



UNIVERSITE D'ABOMEY-CALAVI

FACULTE DES LETTRES, ARTS ET SCIENCES HUMAINES (FLASH)

ECOLE DOCTORALE PLURIDISCIPLINAIRE (EDP)

« ESPACES, CULTURES ET DEVELOPPEMENT »

SECTION : Etudes Anglophones

OPTION: Etudes Africaines

MEMOIRE DE D.E.A.

THEME

**CORRUPTION IN AYI KWEI ARMAH'S *THE BEAUTYFUL ONES ARE NOT YET BORN* (1968)
AND CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE'S
PURPLE HIBISCUS (2006)**

**Réalisé et soutenu par :
BOUKARI Alliou**

**Directeur de recherche:
Docteur Laure Clémence
CAPO-CHICHI ZANOU
Maître de Conférences (CAMES)**

ANNEE ACADEMIQUE 2013-2014

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research work to my late father Mama BOUKARI and to my mother MAIDANDA Aïssatou.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to ALLAH, the Almighty GOD, to my parents, predecessors, classmates and other friends, all the lecturers who have taught me during this training. They are Professor Augustin AÏNAMON, Professor Taofiki KOUMAKPAI, Professor Ambroise MEDEGAN, Professor Léonard KOUSSOUHON, Doctor Moussa OKANLA. I will never forget the Head of the English Department, Doctor Patrice AKOGBETO. I would like to thank those whose names are not mentioned here but have of course contributed so much to the fulfillment of my objectives.

I wish to express my thankfulness to Mr. Boni DANTOROU and Mr. Boco KANA GABA for their encouragement and assistance over years.

I would also like to thank my brothers and sisters, my dear wife Adaman, Mr. Imorou YAROU and all members of ASEECKA-ASSOCIATION.

I would respectfully like to acknowledge my project supervisor, Doctor Laure Clémence CAPO-CHICHI ZANOU for her pragmatic suggestions and contributions without which this work would have been shapeless and void. It's time to express her my profound gratitude and to wish her and her family a long life marked with happiness and prosperity.

INRODUCTION

The earliest African fiction has celebrated and documented the glorious past of the continent through its cultures and traditions so as to correct the western conception of the likes of Joyce Cary and Joseph Conrad about the continent. Contrastively, the post independent fiction addresses the social evils the newly independent African countries are suffering from. Indeed, the so much desired independence fails to bring joy and freedom to the continent and its people. Actually, it increasingly fosters new leaders whose sole purpose is to gain not only in wealth but in social position as well. Thus, corruption becomes part and parcel of their governance. Consequently, writers do not need any persuasion to denounce and criticise the new leaders' wrongs. Among them are the Anglophone male and female writers Ayi Kwei Armah and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie respectively in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) and *Purple Hibiscus* (2006).

The two of them come from different African countries and from different social backgrounds, and they belong to different generations, so they use different historical settings, but they have in common the same lingua franca: English. Simply put their countries have experienced the Indirect Rule and as such they do have much in common.

In fact, set in the sixties, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* appears ten years after the independence of Ghana. The novel depicts all criticisms about the first president of Ghana and his power. It truly lays out the corrupt life in Ghana during Nkrumah's reign up to a few days after his removal from power. It then reveals materialism as a cancer and a real obstacle to development. In the novel, Koomson represents the ministers while the man belongs to the lower class of society that suffers injustice from the power due to the bad governance. Furthermore, the man stands for the common people of Ghana and Africa who are the victims of injustice and exploitation from those who head government institutions like Koomson and his followers. Despite the man is well educated,

he lives a wretched life because of his honesty and integrity. Surprisingly, like a monster, corruption has seized the heart of the men leaving them abandoned in the cobweb of corrupt society. People like the man and the other loved have labored in vain because no one can resist, if they try, they will be compared to “Chichidodo”.

In the second novel, entitled *Purple Hibiscus* there is a critical presentation of an oddity in Nigeria as well as in Africa, as the continent trudges in the biting tyrannical trauma of the military and anarchical leaderships due to the phenomenon of corruption. *Purple Hibiscus* is actually a novel set in postcolonial Nigeria, a country beset by political instability and economic difficulties. The central character is Kambili Achike, fifteen for much of the period covered by the book, a member of a wealthy family dominated by her devoutly Catholic father, Eugene. Eugene is both a religious zealot and a violent figure in the Achike household, subjecting his wife Beatrice, Kambili herself, and her brother Jaja to beatings and psychological cruelty.¹ Ultimately, the story reaches a critical mass when “unable to cope with Eugene’s continual violence, Beatrice poisons him”². Jaja takes the blame for the crime and ends up in prison. In the meantime, Auntie Ifeoma and her family go to America to live after she is unfairly dismissed from her job as lecturer at the University of Nigeria.

The novel ends almost three years after the events just described, on a cautiously optimistic note. Kambili has become “a young woman of eighteen, more confident than before, while her brother Jaja is about to be released from prison, hardened but not broken by his experience there”³. Their mother, Beatrice, having deteriorated psychologically to a great degree, shows small signs of improvement. In essence, a better future is possible for them all.

But what is corruption?

¹ Kevin, Densley, Teaching Notes, Nigeria, Harper Perennial Ltd, 2013, p. 1.

² Idem.

³ Idem.

Corruption is the act of exploiting the society by taking undue advantage of political power to accumulate state wealth as a personal property. It comes in various forms: bribery, embezzlement, manipulation of political roles, rigging, financial misappropriation, stealing from public treasury, giving of nonexistent contracts, etc⁴. It is an extreme immorality or depravity act which means rotting or putrefaction, or the state of being rotten or putrid⁵. As a matter of fact, corruption can be defined as a:

Complex and multifaceted phenomenon with multiple causes and effects, [...] and confers undue and/or unmerited advantages on the perpetrator. Such behaviour also expresses the notion of a betrayal of trust especially in a democracy where public office is held in trust for the people.⁶

Literary speaking, it is an undesirable change in meaning or another error introduced into a text during copying. In linguistics for instance, corruption is an alteration of a word or phrase from its original form⁷. The research theme I am concerned with is entitled “Corruption in Ayi Kwei Armah’s *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus* (2006)”.

I have really chosen to deal with this very theme because my objective is to explain the problem of corruption exposed in the two novels. Then, I intend to answer some unanswered questions on corruption in order to denounce it and encourage the fight against its widespread practice prevailing in the contemporary African societies. In addition, my choice of a woman writer aims at showing that women have much to say about the ongoing practice of corruption. So, dealing with the two novels at the same time shows that as far as corruption is concerned, there is continuity in the practice of corruption.

⁴ C. Oha, Anthony, *The African Novel, ENG 281*, Department of Arts (English Unit), Benson Idahosa University Benin City, National Open University of Nigeria, 2008, p. 67.

⁵ Victor T., Le Vine, *Political Corruption and the Informal Policy*, Inaugural Speech, Accra, Ghana Universities Press, 1971, p. 43.

⁶ Victor, Egwemi, *Corruption and corrupt practices in Nigeria: An agenda for taming the monster*, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, 2012, p. 73.

⁷ Victor T., Le Vine, *Political Corruption and the Informal Policy*, Inaugural Speech, Accra, Ghana Universities Press, 1971, p. 32.

Besides, such a study requires the need to read and analyse an appropriate literature review. So, a literature review is necessary since corruption has already received much attention from researchers. Among them there is Célestin Gbaguidi whose *Mémoire de Maîtrise* is entitled “Corruption as a Problematic African Contemporary Issue (1960-2000)”. The dissertation defended in 2001 deals with the forms, causes, drawbacks and the fight against corruption. He comes to the conclusion that the negative costs of corruption are immeasurable, particularly in Africa South of the Saharan developing countries. For him, corruption’s undesirable consequences are prejudicial to the political, social and economic welfare. Therefore, African political elite and officers must change their mentality so as to work for the sole interest of the community not for their selfish, greedy ones. In 2005, Moussa Sidi Chabi has denounced the practice corruption in his *Mémoire de Maîtrise* entitled “Crisis of Leadership in Chinua Achebe’s *A Man of People*”. According to his analysis, corruption is the first social evil which undermines the society depicted in the novel. It is a phenomenon which takes different forms and resulted in harsh consequences. He believes that no meaningful democracy can exist side by side with so much corruption. For, the crisis of leadership which prevails in Bori can never be solved if democratic principles are not applied. After that, the same Moussa has discussed the problem of corruption in his master’s dissertation in 2009. In this dissertation, he has presented the “Cultural Conflict in Chinua Achebe’s First Three Novels: *Things Fall Apart*, *No Longer at Ease* and *Arrow of God*”. And in its tenth chapter, it clear that corruption is rampant and institutionalised in Umuofia. Joseph Foundohou has also mentioned cases of corruption in his *Mémoire de Maîtrise* defended in 2001 and entitled “*Fragments as a True-to-Life Picture of Contemporary Ghanaian/African Culture and Society*”. In chapter one of his work’s second part, Foundohou has clearly shown that corruption hampers the stepping up of development and the general level of economic activities in Ghana. For him, corruption needs amends.

Other dissertations of Maîtrise dealing with corruption include Houndefo Aboudou's "Post Independence Despair and Hope in Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*" defended in 2011. In chapter two of his work, he has demonstrated that the phenomenon of corruption has become like the bone in the throat of the dog which blocks its throat, till it is obliged to vomit all what it has eaten; so it is the same for the livings on this corrupted earth. The high corruption has seized the hearts of African leaders, and has led the continent into the lost of the hope. In short, he concludes the section by showing that corruption has become a big problem in the world and principally in Africa because of the behaviour of the new masters who have led the whole population in the corrupt system.

There is no doubt that a great deal has been done, said and written about corruption. But most of the available literature has briefly presented the endless practice of corruption. My work will then have the merit of dealing thoroughly with a direct inter-dependence between corruption and its causes, its aspects and its consequences. This work will also fill in the gap by giving a particular attention to a woman writer who tries to denounce the practice of corruption in spite of all kinds of the political menace and intimidation.

However, these previous works together with some information gathered from some web sites can be very suitable in helping me to convey my message in which I intend to adopt the reader's response theory as research methodology. Such a research methodology consists in data collection from history books, research papers, articles, literary books and the internet. Combined with other proofs and my personal experiences, the present methodology is useful and can enable me to increase the general assessment and understanding of the novels themselves.

To support this, I have divided the study into two main parts. In the first part for example, I have exposed the causes and aspects of corruption in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) and *Purple Hibiscus* (2006). For, this

part is subdivided into two chapters. The first chapter is about the political, economic and social causes of corruption. In this respect, the second chapter deals with the political, economic and social aspects of the evil. In the same chapter, I have also examined the aspect of corruption at the state level.

As far as part two of the present dissertation is concerned, it deals with the consequences of corruption in the two novels viewed from two angles through chapter three and chapter four. In chapter three for instance, the direct drawbacks of corruption are namely political, economic and social. Then comes the post-independence disillusionment in the fourth and the last chapter. Such a feeling is essentially due to the political leaders' hypocrisy, the masses' frustration and their despair, and the passivity of the victims of corruption.

In my conclusion, I acknowledge that corruption blocks attempts at social welfare and remains one of the greatest crimes against good governance and development. So, I have suggested that people must wage a bitter war against the pandemic and omnipresent problem of corruption. It shows that such a wage requires the way out which includes political, economic, social and cultural anti-corruption actions. I have also indicated that there is no magic formula for sustainable development apart from the institutionalization of democracy which is essential to provide good governance for all Africa.

**PART ONE: CAUSES AND ASPECTS OF
CORRUPTION IN THE NOVELS**

CHAPTER 1: THE CAUSES OF CORRUPTION IN THE NOVELS

In this chapter, I intend to analyse the political, economic, and social causes of corruption in the fictional nations presented by Armah and Adichie.

1-1- POLITICAL CAUSES OF CORRUPTION IN THE TWO NOVELS

Throughout Armah's *The Beautiful One Are Not Yet Born* and Adechie's *Purple Hibiscus*, it is obvious that Ghana and Nigeria are confronted with various corrupt practices. This implies that one of the most endemic problems the two countries have politically met since the exit of the colonizer is corruption. From this view, politics can be seen as a cause of corruption. Politics is a cause of corruption because it becomes an easy way whereby people want to make progress in life. As a matter of fact, corruption is mostly defined as the act of exploiting one's community by taking undue advantage of political power to accumulate common wealth as personal property. This short definition implies that the major causes of corruption lie in colonialism and neocolonialism which is nothing but the manipulation of political roles. And the fact that neocolonialism itself is the result of a historical process of class formation by colonialism indicates that corruption is a colonial legacy. The following quotation proves my viewpoint:

The leadership style adopted by African political and administrative elites after independence reveals a strong resemblance to this model. Contemporary African politicians and administrators appear to have embraced the power structure associated with the colonial chief, [...], and adhered to "an only slightly softened version" of the colonial chiefs role. [...]. In particular, they have shown open contempt for the law, an attitude which is partly responsible for the rampant corruption that characterises most administrative bureaucracies in sub-Saharan Africa today.⁸

Throughout the passage above, it is clear that contemporary African politicians and administrators have used their positions of power to perpetrate

⁸ M. Mulinge, Munyae and Lesetedi, Gwen N., *Interrogating Our Past: Colonialism and Corruption in Sub-Saharan Africa*, African Journal and Political Sciences, Vol. 3 No. 2, 15, 28, 1998, p. 21.

the colonial leadership style with the policy of divide and rule which is implemented to amass illegal wealth just like the colonial chief. Moreover, “the role of the ‘colonial chief model of administration’ in the perpetuation of corruption in most of sub-Saharan Africa has been reinforced by their independence constitutions”⁹. The matter becomes most critical when “with the conducive environment created by the new constitutions the new political elites manipulated the new state institutions to facilitate their engagement in corrupt practices”¹⁰. It is as if the whole essence of independence is not to dismantle the colonial structure, but to push a few black men closer to the former colonial masters.¹¹

Another policy having caused the practice of corruption in several instances can be associated with the rampant tribalism, favouritism and nepotism that are very widespread in most African countries. This has certainly led post-colonial African political leaders to develop a tendency to treat members of their tribal group with favour in order to set the stage for the rapid growth of ethno-centric favouritism and nepotism. That is the reason why to fill important positions in public administration, the appointment of unqualified or at least under-qualified but politically well-connected tribesmen become very widespread in some countries. To illustrate such a situation I have to indicate that Munyae and Lesetedi write that:

Kenya under Arap Moi provides a classic example. A notable attribute of the Moi administration has been the systematic elimination of the members of other tribes from the most strategic political and economic positions in Kenya's political administration and economy, and replacing them with individuals from Moi's own predominantly pastoral Kalenjin tribe. This appears to have ushered in what could

⁹ M. Mulinge, Munyae and Lesetedi, Gwen N., *Interrogating Our Past: Colonialism and Corruption in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Op. Cit., p. 22.

