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Thème

**CORRUPTION THROUGH *THE INSIDERS*, BEHIND
THE MASK AND *A SILLY SEASON* BY A. S.
OGUNDIMU**

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Dedication

I dedicate this research work to:

Late President MouammaKhadaffi for all thathe did for the development and the welfare of the black continent and its people.

Late President Nelson Mandela for his sacrifice and his struggle for restoring social justice is South Africa.

My son, Mawunan, whose first tears gave me the strength and the desire for going far in all my life's struggles.

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INTRODUCTION

AdetunjiSuleimanOGUNDIMU has a special interest for social and political commitment. Most of his texts reflect the socio-political events in modern Nigeria. That is why his writings are always connected to the socio-political experiences of the people of his country. As a consequence, his literature serves a purpose in denouncing and fighting corruption in his society, I mean the modern Nigeria decades after independence.

Through *The Insiders*, *Behind The Mask* and *A Silly Season*, Ogundimu can be viewed as an intellectual and a writer. The three novels describe social problems and corruption in Nigeria, led by his own citizens or children. Be it in *The Insiders*, in *Behind The Mask* or in *A Silly Season*, Ogundimu provides an important socio-political implication as it is the case in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* by AyiKweiArmah, where “the Beautiful Ones” stand for clean, honest, righteous, and trust-worthy people like KunleBangbelu in *A Silly Season*. They are also those who fight for freedom and seek independence, those who lead the revolution against the colonialism and segregation. The promise of a new life after independence does not go far beyond a moment of fake hope since it is instantly thwarted when the new leaders who have fought the former corrupt government prove to be more corrupt. For example: “*from someone pursuing 20 millions contract, the governor wants five millions cash said Kayode the clerk*” (Ogundimu, 2008 :63)

Although there are other themes in these three novels, I choose to analyze the theme of corruption. Corruption in general, is a very vast phenomenon in these novels. It is not only vast but it is also complex. What I want to suggest here is that as far as the subject of this research paper is concerned I will be paying more attention to the way how Ogundimu proceeds in approaching corruption through the focus novels.

The main theme discussed in the three novels tackles corruption which is a very destructive phenomenon that ruins all society especially the ones in the third world countries.

Ogundimu goes straightforward in naming the handicaps of Nigerian society, a society which he knows very well because he lives and works there, right now. He draws the horrible image of corruption in that society which he fictionally calls The Republic of Rabbenia through *The Insiders*, Orindowe in *Behind the Mask* and Republic of Ribalia in *A Silly Season*. Without any doubt the author is talking about corruption as it is the case in many African countries.

Through *The Insiders* corrupt practices occur with policemen and especially Okafor the officer who has been in charge of Bayo's case when he is jailed, and it is the case of all the members of the higher administration officers.

In *A Silly Season*, Koyode the clerk, the governor, and other characters working in the administration of Ribalia Republic are known for dealing with this evil practice. And finally in *Behind The Mask* the practice occurs with Dogo, the president of the customary court of Oribande in charge of the divorce affair between Peju and Kukoyi and at all the different level of the administration and the government. These practices are like a curse in the three novels.

Five decades after independence nothing has changed as Armah said in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* in 1974. Indeed, the spread of corruption must be stopped if one wants a sustainable development of our African countries. But unfortunately, the practice is occurring everyday and is growing up and it seems it is accepted by everyone. What Soyinka, Armah and other writers said about corruption in 1960's is being said in the years 2000 by Ogundimu. It simply means that corruption is not a fact to fight against easily without including serious means in term of human resources, mentality change, moral and spiritual

values. So, the concept of corruption must be widened on numerous considerations or factors because of its complexity.

Considering the publishing dates of the three novels: *The Insiders* was published in 1995, *Behind the Mask* was published in 2000 and *A Silly Season* in 2008, one can state that the novels are about post independence Nigeria. The disillusionment of the people when their own brothers have taken power.

1-Hypothesis

After independence Africans are expecting a better life. This is the reason why they fought against the white men's oppression. They know that it is only by fighting that they can obtain their independence and freedom in order to work for the welfare of their people.

But unfortunately they are disappointed by their new African leaders. The worry is about the new leaders' corruption, their mismanagement, their tyranny and their oppression over the people. Most of the new leaders have widened the gap between the poor and the rich in their society throughout corrupt practices. That is what Ogundimu is criticizing and fighting against in his novels. It simply means that fifty-three years after independence nothing substantial has changed. That is what Akwa is explaining to Kunle when she states: "if you don't know as our people say a fish normally rots from the head. In our case, both the head and the tail are rotten. There is rot at the three levels of government, federal, state and local including all the ministries". (Ogundimu, 2008:24).

