from Africa by the white men through slave trade. Consequently, the enslaved Africans lost the path of their origin. It is obvious here that slave trade is the first cause of the plague of the continent. Here is how Armah regretted that lost in the prologue to the novel:

> A people losing sight of origins are dead. A people deaf to the purposes are lost. Under fertile rain, in scorching sunshine there is no difference: their bodies are mere corpses, awaiting final burial.
> What when the tumult and the rush are yet too strong for the voice to prevail uttering heard sounds of origins, transmitting seen visions of purposes? What when all our eyes are raped by destruction's furious whiteness? (T.T.S p. xiv)

The quotation above is the expression of the arousal of consciousness on the values that the African people are losing by partitioning themselves from the way. Such behaviour will never favour the transformation of the black community. The writer is proving how destructive the oblivion of the memory is to the development of the continent. For this reason, he strongly calls on other Africans to revisit their past in order to make good use of it for the welfare of the continent.

In this perspective, he wants to use the rich past of the continent as a fundamental element in the reconstruction of the fragmented African nations. As a common saying goes 'A people without a past are a river without depth' As a matter of fact, to substantiate the rightness of this pronouncement, Ayi Kwei Armah calls upon all the Africans to go back to the way, their origins. So, the people of the way are those who still keep remembrance of the origin from

which to derive energy for current development. For Armah, it is quite obvious that the way bears within itself the germs and principles of creation and regeneration that gives essence to life. The writer states these intrinsic and universal values and principles in the following terms:

> There is one cause - all else are branches: you have lost the way. You have forgotten the way of our life, the living way. Your ears have stopped themselves to the voice of reciprocity. You yourselves have become a spring blindly flowing, knowing nothing of its imminent exhaustion, ignorant of replenishing reciprocity.
> Reciprocity, that is the way you have forgotten, the giving, the receiving, the living alternation of the way. The offerers, those givers who do not receive, they are mere victims. That is what in the heedless generosity of your blinding abundance you have turned yourselves into. […] The way is not the rule of the men. The reciprocity is the way. The way is not barrenness. Nor is the way this heedless fecundity. The way is not blind productivity. The way is creation knowing its purpose, wise in the withholding of itself from snares, from destroyers. (T.T.S p.17)

In the aforementioned citation, the author has used four times the word 'reciprocity', that means that the word is cardinal, vital and the foremost characteristics of the African society in terms of promoting or reviving endogenous values. In fact, what does reciprocity suggest? According to *Oxford Advanced Leaner's Dictionary* "reciprocity" is "the principle or practice of mutual exchange especially giving advantages or privileges in return for advantages or privileges received"[111] Furthermore, the writer himself gives it the following significance

> Reciprocity. Not merely taking, not merely offering. Giving but only to those from whom we receive in equal measure. Receiving, but only from those to whom we give in reciprocal measure. How easy, how just, the way. Yet how easily, how utterly you have forgotten it. You have forgotten that justice is not ease. (T.T.S p.17)

The concept of reciprocity engages every human being, every class into a dynamic action that enhances life.

This concept maintains the social equilibrium in every realm of life. So, we Africans need to return to our roots. It guides our being and makes it possible to correct the imperfections of

[111] Jonathan Crowther ,et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995), p. 930.

the present. Reading Armah one remarks that the past is the key factor to the remaking of the dismembered Africa. For Armah, the understanding of the Africa's current plight lies in searching for the events that overwhelmed her and proceeding to their analysis. This basic approach will pave the way to the African development.

In *Osiris Rising*, Nwt, Ast's grandmother, brought her up and fostered her knowledge about the circumstances under which they were brought to America, their new home. To deepen her curiosity Nwt answered Ast's worry with a question: "Do you know that our people were sold into slavery? That question raised more intractable questions in Ast's mind. Who sold us? What did such betrayal mean? Was it dead history? Or did it still have the energy of news, with power to shape the future?" (O.R p. 1)Through the questions she asked her grandmother and the information she read from the book entitled *Journey to the Source,* Ast discovered that what is in fact her soul is nothing but commodity.

In fact, *Osiris Rising* introduces Ast to us as an African American who is eager and fearful to return to her origin in Happa, a fictional country of the African continent. In the following passage, Armah shows his female protagonist preparing herself to begin her adventure:

> Selecting clothes and books to pack, Ast was surprised by the sadness crossing the excitement of the coming journey. It passed as quickly as it had come. The urge to return outgrew nostalgia long ago. Yet she remembered a time when her energy ebbed at the idea of goals so far ahead. Sometimes she'd feared the energy she needed for motion might never come. It came in unsigned article, mimeographed on yellowed paper, the text clean on the single page, its only identifying marks set at the top of the page: the ankh. Above her clothes she packed her must-take books. She had wanted to slip the article in among the books… (O.R p.9)

She desired to undertake a research on her identity and that one of her forefathers and situate the responsibility of each protagonist:

Who We Are and Why?

> In a people's rise from oppression to grace, a turning point comes when thinkers determined to stop the downward slide get together to study the causes of common problems, think out solutions and organize ways to apply them. For centuries now our history in Africa has been an avalanche of problems. We've staggered from

> disaster to catastrophe, enduring the destruction of Kemet, the scattering of millions raging the continent in search of refuge, the waste of humanity in the slave trade organized by the Arabs, Europeans and myopic, crumb-hungry Africans ready to destroy this land for their unthinking profit. We have endured the plunder of a land now carved up into fifty idiotic neo-colonial states in this age when large nations seek survival in larger federal unions, and even fools know that fission is death
>
> It may look as if all we ever did was to endure this history of ruin, taking no steps to end the negative slide and begin the positive turn. That impression is false. Over these disastrous millennia there have been Africans concerned to work out solutions to our problems and act on them. The traces these makers left are faint, because in the continuing triumph of Africa's destroyers the beautiful ones were murdered, the land poisoned. Now wherever future seed seeks to take root it strikes sand.
>
> Still, even in defeat the creative ones, left vital signs. They left traces of a moral of mindpath visible to this day, provided we learn again to read pointers to lost ways. Then connected with past time and future space through knowledge recovered, thinking Africans seeking one another in this common cause will meet the best of humanity for the work ahead: ending the past and the current rule of the slavers.
>
> We are not after the slave-foreman power that, under the killer's continuing rule, is blind ambition's hollow prize. We are after the intelligent understanding of all our realities, not simply the politics of power. We are after intelligent action to change these realities. For we intend, as Africans, to retrieved our human face, our human heart, the human mind our ancestors taught to soar. That is who we are, and why. (T.T.S p.9-10)

This quotation makes diagnostics of the Africa's sickness and highlights the possibility of the reconstruction of the continent. In this, Armah shows that it is important to recourse to our history if really we want to build the present and better the future of the continent. History tells us that our people had been enslaved by the Arabs and the Europeans and our own caretakers, kings and leaders were their accomplices. But not everybody participated in human beings destruction, there was resistance to it. Though it was faint, its traces constitute models to the present leaders and it will revitalise the young generation in its battle for freedom. To construct the future of this continent, the leaders have to avoid seeking position and blind ambition under the destroyers' power. Their role is to run after an intelligent and deep understanding of all our realities and look for a smart action to change these realities. It is only at this cost the Africans can expect a possible transformation of the continent. Since decades the different forces of the whole world have held conferences, seminars and applied policies of development in order to boost the economic growth of the continent, normally

synonymous with development. However, Africa continues suffering from the pangs of ills such as poverty, hunger, starvation, desertification, malaria, HIV-Aids and other diseases. Analysing the failure of these strategies of development, Ayi Kwei Armah believes that the solutions to the problems of Africa lies somewhere else, not in the investments of money in the continent, the adaptation of these policies of development to the African realities. That is the reason why the Ghanaian writer proposes the return to the past, history. He gives a better evidence of historical approach in his novel *KMT: in the house of life*. In this historical novel, the writer assigned his protagonists Pr. Sipha Jengo and Dr Lindela, Djiely Hor and Astw Konate the mission of the investigation into the realities of the black continent. In this novel, Pr. Sipha Jengo and Dr Lindela are introduced to the readers as scholars and Djiely Hor and Astw Konate as traditionalists. They are working for the revival of the positive aspects in the African values. It is only at this effort that we can attain a sustainable development. First and foremost, the reconstruction must be endogenous before exogenous. It is in this optic that they went far back the antic civilisation of the continent in order to collect the marking facts and events that sanctioned the African history. In this perspective, they organised a seminar on Historigraphy in the little town Yarw to oppose the European view and that one of the traditionalists about Africa, the cradle of humanity. The European conception of Africa is summed up in the lacunary communication that Professor Arendt Christine gave at the seminar about the stance that Africa occupies in the world history:

> Indeed, all of Africa's intellectual existence before the arrival of the Arabs and Europeans with their writing systems could be summed up as existence in the informal sector. And anyone familiar with the informal sector in today's Africa should be in a position to see the predictable consequences of such a situation. The production of knowledge being informal, the product was regrettably but just as inevitably, of low quality, its reliability, to say the least, questionable. […] Professor Christine Arendt added that in spite of seeming pessimism of her image of Africa, she did not consider the prospects of this continent and her people at hopeless. History, in bringing about the meeting of Europe with Africa, had provided the remedy to Africa's ills. Africa could borrow the historical consciousness of Europe, and march into the future. Professor Christine Arendt quoted from the elucubrations of two poets of Negritude: in

> return for the gift of feeling, Europe would save Africa with the gift of rationality. (KMT pp. 177-8)

This extract quoted from Professor Christine Arendt's speech demonstrates the Europeans wrong vision about Africa and her heritage. As a matter of fact, for her, Africa has come into history through her contact with Europe. This contact according to Professor Christine Arendt had provided a cure for Africa's ills. For her, Africa had only produced gift of feeling whereas Europe would save her from the gift of rationality. In the same logic, Professor Pierre-Jean Badin, expert in Sub-Saharan African history, asserted that Sub-Saharan Africa is an area filled with enigma. "Professor Badin's field of expertise was Sub-Saharan African History. It was, he said, a field shrouded in mystery. All that was certain was that Sahara had been an impassable barrier through most of recorded history, allowing no contact except through trade and Islam." (KMT p. 178) All this proves that the Europeans have narrow and wrong knowledge about Africa. Fortunately, this ignorance has been automatically rectified by the board of the traditionalists represented by Djiely Hor who contradicted in its righteousness these wrong views on the continent. For him, Africa has her own knowledge however it had been shattered through violence and fraud exercised by the invaders such as Arabs and Europeans coming respectively from the sea and desert. In the coming passage Djiely Hor unveils the secrecy about the Arabs and European's deeds:

> The Arabs knew what they wanted from us when they came, but they also knew better than to tell us straight. They said they brought us salvation. The Europeans did the same. They have always known what it is they need to take away from us: our sustenance from land and sea and air, the vitality of our bodies, the consciousness in our spirits. But their song is that they bring us salvation. It is one of the secrets we traditionalists know, but are sworn never to utter unless we are ready to die: that Arabs brought us the lie magnified as eternal truth, and the Europeans brought us also the same lie magnified as eternal truth. Were we to tell the truth to all our people, we would tell them when the Arabs arrived, citing years and names, because we know, how they came, what they did, and what they found that belonged to us, because we know; what they have worked so hard to destroy, because that too we know. (KMT p. 186)