¹⁰ Idem.

¹¹ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, London, Heinemann Educational Books, 1968, p. 126.

be considered as a "pastoral model" in the management of the economy which is characterised by purposeful corruption.¹²

The above statement shows that ethnicity/tribalism, favouritism and nepotism have caused the spread of corrupt practices in Kenya's political administration and economy through a "pastoral model" based on embezzlement and economic mismanagement. In the same way, I have also noticed that most African writers especially those who have written after colonialism, have portrayed the strange practices of corruption among the educated elite. In addition, the historical widespread environment of corruption described by Adichie in Nigeria showing that "the politicians were corrupt"¹³ reveals its political causes. On behalf of political power, politicians have respectively betrayed the ideal of democracy in Nigeria and socialism in Ghana by fraudulently grabbing public wealth for themselves. It is clear that corruption is a political legacy in Nkrumah's Ghana as well as in Abacha's Nigeria. Anyway, corruption is the direct cause of the political misleading of leaders. That is the reason why Adichie accuses "the soldiers' arrival at the offices"¹⁴ in her country. For her, their power is the shortest way to corruption because one of the most draconic ruling patterns that have created the corrupt practices in Nigeria is the bad governance of military regimes.

Undoubtedly, Adichie sees the many years of military power and their turning into authoritarian and anarchical regimes as the greatest political disorder and cause of corruption in most of Nigerian governments. As it can be seen in the quotation below, "the biting tyrannical trauma of the bad governance of military and anarchical leaderships"¹⁵ in Nigeria during the reign of General Sani Abacha (The Big Oga, as she calls him) is a significant cause of corruption. For that reason, she has critically asserted that in Nigeria as well as in Africa in

¹² M. Mulinge, Munyae and Lesetedi, Gwen N., *Interrogating Our Past: Colonialism and Corruption in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Op. Cit., p. 21.

¹³ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Lagos: Farafina, 2006, p. 25.

¹⁴ Ibid., p.154.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 53.

general “what we needed was not soldiers ruling us”¹⁶. In other words, Adichie believes that African politicians’ hypocrisy, betrayal and selfishness are the causes of corruption. This critical vision of society is similar to the one in Ayi Kwei Armah’s novel entitled *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* where he declares that “one man, with the help of people who loved him and believed in him, had arrived at power and used it for himself”¹⁷.

Prior to this situation, the chronic political instability created by the socio-political system has contributed to exacerbate the predicament of corruption. Actually, the post-colonial crises of leadership have led to a series of contradictions. These contradictions have occurred between the élites and the political leaders on the one hand and between civilian regimes and military ones on the other hand. Consequently, they have led many countries to be very corrupt. Without being mistaken, one can say that in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Born* (1968) and *Purple Hibiscus* (2006), politics has become one of the particular and best means through which people acquire riches illegally. The same idea has been denounced in the following statements:

[...], the scramble for material possessions dominates. Policemen ask for bribe shamelessly. Someone kills his neighbor with the hope of stealing some money. The attraction on the “gleam” [as Armah terms materialism] is powerful in this society. A bus conductor daily cheats passengers by handing them less change than they are entitled to so that he can keep the difference for himself¹⁸.

Clearly, it can be said that such situations are certainly due to “the personalization of public office, the political culture and the inability of leaders to overcome their colonial mentality in respect of their perception of public office”¹⁹. Leaders pay no attention to the masses’ poverty but they have been

¹⁶ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 25.

¹⁷ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 157.

¹⁸ Laure Clémence, Capo-Chichi Zanou, *Corruption in Selected African Novels*, Editions: Centre des Publications Universitaires de l’Université d’Abomey-Calavi (UAC), Abomey-Calavi, 2012, p. 79.

¹⁹ Gbenga, Lawal, Corruption and development in Africa: challenges for political and economic change in, *Humanity and Social Sciences Journal*, 2(1), Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State, Nigeria 2007, p.7.

exhibiting all types of corrupt practices that have hampered the proper development of their societies.

Apart from these political factors having favoured corruption in the two novels, there are many other causes related to the politicians' lust for power or their excessive ambition to reach the highest position in their community. Indeed, the lust for power is one of the most critical causes of corruption in the fictional societies depicted by Armah and Adichie. The political leaders' thirst for power is the root motive for corruption since they consider politics as the most important opening to power, to social prestige and to wealth. Their obsession with power leads them to use corrupt means. It is then important to point out here that the worth of a person to lead the nation resides in his capacity to corrupt the masses. This means that to cling to political power in order to make themselves life presidents, the politicians resort to various practices of corruption. Moreover, in a bid to get to the highest position and enjoy it, one has to become a politician so as to embezzle public funds. Therefore, to attack politicians' obsession with power Chinua Achebe writes:

The trouble with our new nation – as I saw it then lying on that bed – was that none of us had been in the rain together until yesterday. Then a handful of us – the smart and the lucky and hardly ever the best – had scrambled for the one shelter our former rulers left, and had taken it over and barricaded themselves in.²⁰

It is clear that the above quotation unveils the greed and selfishness of the post-independence Nigerian political leaders. For Achebe, the Nigerian politicians do not differ from their former colonial master; rather they are worse than the coloniser who has bequeathed power to them. Once again, one can state that corruption is the result of political legacy.

Besides, one can talk about the political causes of corruption since most of the political leaders make life very harsh to people so as to constrain the latter to succumb to the charms of corruption. In these circumstances, “there would be

²⁰ Chinua, Achebe, *A Man of the People*, New York, Anchor Books, 1967, p. 34.

always only one way for the young to reach the gleam. Cutting corners, eating the fruit of fraud”²¹. Armah has made the fact that power is one of the straight ways to corruption clearer when he says “I saw men tear the veils behind which the truth had been hidden. But then the same men, when they have power in their hands at last, began to find the veils useful. They made many more”²². For the ordinary man, political power is the synonym of “corruption, public theft”²³.

Here, it seems that weakness, the lack of the political ability and vision to manage public administration in the right way after independence are truly the foremost causes of corruption in both novels. In a nutshell, this includes the lack of ability, the misleading of political leaders to control public resources and meet the legitimate needs of their citizens after the white man’s departure. At this point, one has to state that corruption occurs when politicians’ greed and selfishness become too great.

According to Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O’Meara, it is universally acknowledged that corruption is an endemic phenomenon which has its origins mostly:

In countries where the legislature and the judiciary are weak, where the rule of law and adherence to formal rules are not rigorously observed, where political patronage is standard practice, where the independence and professionalism of the public sector has been eroded.²⁴

Here, it is clear that the problem of impunity remains one of the most critical causes of corruption. In all its forms, impunity automatically keeps the political leaders very far from the reality of good governance and development. Truly, Armah has identified impunity as a cause of corruption during Nkrumah’s stay in power. He points out this era as a period of impunity of “the really big

²¹ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 95.

²² Ibid., p. 92.

²³ Ibid, p. 58.

²⁴ Martin, Phyllis M., and O’Meara, Patrick, *AFRICA*, Cambridge University Press, Third Ed, London, 1995, p. 6.

corrupted people”²⁵. The same thing can be observed in any society where civil society lacks opportunities to hold authorities or other persons responsible for corruption. Anybody can easily and freely embezzle public funds without being punished if citizens are not able to denounce them. Under these circumstances, impunity becomes the medium to cheer people found guilty of corruption and to praise them. For Adichie, “it was simply the way things were done”²⁶.

At this view point, it can be understood that the various practices of impunity have completely destabilised the judiciary system in her country. For example, she shows that there is significant impunity at the top of the Nigerian judiciary system. Consequently, even the police, the military army and lawyers or judges cannot punish anybody guilty of social evils. Such a social malaise has certainly incited Amaka “to write to the office of the Head of State, even to the Nigerian Ambassador in America, to complain about the poor state of Nigeria’s justice system...especially in Nigeria: all that corruption and all that heat”²⁷.

This statement shows clearly that the phenomenon of impunity has completely eroded the state of Nigerian justice and made it poorer than before. Instead of being loyal in order to prevent awful situations, “Nigeria’s justice system” simply falls into injustice and partiality. It really continues to deceive the masses without being worried at all. Here, one of the most surprising aspects of impunity is that “some big men in Abuja”²⁸ loot lots of money “like someone who would not have an opportunity to eat again soon”²⁹. In addition, the phenomenon of impunity has led Auntie Ifeoma to ask the following question: “Will you pinch the finger of the hands that feeds you?”³⁰

²⁵ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 154.

²⁶ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*. Op. Cit., p. 61.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 304.

²⁸ Ibid., p.139.

²⁹ Ibid., p.105.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 104.

Undoubtedly, this kind of accusation confirms that only the weak and powerless people are despised. But at the same time, some special persons are protected or allowed to live freely without any trial although they are known as criminals. This is similar to what occurs in *The Interpreters* by Wole Soyinka where the big thieves are powerful and they can do what they want while the small thieves are put in jail because they have no one to defend them. For example, in order to explain that impunity becomes the medium to cheer the bigger or larger thieves in Nigeria, the narrator confirms that:

[...], little thief or the bigger thieves will pass a law against your existence as a menace to society. Sagoe followed them... run, Barabbas from the same crowd which will reform tomorrow and cheer the larger thief returning from his twentieth Economic Mission and pluck his train from the mud, dog-wise, in their teeth³¹.

Obviously, Wole Soyinka is critical of the behaviour of people who treat badly little thieves stealing on the streets while they cheer people in power using their position to greedily embezzle public funds. For him, the authority cannot come down hard on the real looters since he is not clean. So, this silence constitutes at the same time an encouragement to the other officials. This is explained through the fact that when a minister embezzles a little sum, he is dismissed. But when the amount is very important, he is either transferred to another post or he is appointed to a higher position. To get people silent, the very looter is decorated as a hero. This situation is similar to Koomson's decoration as the "Hero of socialist labor"³² in Nkrumah's Ghana. As a consequence, in contemporary Africa, most of officials have dirty hands as far as frauds are concerned. The maddening fact of this issue is that the very looters qualified as "larger thieves" are prized and pass the laws against the life of the little ones (those who steal bread in the market to quench their hangar) who are perceived as a menace to the society.

³¹ Wole, Soyinka, *The Interpreters*, London, Heinemann Educational Books, 1970, p. 114.

³² Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 56.

Once more, it goes without the saying that there is a great paradox between practice and theory. Those who perpetrate the practice of corruption are never punished because they generally belong to the parties in power. Another fact explaining such cases of impunity is that these people are closely related to authorities or officials in high position. Or some of them generally have “many foreign connections”³³ and simply move to neighbouring countries. They continue to live abroad freely without being troubled at all. That is the case with Koomson who has fled away although he is known as the big thief of public wealth.

For many people like Armah, Ghana is far from being an exception in this game of impunity simply because the net to catch thieves are simply made in unique Ghanaian manner:

To allow the really big corrupted people to pass through it. A net to catch only the small, dispensable fellows, trying in their anguish blindness to leap and attain the gleam and the comfort the only way these things could be done. And the big ones floated free, like all the slogans³⁴.

This statement is another proof that the very corrupt persons are allowed to live without restraint, without any trial. In this way, impunity becomes the law in Ghana. This kind of misbehaviour makes some public officers and clerks ask for bribes. As a popular saying in Benin Republic goes, “the officials oblige citizens to put a stone on their documents so as to avoid their being blown by the wind”. Truly, officials try to create artificial bottlenecks in order to be given bribe and kickbacks. Another reason to explain their behaviour is that they believe, as another popular saying goes; “one must not sweat while doing government work”.

As a consequence, the widespread impunity obstructs all efforts made to eradicate corruption. And the fact that impunity becomes more and more the

³³ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p.208.

³⁴ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p.154.

norm in Ghana may be the reason why Koomson is appreciated and admired by the man's mother-in-law. Actually, the latter maintains that "Koomson has done well, [...]. He has done well for himself, and for his family too"³⁵. Nevertheless, people like "the man" and Teacher who try to remain upright forever are considered not only as perverse and ridiculous but also as a strange specimen of the contemporary Ghanaian society.