And this can be attested with Soyinka when he states that: "the world is old but the rush of a million of years has left the chain unloosened" (Soyinka, 1963:67)

Thus, decades after independence, Africans are still witnessing the same things. That is why Soyinka states that "A parallel between the present and the past is established by the recurrence of character types, similar crimes, and even the same corruption" (Soyinka, 1963:25). The world is old, a generation has gone and a new one starts again. Soyinka goes on in the

same play when he says that: "A hundred generations have not made the difference" (Soyinka, 1963:25)

For me, it clearly appears that the new leaders are eager to fill their pockets with the money of their nation in order to satisfy their family's needs or those of their friends and relatives through corruption. That is what Ogundimu is denouncing in *The Insiders*; *Behind The Mask*, and in *A Silly Season*. Corruption leads to police corruption; political corruption, judicial corruption, nepotism, moral corruption, red tape among others.

Even a mad person in the street can recognise the havoc caused by corruption. The funds allocated for the welfare of the population vanish mysteriously. Thus, it is believed by many in the society that corruption is causing immeasurable havoc. I can say that corruption is endemic in all government and that it is not peculiar to any continent, region, and ethnic group. Thus, it occurs across faiths, religions, denominations and political systems and affects both young people, and old people, men and women.

Corruption is found in democratic and dictatorial politics, capitalist and socialist economies, Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist cultures are touched by corruption. It is as old as the world and does not start today. This does not mean that the level of corruption is equal in every society.

Since, corruption is not new and since it is a global phenomenon, it is not peculiar to the fictitious Republic of Rabbenia through *The Insiders*, the one of Rabelia through *A Silly Season* and to the one of Orindowe in *Behind The Mask* by Ogundimu.

Through my work, I will identify the different instances of corruption in the novels I am studying, I will dig out the consequences of this shameful practice on the whole society and I will suggest means to fight against this evil

practice. Nonetheless, no serious discussion can be held on corruption without a clear understanding of the concept.

2-Definition of the concept

The different forms of corruption in Ogundimu's novels cannot be understood without a clear definition of the concept. Corruption is a very wide and complex notion to be defined easily. According to the *Wikipedia online dictionary*, corruption is spiritual or moral impurity or deviation from an ideal. Corruption includes bribery, judicial corruption, police bribery, embezzlement, nepotism. Government or political corruption occurs when an official holder or other government employee, in position of power act in an official capacity for his or her own personal gain.

Etymologically the book *Corruption in Selected African Novels* reveals that, the English word corruption is adopted from the French word "corruptio" which is an adaptation of the Latin noun of action "corruption, corruptionis" derived from "corruptus" the past participle of the verb "corrumpere". (Laure Clemence Capo-chichi Zanou, 2012:18)

This verb "corrumpere" according to the *Etymological Dictionary of the English Language* is a combination of "cor" from the Latin preposition "cum" meaning wholly, together, and the verb "rumpere" meaning to break into pieces. Thus corruption means to break or to destroy.

The *Online Oxford English Dictionary* (OED online version 2012) divides its different meanings into three main parts: it is physical, moral, and spiritual.

It is also immorality, perversion, dishonesty, decay, errors, alteration, decomposition, destruction, rot, and lack of integrity, ruin of morality, uncleanness, fraud, theft, unlawful and unethical decision, unprincipled behavior. Certainly, very wide to be defined, corruption is also the fact of

changing or falsifying what is fair and correct. To corrupt a person or a group of people is to deteriorate what is sane and honest in this person or this group of people.

In this regard Iyalode corrupts her daughter Kudi not to marry a clerk like Bayo. Corruption also means depravity or perversion. This form is also called moral corruption. To corrupt a person is to seduce him or her with presents or promises in order to make him or her act in one's favour and contrary to the ethical and moral rules. Then, the engineer brings a Ghana-must-go bag full of money to Kunle to convince him about the totoro project. This form of corruption is known as bribery. It mainly takes place in the civil service. In Benin, and other French colonies, the French expression « déposer la Pierre sur son dossier » (to put a stone on one's file), is known and used to describe bribery.

On roads, taxi drivers and traders have to bribe policemen and customs officers in order to travel without problems. Some young graduates usually bribe administrative authorities before getting a job in the Public Service. Students sometimes offer bribes before being granted a scholarship in order to study abroad. Corruption is also the misuse of public funds called embezzlement of public funds which jeopardizes and cripples the economic development of most African countries.

Some leaders steal sizable amounts of the public funds which they put in European banks particularly Swiss banks where secrecy and considerable interest are guaranteed. That is what Kayode is explaining to Kunle when he stated: "even the military president is eating and smiling. Ask French banks! Or check the president's accounts in Germany. They will tell you that our president is a multi-billionaire". (Ogundimu, 2008: 95). Every year African countries lose countless billions francs through this form of corruption according to what media say.

Nowadays public funds are given out to political allies and personal friends by granting them procurement contracts. The granting of these contracts is fraudulently organised and this leads to overcharging. Little amount is used and an important part is stolen. The enterprise in charge of performing the work inflates the prices of materials in order to secure their own profits which will be shared. What is then the structure of this work?

3-Structure

My research paper aims four goals. I will first deal with the different causes of corruption through the studied novels secondly I will study the different instances of this practice then I will show the consequences of the evil practice on the entire community, and finally I will deal with the fight against it and then conclude.