If the Africans did not disclose their knowledge in the above excerpt, it was not because they hadn't any. It was because the traditionalist feared to break the oath and lived under a permanent death. The traditionalist showed that Africans had achieved great performances, habits and knowledge in the past. If this feat were not destroyed, the Africans would never know the underdevelopment of the continent. The next quotation corroborates the condition above:

> You have heard supposed keepers of knowledge tell you that the traditionalists of Africa have no way of keeping accurate time. Now hear the truth. We count, but we ourselves tied up by the oath of power, contribute actively to the myth of a society ignorant of counting by keeping our computational methods secret. Go to the inner home where traditionalists live. If they let you enter, you will see stones, tapestry, beads. The stones vary in size, from years to decades to centuries. The tapestry has reminders woven into it. The beads have colors answering to the narrative of time. They are much like stones, but their detail is finer. […] A piece of tapestry may be taken out for special occasions; the traditionalist detailed to be pour memory for that moment sees it, seeing it remembers information from ages by ordinary persons. The beads: go to a festival where the beads are worn, and watch. You will see that traditionalists come in pairs. See the companion of a traditionalist touch her beads as if in distraction. Like any collaborator of illusionists she is not distracted, only trained to seem so. What she is doing is to remind her companion when his memory began to falter, and to bring him back to the narrative path along which the public memory flows. Stones for telling the passage of years and centuries and millennia. Beads for knowing the content of counted time, what the ancestors did, or did not do. Tapestry for remembering the tangle of events. All these methods were there before Arabs came from the desert or Europeans from the sea. So why are we told in such confident words that we had no way of counting time? (KMT pp 185-6)

Referring to the content of this long but edifying aforementioned excerpt one notices the entire importance of the return to the past, history. The past lends its experience and secrets to present. From the speech of the traditionalist Djiely Hor, the forefathers of the African continent, had invented the computational methods of counting focused on the use of the stones, the remembrance of time and its content and the narrative path of the memory of the old generations. Actually, the information in this narrative extract will give the Africans, whoever they are, and the confidence to revisit the African past and restore the truth about the heritage of the continent. For an African saying goes 'it is at the end of the ancient thread that

one weaves the new one'. So the connection with history is a necessity for the development of the continent. It appears irrefutable now that Africa has a rich heritage to offer to the rest of the world and it becomes a sine qua non condition for the leaders, scholars, intellectuals, in brief, the children of the continent to go back to this past for continuity, perpetuation and promotion of this heritage in order to leave the state of underdevelopment and catch up with the missed development. Moreover, before the invasion of the Arabs and the Europeans, Africans had developed great schooling systems that should normally lead to progress. Unfortunately, these schooling precepts were shattered by the Arabs predators and white destroyers. Once again, here Djiely Hor informed us that there were two important schools that assured the training of the Africans. Through the coming citation Armah informs that the African forefathers were smart, clever, and intelligent, in short, men of great ideas in terms of creation and invention of genius. "The first is the greater school in size. The second would be greater if truth yet mattered, since some of our oldest traditions say it began in a house of life. The first the official school that hands down tradition the way power wants it, mixed it with lies. The smaller is the school of souls unwilling to live by lies." (KMT p. 192) For him, the Africans have their own schooling within which they expressed their thoughts, developed their philosophy and constructed their lives. For this reason, one can say that Armah wants all Africans to go back to the root so that they could use the truth to save the continent from the mouth of death that is to say, from the foreign domination. Here again comes out the writer's desire to serve with the tools in the past to break the link between Europe and Arabs. Therefore, the return to past is one of the strong signals that inevitably leads to the achievement of progress. The most important question aroused as regards the restoration of African past is: can the West accept the existence of such rich heritage after reducing for ages the humanity in Africa into animality? Obviously, the answer is no. In this optic, the first key mission of the West is now to debase the capability of the black continent to put into value its

genius creator. As we know that nothing good can come out from the relation between the West and Africa, it is high time the Africans authorities disrupted this secular deception with the West. Consequently, the realisation of such feat is irrefutably the beginning of the regeneration of the continent.

The next subsection will deal with connectedness of the past to the present as a base of remaking the continent.

7.2 Connectedness of the Past to the Present as a Base of Remaking the Continent

In the foregoing subsection, I have already discussed the necessity to return to the past. So, my concern here is to show in what way the connection of the past to the present is the key policy to the reconstruction of the continent, using Armah's creative works. In this perspective, arts and literature become very important for connecting the memories of the continent into the the aggregate sum:

> Creative imagination is one of the greatest of re-membering practices. The relationship of writers to their social memory is central to their quest and mission. Memory is the link between the past and the present, between space and time, and it is the base of our dreams. Writers and the intellectuals in these movements are aware that without a reconnection with African memory, there is no wholeness.[112]

The quotation above accounts clearly for the preponderant role that writers and intellectuals have to play in the process of wielding memory of the continent. Without the recollection of the past, Africa will suffer from the lack of regeneration tools from the past.

The reality is that for decades the black continent had been torn to rags by the Europeans. History informs us that in November 1884 and February 1885, the Europeans had shared the entire continent among themselves; they set frontiers mixing people of different

[112] Ngug i Wa Thiong'o, *Something Torn and New: An African Renaissance* (Basic Civitas Books: New York 2009), p.39.

philosophy and tradition causing thus ethnic and cultural conflict later. Consequently, the fragmentation and the confusion had radically disrupted the unity of the continent. In *Things Fall Apart,* Obierika, one of the protagonists of the novel, expressed this sorrowful situation in these terms:

> Does the white man understand our custom about land? How can he when he does not even speak our tongue? But he says that our customs are bad; and our own brothers who have taken up his religion also say that our customs are bad. How do you think that we can fight when our own brothers have turned against us? The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. How he has won our brothers, and our clan no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart.[113]

Once the unity of the Umuofians was jeopardised with the western tradition, the white man settled down and began spiritual and military occupation. His incursion in the clan has considerable drawbacks on the old order. This has led to social revolutions, which has characterised Africa for many centuries, because dissatisfaction and anger of the masses can never allow stability and development of the continent.

In the light of what precedes, the most important challenge today for the African leaders and authorities is to re-allocate the dismembered continent in terms of territory. In this perspective, Ayi Kwei Armah, the Ghanaian scholar on the ashes of the Pan-Africanist ideology advocated by his compatriot Kwame Nkrumah, the former president of Ghana, vehicles with strength in his fictional works the indispensability to bridge the past of the continent to the present in order to build its future. It is rightly in this respect that Armah, the Ghanaian scholar has decided to conduct study on the past of Africa, for he knows that without the past the building of the present is workably impossible. For this reason he began in-depth reading of the ancient Egyptian literature in order to find out the most general life experience and the most significant technological features. In effect, the scholars who achieved in the antiquity what is now called the ancient Egyptian literature were not primarily

[113] Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (Heinemann : Ibadan, 1958), pp.124-125.

interested in literature per se. Even though they were not blind to literary productions, they thought of themselves as participants in a more rewarding process, the maintenance of vital connections between parts of a universe in which connection meant life and disconnection death. It is then the responsibility of our leaders to take options to direct us to the past heritage and compel us to keep memory and manage its flow into the future. This accounts for the reason why Armah writes about the past life experience of the human being:

> The community of souls traversing time was known to have inhabited visible spaces while alive. They drew sustenance from, and bestowed affection on, the landscape, waterways, vegetation and other living things. Their connections were not simply with other human members but also with the natural environment, and with the cosmos as the dwelling place of the departed and unborn souls. This outlook is common to African society everywhere.[114]

Armah's research on the life of ancient Egyptian people proved that the past is engorged with testimonies whose connectedness to the present will cement the beliefs of the contemporary Africa. This connection of the past to the present is a determining factor for the development of the continent. So, the remembrance of the past in the present will help the living people to follow the steps of those who had gone before and permit to perpetuate their deeds that are central to the development of the contemporary Africa. In the following excerpt, the scholar's results inform us about the sorrow, obsession of death; the happiness, affections, joys and entertainments expressed through monuments:

> It is possible, from looking at the surfaces of ancient Egyptian culture, to conclude that death was its dominant obsession. After all, the most spectacular monuments of the pharaonic era were mortuary buildings, funeral cities and pyramids. But this would be a misinterpretation of the message these monuments were intended to convey. They were created to bear testimony to the importance of the connections between the visible realities of here and now and the invisible universe of connected times and places. This concern with connections is constant motif in all autonomous African culture. It comes from an ethos that says death cannot be the end; that beyond death remains connection, between those here now, those who were once here but are now elsewhere, and those who, though not yet here, are destined to come someday.

[114] Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Eloquence of the Scribes. (Per* Ankh: Popenguine, West Africa. 2006), p. 195.

> Africa's tombs testify to the death of bodies, but their contents speak of the immanence of the souls. Bodies may connect visibly in the here and now; souls are connectors across the present with past and future time.[115]

In effect, the mortuary building, funeral cities and pyramids that the narrator mentions in the precedent citation is our past. They embody our whole being. Under the compulsory to embrace destruction calling itself creativity, tyranny nicknamed democracy, and robbery decked out as free trade, Africans have been invited to discard such visions of our own as worthless, and to embrace the salvation presented by the enslavers. Our shattered universe lies underfoot, as we adjust to the rhythms far from the call to connection. In this respect, the voice of Africa as heard in the rituals of connection and remembrance has long been silenced in our public places. Fortunately, in this mess, an isolated poet, Birago Diop, from some private place raised his voice to remember what might yet live and whispered words of remembrance from the buried continental soul. Now listen to Birago Diop, the twentieth-century West African poet, uttering this vision of connection older than the pyramids, as old as African humanity:

> The dead never did go:
> They are in the glimmering shadow
> and the darkening shade.
> The dead are not underground;
> They are in trembling tree,
> the groaning wood;
> in flowing water
> as in still waters.
> They are in hut and in the crowd:
> The dead are not extinct[116].

In this poetic extract borrowed by Ayi Kwei Armah from the Malian poet lies all the necessity to be in permanent communion with the departed souls and assure the transmission of African cultural values.

[115] Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Eloquence of the Scribes.(* Per Ankh: Popenguine, West Africa. 2006), p. 195-6
[116] Ibid, p. 198.