That is certainly the additional reason that stimulates people to acknowledge that "corruption flourishes where politics gives it motivations and where the institutions of repression are weak"³⁶ [translation mine]. In a word, impunity dominates where neither the political class nor the masses dare denounce even a single case of social crime.

Besides, the matter of disloyalty and prohibition of telling the truth increase impunity and keep corruption remain more incurable than before. Nigeria seems to be very frail "like a Big Man with the spindly legs of a child"³⁷. By then, Nigerians cannot counteract corruption where impunity thrives. In this regard, Aunty Ifeoma says: "I am not paid to be loyal. When I speak the truth, it becomes disloyalty"³⁸. Once again, it can be seen not only in Ghana but also in Nigeria that the question of disloyalty and disorder are synonyms of impunity since there is a large scale of impunity in these countries. Therefore, impunity may remain an excellent technique that helps to impede the eradication of the vicious circle of corruption. It is undeniable that impunity worsens in any society where justice itself is corrupt at the top. And in such a society, loyal people become a great threat for their political leaders. Loyal people are mostly arrested or executed by the government agents. In this way, "soldiers had arrested Ade Coker"³⁹ without any fundamental reason. Another

³⁵ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 139.

³⁶ Observatoire de Lutte Contre la Corruption (OLC), *La stratégie de lutte contre la corruption au Bénin* (Document de vulgarisation), Cotonou, Mars 2007, p. 8.

³⁷ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 19.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 229.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 46.

dramatic and unpleasant incident happens *when* “soldiers shot Nwankiti Ogechi in a bush in Mina”⁴⁰ and get away with it. This testimony is an evident proof that impunity is legalised and institutionalised in Armah and Achebe’s fictional societies. There is no doubt that such a situation can be likened to a sort of prison or “life of the jungle”. It is very hard and turns into a harsh anarchy for the weak and powerless masses. As a consequence, what is normally a crime becomes a good action whereas what is normally good becomes a crime in Ghana and Nigeria. In short, corruption rules the world and becomes a generally accepted or tolerated mode of behaviour where impunity increases. In any case, the lack of account on matters of corruption in the eyes of everybody proves that apart from the political sources, corruption has also some economic causes.

1-2- Economic causes of corruption

The economic causes of corruption are mostly those related to the extension of the new economic order, the quest for economic and financial gains. They are also characterized by poverty and wide income gap between the rich and the poor. This means that the economic causes of “corruption may depend on cultural and institutional factors as well as on low income levels, focusing exclusively”⁴¹ on a given country.

As far as the economic causes of corruption are concerned, one can easily refer to Armah who declares that, in the Ghanaian society, “money sweet pass all”⁴². For, even those who seem to be against the phenomenon of corruption find themselves snowed under it. That is the example of “the man”, a character in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, hates corruption although he does not get involved in it he cannot fight against it. For, money has become the only essential commodity to which people rush in his society. A similar situation happens in Achebe’s *No Longer at Ease* where:

⁴⁰ Chimamanda Ngozi, Achebe, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., pp. 206-207.

⁴¹ Kwabena, Gyimah-Brempong, *Corruption, growth, and inequality in Africa*, USA, Tampa, 2001, p. 185.

⁴² Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, op. cit., p. 106.

Obi, the grand-son of Okonkwo, returns to Nigeria after completing a B.A. degree in England. Idealistic as are all young people, he hopes to contribute to the establishment of a better society in Nigeria through fighting social ills such as political nepotism, corruption, bribery...etc. [...], he weakens and succumbs to the very ill he wants to extract from his society- bribery.⁴³

This statement shows that the long contact with the coloniser has turned African people into materialistic opportunists. Clearly, it is worth noticing that money has been granted the greatest importance to the extent that:

Those who possess money, even if they happen not to be highly educated like Chief Nanga and Koomson, have power and respect within their individual society. As a result, everything is done in order to amass wealth and while doing so the means are usually given little consideration, only the goal to be achieved matters⁴⁴.

Here, it appears that money is the major element having increased the practice of corruption. Moreover, the introduction of a monetary tax in the economic system is a very significant way by which post-colonial governments have encouraged the growth of corruption. Such an indirect control of economies has actually favoured the practice of corruption because “the colonizers [have] realised that it was impossible to maximize economic benefits from their colonies without direct political and administrative control”⁴⁵. This seems to be inevitable considering the fact that “colonialism was an extension of the new economic order and its concomitant problems which resulted from the industrial revolution”⁴⁶. In this respect, a closer look at pre-colonial African economies reveals that:

There are three major ways through which the historical event of colonialism could be linked to the emergence of corrupt practices in sub-Saharan Africa. First, [...] corruption requires a well developed monetary economy characterised by a clear differentiation of interests to thrive. [...]. The existing economies, therefore, lacked the financial and economic infrastructure necessary for engaging in corruption. Consequently, the new economies promoted by colonial governments

⁴³ Macheke, Mavis Thokozile, Academic Journals, *International Journal of English and Literature*, Vol. (5), Great Zimbabwe University, Zimbabwe, 2012, p. 7.

⁴⁴ Macheke, Mavis Thokozile, Academic Journals, *International Journal of English and Literature*, Op. Cit., 2012, p. 7.

⁴⁵ Mulyae M., Mulinge, and Gwen N., Lesetedi, *Interrogating Our Past: Colonialism and Corruption in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Op. Cit., p. 22.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 18.

had to nurture the conditions for the evolution of structures that were conducive to corrupt practices.⁴⁷

Once more, colonialism is accused for being among the factors found to increase corruption in economic domain. In the same way, colonialism is a key cause of corruption in economy because African countries generally tend to have weak and fragile economic institutions. It is therefore crystal clear that the “lack of transparency and accountability in public actions, too many controls that give too much discretion to the public official, too much centralization and monopoly given to the public official, low relative wages of public officials⁴⁸.”

In order to show the veracity of the economic causes of corruption, I have resorted to a scholar who says:

Money helps in the acquisition of various things; money controls a policeman to keep quiet and let fraudulent drivers bypass; money gives power to party leaders; and lastly money also helps people to find jobs....
Besides, money gives its owner some respect within society. Koomson, the minister, is called “*my lord*” by an old woman, because she suspects that he may have a lot of money.⁴⁹

Undoubtedly, the terrible and strange nonstop race for material goods and economic wealth denounced in the quotation above has brought a complete disregard for moral issues. Then, the only thing which counts in Koomson’s life is “the pride of his family and his own secret happiness, at least for the moment all demanded that he loses control of himself and behaves like someone he was not and would never be? Money. Power”⁵⁰. So, in post independent Africa, money has become an avenue to social prestige and wealth.

Indeed, the craziness, the opportunistic ambition and the materialistic society have created in people the need to steal, defraud substantial parts of available national resources for personal needs. For that matter, Koomson has

⁴⁷ Munyae M., Mulinge, and Gwen N., Lesetedi, *Interrogating Our Past: Colonialism and Corruption in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Op. Cit., p. 22.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 22.

⁴⁹ Laure Clémence, Capo-Chichi Zanou, *Corruption in Selected African Novels*, Op. Cit., p. 52.

⁵⁰ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 115.

decided to get shining boats, private factories, very big cars, very large expensive houses with extremely expensive imported furniture.

As far as Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O'Meara are concerned, apart from the causes mentioned above, the most complex and overwhelming causes of corruption in economic have started when "International lending agencies, led by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), began to impose conditions on subsequent loans"⁵¹. According to them, the economic causes of corruption include "the devaluation of currencies, the freezing of wages in most African countries, and the reduction of nonfood imports and the increasing of staple foods' price"⁵². In these circumstances, one can confirm that the very low state of official salaries and wages continues to create more fertile grounds favourable to the growth of corruption. Such a situation results in difficult work conditions. It also includes the lack of the capacity to manage resources effectively and efficiently to improve the quality of the citizens' life. Nonetheless, it is important to underline that apart from the causes already mentioned, there are also social causes of corruption.

1-3- The social causes of corruption

Dealing with social causes of corruption is essential to know why corruption has become a way of life; an institution accepted by everybody. This can also help me to know why the whole society or environment encourages bribery and corruption and nobody cares any longer about questions of morality. At this stage, it is worth stating that social injustices are the first cause of overwhelming corruption in modern society. Indeed, these social injustices the predicament of colonialism which is a strong fashionable form of cynicism developed among people to breed a corrupt culture within the administrative

⁵¹ Martin, Phyllis M., and O'Meara, Patrick, *AFRICA*, Op. Cit., p. 354.

⁵² Ibid., p.357.

machinery. This view is also shared by M. Mulinge Munyae and Gwen N. Lesetedi when they point out that:

Concerning sub-Saharan Africa in particular, however, corruption appears to be a social phenomenon deeply rooted in the historical process of colonisation. [...], the practice is viewed here as a by-product of traits of fraudulent antisocial behaviour derived from British, French and other rulers. This behaviour was instilled into the colonial peoples during the colonial period and was carried into the post-colonial era.⁵³

Here again, the causes of corruption are associated with colonialism because “the administrative culture inherited from colonialism [...] in post colonial institutions [has] contributed to the institutionalisation of corruption”⁵⁴ in African social affairs. In this respect, it is unthinkable and disgusting but true to hear for instance that “the administrative culture inherited from colonialism presents a second avenue through which Africa's colonial past has facilitated and entrenched corrupt practices”.⁵⁵

Actually, the reader can notice that the presence of corruption in colonialism means that the practice of corruption is a social means or value accepted by both Europeans and Africans. That is the reason why taking and offering bribes cannot be seen as anything wrong in society. In other words, the perpetration of corruption is a common share of people. In *No Longer at Ease* for example, for getting caught for bribery, Obi is blamed by only few members of the Umuofia Progressive Union (UPU). But on the contrary, the entire society blames “his lack of experience” when one of them declares that “‘it is all lack of experience’ [...] ‘He should not have accepted the money himself. What others do is tell you to go and hand it to their houseboy. Obi tried to do what everyone does without finding out how it was done.’”⁵⁶ Therefore, “the accidents are those who get caught”.⁵⁷

⁵³ Munyae, M. Mulinge and Gwen N., Lesetedi, *Interrogating Our Past: Colonialism and Corruption in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Op. Cit., p. 18.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 21.

⁵⁵ Idem.

⁵⁶ Chinua, Achebe, *No Longer at Ease*, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, London, 1974, p. 5.

⁵⁷ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 59.

It is under these circumstances that Achebe deliberately chooses to show how Africans use their duplicity to perpetrate corruption. No wonder that the colonial authorities have used corrupt methods and have allowed their practice to subdue and control the colonised peoples, although the latter themselves are guilty. As already seen, corruption has been transmitted to African societies from the colonizer himself. It thus appears that corruption is a legacy of colonialism. For that matter, corruption becomes quickly a model of life or “an institution accepted by everybody, a strong and popular form of cynicism developed among people to the extent that nobody cares any longer about questions of morality”⁵⁸. This idea is proved by the quotation below:

In the urban political reality corruption has become a way of life, all pervasive, all encompassing and totally acceptable. People do not question the ethics of accepting a bribe; rather, they cynically admire those who know how to take a bribe [...].⁵⁹

According to Armah, after independence, one of the diseases known in Ghana as an evident cause of corruption is the lack of moral values in society. This situation has turned people into cynical admiration of corrupt citizens. From then on, moral values such as integrity, honesty, loyalty have been replaced by the act of “stealing by means of employment”⁶⁰. Due to the lack of good morality, this practice becomes a norm in most countries such as Ghana and Nigeria. For example, in *Fragments*, the same Armah succeeds in portraying top officials who, because they lack moral integrity, deprive the masses of their properties and rights. That is the reason why, in the same respect, Armah stresses that corruption is a phenomenon which resulted from a social fact. For that matter, the timber merchant when visiting the man tells him: “You also

⁵⁸ Laure Clémence, Capo-Chichi Zanou, *Corruption in Selected African Novels*, Op. Cit., p. 46.

⁵⁹ Cartey, Wilfred, *Whispers from a Continent*, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, London, 1969, p. 162.

⁶⁰ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 129.

know that everybody prospers from the work he does, no? Everybody prospers from the work he does.”⁶¹

The main derive here is that the disappearing or decreasing of moral orders of values such as integrity, dignity, faith, responsibility, willingness, conscience and shame has prompted the matters of corruption to be very widespread. For most people, the lack of good morality on the part of rulers creates the idea of corruption. That is the reason why Adichie is asking Nigerian people “to restore human dignity”⁶² in the motto of “UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA”⁶³. She cannot help “urging God to bring about the downfall of the Godless men ruling our country”⁶⁴.

Over the years, it is common knowledge that authoritarian and tyrannical regimes are other potential sources of corruption for having created the lack of freedom, the unbearable insecurity and the violation of Human Rights. In the particular case of Adichie, these regimes have really created an atmosphere of physical fear and psychological trauma in people.

Besides, the problem of the masses’ pervasive illiteracy has perpetrated the issue of corruption in the society described by Armah. Actually, the lack of moral awareness has turned the masses’ fight for survival not only into a struggle but also into the continuous, frequent and indefinable temptation of corruption. Such a situation can be illustrated by the story of the “loved ones”⁶⁵ in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. At one time Oyo stares unbelieving at her husband then whispers softly, ‘chichidodoooo’. The story refers to the man himself, an honest filing clerk who is starving. He walks or takes a bus to his office. So as to survive, he has to feed on fish from Koomson’s fishing boat. For that, his wife labels him a ‘chichidodo’ a bird that hates excrements to all its

⁶¹ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 32.