Through the focus novels, there are problems without solutions in the community of the characters, but the issue of the quick spread of corruption is troubling and the damages it has done to the society are enormous. My method consists in describing how Ogundimu uses different characters to tackle the issue of corruption through the three novels. What are then the different causes of corruption through the focus novels?

Part one

**The causes of corruption and its different instances
in Ogundimu's novels**

Chapter one :Thecauses of corruption

People say that corruption may be the easiest way or indeed the only way to get what they want. As the nameless character, the man, has noticed in AyiKweiArmah's novel *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*: "there would be only one way for the young to reach the gleam of hope: cutting corners, eating the fruits of fraud" (Armah, 1968:95) . At times, a bribe may provide a convenient means of avoiding punishment. As corruption spreads it becomes more acceptable until it is finally a way of life according to the characters in the novels under study. According to Alaba: "you can't go to the police empty handed. You need money. Real money. Physical cash." (Ogundimu, 1995:155). People with pitifully low wages come to feel that they have no option. They have to demand bribes if they want to live decently. And since those who extort bribes and those who offer bribe go unpunished, few are prepared to swim against the tide. And as King Salomon in the holy bible states "Because sentence against a bad work has not been executed speedily, that is why the heart of the sons of men has become fully set in them to do bad" observed King Solomon Ecclesiastes 8:11

Because of selfishness, corrupt people turn a blind eye to the suffering that their corruption inflicts on others, and they justify bribery simply because they benefit from it. The more material benefits they amass, the greedier they become. As it is said in the *Holy Bible*: "A mere lover of silver will not be satisfied with silver observed Solomon, neither any lover of wealth with income". Ecclesiastes 5:9

In addition to the above causes, pressure from relatives, friends, and family's pressure makes it compelling for those in governmental positions to steal as much money as possible before their tenures expire. Many causes keep the fire of corruption: Selfishness, low salaries, greed and impunity, pressure of family, and tribal solidarity of a tradition of nepotism and favoritism, weak rule of law, ignorance of law among the population and psychological causes or the fear of poverty.

1-1 – Psychological causes of corruption or the fear of poverty

The fear of poverty is another main cause of corruption. Among many examples, we can take the case of the Honourable Chief Nanga who is a former teacher. Since he reaches the gleam, he becomes a rich man and one can agree with Odili when he proclaims that: we ignore man's basic nature if we say as some critics do, that a man like Nanga had risen overnight from poverty and insignificance to his present opulence, he could be persuaded without much trouble to give it up again and return to his original state. (Achebe, 1967:40).

In *A Silly season*, Kunle's mother asks his son the following rhetorical questions: Do you want to die a homeless pauper like your father. When do you want to use your power as a commissioner? Do you know what people call government? You eat and I eat; we all eat, everybody is happy. (Ogundimu, 2008:36).

So taking into account the psychology of Kunle's mother, one can say that corruption thrives because most necessities are not easily accessible and the fear of poverty drives people in position to steal. By so doing they make sure they liberate themselves from the menace of poverty, but they also store up enough money for their offsprings. The whole thing is like a curse; once they start they do not know when to stop. Warning her son about the menace and the fear of poverty, Kunle's mother declares addressing herself to his son: Can't you learn anything from your father's woes? (Ogundimu, 2008:36). Because Kunle's father has been honest at service and retires homeless and poor, Kunle's mother does not want this to happen to her son.

In addition, people blame those who, when they are in position, do nothing for themselves and their family and retired poor like Kunle's father. In African people's mind, to be appointed in a good governmental position is synonymous to getting rich quickly. So those who occupy strategic posts in the administration consider that situation as an opportunity to amass as much wealth as possible. Not only for themselves but also for their families. So, people think that governmental jobs are means of quick self enrichment. The wealth of the state is

looked upon as a “national cake” from which any politician takes his part for himself and for his family. So the psychological causes of corruption are linked to the low salaries because public salaries are so low that it is impossible for a public servant who is not corrupt to own a house, or to afford a decent standard of living whether in or out of office like Kunle’s father. The fact that those who steal, live comfortable lives make the temptation rise for the other. That is what the narrator says to Peju when she goes to the seating room of Dogo the corrupt Orinbande Court President.

“Peju surveyed the full upholstered seats covered with fashionable glistening velvet. Her eyes moved to the color television set and the Kenwood video tape lying on a mahogany sideboard in between a tape recorder and a binatonelamp. The TV/VTR remote control was carelessly dumped on the glass centre table. (Ogundimu, 2008:86).

Odili acknowledges the same thing in *A Man of the People* when he proclaims: “when I lay down in the double bed that seemed to ride on a cushion of air, and switched on that reading lamp and saw all the beautiful furniture anew from the lying down position and the towels as large as a lapp, I had to confess that if I were at that moment made a minister, I would be most anxious to remain one forever” (Achebe, 1967:40).