As Professor Komla Messan Nubukpo said, in an interview I had with him on 16th February 2012, "the past is a permanent present no one can part from his past without destroying his or her spiritual being."[117] i.e. the past is at core of the life of the existence. What a human being can do without referring to the past? Honestly, I think impossible to live in the oblivion of one's heritage. The knowledge of the past permits to avoid making the same mistakes and repeating them in the present, because Armah writes:

"I say a society that holds its own history in contempt is dead in the heart and sick in the brain"(KMT p. 184) From this perspective, it will be very dangerous to feel ashamed of one's history no matter what it bears as negative for the existence of the human beings. By connecting the past to the present to construct the future the Africans must understand that their ancestors had been victim of exploitation, fraud, violence, slave trade, migration and colonisation. In this respect, the writer serves of historical events to denounce the injustice to which Africa was submitted:

> Why did we move? Look around you even today and the answer will stare back at you all over this land. Among us traditionalists, the reasons for migration are no secret: the betrayal of watchers and thinkers, the turning of the strong-armed into goods, the strong-minded into priests, the people into ignorant believers; the accumulation of treasure; the built on deceit, the easy life of the rulers, the pomp and show of the hangers-on sharpening the envy of needy foreigners; the transformation of needy foreigners into armed invaders; the scattering of the disarmed people in the terrible harshness of life under alien rulers seeing people only as tools for their wealth and comfort. (KMT p. 191)

All that social perversion and inhuman behaviour had stopped the process of the construction of the continent. For this reason the consequent and visionary Africans will never accept any kind of foreign intervention on their continent and will strongly stand ground against every form of exploitation. It is only at this cost that the Africans will overcome the ghost of fatality which is the underdevelopment. Once the target is attained, the development of the continent will easily be achieved. In the coming subsection, I will deal with the myths

[117] Komla Messan Nubukpo, 'Conversation', Hotel de la Haie Vive, 16th February, 2012.

in Armah's literary works and show their importance for the remaking the destroyed continent.

7.3 Myths in Armah's Works

The myth has been put the use that needs special attention in Amah's creative works. One can talk about its socio-political function as a whole. The critic Eric Dardel points to the connectedness between the myth and the rationale that sustains societal and individual's growth in these terms: "The mythic does not exclude the rational, it does not precede it in time, it does not entirely disappear before its advance. It co-exists with it, and is complementary to it." [118] In some Armah's literary productions, there is a steady mention of the elements of myth that need discussing in this section. Myth is, according to, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, "a story that originated in ancient times, especially one concerning the early history of a people or explaining natural events…"[119] From a more literary point of view "myths are symbolic tales of distant past (often primordial times) that concern cosmogony and cosmology (the origin and nature of the universe), may be connected to belief systems or rituals, and may serve to direct social action and values."[120] Furthermore, Robert O'Connell gives a working definition to myths "myths are stories told by people about people: where they come from, how they handle major disasters, how they cope with what they must and how everything will end. If that isn't everything what else is there?"[121] The question that stands in this quotation is a rethorical question that emphasizes the assets of myth in terms of the contribution to the appreciation of human life and the environment in which people live. Related to this contention is Wade W. Nobbles' critical pronouncement that:

---

[118] Eric Dardel, "The Myth" (225-243) in Alan Dundes ed. *Sacred Narrative: Readings in the Theory of Myth* (University of California Press: Los Angeles, 1984), p.241.

[119] Jonathan Crowther et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995), P.770.

[120] http://www.faculty.de.gcsu.edu/~mmagouli/defmyth.htm retrieved on May 11th 2012.

[121] http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/mythology/f/111408WhatsMyth.htm retrieved on May 11th 2012.

> Myth can be considered a form of reasoning and record keeping by providing an implicit guide for bringing about the fulfilment of the truth it proclaims. It connects the invisible order to the visible order. Myth is therefore the form in which the experience of a people has become conscious and as such should be viewed as a carefully constructed symbolic cloak for their abstract thought.[122]

The thing worth addressing from this quotation is that the myth is the source from which human beings construct the rationality that underpins the whole existence. In effect, myth gives birth to the human vision of the world and documents the different ways in which to hold onto it. The myth is a tool that sheds light on the ancient African thought and perpetuates a philosophy into the contemporary life scenes. In that sense, one can say that myth can generate and sustain the development of Africa.

Given the belief that myths remain value-laden discourses that explain much about human nature, Armah made intensive use of them to explicate the sorrow and the environment of African people. The title given to his first novel *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* is impacted by the mythical appellation of Osiris: 'The beautiful One' in ancient Egyptian myth of, at least, five thousand years old. For professional Egyptologists "it's a praise name for a central figure in ancient Egyptian culture, the dismembered and remembered Osiris, [which is] a sorrowful reminder of our human vulnerability to division, fragmentation, and degeneration, and at the same time a symbol of our equally human capacity for unity, cooperative action, and creative regeneration."[123]

In effect, in hieroglyphic transliteration, the expression relates to *Wn Nefer* which means beauty, a beauty more profound than what the eye can see. The parabolic *Wn Nefer* refers to the search of the ideal and the improvement of the social life. Referring to the novel *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, 'The Beautyful Ones' are common people who are working for social justice, integrity, equity and honesty in their community: "It is just such

[122] Wade W. Nobles, *African Psychology Towards Its Reclamation, Reascension & Revitalisation* (A Black Family Institute Publication: California and Oakland 1986), p. 39.
[123] Ayi Kwei Armah, Remembering the Dismembered Continent (Per Annk: Popenguine, 2010) p. 267.

persons —individuals who live entirely ordinary lives, but whose integrity makes them wish they could live in a society functioning along honest, just lines…"[124] Moreover, the beautiful ones in the novel are the railwayman, who give the novel its core character and who refuse to involve in the practice of corruption that becomes 'a national game', his friend, teacher, and Maanan, the woman who falls in loves with a charismatic political leader, only to watch him disappear into the entrails of the colonial labyrinth of injustice. So, the mythical title of Armah's first novel conveys the disenchantment and disappointment of the African people after the acquisition of the independence. It is then very crucial for the researcher to look for the role that myths play in the transformation of the continent.

While reading Armah's recent works, it clearly appears that he has great affection for the myths, for they help to shape life styles in our communities and establish principles which will guide the societies. In the way Armah uses the myths, this literary genre traces the path to the backgrounds for the new generations. Where can we find our myths? "Our myths, like our dead are all around us. If we don't see or hear them, it is because the paths leading to them, to paraphrase Wole, are overgrown poisonous weeds."[125]

As Africans we need to undertake research that will clear the paths to knowledge of best and buried souls. That is the reason why Armah has very soon conducted research work in the field that has been greatly influenced by the mythical works carried out by Wole Soyinka in order to restore the African myths for the reconstruction of the continent. So through Soyinka's *Myth, literature and the African World*, it is obvious that the author of *The Eloquence of the Scribes* has scanned the myths of the Yoruba world. Soyinka says "Myths arise from man's attempt to externalise and communicate his inner intuition."[126] In the book, Soyinka reconstructs the mythic voyage that is fundamental to the creative artistic and scientific inspiration. Soyinka places the deity Ogun in the centre of the area of the psychic

[124] Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Eloquence of the Scribe* (Per Annk: Popenguine, 2006) p. 258.
[125] Ibid, Pp. 269-70.
[126] Wole Soyinka, *Myth, Literature and the African World* (Cambridge, 1976), p. 3

experience that he terms the Fourth Stage. As a matter of fact, why the fourth? Researchers, scholars and students of African cosmogony recognize three usual dimensions of cyclic times: past, present and future. "Commonly recognized in most African metaphysics are the three worlds…the world of the ancestors, the living and the unborn."[127] Referring to these three worlds, the sons of the continent can identify the obscure zones where lie the obstacles linked to the development of the continent. After circumcising these evils, the Africans shall have to work to create, invent, and innovate in order to reconstruct the fragmented minds and thoughts of the Africans. But above these three stages, Soyinka explains that there lies the Fourth Stage, "less understood or explored than the first three..., the dark continuum of transition where occurs the inter-transmutation of essence ideal and materiality."[128] Within that instance of reality only the incurably curious feel termed to venture, driven by a need to know what is not yet known, to mix that knowledge with the prevailing realities, and thus to create tomorrow what did not, could not exist yesterday. Actually, it appears like the space of the innovative and creative souls, the category of persons who live to redefine new frames for life, the creative thinkers, artists, and scientists. Therefore, attainment of this opaque instance in the consciousness of the African becomes a *sine qua non* contract to fulfil in the process of the modernisation of the scattered continent. With details, myths in the African context teach us what should be avoided in our past life and what should be safeguarded in order to build the current existence and that one ahead. So, in the following quotation Armah, focusing on the African mythology, points out that myths are central to African development:

> Our myths tell us that if we were Africans and not citizens of a former European colony called, we would not sell our African uranium to Europeans at prices dictated by themselves. If we were Africans we would sell no raw resources at all. Knowing that resources are the mothers of industries, the grandmothers of job, and the great-grandmothers of prosperity, we would want prosperity, jobs, and industries here at home where we live, so that our younger generations could have the choice of living, working and prospering here at

[127] Wole Soyinka, opcit, p.26.
[128] *Idem, p.26.*

> home with us, instead of being condemned to go abroad, chasing the resources we foolishly sell, in a vain attempt to catch a little bit of the wealth we throw. If we were Africans, our young could travel to other countries as tourists after a year of a profitable work at home, instead of stowing away in a suicidal search for jobs abroad. If we were Africans, we would begin our thinking about resources with the knowledge that they belong to the dead, the living and the unborn, not to the few living today alone; otherwise we would not have come to find them. If the living had given themselves the right to sell land, we would have been born landless. Had the living before us forgotten that the unborn too have a right to live among green plants, would have been born on land turned to sand because all our timber would have been cut down and sold to enrich the living for one myopic generation and after that to impoverish all future generations. If we were able to think out of a real African consciousness, we would not listen to anyone coming to tell us to sell our gold and diamonds and petroleum and uranium and cobalt and coltan and timber now to make a few million dollars for dictators and pimps. Instead, we keep all our resources, tapping them a tiny bit per generation, and using what we take to create industries capable of turning out products of our skill and intelligence, enough to earn us over generations million times more prosperity than any short-term deal ever brought us. If we were Africans we would know what not to sell, beginning with people, land, water, air, sun.[129]

Reading and analysing this long quotation it obviously appears that myths offer the path to follow that serves as the remedy to the underdevelopment. The salvation to development of the continent resides in our African mythic knowledge. As Ayi Kwei Armah states in the foregoing excerpt the knowledge of the myths is ineluctably a way to lead to the development. In the myths the human beings are supposed to discover the vital values that found the hopes for the regeneration of the continent. In other words, they teach and inculcate us the communal beliefs and values taught through initiation that constitute the veritable essence which leads to reconstruction and the transformation of the African societies. That is the reason why Armah calls on every African to conduct a research work on the African myth. In *Osiris Rising*, the symbol of ankh means in African myth life. In-depth research, the symbol itself was a proof of the private initiatives performed by the secret societies within the African communities in the time of our forefathers. This is how Tete, the historian character in the novel, explained its meaning that results in disillusioning His Excellency Ras Jomo Cinque, an African American seeking for a supposed royal privileges and honour born by the half of

[129] Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Eloquence of the Scribe* (Per Annk: Popenguine, 2006) p. 259-61.

the symbol of ankh. But what interests us and is important for our research is the social function that the symbol had for the past, present and future generations. In effect, the symbol of ankh hints at the insights of group and pair works that is capital to the development of the continent. One comes across Tete's destabilizing explanation:

> 'It started as a group committed to our people and afraid for us. Not for our physical survival, but for our values. Not all our values; some of the ways we live are not worth saving. The friendship of the ankh wanted to preserve only the best of our values. We had a civilization. It was prosperous then, but these far seers saw it falling apart, our people degenerating from builders to consumers of gifts they no longer knew how to create, things handed down by more vigorous ancestors. The ancestors were makers, creators. The descendants were finders and consumers.
> 'The seers saw disasters ahead if we did not fill the gulf separating creative ancestors and hedonist descendants with working values, if we divorced consumption from production. They saw a future in which, lacking foresight, generations of our people would experience all change as disaster. Abundant rains would become destructive floods because of minds grown too indolent to calculate the coming of seasons and rains. A dearth of rains would cause devastating droughts because minds grown too lazy to calculate the need to store water in its abundant time, or to tap water in its hiding place, for use against droughts yet ahead.
> 'It was to work against such continuous disasters that the companionship of the ankh was born: an ellipse of life linking future with past through intelligent work in the present. This', Tete's voice rose slightly, 'was no royal society. There were farmers and princes and potters in it, there were priests and scribes in it. (O.R pp.260-2)

From the foregoing citation the narrator informs about the importance of the myths in the reconstruction of the continent. The myths selected here address the African youth drawing its consciousness on what it should do and what it should not do as regards the development of Africa.