⁶² Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*. Op. Cit., p. 120.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 118.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 51.

⁶⁵ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 42.

soul but feeds on maggots, plants that grow best inside the lavatory. Furthermore, the wife adds: “Everybody does it. Why not you?”⁶⁶

In order to round up this chapter, I have shown that corruption has various causes. Among them, I have truly identified the political, economic, social and cultural ones. Their importance has prompted me to examine the practices of corruption in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* as well as in *Purple Hibiscus* through the next chapter.

⁶⁶ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 32.

CHAPTER 2: ASPECTS OF CORRUPTION IN THE NOVELS

At this point of my presentation, I have to acknowledge that the phenomenon of corruption is a complex issue because of its various aspects over the years. Firstly, these aspects will be analysed from a political and an economic view point. Secondly, they will be enlightened from a social perspective. Lastly, I will show how corruption is practised at the state level.

2-1- Political aspects of corruption

The practices of corruption in political spheres have to be underscored since some outsiders believe that “many African politicians, who aimed to stay in power as long as possible in order to implement their independence programs, extended their mandate through extra-constitutional means”⁶⁷. From then on, the practice of corruption becomes an “institution” in which politicians employ corrupt weapons just to win the confidence of the masses. This facilitates the setting up of favouritism, tribalism and the manipulation of the Press. As far as favouritism and tribalism are concerned, they are illegal means whereby one can give or be given unfair advantages to the detriment of people who deserve it.

At this stage, it is very important to acknowledge that favouritism and tribalism continue really to rot Ghana. It seems that these practices have prompted the Ghanaian society to allow incompetence and mediocrity. For the man, the real problem occurs when Koomson, known as a mere factory worker has turned out to be a Minister. He is even referred to as “His Excellency, Joseph Koomson, Minister Plenipotentiary, Member of the Presidential commission....”⁶⁸ In this respect, one can say that the narrator is talking about the politicians who have been appointed in government and who have then suddenly grown up with strange ideologies. In fact, that it is truly an imaginary illustration of the political atmosphere under Doctor Kwame Nkrumah. There, it

⁶⁷ Phyllis M., Martin, and O'Meara, Patrick, *AFRICA*, Op. Cit., p.p. 348-349.

⁶⁸ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 56.

has been stated that only the members of the Congress People Party (CPP) are given high positions in the administration “at the regional and district level”⁶⁹.

As far as Adichie is concerned, politics has lots of complications in which “there are some things that happen for which we can formulate no whys, for which whys simply do not exist, perhaps, are not necessary”⁷⁰. Before her, Armah has already acknowledged that “some people think being a Minister is all good-time”⁷¹ since Koomson, as a Minister, has stolen the money of the State for himself and his kinsmen. It is then acceptable that the unjust society depicted in Armah’s first novel is the direct result of the practice of the politicians’ corruption. Moreover, most of “the District and Regional Commissioners were replaced by party cadres most of whom had little or no education at all”⁷². As the whole society required, they only “have pressed those who are in high positions to favour them for their fair share of the national cake”⁷³. The main fact here is that although people are mediocre, they must really “keep getting pushed into using personal contacts”⁷⁴ in order to “take up a strategic post in the civil service”⁷⁵ anyhow though they lack the required degree and efficiency to administer the offices they are asked to manage.

Let it be remembered that the same mess continues in Nigeria when it is said that the Big Man “had helped [his] wife get the messenger job at the Local Government Office”⁷⁶ though she knows nothing about the civil service. This is similar to the situation of the “maths teacher who didn’t know the answers to his own tests”⁷⁷. Now, it is clear that people with doubtful characters such as praise singers and others are promoted to very high positions in compensation of their

⁶⁹ Hagan, P. George, “*Nkrumah’s Cultural Policy*” (a paper read at a symposium), Accra, 1971, p.14.

⁷⁰ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 307.

⁷¹ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 132.

⁷² Hagan, P. George, “*Nkrumah’s Cultural Policy*”, Op. Cit., p.14.

⁷³ Chinua, Achebe, *A Man of the People*, Op. Cit., p. 13.

⁷⁴ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *Fragments*, Op. Cit., p. 82.

⁷⁵ Chinua, Achebe, *A Man of the People*, Op. Cit., p. 13.

⁷⁶ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 111.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

militantism. As a matter of fact, the ideal of rewarding, according to the merit, to excellence and to competence seems really to be a hollow concept. Therefore, the concept of “the right man at the right place” is no longer acceptable, as Achebe said, to occupy any strategic post, “it did not matter what you knew but who you knew”⁷⁸.

According to Achebe, qualification is not important. Getting a good job depends on “who you are” since leaders used to appoint their relatives, members of their ethnic groups, families and less qualified people to the most lucrative jobs. So, to be promoted, one needs only to know a strategic person of the administration, at a top position where decisions are taken. This is the way things are done. In order to perpetuate corruption, the politicians keep developing favouritism and tribalism which have enabled not only Ghanaians and Nigerians but also African leaders to promote incompetence or mediocrity more than competence, excellence and merit.

Another instance through which the practice of corruption becomes the law in both novels is the political manipulation of the Press. Adichie analyses this in her novel where she states that “the Big People manipulate the Press in Abuja by bribing journalists, refusing the truth”⁷⁹.

It is clear that the great influence those Big People have on the journalists enables them to manipulate the Press in order to sing their praises. At the same time, the journalists must praise those people for their false, selfish and hypocritical plans.

Under these circumstances, the Press is clearly prevented from telling the truth in order to veil the leaders’ odious social crimes. In this vein, they have to be bribed so as to safeguard the leaders’ own interests and to keep the latter’s

⁷⁸ Chinua, Achebe, *A Man of the People*, Op. Cit., p. 19.

⁷⁹ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., pp. 205-206.

so-called political opponents silent. Accordingly, all means are good to discredit the opposition parties in the eyes of the people.

In this respect, it is much easier to notice that the Press is not totally free in Nigeria. There is no safety for the journalists who try to be loyal and stay out of “the national game”⁸⁰. As a consequence, journalists no longer give true, accurate and unbiased information. They have to falsify, contort and distort the right version of the information. Even the journalists who actively comment the political scenes of their countries must generally falsify and twist the right information to the people.

There is here a clear indication that the Press is easily bribed because they are also “clearly seeking their own interests in their manner of reporting political incidents....”⁸¹ Such behaviours on the part of journalists have helped politicians to take actions so as to bribe them:

Even the government agents, two men in black jackets who came some time ago, yanked at the hibiscus as they left. They came in a pickup truck with Federal Government plates and parked close to the hibiscus bushes. They didn’t stay long. Later, Jaja said they came to bribe Papa, that he had heard them say that their pickup was full of dollars. I was not sure Jaja had heard correctly. I imagined the truck full of stacks and stacks of foreign money, wondered if they had put the money in many cartons or in one huge carton, the size our fridge came in.⁸²

This passage is a picturesque illustration of the true manipulation of the Press. In such a context, it is understandable that the inflexible and truthful journalists are intimidated and threatened to be killed or put in jails. Ade Coker’s uprightness is assertive of this. As it can be read “the soldiers had gone to the house; they had shot him to make sure he would never publish anything again”⁸³.

One can rightly deduce from this that the socialists and democratic

⁸⁰ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 55.

⁸¹ Cartey, Wilfred, *Whispers from a continent: The Literature of Contemporary Black Africa*, Op. Cit., p. 160.

⁸² Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., pp. 17-18.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.155.

regimes established respectively in Ghana and in Nigeria are authoritarian and dictatorial regimes in which the high practice of corruption has become legal.

Apart from the manipulation of the Press, African politicians have monopolised over the police, the armed forces and the judges because “our lawyers knew the right people to bribe”⁸⁴. In the two novels some of the most outstanding corrupt practices have happened because the police cannot help demanding bribe to any person in need of being helped. This is proved by Father Amadi when he has visited Jaja in prison. In order to sooth Jaja, Amadi tells him “the lawyers will get you out next week. Mama has bribed all kinds of ointments in and none seem to work”⁸⁵.

As indicated above, the incidence of corruption is quite high in Nigeria because bribery of public officials and public acceptance of corruption are universally acknowledged there. It goes without the saying that the taking of bribes and the perversion of justice among the police, the judiciary and other organs that administer justice are very easy businesses in the fictional societies presented by Armah and Adichie.

All this is a series of evidences to prove that political leaders have turned out to be fraudulent actions doers. For those leaders, the matter is not about a great knowledge but about personal relations. They only keep on putting stress upon an attachment that arises from a sense of affinity. Such inequalities condone corruption, exemplify the poverty of the masses and multiply the aspects of corruption in economy.

⁸⁴ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p.303.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p.308.

2-2- Economic aspects of corruption

First of all, the economic aspect of corruption has really to do with its manifestation or practice in the economic and financial spheres. It is then worth talking about the economic aspects because there are some practices of corruption in economy throughout the two novels. Be it either in Ghana or in Nigeria corruption thrives in the socio-economic life. It even seems that the high level of corruption in economy is one of the greatest plagues that thwart good governance and development. The matter of corruption has been a deep concern for Armah to the extent that he has revealed one of its incidents in the following dialogue:

The messenger came over to the control desk. He still had his smile.... 'I won something in the lottery,' he said. [...].

'I know people who won more than five hundred cedis last year. They still haven't got their money.' [...].

'I hope some official at the lottery place will take some of my hundred cedis as a bribe and allow me to have the rest'⁸⁶.

The conversation above shows that most of government institutions such as the lottery and the police practise corruption through distortion of due procedure in the public sectors. From this example, it appears that the most obvious economic practices of corruption deal with the great need to steal, to loot, to defraud substantial parts of available national resources for personal needs. That is the reason why Adichie writes that "the people in Abuja had stolen all the money meant for making the expressways dual-carriage"⁸⁷. A little further, she has also talked about the corrupt leaders who use the government money to finance churches in Nigeria⁸⁸.

Acting in a different way but with the same motivation, the question of the greed for money makes Araba as well as her mother, Efua say in *Fragments*:

⁸⁶ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 19.

⁸⁷ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 62.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

[...] an out dooring ceremony held more than a few days after payday is useless. Ghanaian men get broke so fast these days it isn't funny. You're right the only sensible time is the first weekend after payday.⁸⁹

Through those few lines, it can be said that money is seen as the only source of happiness and well-being in contemporary societies. The most important thing is to amass wealth and become rich. That is the reason why loans and nearly all economic projects, in terms of billions, are not properly executed by African leaders. They divert those funds for their personal needs. They buy luxury items such as very big cars, very large and expensive houses with extremely expensive imported furniture. For example, Adichie criticises the spending of substantial parts of available national resources on useless projects as the major ban to her country's economic growth.

Talking about the same point, Adichie accuses the politicians of Nigeria arguing that "something is not right with them"⁹⁰. Further, she makes it clearer "that was the problem with our people, Papa told us, our priorities were wrong; we cared too much about huge church buildings and mighty statues. You would never see white people doing that"⁹¹.

Others dreadful pictures about the misuse of public funds come to mind as Kambili is confessing that she "had never been to the restaurant Genesis and had only been to the hotel Nike Lake [...] the happening places in Enugu [...] where Papa's business partner had a wedding reception"⁹². In the same way to portray the economic practice of the corrupt politicians, Armah recalls readers the existence of "the Atlantic-Caprice". It is represented as the most comfortable place in Ghana where people waste not only their time in comfort and pleasure but also waste so much money. These sumptuous places found in Ghana and in Nigerian may significantly be indicative factors of social practices of corruption.

⁸⁹ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *Fragments*, London, Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd., 1970, p. 88.

⁹⁰ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p.150.

⁹¹ Ibid., p.112.

⁹² Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit.,p.125.

2-3- Social aspects of corruption

In *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* and in *Purple Hibiscus*, some places like the Atlantic-Caprice, Genesis and Nike Lake are representative of disorder and corruption. Accordingly, only corrupt politicians and wealthy businessmen can go there in order to organize parties and spend huge amount of money. Thus they symbolise social acts of corruption. There is also the case of the timber merchant when one takes into account his discussion with the man about the allocation clerk: “I am not a child, my friend. If you work in the same office you can eat from the same bowl. What do you mean to tell me?”⁹³ Furthermore, this same timber merchant adds:

I beg you, let us stop joking now, [...]. There 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.⁹⁴

Actually, the statements above are dealing with moral and social practices of corruption at the same time. Here, the timber merchant is trying to convince the man to accept his bribes offering. And at the same time, the man is resisting in order to remain upright in his rotten society. This form of corruption is particularly harmful for the masses. Such bribery is on a large scale of corruption in terms of management because it usually involves powerful officials and large amounts of money.

In the same way, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie has unveiled the problem of the police. For her, the issue of the corrupt police is a very burning fact to the extent that “Papa was talking about the policemen, about how they set up the roadblocks in wooded parts, even if it was dangerous for motorists, just so that they could use the bushes to hide money they extorted from travelers”⁹⁵.

⁹³ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 29.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 30.

⁹⁵ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*. Op. Cit., p. 112.