For Peju, certainly the furniture is too classy and too flamboyant for the salary of an honest public servant, not to talk of a retired teacher given contractual appointment as a customary court judge. This also makes a mockery of those who, due to their self-imposed moral standards have to go begging the corrupt ones, because according to Abeji in *A silly season* «whatever you put away is what will remain when you leave office”. (Ogundimu, 2008:112) and do what everybody is doing is to be realistic according to Akwa. (Ogundimu, 2008:28)

What does Kunle say when he makes the counting of the money brought by the ingeneer? He states:

I went back to the bag and did the counting; N250, 000, 00. Wow! One quarter of a million! Even with the inflation rate in the land, it was a huge sum of money; enough to do many things ordinarily, it wouldn’t have taken me less than sixteen years to save that amount, which was more than half the total number of years I would stay in service. Now I could have all that at a stroke in one single day, if I want. (Ogundimu, 2008:60- 61).

The fear of the fulfillment of the fundamental need is also a cause of corruption as the man’s mother-in-law tells her grandchild in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not*

Yet Born “My poor husband! Said the old woman over again. You have no shoes to wear, so your poor little feet get torn to pieces. Ei, my husband you have nobody, nobody to buy you shoes, so your little toes will all be destroyed” (Armah, 1968: 123).

Corruption is often attributed to civil servants’ low salaries. This makes a difference between petty corruption and greed corruption. The first is satisfying basic requirements for survival and the second is satisfying desires and comfort that salaries cannot help afford. It may be true that it is more difficult to stay honest, hard-working and trust-worthy on a low salary as Kayode says in *ASilly season*: “how much does he (Kunle) think we earn? How does he want us to make ends meet, if we cannot make extra money?” (Ogundimu, 2008: 95),

But it is also true that most people with low salaries are still able to do so and that many corrupt officials are people in high positions, earning good salaries.

Corrupt practices flourish in systems where the level of professionalism in the public service is low, and hence officials rather serve their own interests than perform their duty of serving the public. It seems they are appointed because of nepotism or favouritism instead of merit.

One can cite the example of the retired teacher Dogo made a court judge in *Behind the Mask*. (Ogundimu, 2008: 86). However low salaries are not a valid reason and do not justify corruption. Although Kunle has a low salary he remains as honest as his father despite his mother’s mockeries. In essence, the root of corruption is greed rather than low salary and other causes need to be found. In fact impunity must be one of the real causes of corruption as Peju stipulates:

”Justice was like a game in which the players in two opposing camps could never play a draw: you were either a winner or a loser. No middle course. Yet at oribande customary court it was no possible to win by accident. The decisive factor was always there: you will win if you ensured that the judge was adequately paid to be fair, or if you ensured that he offered enough inducement to stab justice in the back”. (Ogundimu, 2008: 74)

The fact of letting the office holders manage the way they like is very dangerous. That is the reason why one must fight against impunity.

1-2-Impunity and protection of the guilty ones

In his essay “*The Trouble With Nigeria*” Achebe writes that “Nigerians are corrupt because the system under which they live today makes corruption easy and profitable; they will cease to be corrupt when corruption is made difficult and inconvenient” (Achebe, 1983:39)

According to Laure Clémence CAPO-CHICHI: The lack of proper official punishment gives birth to a generalized corrupt post independence atmosphere (Capo Chichi Zanou,2012:25). To add to the above quotation, King Solomon observed in the Holy Bible the following statement: "Because sentence against a bad work has not been executed speedily, that is why the heart of the sons of men has become fully set in them to do bad" Ecclesiastes 8:11

It is known to everybody that because of nepotism, tribal solidarity, favoritism, many professional mistakes have been hidden. It is well known that whenever someone has professional compromising problems, he goes to see someone in the higher position to ask for help. If the latter is not able to satisfy the request, he goes to see another one in a higher position than his, so as to find a solution to his problem. In Chinua Achebe's *A Man of The People*, though Chief Nanga and his colleagues are involved in a financial scandal, they are reappointed to high positions after the cabinet has fraudulently won another election.

Then, corruption cases that deserve a serious punishments or sanction are misled. Some very important person to whom the managers or the directors cannot say no come to ask for mercy for a fault which deserves to be punished. In *Behind The Mask* one can see the case of Dogo, who is protected by his cousin the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Information when dealing with many corrupt practices. (Ogundimu,2000: 97- 98)

In the same novel Ruth who must be punished for leaking the examination questions to banker parents of one of her students continues staying in government because of impunity and the protection of “Kokoro Aye” club. (Ogundimu,2008:116)

When those who accept bribes in order to grant unfair advantages go unpunished, few are prepared to imitate them. Impunity can be explained by the fact that nobody knows who will punish whom when everybody is corrupt. And when everybody has his share the silence will be total like Koyode states: “when the mouth eats the eyes overlook” (Ogundimu,2008:74) and according to Akwa “when mouth eats, the eyes will flinch” (Ogundimu,2008:24). This has been Kunle’s case in *A silly season*. Because he receives the engineer’s bribe in his office, he is like a greedy dog, unable to bark because a big bone is stuck in its throat. (Ogundimu,2008:96). So it is impossible for him to punish Kayode and as Banji agrees “that would be difficult. we can not punish Kayode on the issue (stealing the Ghana must go bag plenty of money), if we do not want trouble” (Ogundimu,2008:94), and because “sacking government worker is not an easy task “like Akwa told Kunle (Ogundimu,2008:26). Talking about the police station, James the landlord of Iyalode, Kudi’s mother, acknowledges: “This place has turned into a true cash and carry centre. Whoever can afford to pay his bribe cash down will have his way” (Ogundimu, 1995:189).