Altogether, regarding this excerpt one can assert that myths are among the means used to attain development of the African continent. This impression stands as Armah's personal myths that associated with his auto-biography.

Chapter Eight: Armah's Personal Commitment to the Reconstruction of Africa

8.1 The Writer's Early Education as Springboard to Development

It is very important in this section to deal with Armah's education and its impacts on the reconstruction of the dismembered continent. The importance attached to education hints at the shaping of the individual's personality. Education refers to the process of learning and acquiring information or knowledge based on two main types of learning: formal and informal. During his schooling, Armah received a special treatment from his relatives which transpires in his fiction. He gives an account of how his aunt Mamie Dena offered him better moral and material conditions in order to pass his examination. Here is how Armah reveals his life story through *The Eloquence of the Scribes* a memoir on the sources and resources of African literature:

> The day I went to take the common entrance examination that would determine whether I would make it into Achimota School, I was treated like a special being. A kind aunt Mamie Dena woke up early to cook jolof rice, and put it into a new enamel bowl for me to take in a bag, with my pencil, eraser, pen, ink, ruler and blotter. Though she had not had much schooling, she gave me excellent advice about taking care to answer every question correctly, and eating well during the lunch break, to give my mind strength for the remainder of the day. Like other family member she wished me good luck, and her voice stayed as I made my way to the examination center[130].

In the quotation above the writer touches upon the African solidarity. One of the values, whichare essential to African people regarding sustained development, is the communal life. That is the reason why in the excerpt it is not Armah's mother who took care of him on the eve of the examination but his aunt. This means that in Africa one does not live all by oneself as the social custom ineluctably pave his way to the development of the continent.

[130] Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Eloquence of the Scribe* (Per Annk: Popenguine, 2006) p.30.

This parental preparation sends the readers back to Armah's previous novel *KMT: in the house of life* in which Lema Biko and Lindela, the round characters, had received a similar preparation from one of their relatives. The two protagonists were trained by their mentor Wennefer who very soon awoke their consciousness to life and sharpened their desire or knowledge:

> I too have found the method useful to this day. One of the reason I lost my fear of languages so early was the help Wennefer gave us. It still amazes me that he turned vocabulary drill, a learning process that would seem inherently dull, into enjoyable game. In a matter of weeks Biko and I knew several hundred latin words, and Wennefer moved from words to phrases. One evening Biko's father walked in and found us at play, testing each other's memory with latin words. He found it funny. Laughing, he asked Wennefer: 'How useful is this, teaching little children latin when they have no exams to sit?' 'Knowledge is just for passing exams' Wennefer said. […] 'Languages are the keys for the universe, don't you see? They open the doors for the mind to move through. We learn about places even if we can't go there yet. We can learn to do useful things if we can read how, in whatever languages. (KMT p.28-29)

Wennefer's venture on these two young men helps them a lot for their admission to the highest and most prestigious Whitecastle School where like Armah at Achimota, they devoted themselves to the acquisition of useful knowledge which is centred on acquaintance of self and hard working. Together with Djiely Hor, Astw Konate, Sipha Jengo; Lindela constituted a research team in order to carry out a historical investigation in the field of Afrocentricity. The collection, analysis and interpretation of the historical data substantiate the relief Armah's strategy of historigraphical approach. Through this methodological approach the writer has recreated the past of a whole and regenerated its possibility to have built a rich and glorious past. The below passage shows the Ghanaian scholar's ability to reinvent the ancestor's deeds in the development of writing skills:

> My friend Meri was delighted to discover that the writing she had heard of was the making of these friends. We learned it together. Meri developed a beautiful hand. Sometimes friends asked her to write something out for them to keep as a decoration. I did not tire of watching members at this exercise of writing. Some used their knowledge for setting down their thoughts, some for their observations. Some wrote to record the movement of a star, some to register the appearance and the motion of the moon. Some wrote down what they saw

> of the behavior of the animals of the ground, those above and those under. Some looked at the flight of the birds, and some studied the behavior of the people. I learned the method of writing, and grew skilled in the transmission of messages. (KMT p. 235-7)

Through this historical creative narrative Armah has given the evidence to the whole world that, contrary to the white man's assumption that the Black continent had no past, no history Africa is a civilised continent. Consequently, one can say that in the historical narrative, the writer of *KMT* has acquired the knowledge and the realities of Africa. This great historical venture carried out on Africa gave him irrefutable arguments to reduce to silence critics like Achebe and Larson who believed that Armah is alienated. In fact, unlike Armah, Achebe very little knowledge of the pharaonic civilisation developed by the Black Africans in the ancient Egypt. Through efforts of recreation of the past, Armah has inventively linked the present and the distant future of the contemporary African community. The innovative manipulation of a historiographical methodology confers on him the status of a writer of greater dimension.

Owing to his mother's ambition and determination, Armah went to the highest schooling institution located at Achimota in Gold Coast. For his mother, good schooling will destine Armah to assured and brilliant future. That is the reason why she gathered all her means to prepare her son to pass the admission to Achimota where he had been distinguished as a smart, hard working and excellent student. There he had become conscious very soon of what awaited him. Initially, Armah was fascinated by the reading of literature but he deviated from this noble ambition and shifted to the field of social studies because he wanted to understand some world events that have greatly affected his whole being. Indeed, when he was growing up into adulthood he was traumatised by the cruel assassination of Patrice Lumumba, one of the most charismatic and greatest sons of Africa. In the below excerpt Armah expresses his dissatisfaction with a creative literature or its study outside social concerns:

> I turned away from a literature that was entirely silent about Africa when I was an undergraduate. […] I saw that if I continued to study literature as taught in the academy, I was unlikely to reach an intelligent understanding of the world. It was at this time that an even happened that brought my need to understand the world order into the excruciatingly sharp focus. Lumumba, the most attractive political figure in Africa at the time, a man whose charisma depended wholly on his ability to analyze the African realities rationally and to state his vision with courage and hop for the future, was assassinated on orders from the secret services of the USA, Britain, Belgium and France.[…] To get a clearer understanding of an increasingly bewildering world, I switched my undergraduate major to a new multi-disciplinary major, Social Studies, within which my chosen focus was the process of industrialization. As my understanding of global social realities grew, my interest in literature as a consumer activity faded, though I sought out and took creative writing courses.[131]

For Armah, whether formal or traditional education is a key factor for the liberation of the continent. In *Two Thousand Seasons,* Armah gives the proof of the importance of the traditional education received by the twenty young initiated through initiation ceremony. As a matter of fact, the twenty young men after their successful initiation refused to do king Koranche's will. Thus, to punish them, the latter schemed with the white destroyers and sold them into slavery. But to release themselves from the white's prison they made use of signs, gestures and the common language they had learnt during the initiation. This stands the beginning of Armah's commitment to Africa's fate.

Searching to model him in the foreign education, Armah's mother had very soon separated her son from his ancestral realities. However, after his formal education the writer has invested himself in learning and acquiring the Ancient Egyptian Civilization through which he trained himself to hieroglyphs by decoding the signs applying the hermeneutic theory. With the help of the scribes and the griots he learnt how to write and read hieroglyphs. This personal training in the field is a prelude to the writing of *KMT* in which Armah has achieved his vision of reconstruction of multi-millennial history of the African community. The thorny educational training that Armah went through enables him to assert with strong

[131] Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Eloquence of the Scribe* (Per Annk: Popenguine, 2006) p. 10-1.

conviction that Africa had developed the first civilisation in the world. In this perspective of the restoration of the past of the continent, it appears as the surest road to development. To close this section one can say that Armah's education is a great chance to the reconstruction of the bruised and dismembered Africa. In the coming section I will try to show whether Armah's literary message is pessimism or optimism; how useful his message is for the development of the continent.

8.2 Is Ayi Kwei Armah's Literary Message, Pessimism or Optimism?

To understand the content of this section well, it becomes imperative to clarify the significance of pessimism and optimism. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* refers to pessimism as "the tendency to be sad and anxious and to believe that the worst will happen"[132] whereas it defines optimism as "the tendency to expect the best in all things; confidence in the success of a course of action." [133] In this regard, Ataféi Pewissi assimilates "the issue of healing to the concept of optimism and indicates that optimism heals the stress that results from both physical and mental defrormity."[134] From this excerpt it clearly appears, in the context of my study that optimism is one remedy among many others that can roll far back the limits of the evils which cripple the reconstruction of the new African nations. Armah has effectively begun his literary career at the morrow of the independence of the African nations a period marked by a great expectation that translated the masses' confidence in the rulers. Unfortunately, the rulers had betrayed the masses and, in the process, lost that confidence. At that time, against all odds, Armah made his preoccupation the thorny issues that hindered the evolution of the continent. That is the reason why he depicted the

[132] Jonathan Crowther et al ed, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 1995), p. 865
[133] *Ibid., p. 814.*
[134] Ataféi Pewissi, "Ayi Kwei Armah and the Isuue of Healing: A Study in The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born (1968), Two Thousdand Seasons (1973), The Healers (1995) in *Mosaique: Revue Interaffricaine de Philosophioe, Litterature et Sciences Humaines* , Revue Semestrielle N° 008 éditée par ISPSH DonBosco de Lomé, Décembre 2008, p.70.

independent Ghana of Nkrumah with the cruellest words to show that there was no hope for development when the elites took over the ruling of their countries.The idea of realism suggested through the portrayal of the African societies and their challenges prompted Augustin Ainamon's pronouncement that literature is "fille de la society"[135] Doubtlessly, Armah's attempt to unveil these social hurdles is a key process to reconstructing Africa. It also appears from the expectation that her development is not a deadlock. Thus, because of his critical stance vis-à-vis the African intelligentsia to achieve insignificant progression after the accession to national sovereignty, there has been a tendency to contrast the supposed authorial virtuosity with the subject of *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. This novel is inaccurately summed up as the pervasive negativity of the human condition in Africa. In fact, the human condition at that time was so sorrowful and cruel that the writer had no choice else than to offer us that dramatic image of the continent. In his literary descriptive technique, he showed that the life of the ordinary people did not change after the colonizers had gone away. The new authorities of the independent countries had schemed with the colonial governors to set up the seat of power in the slaveraiders' castle enjoying a grandiloquent life and ignoring the daily plight of the masses. "For in the real historical situation on the ground, the core betrayal came in a development gravid with symbolic implications: the leader's acceptance of the colonial governor's suggestion that he move into the slaveraiders' castle as his new seat of popular power."[136] These leaders have betrayed the populations who have trusted them. In his first novel Armah is not describing pessimistic feelings but is rather awakening the consciousness of the common people. Unfortunately, some critics' lack of good sense of analysis induces them to interpret laconically Armah's first novel. Here is the observation Neil Lazarus makes of the lacunae:

[135] Texte présenté aux Journées Scientifiques De la Faculté des Lettres, Arts et Sciences Humaines des 8, 9 et 10 janvier 1997 à l'Université Nationale du Bénin et Le Poète dans la nation, in *Revue du Groupe d'Études Linguistiques et Littéraires, GELL*, Langues et Littérature, Université Gaston Berger de Saint Louis, Sénégal, N° 8, janvier 2004 pp. 11-2.