Furthermore, Kambili gives further evidence to the matter when she witnesses a case of corruption at a police checkpoint on the road leading to the town of Nsukka. At the checkpoint, a policeman has stopped the lorry by which Kambili is travelling. After having seen the full episode, she says:

A policeman flagged us down as we approached. Kevin groaned. Then as he slowed, he reached into the glove compartment and pulled out a ten-naira note and flung it out of the window, towards the policeman. The policeman gave a mock salute, smiled, and waved us through.⁹⁶

Another very important instance showing that everybody is involved in corruption happens “when policemen or soldiers stopped Papa, he spent so long showing them all his car papers, letting them search his car, anything but bribe them to let him pass”⁹⁷. No doubt, Uncle Eugene seems to be against corruption and appears as an idealistic person like the man, but he eventually succumbs to the temptation of corruption since he gives bribes to the police to let him pass through. This means that the massive implication of the police into corruptive activity has made the public stick to corruption more obviously. For instance, bribing the police and lawyers becomes the most common practice because they cannot help asking for bribe to assist people in a bad situation. In view of this, Armah has only to warn people by telling them: “It cost you more money if you go to the police”⁹⁸. It is fair to point out that the matter of the corrupt police becomes more and more true to life and very alarming to the extent that:

Once when the man was traveling to Cape Coast there different policemen had stopped the little bus and asked the driver for his quarter license. The driver had not bought it yet, and each of the policemen had said to him in front of everybody. “Even kola gives pleasure in the chewing”. In each case the driver had smiled and given the law twenty-five pesewas, and the law was satisfied. There only one way.⁹⁹

As it can be clearly seen, the quotation above confirms what I have said above about the corrupt police. Here, the author is telling readers that there is no

⁹⁶ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*. Op. Cit., pp. 118-119.

⁹⁷ Idem.

⁹⁸ Armah, Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 19.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 95.

other “way for young people to reach the gleam”¹⁰⁰ except through corruption. There is no gainsaying that corruption engulfs the entire society since money is called “kola” by the people who offer bribes and those who receive them. People use this term just to prevent everyone from knowing that what they are thinking about or what they are doing is illegal.

The most surprising thing is the fact that justice whose duty is to enforce the law has also turned out to be corrupt. So taking bribes has become a very common fact for judges. This is the case with sir Derinola in Soyinka’s *The Interpreters* (1970) who, although he is a judge, likes taking bribes. He practices that sad business in complicity with the most obviously corrupt politician called Chief Winsala. All this is an indication that corruption is rampant and there is increasing evidence that it is practised at the state level.

2-4- Corruption at the state level

At the state level, international business transactions have long been recognized as fertile ground for various practices of corruption in the two novels. For, these transactions are used to keep, in safe havens outside one’s country, much of the illicit capitals gained as a result of corrupt practices. For example, although there are several systems of controls set up by the government in order to forbid the transfer of hard currency to foreign countries, it is easy for Koomson to send some money abroad¹⁰¹. In *Purple Hibiscus*, the narrator confesses it as follows: “[...] the Standard had written many stories about the cabinet ministers who stashed money in foreign bank accounts, money meant for paying teacher’s salaries and building roads”¹⁰². The most important here is to show that corruption has cut across international borders and opened “many foreign connections”¹⁰³ so as to engulf many local officials and

¹⁰⁰ Armah, Ayi Kwei, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 95.

¹⁰¹ Laure Clémence, Capo-Chichi Zanou, *Corruption in Selected African Novels*, Op. Cit., p. 38.

¹⁰² Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*. Op. Cit., p. 32.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 208.

significant numbers of international businesses at the state level. It seems that international businesses favour the export of local currency to foreign banks and countries. The proof is that Achebe also portrays leaders as those who “work with foreign companies to rape the nation’s economy. [...]. Nanga would invest in foreign banks the profits he would make”¹⁰⁴.

It thus appears that corruption thrives well to the extent that foreign companies and foreign banks are also considered as the fertile grounds for corrupt practices at the state level. Another aspect of corruption at the state level is that “Heads of state and/or their powerful cronies pressure courts to delay and eventually throw out even the most serious cases of corruption leaving the perpetrators free to continue fleecing the nation”¹⁰⁵. Actually, it also seems that the banks are involved in that play because when the man doubts that it is impossible to send the money abroad and confesses “I thought that was no longer possible”¹⁰⁶, Koomson defies him and replies telling him that “everything is possible, [...]. It depends on the person”¹⁰⁷. Since Koomson is a Minister he can do forbidden things in his society. For example, he uses the fishing boat scheme to win Oyo and her mother since he promises them that he would make them rich by giving them the fishing boat yet the boat is in the name of his daughter, Princess. At the same time, he used to steal money that belongs to the state, hence he abuses the trust that the government places on him¹⁰⁸. In the same way, as Minister of Foreign trade, Chief Nanga appears to have a dirty bargain with a governmental firm called British amalgamated in the following passage:

Chief Nanga, who had himself held the portfolio of Foreign Trade until two years ago, had been guilty of the same practice and had built out of his gains three blocks of seven-storey luxury flats at three hundred thousand pounds each in the

¹⁰⁴ Macheka, Mavis Thokozile, Academic Journals, *International Journal of English and Literature*, Op. Cit, p. 16.

¹⁰⁵ Kwabena, Gyimah-Brempong, *Corruption, growth, and inequality in Africa*, op. cit., p. 24.

¹⁰⁶ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, op. cit., p. 149.

¹⁰⁷ Idem.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 58.

name of his wife and these flats were immediately leased by British amalgamated at fourteen hundred a month each.¹⁰⁹

This statement shows that there is grand corruption at the state level associated with various features. And then apart from these characteristics another aspect of corruption at the same level is that a lot of people accused of corruption often move to neighbouring countries or to other continents to avoid prosecution. Having avoided being punished, such people create international relations and other legal mechanisms through which they largely perpetuate corruption. Like Koomson and the Head of State (General Sani Abacha), some of them build factories or companies inside and outside their countries, in which they invest the countless money they have defrauded to the detriment of the masses¹¹⁰.

Throughout this part of the study, I have documented the various causes and aspects of corruption in the fictional nations depicted in the two novels. But one of the important matters remaining here is to know whether corruption has a lot of negative impacts on every sphere of societal development: political, economic and social.

¹⁰⁹ Chinua, Achebe, *A Man of the People*, Op. cit., p. 112.

¹¹⁰ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 106.

**PART TWO: CONSEQUENCES OF
CORRUPTION IN THE NOVELS**

CHAPTER 3: THE DIRECT CONSEQUENCES OF CORRUPTION

The effects or consequences of corruption in both novels can be analysed from three main perspectives: political, economic and socio-cultural.

3-1- Political consequences of corruption

Corruption is a global phenomenon and its political drawbacks on individual, on institutions, on Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana or on General Sani Abacha's Nigeria and on global development have made it an issue of universal concern.

Talking about the political consequences of corruption, one has to mention that the very practice of corruption has broken down the law and order in society. One of the most dangerous consequences is the overthrow of corrupt regimes set up as the way of life. In Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* for instance, military leaders use the pretext of widespread corruption to justify their taking power when they stage a coup and depose the corrupt regime led by Nkrumah. There is no gainsaying therefore that corruption is the main cause of the shameful fall of the dirty Ghanaian regime with which Koomson is connected. This coup has really begotten political instability which has led to many other coups in a period of time. Nonetheless, it seems that many people have applauded the coup for the reason that "in the great strike, many men had thought the big chance definitively comes. And they had rushed to say how much they had fought against the order they thought had been overthrown"¹¹¹. At that time, even "at the bus stop people were talking, but in truth nobody knew anything except that there had been a change...."¹¹²

The real problem lays here is that the coup d'Etat is the direct consequence of the corrupt practices in Nkrumah's Ghana. Besides, the

¹¹¹ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 157.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 159.

inefficiency of the public service is a key consequence of corruption because it can lead to citizens' distrust toward the rulers. In the same respect, the rulers become unreliable. According to Adichie, this point is very meaningful and common to Nigerian politicians whose administrative slowness and inefficiency have directly brought about serious series of strike and riots. For, the masses "could not get the stretcher from the medical centre because the medical administrative staff was on strike, too"¹¹³. Moreover, it is said that Papa Nnukwu "would be alive now if the medical administration was not on strike"¹¹⁴. Certainly, apart from the Nigerian medical administration, many institutions and public services have been on strike so as to protest against their marginalisation. For her, to solve social issues, "it would take ages before anybody did anything about them"¹¹⁵.

Here, needless to indicate that the political practices of corruption in Nigerian have rendered basic services unattainable for the poor people who cannot afford them. Moreover, the practices of corruption have completely weakened the judiciary system and made impunity the medium to encourage "the really big corrupted people"¹¹⁶. Undoubtedly, such a malaise has incited Amaka to compare corruption with an overwhelming high temperature in the following expression: "all that corruption and all that heat"¹¹⁷.

Indeed, as already mentioned, the ruling class breeds and takes care of the exploitation and oppression of the less privileged Nigerian people. It is clear that due to the widespread practices of corruption, the poor and vulnerable citizens suffer most because they depend on government services and public systems to satisfy their most basic needs.

¹¹³ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*. Op. Cit., p. 192.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 193.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 237.

¹¹⁶ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 159.

¹¹⁷ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p.304.

As an evidence, the inefficiency of the Head of State shows that corruption can hinder the building of the nation. This view is also shared by Adichie when she points out:

Students are rioting [...]. The singing was clearer now, loud and resonant. There had to be at least five hundred people ‘Sole administrator must go. He doesn’t wear pant oh! Head of State must go. He doesn’t wear pant oh! Where is running water? Where is light? Where is petrol’?¹¹⁸

In such situations, students vandalize everything in their passage. As one can imagine, they have organised great manifestations in which they have “burned a senior professor’s car”¹¹⁹ and they have continued to shout:

All we are singing, ‘Sole administrator must go. All we are singing, he must go! Na be so? Na so? [...].
Great Lions and Lionesses! We wan people who dey wear clean underwear, sef, talkless of clean one? No!¹²⁰

Now, it is worth noticing that the practices of corruption have led to several actions planned in socio-political fields to paralyse the country. And one of these plans “was signed by the registrar. The university was closed down until further notice as a result of the damage to university property and the atmosphere of unrest”¹²¹.

Unquestionably, the university closure until further notice is another act that needs attention. The outcomes of this banal behaviour may have many other devastating long-term effects on those students who are denied a proper acquisition of knowledge. It is clear then that they may suffer from low cognitive skills and associated problems later “since nobody knew when the university would reopen”¹²².

It is therefore necessary to notice that because of the political drawbacks, corruption has many negative impacts on the economy.

¹¹⁸ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., pp. 232-233.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p.233.

¹²⁰ Idem.

¹²¹ Idem.

¹²² Ibid., p. 238.

3-2- Economic consequences of corruption

It is worthwhile to recall here that the mismanagement of public wealth is an enormous consequence of corruption because it results in the deviation of funds intended for development. It also undermines the capability of government to provide basic services. It is under these circumstances that Adichie writes:

We have not had fuel for three months in Nsukka. I spent the night in the petrol station last week, waiting for fuel. And at the end, the fuel did not come. Some people left their cars in the station because they did not have enough fuel to drive back home.¹²³

At this point, one can clearly notice that the practice of corruption leaves ordinary people without essential services such as fuel and petrol. In other words, corruption deprives the masses of having access to the basic needs of life. Worst still, the lack of fuel and petrol increases the prices of basic materials as “you could see how the prices of dried milk rise every day, as if somebody is chasing them”¹²⁴. For that reason, “the traders say it is hard to transport their food because there is no fuel, so they add on the costs of transportation...”¹²⁵.

Beyond doubt, the masses live in the upmost hard life since corruption continues to erode their living conditions. Unfortunately, very few people can acknowledge that “those poor ignorant souls”¹²⁶ are seriously confronted with an unbearable poverty. In the particular case of poverty, another illustration is the man’s inability to buy his children shoes and one of them gets his leg injured. Hence, the man is the archetype of the ordinary masses who lack all and cannot make their ends meet. The situation has angered the man’s mother-in-law who bitterly says:

My poor husband! Said the old woman, over and over again. You have no shoes to wear, so your poor little feet get torn to pieces. Ei, my husband, you have

¹²³ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p.84.

¹²⁴ Ibid., p.238.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p.178.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 179.

nobody to buy you shoes, so your little toes will all be destroyed. You must know you have nobody; you are an orphan, a complete orphan. You must not run around, like people who have men behind them, to buy them shoes. My poor husband!¹²⁷

As pointed out above, these words occur when one of the man's children hits his foot against a stone. As a result, the stone injures him because he has no shoes on his feet. Indisputably, for the old woman, having a poor father is synonymous with being a complete orphan.

In addition, all these actions show that there is an evident link between the endemic corruption that characterises the public life and the deplorable economic situation which prevails in the countries portrayed in the two novels. In *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* for example, characters such as “the man”, Teacher, Maanan and others are symbols of poor and hopeless people. But among them, the most striking example is “the man” who lives a very miserable life and earns a very meager salary which is not enough for him and his family. For instance, he can neither feed his family properly from the beginning of the month till the end. Nor can he satisfy his own needs as it can be read:

The man could see how little the stew was with which they were trying to eat their kenkey. But it had always been like that. Once or twice he had impulsively given up his food so they could have more meat. But if he really wanted to give them the food they needed, they would certainly have to go naked, or he would have to go¹²⁸.