Public life must require a standard of its own; and those entering public office must be made aware of this. The above examples show us that the absence of rules, regulations, and legislation contribute to the spread of corruption. Public or private sectors must have rules, regulations and policies that guide management in terms of acceptable behavior and conduct within the organization. Rules, regulations and policies are tools in organizing people, steering them towards a common goal and ensuring that everyone is treated fairly and equally. In order to be effective, such rules and policies must be clearly stated and made known to all individuals in order to be understood and applied objectively. Corruption is more likely to flourish in an organization that does not have a wide range of rules, and regulations that guide employees in their

work. Similarly, a country must have clear policies and legislation that guide the behaviour of all citizens and residents within that country.

Friends and kinsmen seeking favour from officials may impose difficult strains on the ethical disposition. Pressure from relatives, friends, family and collaborators are a very big cause of corruption. Pressure to meet family members' obligation helps to deal with the evil practice when salaries cannot be sufficient.

1-3-Pressures from family and colleagues

In Africa people think that appointment to a high position rhymes with self-enrichment. Through the three studied novel, pressure from relatives, family and friends is very clear.

Starting with Pa Shittu, Kunle's immediate neighbour, who asks Kunle not to forget them when he clearly puts it by saying: "Even if government continues to forget us, you will remember us, I am sure you know Jegede very well and you know what life here is all about (Ogundimu, 2008:11).

To continue on the same step, because their friends' help at the swearing ceremony Abeji wants Kunle to do something for them.

"you have to do something for our friends "awarding contract to them" (Ogundimu, 2008:17) In the studied novels the pressure of relatives is so powerful that their fulfillment cannot occur with a single salary. So as Akwa says to Kunle "if you don't have enough to eat it will be difficult for you to remember to give to friends" (Ogundimu, 2008:25)

Since he resists the pressure of his staff, the Minister of Social Affairs has been dismissed of his collaborator's plot in *A Silly Season*.

When a father-in-law extorts money from his son-in-law, what else will the later do if he does not have enough to make both ends meet? When Nanga's father-in-law is claiming everything from his son-in-law by saying this:

“Listen to her (meaning his daughter Edna), because she ate yesterday she won’t eat today?No my daughter.This is the time to enjoy an in-law not when he has claimed his wife and gone away. Our people say that “if you fail to take away a strong man’s sword when his is on the ground,will you do it when he gets up?No my daughter.Leave me and my in-law. He will bring and bring and bringand I will eat until I am tired”. (Achebe, 1967:99).

If the son- in-law does not have anything in term of money, what will he do? That is the reason why many civil servants are obliged to accept bribes.

The pressure of member of the family can be understood by the following statements from different characters speakingto Kunle the honest civil servant.His own mother tells him:

“If you throw your dinner to dogs,you will go to bed on an empty stomach that will be out of your negligence.And just like hunger punishes laziness,poverity punishes negligence.Kunle’smother explains”(Ogundimu, 2008:35).

To strengthen her ideas, she adds”

“If some people starve because they don’t have access to food, I will understand.If they suffer because they have no access to the reign of power, I will still understand and forgive.But is a man has a golden opportunity and allows it to slip through his aimless fingers that will be unpardonable. Look if you refuse to take bribes bribe will corner you,somebody else will take them,the job will be done irrespective of your stand. Ultimately, you will curse your folly and end up like your father a miserable pauper.Kunle’s mother says”. (Ogundimu,2008:35).

All this to convince Kunle to take bribe because Kunle is honest and does not want to be corrupt by taking bribe, his aunt treats him by saying:

“If you don’t need money the family needs it. Take it and bring it home, we shall keep it for you.In the meantime I will come for my own share this week end.Bring money home for me .You understand?May be it is because we don’t demand our share forcefully that you don’t collect it in your office.From on we shall demand it”.(ogundimu,2008:42).

Can we say that pressure from family is a real cause of corruption if despite of all the above pressures Kunle remained uncorrupt?That is why the need of model like Kunlé’s father is necessary in the fight against corruption.