[136] Ayi Kwei Armh, *Remembering the Dismembered Continent: Seedtime essays*, (Per Ankh: Popenguine, Senegal, 2010), p.271.

> Critics of the novels have not found it easy to describe this relationship between affirmative vision and degraded reality. At the center of their difficulties, it seems, has been an inability to reconcile the two dimensions. Contemplating the bleakness of the material universe that the novel postulates, many commentators have struggled in vain to retain their grasp on the work's vision of regeneration. They have been led to argue either that the novel's pessimism is absolute, or that its affirmatory aspect is abstract and utopian. Some critics have even expressed the view that the novel is ultimately unbalanced.[137]

As a writer he has the heavy responsibilitry to inform the masses about the leaders' deeds and denounce their bad behaviours. The allegorical use of decay, rot and corruption to typify the prevailing social and political conditions after the independence of the new African nations did not mean that the writer of *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* is pessimistic but as a committed writer he seizes his quill to highlight the disenchantment and disillusionment of the people in his creative writings. By doing so some critics believed that Armah was an anti-African writer or a writer exoteric to the African realities. The below quotation from *Remembering the Dismembered Continent* comes as a supportive insight to critics with narrow understanding of Armah's novels. Achebe as reported leveled criticism at the book in these terms:

> A few reactions to the book, however, have been bluntly hostile, the most extreme example being the attack Chinua Achebe, the Igbo novelist, launched against the book and its author shortly after its publication. Speaking at Harvard, at a time when I was, I think, in Mtwara, near the Tanzanian border with Mozambique, Achebe built his condemnatory argument around an astonishing claim: he had discovered a quote 'somewhere' in which I, Armah, said I was not an African writer. For good measure, he implied that I'd said so in an effort to please Western audiences.[138]

In fact, though some critics think that Armah is an alienated writer completely away from the African realities, he is still a writer of a great dimension because the worry he addresses in his works is also at the core of Nkrumah's regime. As a matter of fact, writing in

[137] Neil Lazarus, "The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born: Pessimism of the Intellect, Optimism of the Will" (157-187) in Derek Wright ed. *Critical Perspectives on Ayi Kwei Armah* (Three Continents Press 1992), pp.157-8.
[138] Ayi Kwei Armah, *Remembering the Dismembered Continent (Per Ankh: Popenguine, 2010)* p. 275.

the years leading to independence, the charismatic political leader Kwame Nkrumah put into a nutshell the social situation that gave *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* its theme:

> I was not blind to the possibility of bribery and corruption in the country among both Europeans and Africans. Things had moved fast, the feeling of power was a new thing; the desire to possess cars, houses and other commodities that were regarded as necessities by the European population in the country, was not unnatural in people who were suddenly made to feel that they were being prepared to take over from those Europeans; and money, the wherewithal to obtain these luxuries, was tempting.[139]

It is my contention that what Nkrumah was not aware of but Ayi Kwei Armah has seen and denounced was that Africa's political leadership had decided to adopt the European colonial, economic and social pattern instead of inventing an African pattern. This blind and thoughtless choice on behalf of the leaders has devastating long-term effects on the reconstruction of the African societies.

Despites all these evils that marred the Ghanaian society in particular and the African continent in general, Armah still has some glimmer of the future of the continent. In *Fragments,* though he described a society culturally to drift, where everybody runs after the material wherewithal, he presents Naana, Baako's grandmother, with the desire to maintain the perpetuation of some African cultural values. The vivid proof is seen through the endeavours of the characters of the book to acquire material wealth from the West. On the one hand, Efua, Kwesi, Araba, Brempong epitomise the cultural decadence in the sense that all for them is the search of the materialistic civilisation, on the other hand Naana's fight paves the way to optimism that offers a great chance for the rebuilding of the continent.

This optimistic insight is also expressed in *The Healers* where the writer believes that the sickness of the continent will find its cure within the continent. In other words, the author still believes in the possibility of regenerating the lost values. As for the characters such as the man, Teacher and Maanan in *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, though, the expected

[139] Ayi Kwei Armah, *Remembering the Dismembered Continent (Per Ankh: Popenguine, 2010)* 270-1.

birth of a new, innovation, egalitarian society in Africa marked formerly by the growth of such nationalist leaders Like Kwame Nkrumah had, for some reason, been aborted. They have been expecting the betterment of the future. In spite of the great disappointment on behalf of the political rulers the masses continue in believing in the occurrence of the social change. "It is just such persons —individuals who live entirely ordinary lives, but whose integrity makes them wish they could live in a society functioning along honesty, just lines —that this novel puts at its center."[140] Even the word 'yet' in the title of *Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* signals certain idea of optimism though the expected social birth had been postponed and abrogated. In concluding this section one can say that Armah's writings do not create in fact a pessimistic mood through what critics think arouses optimism.

The optimism in Armah's works appears clearly through the permanent search for beauty that is to say to the ceaseless search for the ideal, which will offer the possibility of the reconstruction of the continent. Here, "the beautiful that is not yet born" is the metaphorical use of development. Though Africa is independent she is endeavouring to shape her beauty that is nothing else than better living conditions in brief development. Since life is dynamic, the social conditions must also change according to the life movement any stagnation will sink the continent into the abyss of underdevelopment. In the coming section, I will analyse the literary devices that the writer has used through his works to arouse the people's consciousness.

8.3 Some Use of Literary Devices and Social Consciousness.

When I read Ayi Kwei Armah's works I noticed that the style in which he wrote is not accessible to everybody. That is the reason why his contemporary counterparts attacked him and gave unreasonable opinions on his literary feat. For his beginnings, *The Beautyful Ones*

[140] Ayi Kwei Armah, *Remembering the Dismembered Continent* (Per Annk: Popenguine, 2010), p. 269-70.

Are Not Yet Born Armah has made great use of description so as to attain his revolutionary objectives. So, in the opening paragraph of the novel he depicted the bus that drove the man to his office in such order to show that nothing has truly changed since the years of glory have over covered the Ghanaian people and the Africans in general. "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." (T.B.O.A.N.Y.B p. 1) This exaggerated description of the filth is synonymous with Armah's disappointment after the independences. Altogether, the writer presented an environment where there is dirt, filth, rubbish everywhere. Even the sporadic efforts that the authorities had made to clean the cities and then the country through a successful campaign "Keep Your Country Clean By Keeping Your City Clean" (T.B.O.A.N.Y.B p. 7) did not solve the problem of the bad management of the environment.

> 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 all the thick of brown wrapping from hundred balls of *kenkey*. People did not have to go up to the boxes anymore. From a distance they aimed their rubbish at growing heap, and good amount of juicy offal hit the face and sides of the box before finding a final resting place upon the heap. (T.B.O.A.N.Y.B p.8)

In his use of hyperbole, the writer highlights the incapability of the African ruling classes to find adequate solutions to the current social difficulties that slow down the pace of transformation of the continent. The master of the literary techniques empowers the writer to educate the populations, awake their consciousness to the social shortcomings. However, the excessive use of these devices constitutes also a handicap to the understanding of the message he or she, as a writer, is conveying. That is the reason why, though the message is pertinent and important to the reconstruction work, the ordinary people are unable to decode it. The anonymity of the protagonist of the novel implies that everybody is concerned with the

deadlock that retards the evolution of Ghana on the one hand, and the African continent on the other. It is what, in fact; Achebe did not probably understand when he said, if the protagonist is nameless, it is abnormal that the novel should be set up in Ghana. For him, it was impossible he set up the novel in the African environment, for him it did not deal with the African realities. Furthermore, the pandemic of corruption is denounced through Armah's use of metaphor in the following phrase 'the national game'.

In addition, the use of metaphor becomes intense in *Two Thousand Seasons* with Armah's intelligence, imagination and creativity. Actually, he used a great deal of metaphorical terms such as 'desert', 'spring water', 'predators', 'destroyers' ' askaris' and ' zombi' which confer on him the status of a writer of great dimension. All these words were contextually chosen to caricature the different groups that had invaded or helped some indigenous to keep the continent under domination. So, the predators and destroyers had successively conquered Africa and kept their hegemony over her. As for the concepts of 'desert' and 'spring water' the author connotatively used them to represent both the Western World and the African continent. In the novel, the author blamed the spring water's for flowing to the desert because this flow will bear nothing else than degeneration and death. It appears succinctly that the encounter between Africa and Europe has been catastrophic and chaotic for the black continent. Armah wrote about this encounter in the prologue of *Two Thousand Seasons*. "Springwater flowing to the desert, where you flow there is no regeneration. The desert takes. The desert knows no giving. To the giving water of your flowing it is not in the nature of the desert to return anything but destruction. Springwater flowing to the desert, your future is extinction." (T.T.S p. xi)

Armah gives the proof of his talent when he plotted and offered the readers an epic scene between Isanusi, the visionary, the model for the young initiated, liberator of the Anoa community from the European enslavers and Bofo Koranche's missionary:

> The dance over, the killer bounded towards silent prey, bounded and headlong into the hole awaiting him. […] The killer's body drove itself with brute violence against Isanusi's. Isanusi fell backward in the hole, fell under the killer's massive. This was no simple fall of the vanquished, however. In his fall Isanusi had taken care first to take firm hold of the shoulder straps on the hunter's uniform the killer Bofo wore. Falling, Isanusi also bent his left knee and placed the foot against the killer Bofo's groin. When Isanusi's back touched the ground he pulled hard, once only, on the killer's clothing. In that same motion he pulled his left leg straight and upright. The killer's body sent hurtling with its own speed and that imparted to it by Isanusi, rammed like cannon shot into the hole's stone-studded side. […] Not much blood flowed from the broken killer's body, and even that little flowed from incomprehensible places: the eye, the ear, the anus, but not the killer's mouth, not his nose. We took ropes and brought Isanusi out, and then the killer. Life still remained in that body, but it was life on its road to death. (T.T.S pp. 188-9)

In the above citation Isanusi used the guerrilla tactics to defeat the mercenary Bofo. In this, Armah recalled the war technique that the soldiers from the kingdom of Danxome used to ambush their enemies and kill them. Besides, in order to raid definitively the slave dealers from the stone places and the groves, Isanusi and his group used the hollywoodian Western techniques of film making. This shows that he is not uneducated scholars. He also runs foreign civilisation to convey his message. Armah demonstrates all his talent through the perfect creation of the fictive characters who applied the European war strategy that is to say to 'Phoney War' to revenge themselves. Here is the way the writer presents the scene:

> Isanusi held the gun just as if he were looking for one among us to test the killing power of the weapon on. He pointed the loaded gun at Oko, then at Tomfo, then at Soyinka. The gun moved down the line of us, the rhythm of Isanusi's walk growing more rapid, more impatient. Once, one of the white destroyers made an irritated sound, but immediately after that all of them laughed, waiting for Isanusi to shoot one of us dead. Isanusi passed the middle of our line. When he reached Okai, he brought the gun closer to his body, ready. A sigh, audible with long relief, escaped the white destroyers. Great then was their chagrin when instead of shooting at Okai, Isanusi turned the gun and aimed it for one steady moment only at the lone askaris, and from just three men's length fired at him. The askarsi, surprised, dropped his gun before fell. That same moment each of us raised our guns and drew a first bullet from beneath our ludicrous, magnificent robes. (T.T.S p. 165)

From *Osiris Rising* to his reference book *The Eloquence of the Scribes,* the writer focused on the usage of flashback to recall the glorious past of the continent. The flashback in his recent

works led to a historigraphical approach that allows him to retrace the rich past of the continent. So, in this perspective the return to the origin becomes a preoccupation of great importance. With the application of flashback to his research methodology he recreated the feats of the African people and reconstructed the lost African background. He demonstrated through *KMT: in the house of life* that the Ancient Egypt had been peopled by Black inhabitants with black skin. To do so in his creative narrative, he assigned to Djieli Hor, Astw Konate, Sipha Djengo and Lindela the hard mission of research and the confirmation of the belonging of Egypt to the black continent. Their work proved that the Blacks had developed great civilization in the past and through this the African people were skilled in many domains of life works. Here comes what Lindela found while transcribing the hieroglyphs that contain the memories of the Blacks:

> I did not tire of watching members at this exercise of writing. Some used their knowledge for setting down their thoughts, some for their observations. Some wrote to record the movement of the stars, some to register the appearance and the motion of the moon. Some wrote down what they saw of the behaviour of the animals of the ground, those above and those under. Some looked at the flight of the birds, and some studies the behavior of the people. I learned the method of writing, and grew skilled in the transmission of message. (KMT pp. 235-6)

It follows from the enlightning quotation above that black people in the remote past were skilled in many realms of social life. It is important for the researcher to slide on the terrain of history before understanding the historical events and facts addressed by the writer during his research to restore the Black creativity. This historical approach typifies my application of the New Historicist theory developed by Stephen Greenblatt in 1980s to my dissertation. In the coming section I will address the foundation of the Per Ankh Publication House that is Armah's personal commitment to the process of the development of the continent.

8.4 The Foundation of the Per Ankh Publication House.

Referring to history it clearly shows that the relationship between the tandem Africa and Europe is that of a great deceit. In this fraudulent relation African artistic and literary productions have been exploited for ages under the helmet of European publishing institution: African writer's Series. To stop the bloodletting in the literary realm Armah with the cooperation of some African intellectuals has founded Per Ankh Publication House by 1980s. In the coming excerpt the writer briefly set up the basic steps of foundation. Here is the account he gives to the readers:

> I knew things were getting serious when I invited Ousmane Sembène to be a founding partner and he laughed. Point blank, he told me his opinion, in the manner he has perfected over a long and productive life, he told me his opinion. African intellectuals like me, he said were good at seeking positions in existing institutions, but inept when it came to creating new ones. He would help me set up the cooperative, provided I promised not to ask him to attend meeting after meeting. He put up a quarter of minimum deposit required under the Senegalese law. A business friend, Lamine Guèye, also put up a quarter, I added the remaining half and we founded Per Ankh, the company we prefer to call the African publishing cooperative.[141]

The above excerpt focuses on the importance of the unity for the development of the continent. In fact, for the transformation of Africa, the sons and daughters of the continent must cooperate and work in team no matter how their tribes, clans, ethnic group, religion and sex. The witticism 'Africa must unite' must begin at the micro-level in the way the Ghanaian writer has started. I want to paraphrase Kofi Ayindoho who during the three day-farewell seminars held in the venue of the Kwame Nkrumah's Institute of African Studies, believed strongly that no one legged man can stand on the bridge and no lame man can lift a pot full of water to the head. What the Ghanaian poet is conveying as a message through the paraphrase is the group or team work. As an African saying goes 'United we stand, divided fall'. To attain the stage of development it is imperative that Africans gather their creative forces and implement their plans and thoughts.

[141] Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Eloquence of the Scribe* (Per Annk: Popenguine, 2006) p. 298.

After the reading of *The Eloquence of the Scribes*, I can assert that the existence of Per Ankh Publication House is in the normal order of things, a good African answer to the irremovable and unshakable Heinemann Publication House. So, the reason behind this creation is inscribed in the perspective that the African literary and artistic works will be run and published by African Publishing Institution and the spinoff profits will help boost the development of the continent. Therefore, Per Ankh Publication House becomes the competitor of Heinemann. By doing so, Armah has broken the pattern that is to say the colonial status quo within which Africa has been much exploited for decades concerning her literary productions. In the coming subchapter I will address the liberation of the continent as the *sine qua non* condition to the development of Africa.

8.5 The Fight for the Overall Liberation of the Continent

Armah's whole life work can be summed up to the struggle for the liberation of the black continent. At first, he wanted to join the ongoing revolutionary movements in Angola and from there he intended to participate into the liberation of the Republic of South Africa. In the following quotation, the intellectual fighter has reported to his audience the unsuccessful attempt he experienced in *The Eloquence of the Scribes*:

> I had sought to work with the revolutionaries, all of whom belonged to some political movements that had sent them. When I was asked who or which movements had sent me, I told them the truth: No one sent me. I arrived traveling on my own, with just a little money. Why had I come? Because I was an African Conscious that our continent was in a critical situation, I wanted to contribute to the solution of our problem, and wished to do so as part of the revolutionary movements my interrogators belonged to. But the fact that I had come on my own, following my own conscience getting information from a wide array of sources, was a serious problem. Was I running away from Harvard? A frequent question was whether the academic challenge of Harvard had been too daunting. Had I failed in my studies? No, quite the contrary. I had found my studies enjoyable and useful. But I thought the future of African society more important than a personal career. My answers were supposed to clarify the issues: all they did was to deepen doubts.[142]

[142] Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Eloquence of the Scribe* (Per Annk: Popenguine, 2006) p.107-8.

The above quotation corroborates the fact that Armah did not just think of liberating only his own country but the whole Africa. Unfortunately, he failed in his project because of lack of confidence, for the revolutionaries did not trust the intellectuals, academics and the bourgeois. His logic is to break the pattern, the link with the colonial *status quo*. It is only at this cost that the continent could find its way toward its modernization. This vision is perfectly planted in the dynamics of the pan African movement founded by Kwame Nkrumah and his African counterparts, the former Ghanaian élite who became later on president of the Republic of Ghana. After the failure of his solitary engagement into the revolutionary movements, Armah resorted to literary production, a field where he thought he could commit himself to the intellectual liberation of the continent. Indeed, most of his novels deal with the liberation of the continent. One uncovers this fictional liberation through reading *Two Thousand Seasons.* In this novel, Armah has organized the full emancipation of the Anoa, victim of Slave Trade schemed by the white slavers, the kings, the caretakers and the chiefs etc…, against the population of Anoa specially the youth. He made has the inventory of fixtures, identified the actors of such an awful and cruel activity against humanity and has found the way to uproot and chase out the destroyers and their accomplices:

> Their news was this: sold into slavery, they had broken away on the journey to the sea. They knew there was no way for them back home. For seasons they had lived their hard, suspicious life here, keeping far from the coastward roads to the rising, the roads used by slavers, predators and by chiefs. Their names? Kissa was the girl. The men were Tete, Mpenzi, Kesho and Irele. They came with us. We had not known them before, but their mind's occupation was the same as ours. Their talk, like ours, was always of terrible treachery of chiefs and leaders, of the greed of the parasites that had pushed us so far into the whiteness of death. Their hope was ours; how to find paths to the uprooting of our betrayers, how to find paths to the destruction of our destroyers: not our specific destroyers, not our individual betrayers alone, but all their kind among our people, all the white destroyers. (T.T.S p.145)

From the foregoing excerpt, the narrator points out that the African authorities in the past turned the youth, the one through its work was supposed to bring about the development of the continent, into slavery. He also addresses the youth's determination and their hope to put

an end to the selling of the African youth and liberate totally their environment and themselves from the month of death. In this vein, the young initiated, surviving from the atrocities of slave trade had started cleaning out the slaveraiders from the stone and grove places under the guidance of Isanusi and Kamuzu. The fight of liberating the stone place was expected to be very hard. But because they had meticulously prepared themselves, the conquest and liberation of the place happened to be less difficult because of warlike tactics and strategies they set up in the stone place in the process of liberation. The writer informs the readers about the situation:

> We had expected the destroyers and their askaris, defenders of the stones place, to make immensely difficult the capture of the stone. Three more of the whites came rushing into the room at the sound shots. They came running as if the very possibility of danger in this place was a stranger to their minds. We sent them hurrying to their soulless ancestors, sent them with their own instruments of death. Seven askaris came next, running even faster. We waited till they saw us, for it was our intention to find out what they would do. They gave us no cause of further hesitation. The sight of their masters lifeless on the stone at our feet filled the askaris' eyes with blood. They hurled themselves against us. Our weapons found their entrails first, all of them. No one else came in after. Carefully we went out ourselves, moving in protected sevens to search the entire place. (T.T.S pp.65-6)

In the light of this quotation, it appears succinctly that the emancipation of the continent passes through its complete liberation. However, some difficulties still hinder this movement toward the victor. It is in fact the lack of engagement and betrayal from some African élites that constitute the hurdles linked to the process of liberation. All these cracks and shortcomings in the methodology within the liberation movement impact seriously the remaking of the continent. For instance, Kamuzu, after the release of the grove and stone place together with Isanusi and the young initiatives, exposed clearly his intention to use his new position, that is to say the power he grabbed from the liberation of the stone place, to renegotiate the treaty of slave trade with the new slave merchants. To persuade his followers, he initiated bilateral relations between himself and the slave dealers, sending them invitations and sharing with them pleasant moments. Finally, he discovered the concept of diplomacy,

which consists in collaborating and cooperating with the former slave dealers and, in the process, boostered him into continuing the inhumane commerce:

> We tried to reason with Kamuzu. We explained it was not power over our people we wanted, but the liberation of all of us from the alien power; that if we content, eager, in fact, to move into the seats of alien control ourselves, then we could not be liberators but traitors, another set of rotten chiefs taking advantage of our own people's immobilization to impose ourselves on them; […] In his new day of power he said he had discovered something we called diplomacy, Kamuzu began to send out invitations to the parasites of Poano and others from nearby to his meals with him. It was these feats he used to begin secret contacts with the whites, with the king Atobra and his courtiers. To him these were beginnings of alliances between one great man of power and other men of power, secret pacts designed in the end to drive us out of the stone place and to keep Kamuzu supreme there, a black copy of the head white destroyers. (T.T.S pp. 171-3)

The substance in this quotation relates to betrayal and the responsibility of the African rulers in the deadlock of underdevelopment of the continent. The narrator also stresses the misconceptions the African rulers have of power. All these germs constitute today the obstacles to the development of African.