There is here a clear indication that “the man” lacks the minimum any normal person must possess. As a consequence, “at the lunchtime he feels really hungry and goes down to the seller. He would like some good fufu, but without a lot of meat, street fufu is miserable food, and with meat the cost will crucify a man completely”¹²⁹.

¹²⁷ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 123.

¹²⁸ Ibid., pp. 119-120.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 110.

Similarly, Kofi Billy and Maanan have no means to face the horrible threat of the unavoidable poverty. In fact, poverty has some drawbacks such as the use and abuse of drugs, suicide and prostitution just to name these. Thus, it is not surprising that Kofi Billy, out of frustration and humiliation, resorts to suicide while Maanan becomes mad.

Truly, the defrauding and looting of public funds by politicians really increase the idea of sharing the public resources like a mere cake. Viewed from the economic side, it has been very difficult for the governments depicted in Ghana and Nigeria to meet the huge economic needs of their citizens because “people [have] stolen all the money of the country”¹³⁰. This is what Koomson has done. He even used to say that “the commercial bank is ours, and we can do anything”¹³¹.

Moreover, Koomson uses public funds to buy a boat on which he puts his daughter’s name. As a consequence, this kind of mess has certainly prompted “some Big Man in Abuja”¹³² to steal lots of money and leave the country “drift further and further into debt”¹³³. For example, “no lecturer has been paid for the last two months”¹³⁴ because the cabinet ministers have “stashed money in foreign bank accounts, money meant for paying teachers’ salaries and building roads”¹³⁵. All the same, “the university did not pay salaries for months”¹³⁶ for the simple reason that “the money has gone in people’s pockets”¹³⁷.

The immediate consequence of this predicament has prompted Adichie to point out the bad state of the university’s infrastructures in the following statement:

¹³⁰ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p.62.

¹³¹ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 136.

¹³² Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p.139.

¹³³ Robert, Fraser, *The Novels of Ayi Kwei Armah*, Op. Cit., p. 8.

¹³⁴ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p.84.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.255.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.181.

The wide schoolyard, enclosed by a trimmed whistling pine hedge, was cluttered with long buildings as if they had all sprung up at will, unplanned. Aunty Ifeoma pointed at a building next to the school, the Institute of African Studies, where her office was and where she taught most of her classes. The building was old; I could tell from the colour and from the windows, coated with the dust of so many harmattans that they would never shine again¹³⁸.

Taking into account the quotation above, one can understand that “when public contracts are procured through a corrupt system, it results in lower quality of infrastructure and public services”¹³⁹. This means that corruption negatively impacts on quality of infrastructures and public services. The same situation shows that corruption lowers investment and retards economic growth. For example, “where corruption is rampant, donor agencies are unwilling to put in their money”¹⁴⁰. Corruption has then resulted in an extreme financial and economic crisis increasing the strong lack of public infrastructures.

Clearly, corruption fundamentally runs contrary to accountability, feeds social inequalities and injustice, increases unemployment and poverty in the economy. For Anthony, “nothing is as destructive to a society as the rush to quick and easy money which makes fools of those who can work honestly and constructively”¹⁴¹. That implies that corruption is no doubt an enemy of economic development. In short, corruption costs lives and negatively affects any country’s development drive. Apart from these negative effects on economy, the practices of corruption result in social and cultural consequences.

¹³⁸ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p.137.

¹³⁹ Egwemi, Victor, *Corruption and corrupt practices in Nigeria*, Op. Cit., p.76.

¹⁴⁰ Idem.

¹⁴¹ C. Oha, Anthony, *The African Novel, ENG 281*, Op. Cit., p. 67.

3-3- Social consequences of corruption

Nowadays, societies are split into two social classes. The ‘haves’ belong to the higher class and the ‘have-nots’ to the lower class. The members of the higher class are referred to as VIP. They are politicians including Heads of the States, Ministers, Members of Parliament, senior civil servants, whereas the lower class is composed of peasants, market men and women, craftsmen and women, students.

Actually, the phenomenon having led the world to be broken into social classes has become a real preoccupation in contemporary Africa to the extent that Armah has also made it a major topic in his books. For example, in *Fragments*, he decides to deal with it in terms of criticism directed against his country men and women as well as against foreigners. At the national level, Armah writes about a new maternity for VIPs and senior officers. A nurse working declares: “Well...this new wing is for VIPs and senior officers”¹⁴², when Baako drives his sister in this very new wing.

But, with these happenings, I can say without fear that in the same society some are more equal than the others. For instance, the VIPs live in a total abundance while the lower class members are suffering. At the foreign level, Armah shows signs that embody the illness boldly at the airport:

“VIP CAR PARK
NO ENTRY
BY ORDER”¹⁴³

Anyhow, one can therefore understand that this parking is forbidden to the ordinary people. In *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Armah also points out some social inequalities. He presents the Koomsons as VIPs, the man and the old woman who is his mother-in-law represent the ordinary people. Once more, it is noticeable that Mr. Koomson is a corrupt politician; he is a minister under

¹⁴² Ayi Kwei, Armah, *Fragments*, Op. Cit., p. 75.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

Nkrumah's regime. He amasses a lot of wealth thanks to the national game which is nothing but giving and accepting bribes. He lives in a luxury mansion previously inhabited by the colonisers, he spends his most of his time at Atlantic Caprice, a luxury hotel rearing above the city, and drives a Cadillac. During their stroll in the market places, Estella Koomson embalmed with perfume and wearing a shiny ring complains of "fridges too full to contain anything more and of too much bread already bought"¹⁴⁴. But in contrast to the abundance in which Koomson; a corrupt politician wallows, an old woman is very poor and is starving. The following passage is nothing but a proof of what has been said about the cruel hunger prevailing the man's society:

A knock on the door. Answer from the woman, and an old woman with her breast barely covered by her cloth comes in holding a little chipped enamel bowl at the tips of fingers.
'Good evening', she said. Here I am again. Sugar. Would you be pleased to lend me a little sugar? Just for the children.¹⁴⁵

Unfortunately, "the old woman's face appears a smile halfway between skepticism and triumphant belief"¹⁴⁶ because Oyo's answer is: "We have just finished our last packet ourselves"¹⁴⁷. And as the old woman "*disappears* through the doorway she looks at the couple within and says, 'Ah this life!'"¹⁴⁸ This situation shows that the man himself, an honest filing clerk is short of sugar. He walks or takes a bus to his office. So as to survive, he has to feed on fish from Koomson's fishing boat.

As a matter of fact, I come to the conclusion that the fictional societies portrayed in both novels are divided into rich and poor people (the haves and the have-nots or the privileged and the non privileged citizens). It is a division that shows clearly the widening gap between the opulence in which the wealthy

¹⁴⁴ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 38.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 43.

¹⁴⁶ Idem.

¹⁴⁷ Idem.

¹⁴⁸ Idem.

leaders live and the general atmosphere of suffering and poverty of the masses. It is also important to state that in such situations few people are extremely rich while the majority is extremely poor and lack the bare minimum¹⁴⁹. The unfortunate outcome of this condition is the evident marginalisation of the masses and the chronic unemployment of the young people. Hence, the masses' "life gets very hard"¹⁵⁰ since they are overwhelmed by the practices of corruption. In order to show such social consequences, Kambili confesses that she "could hear more people [...] complain about how hard life was, how they could not buy new clothes for their children this Christmas"¹⁵¹. Suffering and sorrow are their daily bread. Afterwards, they must finally lose all hope and live desperately because the new political leaders lack integrity and transparency. So, the main problems of those masses who have strongly struggled for independence are ignored. Those masses have no longer any single power to protect themselves from any form of social injustice.

Actually, social injustice has led to the unequal and unfair distribution of the country's wealth. It has prevented poor people from having access to health, sanitation and education. On the contrary, poor people are severely exploited, betrayed oppressed and neglected by the political leaders.

Such a dramatic situation, often, leads to social unrest. And one still observes the sincere situation of the macro oddities as consequences of corruption in the Nigerian neo-colonial society. For Adichie, corruption impacts most heavily on the poor and vulnerable members in society. Obviously, greed, injustice, brutality, violence and murder portrayed by Adichie resulted from the military dictatorship, its ethical misappropriation and the pains of anarchy. It is clear that these social realities are the direct consequences of corruption Adichie has described.

¹⁴⁹ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 286.

¹⁵⁰ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 125.

¹⁵¹ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 68.

Armah and Adichie's views about the plight of the masses in neo-colonial African societies show that social consequences of corruption are similar to the most breathtaking vices. These vices include bad habitation, malnutrition, unemployment, distress, agony, ill health, misery and starvation. In other words, they affect the future growth and prosperity of all people.

As depicted in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* and *Purple Hibiscus*, the most striking consequences of corruption on African modern societies include the phenomenon of alienation. Indeed, alienation is the fact of imitating another people's habits. It is the crazy and blind mimicry which continues to eat deep into the fabric of the people's socio-cultural life till now. For example, once alienated, people have to put western values above everything and hate their own culture. Another example occurs in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* when Estella Koomson shamelessly declares that:

'This local beer,' [...] does not agree with [her] constitution.' [...]. 'Really, the only good drinks are European drinks. [...]. [she said the man] should have brought European drinks,' [...], 'and not have wasted [his] money like this'¹⁵².

The quotation above proves that Estella Koomson is a live representation of cultural alienation. Here, she is complaining about local beer which she does not like to drink because it is not suitable for her body. Anyway, one can understand that by saying so, it is a kind of irony because she means that local beer is not fit for a category of people like her. So, according to her, her social rank is very higher than others' who drink local beer, she has not to put herself with those people. And to tell the truth, far from exaggerating, Estella and her husband use to drink only imported drink from the western countries.

Actually, through the character Estella, one can understand that the search of honour leads most African people like her to copy Western social values without judging its drawbacks on human beings. For that reason, they morally

¹⁵² Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., pp. 131-132.

“kill” their culture. On behalf of alienation, people choose the death of their ideal customs which particularize and make them feel happy and proud. This becomes a common practice in corrupt society. So, apart from engendering poverty, the phenomenon of corruption has the capacity of changing the social values of a good and progressive society dramatically to nothing else than alienation. Thus, alienation is a social evil linked to corruption.

Obviously, such behaviours prove that Estella Koomson symbolises the women who live “in the manner of a languid white woman in films, to raise a curl that was obscuring her vision and push it back into the main mass of her wig”¹⁵³. Moreover, she also symbolizes those people who mostly “don’t like the made-in-Ghana Spirits”¹⁵⁴. For, “there is an irony in the Nigerians’ acceptance of European values; they are cynical about colonial society, yet they embrace its trinkets. By so doing, they contribute to perpetrate”¹⁵⁵ the phenomenon of alienation. The erosion of the moral fabric of society resulted from the strong lack of faith as another bitter consequence of corruption in African societies.

Evidently, corruption intrinsically undermines efficiency and the quality of governance. Anthony captures this impact on governance by arguing that “corruption kills the development spirit”¹⁵⁶.

Finally, I realize that in the fictional societies presented by Armah and Adichie, corruption remains a way leading to the disillusionment.

¹⁵³ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 131.

¹⁵⁴ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *Fragments*, Op. Cit., p.88.

¹⁵⁵ Laure Clémence, Capo-Chichi Zanou, *Corruption in Selected African Novels*, Op. Cit., p. 45.

¹⁵⁶ C. Oha, Anthony, *The African Novel, ENG 281*, Op. Cit., p. 67.

CHAPTER 4: THE POST-INDEPENDENCE DISILLUSIONMENT

The practice of corruption has favoured the feeling of disillusionment at the political, at the economic and at the social levels After independence.

4-1- The political leaders' hypocrisy

In the present section an effort is to be made to examine the way Armah and Achebe have explored the masses' disillusionment in their postcolonial societies. This includes the two writers' views about the plight of the masses in Ghanaian and Nigerian neo-colonial nations as they are reflected in their novels.

Indeed, the expression of life of disenchantment and pain in these novels indicates that the political leaders' greed and injustice sometimes hide not only a mere complicity but also a naked hypocrisy. Actually, most of the leaders work under the cover of hypocrisy. As it is the case in Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, every single means of communication is used to flatter people with impressive but false campaign:

Like others before it, this campaign had been extremely impressive, and admiring rumors indicated that it had cost a great lot of money. Certainly the papers had been full of words informing their readers that dirt was undesirable and must be eliminated. On successive days a series of big shots had appealed to everybody to be clean¹⁵⁷.

It is obvious that the impressiveness of the campaign itself is a mere illusion. Even the slogan "keep your country clean by keeping your city clean"¹⁵⁸ is nothing but a pure hypocrisy on the part of political leaders. It shows that politicians can never clarify to the people the way they want their socialist ideology to be followed. Therefore, they use it in order to weaken the ordinary masses' consciousness forever. And the slogan itself is a pure euphemism in which the leaders defend their ideas. It proves that the honesty of a political communication is not the sincerity of its author. Moreover, this speech is a kind

¹⁵⁷ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., pp. 7-8.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 7.

of strong political machinery hidden behind a steady practice of corruption. It is also a hypocritical plan through which large amounts of government's money have gone into fictive, false and fruitless projects.