1-4-The lack of model

In Africa, we respect old people or elders for the fact that they represent “wisdom” which is an important value for a human being. That is the reason why

Amadou Hampate Ba says that: "En Afrique, quand un vieillard meurt, c'est comme une bibliothèque qui brûle." In Africa, when an old man dies, it is like a library burning. (my own translation)

To tell the truth there is a need of model everywhere. That is Kunle's wonder when he states to Akwa that: how could a teacher proclaim openly that he would take bribe in office? What kind of legacy was he going to bequeath to future generations? (Ogundimu, 2008:21)

Like the saying goes "actions speak louder than words" as far as everybody can see what is happening around him, who else will be the adviser when most of the elders are corrupt. Juniors learn from seniors. That is what Akwa means when he states: "They watch us when we do things, they perform their own strategies and improve on our poor performance in shameless roguery." (Ogundimu, 2008:22).

Not only is the political system rotten but the educational system has also fallen apart. The attributes of a good teacher is the ability to lead by example and the capacity to be a role model. However now they turn into behaving badly as it is Akwa's case. It seems that the whole society is rotten. There is no model anywhere. Everybody is eager to fill in his own pocket. That is what Akwa is explaining to Kunle in the following sentences "Role models my foot. Is my head of department not supposed to be a model role? Is he one? Is the provost a role model? Am I to be wiser than the Head of Department and the Chief Executive of the college?" (Ogundimu, 2008:23)

Moreover the lack of model takes its root in the fact that government which is supposed to give the good direction to be followed is guilty of the evil practice of corruption. Akwa is right when he says that "the leaders are teaching the art of corruption and the populace are learning fast" (Ogundimu, 2008:25).

So to try to avoid, corruption is like to swim against the tide because "when you are in the land of the hunchbacks, you must carry a stone on your back" (Ogundimu, 2008:41)

So in a corrupt land one must accept to be corrupt. That is the reason why bribery and favouritism are prevailing.

1-5 – Nepotism and favouritism

Bribery and favoritism at all levels of administration are some of the causes of corruption. That is what Akwa explains to Kunle Bangbelu when he tells him:

You are part of a rotten fish, if you don't know. And like our people say, a fish normally rots from the head. In our case both the head and tail are rotten. There is rot at the three levels of government: Federal, state and local including all the ministries. (Ogundimu, 2008:24). Consequently it has defied all the necessary medicines.

While applying for a job as a journalist in the Independent Viewpoint, Sagoe has bitterly experienced this form of corruption. In spite of their high position in the society, the board members, and mainly Sir Derinola and Chief Winsala do not abhor asking for petty bribes before offering a job. During his first contact with the board members, Sagoe is disappointed. He finds the interview very disappointing. As a matter of fact, the board has no consideration for his degree and wants him to submit to all their decisions. As the Chairman puts it: Don't talk when I am talking otherwise just get out. We want the kind of person who is going to respect the superior not conceited boys of your type. Suppose you are not begging who is interested in that? Your betters are begging my friend go and sit down. (Soyinka, 1965:108).

For the board members, Sagoe's degree does not matter and will not enable him to get the job. Beside his degree, his total submission to them and all their decisions is demanded. The board wants Sagoe to add something to his knowledge and degree. Chief Winsala becomes clearer when he says: "Before, degree is something, but now everybody is having a degree. Degree is too for penny so everybody is rushing to fill all vacancy. No more degree passport.... The job is there, but you have to secure it". (Soyinka, 1965:83)

In the focus novel corrupt means are used to fight against anti-corruption. When Bayo is arrested, he is said to be freed by a corrupted way as the senior prisoner mates tells Ranti when she pays a visit to him: There is nothing you can do tonight. Go and look for money come back tomorrow, (Ogundimu, 1995:152). Alaba adds by saying this to Mama Tunde and Ranti: "You can't go to the police empty-handed. You need money. Real

money. Physical cash. That is the language they (police officers) understand, and we all know” (Ogundimu, 1995:155).

Every other prisoner mate agrees with the speaker that the only thing that is essential is money. The previous lines tackle the different causes of corruption and give a broad definition of each instance for a good knowledge of the phenomenon matters in the society. Defined as a perversion or a change for good to bad, corruption or corrupt behavior involves the violation of established rules for relative personal gain and profit.

In addition it also includes benefit for close family, the use of personal connection to obtain favours, protection for friends or kinsmen...etc. That's the case of Kukoyi in the following lines:

“while lobbying against an impending retrenchment from Dagbolu Grammar School, Kukoyi knew what he wanted in the circumstances, and he was not stingy. He pleaded with Okedara, Okedara intervened and the intervention performed wonders. Okedara contacted Banjo, his cousin Banjo spoke to a brother-in-law, the brother-in-law saw another relation of his whose girlfriend knew a commissioner's twin sister. The commissioner's twin sister took the matter up with her brother who talked to the newly appointed Permanent Secretary at the commission”... (Ogundimu, 2000:25).

In no time Kukoyi's name is dropped from the already prepared list of teachers affected by the mass retrenchment exercise.

This is a behaviour which violates rules against the exercise of certain types of duties for private gains regarding influence. It includes behaviours such as bribery that is to (use reward to pervert the judgment of a person in position of trust, nepotism (bestowal of patronage by reason of relationship rather than by merit) and misappropriation (illegal appropriation of public resources for private uses).