For Armah, the liberation is upstream and downstream to the reconstruction of Africa. That is the reason why, though sometimes some members of the cause failed and betrayed, those passionate with liberty continue the fight up to the final victory, a way to the transformation of the African nations. Here, the writer is satirising the behaviour of the African leaders. The message he is conveying is always that 'the beautiful ones are not yet born', for there is no permanent victory over the evil. Everything is changing. In this perspective the builders of the nation must be active. To corroborate the immensity and importance of the ongoing destruction caused by the vast conspiracy against the African humanity, Armah writes "There was more work, unending work against destruction." (T.T.S p. 173)

Altogether, one notices through *Why Are We So Blest?,* that Ghanaian novelist has alluded to the Algerian revolutionary movement that led the country to recovery of freedom in Algeria.

There the Black men wanted to fight against the established current inequality, inequity and injustice and stand for their rights. All this social reality is underscored by the writer to show the necessity of the revolution to reverse the fixed social order that did not promote the development:

> We told Ndugu Pakansa our news. That the white men since they came to our land had done to us everything guests are forbidden to do their hosts. Ndugu Pakansa it was true. That I had been asked to tell him our decision: the days of guests and hosts were over. That a new dance had come. That our people were ready to fight for all the things that had been stolen from them by their pretended guests – the things that can be seen and the things that cannot be seen. Ndugu Pakansa made a noise of agreement. I said it was not his agreement that we had come to seek, that we needed to know if he would fight together with us. (W.A.W.S.B p. 39)

In this quotation, the narrator expresses the necessity of disrupting the tandem guests and hosts that characterizes the relationship between Africans and white men. The achievement of such a feat can be the beginning of the liberation of the continent.

In the process of liberating the continent, Armah always diagnoses the hurdle that is the leadership. The African leaders are too much extrovert, attracted by the European way of life, that they forget the noble mission that is theirs. So, the major political characteristic of African leadership since the liberation movements started on the continent is its inability and unwillingness to connect organically with the African people because it always seeks, first of all, to connect with Europe and Europeans. *Why Are We So Blest?* highlights the incapability of the authorities of the movements of revolution to create a revolutionary movement termed 'Maji Maji' and organise their people within it so as to neutralize the European poison:

> Maji Maji leaders did understand the need to create a means of defense that could operate on two levels: 1. Psychologically, remove the fear of death, i.e., the fear of white people, agents of death. 2. Practically, neutralize the white people's implements and strategies of death. Maji Maji leaders understood that. Their implementation of that understanding was raw, faulty, magical, not practical. That is the fault of an authentic African leadership would correct. But those with access to practical knowledge of the means are conditioned inevitably to lose sight of the aim. The maji is not something existent, waiting to be collected and used. It would be something to be created, antidote to the potent poison of European penetration. But those of us to get into a position to

> find out the composition of the European poison absorb so much of it ourselves; we become completely incapable of creating a real, a workable maji. We are addicted to the poison that kills us. (W.A.W.S.B pp.221-2)

The poison the writer is alluding to here is Western education. In the novel context this education does harm to Africans in the same way poison destroys human organism

In this vein and for Armah, an intellectual renaissance in Africa cannot be generated unless authentic African intellectuals – he prefers calling them at one time: "cultural workers", at some others: "system-makers" – combat the Euro-centric and potentially destructive reflexes that shape and define neo-colonial schools. Instead of being rewarding and liberating, Western education is seen by Armah as institutional machinery that indoctrinates African minds in submission to Western power and blinds the same minds from ever aspiring to a just world order. According to him, without a conscious deconstruction of this institution's festering viruses, there is little hope for Africa's cultural revival to come about. The next step in his epistemic process of liberation involves conscious ground preparation for founding a just organisational social order. Armah here dispenses with the revolutionary alternative as he thinks it not only wasteful and superficial but also suicidal.

The Healers reminds us of the potency and glorious past of the Ashanti Kingdom. In this novel, Armah reinvents the fall of the story of the Ashanty Empire to negotiate the scramble, partitioning and the destruction of the African continent. To him, this calamity can be attributed to the inhumanity of the West. For Africans to benefit from liberation, they must work hard to repair the damage. Also, this novel presages a better future. Through the reading of the novel, one notices that the author once again offers an instance of liberation of African community from the European yoke. The Ashanti Kingdom opposed a bloody and fierce resistance to the West conquest. In its perspective, *The Healers* is revolutionary; it also displays a global or communal African memory or history, and shows a high sense of social mission and strong relationship with the African community. The ordering of the novel in

terms of setting and milieu, shows a kind of historical and chronological trend as far as the unjust behaviours Armah fights against on the continent are concerned. In this novel, Africa becomes the plot, character, theme and the situation, and Armah's novelistic vision is to emancipate the continent from the forces of slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism. According to the writer the future of the continent lies in the hands of its children. No development is possible unless they achieve the thorough liberation of the continent. That is also the reason why Armah in *Osiris Rising* lends his qualities of liberator to the male protagonist of the novel, Asar, who has gone to the south of Africa as an activist to release South Africa from the throes of Apartheid. For this mission of fight for dignity, identity, and reconquest of the lost continent from the hands of the foreigners, one sees Asar very active in the Southern part of the continent. This individualistic commitment will ineluctably lead to the emancipation of the continent. One learns about Asar's activism in South Africa through the dialogue between Netta and Ast.

> And Asar? ' Netta's voice faltered. ' Asar didn't return here after his studies. He went to the liberation wars down to south. I told you. There were rumours. He was dead. No, mad, Missing.' 'Where?' 'What came through was that he'd volunteered to work against white supremacy, some said in Angola. Mozambique. Zimbabwe. Then in South Africa. (O.R p. 76)

The whole lifework of the Ghanaian writer is strongly dominated by the liberation vision. For him, the fact of saying no to the Western injunction is already the starting point of development. Therefore, to attain this noble achievement, Armah is calling for a great gathering of all the African forces to fight the white superiority to death. Today, to break the bond with the West Africa needs a general mobilization from the behalf of her sons and daughters. This will look like what happened from 1962 to the 1990s and the whole continent joined in the same political movement 'ANC': African National Congress to stop the domination and reign of the Apartheid regime in South Africa, which led to the release of the

charismatic freedom fighter Nelson Mandela in the 1990s. That was a signal a better morrow for the whole continent.

On the whole, it appears imperative that the future of the continent lies in the essence of the fight for liberation. When Africa will thoroughly be released from the Western yoke, she will start her effective development. Inevitably, the liberation work involves some difficulties that slow down the rapid process of the liberation. The fighters must not be demotivated, for when a baby begins to walk it very often falls but it does not give up the process of walking. On the contrary, it continues the different steps of the process up to the realisation of a perfect walk. Considering this natural and edifying experience the freedom fighters and the builders of the continent must steadily have to believe in what they are achieving despite the shortcomings so that one day they will attain the final victory crowned by glory, a hope for Africa as a whole. Armah's contribution is crystallised in the awareness raising infused in the reader through advocating social justice, and political responsibility in his fiction. His Marxist writing calls on different classes as well as on the different forces to "humanize each other"[143] for the sake of the society under depiction. This symbolic society bears the characteristics of Africa regard different challenges around.

[143] Komla Messan Nubukpo, " Womanist Discourse And the Future of the Male Tradition *in Modern African Literature in Bridges: An African Journal English Study* No 6, Special Gender, Sexuality and Literature, 1995, pp; 59-66.

Conclusion

The concern of this dissertation has been to show the different narrative strategies put in place by Ayi Kwei Armah to tell the readers that individual readers must commit themselves to the implementation of the truth, justice and equity to generate and sustain Africa's development. The whole work has been divided into three parts and comprises eight chapters. The first part is entitled 'The Obstacles to Africa's Development as Seen in Armah's Novels.' Through this part, I have shed light on the remote factors that cripple the development of the continent. At this level, the first chapter is entiled 'Background to the Africa's development problems' whereby the diagnosis of feudalism, persecution, migration, the responsibility problem of the African leaders and the misuse of the pyramidal structure of the society and the deification of the African leaders as hindrances to development of the African continent is conducted. The second chapter entitled 'Africa's Development Probems in Armah's Novels' deals with slave trade, colonialism, religious and modern obstacles. The evils diagnosed have paved way to the underdevelopment of Africa before the incursion of the foreigners.

In the second part, I have addressed the impediment to post-independence development of Africa. The issue is articulated into three chapters. The first chapter which is 'Literary Articulation of social and economic impediments' deals with the cult of personality, nepotism, corruption and the brain-drain, unbalanced partnership in terms of exchange and the retardation of the industrialistion of Africa in the years after independence. The second chapter has addressed cultural impediments and deals with the issues of loss of identity, colonial languages and their impacts on the continent and the role of the colonial education in the backwardness of the continent. In the third chapter, I have dealt with the political impediments, which discusses the failure of the ideologies and its impacts on the African populations, political instability, dictatorship and war as an indicator of backwardness.

In the last part of this dissertation I have addressed Armah's contribution to development of the African continent.

The first chapter of my research work entitled 'fundamental conditions for development in Armah's novels' covers seven subsections because of its importance to the issue I am dealing with. The notion of development, the concept of "sphere" in the process of the knowledge acquisition, the vision of change, the idea of Africa in transition, and the integration of the continent and the rethinking of the educational system are the key issues that have rendered literature a tool for Africa's development.

Through the last chapter of this part, I have discussed Armah's personal commitment to the reconstruction of the African continent. Here, I have based my reflection on the writer's early education as springboard to development and shown that the Ghanaian novelist's literary message is optimism. In this regard, the literary devices such as metaphors, satires and hyperboles he has used raise social awareness through the connection created with real life. Furthermore, I have addressed the writer's commitment to the foundation of the Per Ankh Publication House and the fight for the overall liberation of the continent. In addition, I have focused on the importance of history to Ayi Kwei Armah as a novelist. This section comprises the return to the past as a way to development and myth in Armah's works.

As it can be seen, this dissertation is a critical analysis of what constitutes the disadvantages and the assets to the development of the continent. The basic causes to the underdevelopment of the continent have been covered through Armah's fictional works with an open door opportunity given to the reader to reconstruct the failing socio-political structures for the development of the continent. Thus, it is clear that feudalism and kingship that constitute the political system should give way to democracy which is a ruling and managing system that offers chances to the Africans to develop. Democracy is a way to

deconstructing political forces that destroy Africa and a means to *reconstructing* the continent through aggregate values.

Armah's fiction has offered me the opportunity to understand how the historical plagues like slave trade and colonialism destroyed the continent through the deportation of its labour forces to a new world. There, they worked for the construction of this new place to the detriment of their original home. Despotic ruling highlighted in *Two Thousand Seasons*, *Osiris Rising* and *KMT: In the House of Life*, also account for domestic slavery and mismanagement that mar contemporary Africa.