In the particular case of Armah, the political leaders' greed and selfishness make them two-faced people towards their masses to whom none of them can tell the truth. His fiction reveals that one major unfortunate problem runs through the independent Ghana is betrayal of public confidence by the ruling class. According to the literary critic, Frazer, "the African politicians love flashy scenes"¹⁵⁹. In the same vein, Frazer has shown that the politicians are champions at flattering the people they rule. For that, they are always in search of new strategies to convince the ignorant and innocent population. The most important thing for the Ghanaian politicians is to be sure that they are strongly supported by the majority of the masses at all cost. At this occasion, it is worth reminding that a similar striking case of hypocrisy is pointed out in Achebe's *A Man of the People* through Chief Nanga:

Chief Nanga was a born politician; he could get away with almost anything he said and did. And as long as men are swayed by their hearts and stomachs and not their heads the Chief Nanga of this world will continue to get away with anything. He had that rare gift of making people feel-even while he was saying harsh things to them that there was not a drop of ill will in his entire frame¹⁶⁰.

It can be said that Chief Nanga is a prototype of those politicians who actually know how to delude people. By the way, the politicians like Chief Nanga make the masses believe in wrong things. Indeed, the politicians have almost all the same behaviours; they know how to utter what their people want to hear so as to win their entire support.

Another similar case occurs in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* where the politicians' hypocrisy turns into "a very hostile form of selfishness, a very

¹⁵⁹ Robert, Fraser, *The Novels of Ayi Kwei Armah*, Op. Cit., p. 8.

¹⁶⁰ Chinua, Achebe, *A Man of the People*, Op. Cit., p. 73.

perverse selfishness”¹⁶¹. For example, Koomson, as a politician, makes many promises to Oyo and her mother in order to win their support. He truly leads the masses into “the blinding gleam beautiful [...] and the shine of powerful new Mercedes cars”¹⁶². This is the reason why “the man” says that “Koomson is just going to fool them” [...] I cannot sit and watch Oyo and her mother getting fooled by this Koomson”¹⁶³. Instead of several boats as promised, Koomson buys only one boat to Oyo’s mother and put her daughter’s name on it. By so doing, Koomson has hypocritically betrayed his supporters.

In order to show how Nigerian politicians tell lies to their people, Kambili has only to maintain that they are “like those children people are rising these days, with no home training and no fear of God”¹⁶⁴. For those politicians, being loyal is “nothing but mortal sin that would keep a person away from”¹⁶⁵ good politicians. As a result, although there are “the best doctors and therapists in Nigeria and abroad”¹⁶⁶, its people “will never heal”¹⁶⁷ from corruption because their “eyes seemed focused on invisible objects for a long time”¹⁶⁸.

Furthermore, their “illegal activity”¹⁶⁹ and their common attitude show that only “the means justify the end”. In practice, thanks to their demagogy, bigotry, cynicism, self-interest and lack of political conviction, political leaders cannot observe any loyalty or rightness. As a consequence, most people continue to think that the hypocritical exploitation and manipulation of the masses is the best way to succeed in life. In addition, political leaders refuse all suggestions and reproaches¹⁷⁰ because their action aims at generalizing fraudulently their hypocrisy. According to Adichie, the politicians’ hypocrisy

¹⁶¹ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 52.

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 56.

¹⁶³ Ibid., p. 57.

¹⁶⁴ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 66.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 14.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 263.

¹⁶⁷ Idem.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 264.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 265.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 59.

reaches a certain level so that “people who have bad stomachs should not spread their bad will to others!”¹⁷¹

Here, I have noticed that the lack of moral integrity, honesty and dignity of the politicians can perpetrate hypocrisy and favour the continued existence of corruption. Truly, one realizes that in both novels, the political leaders’ hypocritical deeds can be likened to a sad game, a trickery leading to high position as it is in the case of Koomson and other similar leaders. Such cases of hypocrisy increase the meanness in which the masses live and really represent a contributing factor in their feeling of disillusionment. As a consequence, such behaviours continue not only to feed corruption and make it thrive forever but also hinder all necessary actions to eradicate it.

An objective analysis of the malaise of post-independence presented in Armah’s fictional nation shows that the neo-colonial indigenous rulers are even worse than the white colonialists. The life of the man in the novel suggests that independence in Ghana has not been very beneficial to the masses. Therefore, there is a recurrence of undisguised bitterness against the new rulers who have betrayed their nations. This supports the assertion of Edward Said:

The collective joy of the events of independence in which the entire nations at different times seemed to be swept up as an enormous celebration has been a nightmare and betrayal. The postcolonial African writers always depict their continent as a place where the rulers have failed woefully to protect their nations’ truncated authority and integrity from the ravages of neo-colonialism and globalization.¹⁷²

Throughout this section, it is obvious that the political leaders’ hypocrisy is one of the most efficient means political leaders use to veil and dissipate the masses’ frustration and despair in order to maintain them despite their disillusionment.

¹⁷¹ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 243.

¹⁷² Edward, Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, New York: Vintage Books, 1993, p. 19.

4-2- The masses' frustration and despair

People have strongly trusted Nkrumah as their sole hope in order to get Ghana become emergent. Unfortunately, despite Nkrumah's international reputation, "there would be nothing different in that. That would only be a continuation of the Ghanaian way of life"¹⁷³. He has been one of "the socialists of Africa"¹⁷⁴.

Consequently, a striking gap has been observed between theory and practice in our Ghanaian modern society; the political affairs of the country become very complicated. The political leader and elite's behaviour towards the people give birth to the further widening gap between the government and the masses. As a result, his regime has fallen into the abyss of materialism before dying in "corruption, public theft"¹⁷⁵. So people are simply betrayed to the extent that:

Only the pain of hope perennially doomed to disappointment. It was so clear. Of course it was in the nature of the wood to rot with age. The polish, it was supposed, would catch the rot. But in the end it was the rot which imprisoned everything in its effortless embrace. It did not really have to fight. Being was enough¹⁷⁶.

In actual fact, apart from the political betrayal of Nkrumah's revolutionary fervor, there are other political consequences of corruption in Armah's novel. Then, after having severely been disappointed and frustrated by their political leaders, the masses' pessimism and despair have consequently brought about protests and upheavals. The protest voices are raised in the country against bad governance and all misdeeds in different forms. The realities become much more biting because "personal liberties were severely eroded"¹⁷⁷ when "army

¹⁷³ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 162.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 131.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 58.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 157.

¹⁷⁷ Robert, Fraser, *The Novels of Ayi Kwei Armah*, Op. Cit., p.12.

men and policemen”¹⁷⁸ have come in power through a coup d’Etat. In *Purple Hibiscus* for example, “it was during family time [...], a Saturday that the coup happened”¹⁷⁹. The coup has been very appreciated by people whose preoccupation is to experience true freedom. For them, the lack of freedom is a main consequence of corruption in Nigeria. And the coup is more than being a true liberation from their political oddities (Greed, anarchy, violence, brutality, injustice, murder).

In this respect, it is easy to understand that Adichie unveils the expected freedom of the people because the lack of freedom is mostly the synonym of pressure and dogma. It also means a very awful anarchy, a disorder and total lack of peace and joy.

Such evidences are the direct and true consequences of corruption. One has either to run away for one’s own security or to be stubborn and lose one’s life. Another illustration occurs once Aunty Ifeoma, as a university lecturer, tells her children and nephews what follows: “We have to move out of this flat in two weeks. I know they are waiting to see that I don’t, so they can send security men to throw my things on the street”¹⁸⁰.

At this juncture, it is important to underline that Aunty is very threatened. In view of this, she has to “call off yet another strike, even though no lecturer has been paid for the last two months because the Federal Government has no money”¹⁸¹. Therefore, she must do like Phillipa who has left the country for another since two months.

Against all the odds, like her friend Phillipa, finally Aunty Ifeoma and her children have gone to America “where you could say anything at any time to

¹⁷⁸ Robert, Fraser, *The Novels of Ayi Kwei Armah*, Op. Cit., p. 8.

¹⁷⁹ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p.34.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 282.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., p. 84.

anyone, where the air was free for you to breathe as you wished”¹⁸². For that reason, from there she has prayed “for the university, for the lecturers and administration, for Nigeria, and finally, she prayed that we might find peace and laughter today”¹⁸³. This also helps these leaders to keep the victims of corruption in total passivity.

4-3-The passivity of the victims of corruption

The passivity of the victims of corruption is one of the main contributory factors in the failure to eradicate corruption. Indeed, to express this idea, Adichie declares that “silence was delicate [...], seemed intrusive”¹⁸⁴. According to her, the masses are characterised by a long and delicate silence. The steady silence symbolises their weakness, pessimism and despair. They are very passive to the extent that they are the victims of all sort of exploitation. For instance, in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, the main character called “the man” is not far from this symbolism. He is presented as a ‘naïve’ person who has to believe in “the new men’s speech about power, unity, freedom and other things”¹⁸⁵. In this way, “the man” is only to be a silent observer who is neither allowed to give his opinion nor to denounce something going wrong in society. Moreover, he can never question people’s misbehaviour since he is waiting for something that will come. Indeed, the same feeling is seen in Kambili’s new vision of tomorrow: “I reach out and place my arm around mama’s shoulder and she leans towards me and smiles. [...]. The new rains will come down soon”¹⁸⁶.

Obviously, the narrator is making an effort to show that Kambili’s passivity in submitting to her father’s harsh religious regime in the family home is a synonym of hope that things will change very soon. Hence, he unveils the meaning of the ‘purple hibiscus’ which is expected to bring a new hope in

¹⁸² Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p.128.

¹⁸³ Ibid., p.134.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., p.172.

¹⁸⁵ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., pp. 86-87.

¹⁸⁶ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*. Op. Cit., p. 310.

Eugene Achike's home (Nigeria). For having been subjected to severe physical punishment of her father for much of the time, Kambili lives in despair and hope at the same time. In other words, her patience, submission and hope symbolise the passivity of some people representing:

The masses who very often do not make pains to analyse what is really going on, usually swallow what is good for the politicians' success in life. In fact the formers' hidden secret hope is that they may, sooner or later, profit from politicians one way or another¹⁸⁷.

Truly, the quotation above underlines that passive people are not naïve but they are waiting for their national share that will come sooner or later. They justify this through the idea that they have been part of struggling for independence struggle in order to help their leaders to take power. From this view, one can simply affirm that:

The ignorance and passivity of the masses is capitalized on by the unscrupulous power seeking leaders who do not take the pains to explain the new concepts to them. One wonders whether the leaders themselves understand clearly what these foreign concepts like democracy, socialism, and political economy mean¹⁸⁸.

At this point, it is clear that the carrying on in the political misleading and economic mismanagement is the main aspect that reduces the masses to a total silence.

In fact, it seems to be a common fact in the two countries described in the novels I am concerned with. So, the masses are really passive towards all socio-political questions. They are obliged to do so about social evils because one can notice that "all the society is corrupt and no one has reason to be out of it"¹⁸⁹ in order to denounce whatever is wrong. And whoever tries to face rudely this bad reality will be blamed by the whole society as it is in the case of "the man" where his own wife treats him as the 'chichidodo'¹⁹⁰.

¹⁸⁷ Laure Clémence, Capo-Chichi Zanou, *Corruption in Selected African Novels*, Op. Cit., p. 36.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 71-72.

¹⁸⁹ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 108.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 44-45.

Apart from his patience and his poverty, the man's passivity has turned into impotence and fear to behave like Koomson and other Ghanaian politicians. This kind of passivity is also synonymous with weakness. Although he refuses to play the national game, "inside the man the confusion and the impotence had swollen into something asking for a way out of confinement"¹⁹¹. This example portrays him as someone who has no power since he fails to stop the corrupt practices prevailing in his society.

Another reason why "the man" does not involve in corruption is that the masses believe that political affairs shall only be dealt by the intellectuals or literate people at least. This confirms my view when I state that the man's passivity is a kind of fear as he represents "those in whom pain and disappointment have killed every other emotion, [...] then it is no longer possible to look with any hope at all time"¹⁹².

It is obvious that the powerless masses are afraid to raise their voice against the corrupt leaders. For example, the common people of Ghana have suffered from injustice and exploitation by those who have headed government institutions. The formers have to remain silent because they have no single mechanism to face corruption. They have not even the most remote courage neither to protest against corruption nor to stop it.

In addition, among the masses, there are those who believe that their passivity is synonymous of wisdom and peace. These social values may enable them to cultivate and preserve the idea that "the poor people are rich in patience"¹⁹³. They see passivity as another moral consciousness and integrity "thinking of the escape from corruption and immorality"¹⁹⁴. For those masses, protesting against their leaders is a sort of war in which "the weak confronted

¹⁹¹ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 47.

¹⁹² Ibid., p. 46.

¹⁹³ Ibid., p. 39.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 48.

the powerful”¹⁹⁵. It is clear that all these desires constantly lead people to confusion and make them more cynical and confused in their behaviours. Such facts also turn them into lazy and dull people and this make corruption more blatant than before.

Anyway, it still remains important to know that the masses’ passivity implies the destruction and “the horrible threat of decay”¹⁹⁶ of society. The situation is very absurd but it is real to the extent that Kofi Billy comes to commit suicide in order to be rid of the rotten society of Ghana. Maanan becomes mad at the end of the novel, for the same reasons. This has prompted Armah to say that “the eternal curse of Africa itself is the rot and weakness”¹⁹⁷. So, it is not good to always keep silent and passive because the evidence is that the more the masses get passive the more the society is rotten to the core.