Thus, corruption is an anti social behavior conferring improper benefit contrary to legal and moral norms and which undermines the authorities to improve the living conditions of the people. That is what Pa Shittu wants Kunle Bangbelu to

be aware of when he declares: however, the people here were cheery in spite of their poverty and state of want, in terms of welfare and social amenities, government had nothing for them. (Ogundimu,2008:12)

Here Corruption seems to be the main means to accumulate quick wealth in the novels. While talking to Kunle Bangbelu about dealing with corruption practices in order to become rich quickly, Akwa states:

“Are you still keeping your hands clean after months in office? you must be a foreigner landing from the moon. If the governor of my own state makes the mistake of appointing me a commissioner, I will be in money within weeks.” (Ogundimu,2008:20)

Corruption occurs in many forms and ways; it has contributed immensely to the poverty and misery of the population through the studied novels. So to hold any useful discussion on corruption, it is necessary to find its different manifestations.

Chapter two: The different instances of corruption.

Corruption is not specific to poor, developing or rich countries. In every country, cases of bribery and other forms of corruption exist and can be found in many areas: judicial corruption, political and governmental corruption, bureaucratic corruption and police corruption.

2-1-Judiciary corruption

According to Peju:

“Justice is like game in which the players in two opposing camps could never play a draw. You were either a winner or a loser. No middle course. Yet at oribande customary court, it was not possible to win by accident. The decisive factor was always there: you would win if you ensured that the judge was adequately paid to be fair, or if you ensured that he was offered enough inducement to stab justice in the back. (Ogundimu, 2000:74)

How can a judge become billionaire?

Here, what is a source of worry is that justice which should be people's protector especially the protector of the weak ones is as corrupt as all the other institutions. According to me judicial corruption is the mother of all corruption since the judiciary body is supposed to be the moderator or the fair referee between people.

Defined as being judges' misconduct through receiving bribe and giving improper sentences to guilty people, or making unfair reports, judicial corruption is the evil that hurts the weak. That is what Ranti is explaining when she asserts that:

“It is an undoubted fact that justice often swings right or left, forward or backward, according to where the higher bidder stands, this is because administration of justice depends mainly on the quality of prosecution, and prosecution is in the hands of the Rabbenian police who,

themselves, often sway to the side of the more generous proposer.”(Ogundimu,1995:174)

They only care for their well being and not for the condition of the people. That is what Mr Green proclaims to Obi Okonkwo in Achebe’s *No Longer At Ease* when he says that: There is no Nigerian who is prepared to forgo a little privilege in the interests of his country.

Thus, when Kukoyi goes to see Dogo the president of Oribande court and bribes him before his divorce with Peju, Kukoyi wants Dogo to declare that Peju is wrong. Without any hearing or any investigation, Dogo decides to give the children to Kukoyi alone after taking money from him. That is why Jeju wonders:

“What kind of president was he? A man trusted and appointed to dispense a local justice who busied himself sowing confusion citizen paid to make justice simple and bring it closer to the people, who turned around to banish fair play and promote warped judgment? An indigenous judge expected to understand the people customs and pave the way for reconciliation where possible, who annulled a fifteen years old marriage like that?” Peju wondered (Ogundimu,2000:74).

That is the way justice is made when corruption occurs. Judicial officers take decisions the way they want without any ethics, law and rule. How can a judge dissolve a traditional marriage since has no hands in its establishment?

The court is so powerful that judges are free to do what they want for their own benefit without any worries but only for their benefit. The question is whether a judge shall accept bribe to settle a justice matter. But Ramoni is obliged to bribe Dogo, the president of the court before she has a hope of the settlement of the case of Peju as she says: Before departing this time, he gave his host a brown envelope beautifully impregnated with fifty naira notes. The president of the court accepted the offer gratefully and saw his visitor of with a broad smile. (Ogundimu, 2000:73)

Bribe is what makes them happy and they do not mind about people’s state of mind. Here corruption is like a norm of the society, the fuel that makes the administration machine to work.

Moreover judicial corruption also occurs with Dogo the president of Oribande court in *Behind The Mask*. How can a judge become a billionaire and will not be questioned without political protection? In *Behind he Mask*, knowing the right caliber of people in the right quarters was a sine qua non condition to enjoy impunity.

For instance if Peju does not know Moni, the Deputy Chief Registrar, her complaint against the mal practices of the president of the court will not be deeply understood so that Dogo be sent out of office.(Ogundimu,2000:98) .

The same thing occurs in *The Insiders*.If Iwa,Bayo's father does not know Chief Agboola,one of the celebrants of the trial ceremony of Amoo,Tijani'sson ,he will not take special notice aboutAmoo's case during the trial. We can see the way justice functions in Rabbenia Republic in the following lines.

At the end of his testimony Iwa produced three photographs received from Chief Agboola ones of the celebrants of the ceremony. The photographs were taken from different angles and showed Amoo's and his white neighbor s faces among others. The lawyer tendered them as exhibits and established Amoo's alibi.