Armah has shown his readers, through the literary universe he has created, a continent gangrened by many social vices, among which one can mention the loss of identity, the cult of personality, nepotism, mediocrity, embezzlement and corruption that sustain the state of underdevelopment in Africa.

Therefore, these political and economic systems enable on the one hand, the West to establish its hegemony all over the continent and, on the other, facilitate the open extraction and exploitation of the riches of Africa. In this context, it is easy to understand the paradox that the continent has immense potentialities in terms of raw materials and natural resources but is still well behind others.

Despite all these impediments that retard the continent in every realm of its reconstruction, it still has many chances and opportunities to develop. In effect, to attain a possible development of the continent, Armah urges Africans through his literary fiction to return to the way, i.e., to the root of things that befall us, understand them and look for their settlement. Throughout the novels of the Ghanaian writer, it has become obvious to me that Africans should revisit their history and values and adapt them to the present needs, which is the literary signal for the reconstruction of the continent. It is obvious to me that no human being can sever connections with the past to improve the present and the future.

The constant concern of Ayi Kwei Armah in this field is to create the adequacy between society and education through curricula taught in the African schools and universities as the revisiting of the curricula in *Osiris Rising* suggests. In the same vein, through Asar, Armah's revolutionary character, the Ghanaian novelist has emphasised the principles of good education. Anyway, with regards to the achievement of his prior ambitions, Armah's commitment and determination have led him to the foundation of Per Ankh Publication House, a guarantee for the development of publishing industries on the continent. With such a literary industry, he and his co-workers have begun encouraging and backing up the young scholars of the continent.

After clarifying the notion of development in the field of literature, reading Armah's novels, I have dealt with the vision of change. As a matter of fact, the analyses both of the Ghanaian novelist's literary materials and other obvious facts from the real life have brought light and hope to the gloomy picture that the continent offers. In contemporary Africa, many efforts have been made as regard the unity of the continent, the politics applied on the continent, the increase of the economic growth by creating economic communities all over the continent. All these feats have enabled me to confirm that Africa is in transition towards her sustainable development.

Through the writing of my dissertation I have tried to establish the relationship between the tandem literature and development. In the document I have demonstrated that literature either written or oral plays an avant-garde role. The writer inspired by social realities seized his quill to denounce, satirise social behaviours and habits in view of redressing the social shortcomings. It is what I have very often noticed in the reading of Ayi Kwei Armah's novels. The novelist as a seer or a visionary has diagnosed the evils that undermine the progression of his country in particular and that of Africa, in general. The way the Ghanaian writer has treated the issue of corruption has aroused the general consciousness

in his country and all over the African continent. However, literature has great challenge to take. Here, the problem is that the permanent effort the writer in general makes to inform the masses about the social facts is nil because the majority of Africans are illiterate. Reading Armah I have come to the conclusion that he has conveyed salvation insights. Yet, how many of the Africans can read his literary works, outside the handful of the intellectuals. Consequently, this minority of intellectuals who have read his fiction works may or may not take into account the writer's message because of their selfish interests or those they are serving. The notice is that the politicians will never implement ideas that will shake their political positions and lead to their political downfall. In short, literature helps solve the problems of societies and by doing so it brings about the change of the society that is synonymous with development.

It is a fact that the implementation of these ideas will ineluctably bring about the development of Africa. However, the implementation of the results is not possible without the good will of the decision makers. Political leaders and business women and men are called upon to cooperate in the shaping of new values of development along the desire for collective responsibility.

Bibliography

Main sources

1- Armah, A. K. *(1968). The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born.* Ibadan: Heinemann.

2- Armah, A. K. (1970). *Fragments.* Ibadan : Heinemann.

3- Armah, A. K. (1973). *Two Thousand Seasons*. Ibadan: Heinemann.

4- Armah, A. K. (1974). *Why Are We So Blest?* Ibadan: Heinemann.

5- Armah, A. K. (1978). *The Healers*. Ibadan: Heinemann.

6- Armah, A. K. (1995). *Osiris Rising: a novel of Africa past, present and future*. Popenguine, West Africa: Per Ankh.

7- Armah, A. K. (2002). *KMT: In the House of Life.* Popenguine, West Africa: Per Ankh.

Other Sources

1- Achebe, C. (1958). *Things Fall Apart*. London, Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

2- Achebe, C. (1964). *Arrow of God*. London, Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

3- Achebe, C. (1987). *Anthills of the Savannah.* Ibadan: Heinemann.

4- Amadi E. (1966). *The Concubine*. London, Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

5- Fanon, F. (1965). *The Wretched of the Earth*. Penguin Books.

6- Mofolo, T. (1981). *Chaka*. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

7- Ngugi, W. T. (1964). *Weep not, child*. Nairobi: Heinemann.

8- Ngugi, W. T. (1965). *The River Between*. Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

9- Ngugi, W. T. (1968). *The Black Hermit.* Nairobi: Heinemann.

10- Soyinka, W. (1965). *The Interpreters*. London, Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd.

French Speaking Writers' Novels

1- Kourouma, A. (2004). *Quand on refuse on dit non*. Editons du Seuil.

2- Plya, J. *L'arbre fétiche* (19 71). Yaoundé : Editions Clé, Présence africaine.

3- Quenum, O. B. (1985).*Un piège sans fin*. Yaoundé : Editions Clé, Présence africaine.

4- Sembene, O. *Les bouts de bois de dieu* (2001). Saint Armant Montront : *le* livre contemporain Achevé d'imprimer sur les presses de Brussière Groupe CP1.

5- Tadjo, V. (2000). *L'Ombre D'Imana*: *Voyage Jusqu'au Bout du Rwanda*. Actes Sud.

Criticism and Selected Papers

1- Agyeman, D. K. (996). *Continuity and Change in Africa: The Paradox of Development.* Accra: Ghana Universities Press.

2- Alibert, J. (1992). *Afrique Contemporaine : Trente années*. La documentation française.

3- Anang, D. "Ollenu" in Sweet & Maxwell ed *Principles of customary land law in Ghana* 1962, 1974.

4- Armah, A. K" The Wrirter in Modern Africa Per Wästberg" in Kirsten Holst, Petersen ed. *Criticism and Ideology: Second African Writers' Conference* (1986), Stockholm, 17-25.

5- Armah, A. K. (2006). *The Eloquence of the Scribes.* Popenguine, West Africa: Per Ankh.

6- Armah, A. K. (2010). *Remembering the Dismembered Continent.* Popenguine, West Africa: Per Ankh.

7- Awedoba, A. K. (2005). *Culture and Development in Africa*. Legon: University of Ghana.

8- Awolowo, O. (1977). *The Problems of Africa: The need for Ideological Reappraisal.* University of the Cape Coast.

9- Awoonor, K. (2012/ 2006). ed. *The African Predicament* (Collected essays).Accra: Subsaharan publishers.

10- Baako, K. (2000/1970). ("Nkrumaism ─African Socialism: Ghana's conception of Socialism" in T.Peter Omari, *Kwame Nkrumah: the Anatomyof an African Dictatorship.* Accra: Sankofa Educational Publishers (191-210).

11- Dardel, E. "The Myth" (225-243) in Alan Dundes ed. *Sacred Narrative: Readings in the Theory of Myth* (1984). Los Angeles: University of California Press.

12- Datondji, C. I. "Literature and Development: How the Study of Literature in Schools and Universities Help Social Development in African Countries" *Présence Africaine* N° 153 3 Quarterly.

13- Dumont, R. (1962). *L'Afrique noire est mal partie.* Editons du Seuil.

14- Dumont, R. (1986). *Pour l'Afrique, j'accuse*. Terre Humaine/ Poche.

15- Filani, M. O. (2006). *Foundations for Urban Development in Africa: The Legacy of Akin Mabogunje.* University of Ibadan.

16- For Full Account, See *Ross Kidd & Martin Byram:* "Popular Theatre and Development: A Bostwana Case Study" *Convergence* (The Journal of the International Council for Adult Education Vol. 10 N° 2 1977)

17- Gakwandi, S. A. (1977). *The Novel and Contemporary Experience in Africa* Ibadan: Heinemann

18- Gikandi, S. (1988/1987). *Reading the African Novel*. London: James Currey.

19- Goma, L. K. H. (1991). AGGREY-FRASERGUGGISBERG MEMORIAL LECTURES Theme: *The Hard Road to the Transformation of Africa*.

20- Hoover, K. (2004).et al ed, *Ideology and Political Life.* USA: Thomson Learning Inc. .

21- Innes, C.L. L. B. (1978). *Critical Perspectives on Chinua Achebe*. Ibadan: Heinemann.

22- Killam, C.D. (1980). *An Introduction to the Writings of Ngugi.* Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books.

23- Kwakwa, B.S. (1974). *Ghanaian Writing Today.* Ghana Publishing Corporation.

24- Mandela, N. (1965). *No Easy Walk to Freedom*. London: Heinemann.

25- Mondjanagni, C. (1984). *La participation populaire au développement en Afrique noire*. Karthala.

26- More, G. (1980) *Twelve African Writers*. Ibadan: Heinemann.

27- Ngara, E. (1984). *Criticism and Ideology: National Liberation and Social Reconstruction*. Ibadan Heinemann.

28- Nichols, L. (1981). *Conversation with African Writers*. Washington, D.C: Voice of America.

29- Nubukpo, K. M. "Womanist Discourse and the Future of the Male Tradition in *Modern African Literature in Bridges: An African Journal English Study* No 6, Special Gender, Sexuality and Literature, 1995, pp; 59-66.

30- Palmer, E. (1972). *An Introduction to the African Novel*. Ibadan: Heinemann.

31- Peil, M. (1977). *Consensus and Conflict in African Societies.* University of California: London press.

32- Pewissi, A. "Ayi Kwei Armah and the Isuue of Healing: A Study in *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968), *Two Thousdand Seasons* (1973), *The Healers* (1995) in *Mosaique: Revue Interaffricaine de Philosophioe, Litterature et Sciences Humaines* (Décembre 2008), Revue Semestrielle N° 008 ISPSH. Lomé: DonBosco

33- Richard, A. (1988). *Wole Soyinka Ou L'Ambition Démocratique*. Les nouvelles éditions africaines.

34- Robert, F. (1980). *The novels of Ayi Kwei Armah*. Ibadan: Heinemann.

35- Rodney, W. (1974). *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa?* Washington, D.C: Howard University Press.

36- Soyinka, W. (1976) *Myth, Literature and the African World* Ibadan: Heinemann

37- Wright, D. (1992). *Critical Perspectives on Ayi Kwei Armah's Novels.* Washington D.C.: Three Continents Press;

Webliography

1- http//: www. Wikipedia. Com. Patrice Lumumba, October 1960 retrieved on 12, July, 2011.

2- http//: www. Wikipedia.com Patrice, Lumumba, October 1960, retrieved on 12th July 2011. (My own translation).

3- http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/mythology/f/111408WhatsMyth.htm retrieved on 12th July 2012.

4- http://www.faculty.de.gcsu.edu/~mmagouli/defmyth.htm retrieved on May 11th 2012.

5- http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/mythology/f/111408WhatsMyth.htm retrieved on May 11th 2012.

: http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_is_the_Hamitic_myth#ixzz23zOXQUoB Genesis 9:25-27. Retrieved on 19th August