Added to the political leaders’ hypocrisy and the masses’ frustration and despair, the masses’ passivity has largely made it easier for politicians to reach political betrayal. It has also contributed to the political instability in other African countries. And the different sections analysed throughout the present dissertation prove that corruption is an everlasting crime against good governance and development.

¹⁹⁵ Ayi Kwei, Armah, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, Op. Cit., p. 173.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 48.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 91.

CONCLUSION

Investigating into the societies presented by Armah and Adichie shows that corruption exists in Ghana as well as in Nigeria. Indeed, the widespread existence of corruption proves that it has lots of causes. Most of them lie in the socio-political, socio-economic and social behaviours of the characters presented in both fictional societies. My investigation has also shown that corruption is practised through various ways depending on the environment where one is located.

At this stage, the two novels are set in societies which practise corruption not only in their political and economic lives but also in their social spheres. In the same way, I notice that the examples from the novels simply confirm that corruption deals with many dramatic consequences in the political, economic and social lives in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* and *Purple Hibiscus*. These drawbacks are also increasing the post-independence disillusionment. This alarming remark has incited me to state that corruption in Africa is costing the continent so much and is restricting its development. For, I suggest that people have to wage a terrible war against the pandemic and omnipresent phenomenon of corruption so as to get rid of it.

Truly, such a war goes together with the need to prevent and fight against corruption. Here, the first condition seems to be the way out which includes political, economic, social and cultural anti-corruption actions. After the preventive measures, comes the proper fight against some specific social evils created by the phenomenon of corruption in the two novels. Hence, the fight against illicit enrichment, impunity, favouritism, tribalism and nepotism become imperative in Armah and Adichie's fictional nations.

First of all, the exceptional courage of “the stubborn king of the Opolo people”¹⁹⁸ shows that leaders must behave like him. They must really depend on

¹⁹⁸ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 152.

themselves so as to face their own realities and create their own welfare without cheating or looting. Such a king has to be imitated for his integrity which has prevented him from breaking the rules of honesty and decency to submit to strange practices. And, “when the British came, [he] refused to let them control all the trade. He did not sell his soul for a bit of gunpowder like the other kings did”¹⁹⁹. Undoubtedly, all leaders have to follow his steps. Their socio-political and economic policies must then be based on legal activities only. This means that people must try to be morally good and deal with good businesses. They must avoid being too much ambitious like Oyo, the man’s wife who wants to behave like Estella Koomson.

On the contrary, people must behave like the man who has “not done what everybody is doing”²⁰⁰. In view of this, people must create an environment very hostile to the corrupt practices in civil services, financial institutions or everywhere they are. They must try to show honesty and be honest despite their “physical hunger”²⁰¹.

It is clear that to fight illicit enrichment, people must refuse to be involved in “a very hostile form of selfishness, a very perverse selfishness”²⁰². But almost all leaders and public officers will be through constant controls under the supervision of the general inspectorate. Such a control institution can impose a ban on the selfish plans in which huge amounts of money have been wasted. For instance, in order to stabilize public finances, it can help government to rehabilitate the dilapidated economy, and to recover the ill-gotten wealth. Besides, greedy political and civilian leaders have to oust from power. As a result, the amount of money that has been stolen from the coffers of the State can undoubtedly contribute in building many social infrastructures.

¹⁹⁹ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 152.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 54.

²⁰¹ Ibid., p. 52.

²⁰² Idem.

Moreover, these significant strategies can bring changes in attitude. These changes will show that any public officer who has committed a serious offence to his nation will ipso facto be punished accordingly. Any public officer who does any prohibited act will be mercilessly punished. For, governments have to enforce administrative and disciplinary sanctions against those who steal public resources in order to stop impunity.

People have to fight against such practices since they expose the citizens to unfair treatment and social injustice. Their practice must be discouraged forever because they confer some great advantages on mediocrity and incompetence. Another proof is that they must disappear because the denial of merit is particularly very dangerous. Considered as a system through which a nation chooses and rewards its people, the practice of favouritism and tribalism is extremely dangerous.

Accordingly, all civil servants must be appointed and treated fairly regardless of their religion, their ethnic group, their gender or their political opinion. Moreover, salaries and emoluments of workers must be made attractive and proportionate to their grade. At the side of this fight, political leaders must institutionalise democracy in order to curb corruption for being a serious constraint on change and poverty reduction. There has been a collective call on “the new military government to quickly implement a return to democracy plan”²⁰³. This means that people or the masses need a political freedom to reestablish political participation in the country.

Under the circumstances, institutionalising fair political competitions remain imperative. Moreover, the institutionalisation of democratic elections is more than healing through some “novalgin, chloroquine injections”²⁰⁴. This can

²⁰³ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 33.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 57.

certainly be true because a fair democratic election is like “the air conditioner”²⁰⁵ in “the fierce heat of seven Nigerian harmattans”²⁰⁶. It is also relevant to say that democratic elections can actually force political leaders to begin to reexamine their roles critically. Accordingly, in creating the current predicament and to consider ways of finding solutions to their problems, such elections are “the best doctors and therapists in Nigeria and abroad”²⁰⁷.

After the statement above, it is worth noticing that there is no magical formula for development apart from the democratic renewal experience. So, democracy has to become more than a model, but a mechanism of choice and a system of development. It is really important to institutionalise competitive and democratic elections because there is wide-spread belief that they can bring “a man of integrity, the bravest man”²⁰⁸ in power. Moreover, in this system, two or more political parties compete in regularly scheduled elections to control the government so as to provide a voice for all citizens in the political process. In this respect, the new governments “must make a conscious effort”²⁰⁹ to use political and economic resources to provide their citizens with basic social and economic services: education, health care, housing, employment.

Another importance of democratic elections is that they frequently help to avoid crises of legitimacy. This situation enables the elected governments to advocate a new system liberalizing both their politics and their economies. It can also end the political instability after several decades of mostly authoritarian rule. Widely reported and analysed, democratisation is not only a model of political reform but also a window of opportunity. It is obvious that people have to take advantage of this window of opportunity in order to succeed in forcing authoritarian regimes to reform or to be ousted. Therefore, in this renewed form

²⁰⁵ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 104.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 263.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 114.

of governance or democratic change, it is said that “nothing should be the same, [...] anymore”²¹⁰ as it has been in the late regime. That is the reason why democratic elections have to receive applause from all over the country.

For more positive contributions and leadership, the decision-makers have “to look back and find out where [they] went wrong, where the rain began to beat [them]”²¹¹. It is then true that to enhance the development of good governance just like Kambili is asking political leaders to “look in the mirror [so as to] have to do with all these privileges”²¹² that God has given to them. It also seems that a simple renewed democracy can help people to raise their voice so as to end up with oppression and exploitation. In other words, democratic elections are the greatest potentialities to attract as much as necessary foreign investments in socio-political, economic and cultural domains. They have to be a fair play or game. For, elections mustn’t be rigged at all. Fair, free and transparent elections have the potential to build public confidence in order to play a pivotal role in the struggle against corruption, hunger, civil wars and other social misdeeds.

Truly, in a bid to improve their reputation and ensure an environment conducive to rapid political change, leaders must look inward at encouraging education. And to succeed in political competitions, education must be promoted. Any appreciable change in society necessarily needs educated citizens like Uncle Eugene. This can pave the way for suitable corrections to the macro problems in society. In general, the educated people can take part to their own emancipation; raise their voice so as to banish tyranny, exploitation and corruption. Undoubtedly, education is a medicine or the easiest way to care illiteracy. For, corruption and disloyalty must never be practised in schools, colleges and universities.

²¹⁰ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 284.

²¹¹ Chinua, Achebe, *Morning Yet On Creation Day*, London, 1976, p. 43.

²¹² Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 50.

Deductively, the educated ruling class is to be more conscious and responsible in making decisions as well as in focusing on specific socio-political problems. By so doing, leaders will succeed in imposing competitions on the economy in order to improve their people's life conditions.

As far as economic competitions are concerned, governments have to examine and find solutions to the question below: "what is the use of degree, [...] when we cannot find a job after graduation?"²¹³ Solving this problem means that to recruit any official in the civil service, well-controlled national competitions or tests shall be organised. From now on, the system will promote workers on merit in all civil services and other institutions or organisations. And the process of reaching high positions in civil service will require that the applicants get them on merit. Such tests may help governments to recruit the best and competent applicants by putting aside those who fail in the competitions.

Another importance of these competitions is that governments will be able to dismiss the "cabinet ministers who stashed money in foreign bank accounts, money means for paying teachers' salaries and building roads"²¹⁴. This indicates that leaders must impose the ban on selfish plans in which huge amounts of money have been wasted. Public wealth will stop being a mere "national cake".

At the side of these actions to limit corruption, I really find it better to institutionalise democracy in the two countries. In the two novels, corruption blocks attempts at social welfare and remains one of the greatest obstacles and one of the most everlasting crime against good governance and development.

²¹³ Chimamanda Ngozi, Adichie, *Purple Hibiscus*, Op. Cit., p. 83.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I- FOCUSED SOURCES

- 1- Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *Purple Hibiscus*. Lagos: Farafina, 2006.
- 2- Armah, Ayi Kwei, *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, London, Heinemann Educational Books, 1968.

II - OTHER SOURCES

A - NOVELS

- 3- Achebe, Chinua, *A Man of the People*, London, Heinemann Educational Books, 1966.
- 4- Achebe, Chinua, *No Longer at Ease*, London, Heinemann Educational Books, 1960.
- 5- Armah, Ayi Kwei, *Fragments*, London, Heinemann Educational Books, 1970.
- 6- Soyinka, Wole, *The Interpreters*, London, Heinemann Educational Books, 1970.

B- ESSAYS AND LITERARY CRITICISM

- 7- Achebe, Chinua, *Morning Yet On Creation Day*, London, Heinemann Educational Books, 1976.
- 8- Anthony, C. Oha., *The African Novel, ENG 281*, Department of Arts (English Unit), Benson Idahosa University Benin City, National Open University of Nigeria, 2008.
- 9- Arhin, Kwame, *The Life and Work of Kwame Nkrumah*, Ghana, Selco Publishing Limited, 1971.
- 10- Capo-Chichi Zanou, Laure Clémence, *Corruption in Selected African Novels*, Editions: Centre des Publications Universitaires de l'Université d'Abomey-Calavi (UAC), Abomey-Calavi, 2012.
- 11- Densley, Kevin, *Teaching Notes*, Nigeria, Harper Perennial Ltd, 2013.

- 12- Frazer, Robert, *The Novels of Ayi Kwei Armah*, London, Heinemann Educational Books, 1980.
- 13- George, Hagan, P., “Nkrumah’s Cultural Policy” (a paper read at a symposium), Accra, 1971.
- 14- Gyimah-Brempong, Kwabena, *Corruption, growth, and inequality in Africa*, USA, Tampa, 2001.
- 15- Lawal, Gbenga, Corruption and development in Africa: Challenges for Political and Economic Change in, *Humanity and Social Sciences Journal*, 2(1), Abuja, 2007.
- 16- Le Vine, Victor T., *Political Corruption and the Informal Policy*, Inaugural Speech, Accra, Ghana Universities Press, 1971.
- 17- Macheke, Mavis Thokozile, Academic Journals, *International Journal of English and Literature*, Vol. (5), Great Zimbabwe University, Zimbabwe, 2012.
- 18- Martin, Phyllis M., and Patrick, O’Meara, *AFRICA*, Cambridge University Press, Third Ed, London, 1995.
- 19- Munyae M., Mulinge and Lesetedi, Gwen N., *Interrogating Our Past: Colonialism and Corruption in Sub Saharan Africa*, African Journal and Political Sciences, Vol. 3 No. 2, 15, 28, 1998.
- 20- Observatoire de Lutte Contre la Corruption (OLC), *La stratégie de lutte contre la corruption au Bénin* (Document de vulgarisation), Cotonou, Mars 2007.
- 21- Said, Edward, *Culture and Imperialism*, New York: Vintage Books, 1993.
- 22- Victor, Egwemi, *Corruption and corrupt practices in Nigeria: An agenda for taming the monster*, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, 2012.
- 23- Wilfred, Cartey, *Whispers from a continent: The Literature of Contemporary Black Africa*, London, Heinemann Educational, Books, 1971.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION	I
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	II
INTRODUCTION.....	01
PART ONE: CAUSES AND ASPECTS OF CORRUPTION IN THE NOVELS.....	08
CHAPTER 1: CAUSES OF CORRUPTION IN THE NOVELS.....	09
1-1- Political causes of corruption.....	09
1-2- Economic causes of corruption.....	19
1-3- Social causes of corruption.....	21
CHAPTER 2: ASPECTS OF CORRUPTION IN THE NOVELS.....	27
2-1- Political aspects of corruption.....	27
2-2- Economic aspects of corruption.....	31
2-3- Social aspects of corruption.....	33
2-4- Corruption at the state level.....	36
PART TWO: CONSEQUENCES OF CORRUPTION IN THE NOVELS.....	39
CHAPTER 3: THE DIRECT DRAWBCKS OF CORRUPTION.....	40
3-1- Political consequences of corruption.....	40
3-2- Economic consequences of corruption.....	43
3-3- Social consequences of corruption.....	47
CHAPTER 4: THE POST- INDEPENDENCE DISILLUSIONMENT.....	52
4-1- The political leaders’ hypocrisy.....	52
4-2- The masses’ frustration and despair.....	55
4-3- The passivity of the victims of corruption.....	57
CONCLUSION.....	62
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	69