You see Tijani continues“my son was the only person acquitted and discharged from among all the suspects those who were tried were found guilty and summarily hanged.Otherslost their lives in detention, while investigations was said to be still on”.(Ogundimu,1995:67).Justice is like a strange fisherman's net which catch small fishes and leaves the fat ones. This is explainable by corrupt practices. Who can arrest and prosecute a customary court president? For Peju,“the most stupid officer of the command would not venture to arrest and prosecute a customary court president who didn't no more than accept a paltry sum in the cool recess of his private sitting room”.(Ogundimu,2000:92).

It is sad to steal a goat and be arraigned in oribande customary court than to steal billions. The goat stealer will be given lengthy jail terms with hard labor to serve as example for others would be goat stealers while the billion stealers, will be asked to pay back a pittance. That is what Akwa was explaining to Kunlein a

silly season when he stated: "bail is free means offering enough inducement to buy freedom. (Ogundimu, 2008:27). As a consequence if one can steal enough money to guarantee the payment of buying his own freedom, he can go ahead according to Akwa. So a judge may allow or exclude evidences with the aim of justifying the acquittal of a guilty defendant of high political or social status. A judge or court staff may manipulate things to favor one party or another to help the bribe giver. So one can give a second definition of the judicial corruption as «the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. By implication, judicial corruption includes any inappropriate financial or material gain or non material gain aimed at influencing the impartiality of the judicial process by any actor within the court system. (transparency international). As a matter of fact Judicial corruption doesn't occur without political corruption.

2-2-Political corruption

Politics is the art of management of the city. The management of the city needs human resources. Human resources are those skilled, qualified or experienced to hold the different posts of responsibilities in the city.

The image of the office holder grows worse and worse in the African novels, since politicians are more and more portrayed as self-seeking, corrupt and fraudulent demagogues. In *A Man Of The People*, Achebe describes political corruption which is personified by Chief Nanga. In the novels one learns that each minister is giving a dwelling of seven bedrooms and seven bathrooms. Furthermore, Chief Nanga has three blocks of seven luxury mansions built in Mrs Nanga's name. Indeed, out of immorality a member of the cabinet, namely the Minister of Foreign Trade Alhaji Suleiman Wagada, has been guilty of a breach of state secret. As a matter of fact, Chief Suleiman has been in cahoots with British Amalgamated and informs the white expatriates that there will be a twenty percent rise in import duties on textile goods on new year's day.

Informed British Amalgamated manages to bring three shiploads of textiles. (Achebe, 1967: 95). This breach of state secret highlights the decay and perversion of the cabinet of which Chief Nanga is member, and this situation will bring a great loss to the country.

Political corruption takes place at the highest levels of political authorities. It occurs when politicians and political decision makers who formulate, establish and implement the laws in the name of people are themselves corrupt. Thus, make the fish rotten by the head.

In *A silly season*, Governor Igida who has normally to combat corrupt practices seems to protect doers of the evil practices.

When discussing about the resignation of appointment of Kunle, the governor declares to Kunle:

” what kind of public servant are you? Do you know how many citizens from this state applied to be commissioners? More than seven thousands; seven thousand applicants for fifteen slots! Did you know that? Now you feel it is important to discuss before you resign...I knew how important discussions were before you got the appointment. And, in spite of what people were saying against you, I stuck to my guns. I was told you were arrogant and idealistic. But at another level, we had our discussions, I had my instructions and I gave you the appointment.....Your name came from the presidency... (Ogundimu,2008:122 -123)

The advent of democratic regime nowadays as we can see all over Africa is an answer to the situation of dictatorship that prevailed and that were managed by the military. The 1990's see the birth of many democratic governments even if in some African countries fraudulent election brought to power military regime like the one of Alagidi in *The Insiders*...during the orile riot, the protesters had peacefully marched past Atanda Square, carrying placards which denounced the sapping economic policies of the Alagidi regime.(Ogundimu,1995: 63)

When discussing about the reason of the resignation of Kunle appointment, Governor Igida to encourage him to be in office tells him:

“Well if your resignation is only on health grounds as it is written in the letter, the state government could sponsor you for treatment abroad... if you decline it cannot be said to be my fault. Nobody can accuse me of being stingy with government funds”. (Ogundimu,2008:124).

Here public funds are seen as not belonging to anyone and can be used anyhow by the governmental officials. Through this kind of corruption, many political office holders acquired wealth and properties. This has made politics a big business because anything spent to secure a political office is regarded as an investment.

Political corruption occurs at the highest level. According to Kayode, Kunlé’s personal corrupt assistant “From someone pursuing a 20 millions Naira contract the governor wants five millions cash”. (Ogundimu,2008: 63)

When Kunle asks advice from Debo about the Ghana must go bag plenty of corrupt money brought to his office by the engineer, Kunle is advised to take part of the money and share the rest among his staff. (ogundimu,2008:69), because those who eat alone shall perish alone.

Political corruption occurs also with contracts awarded by top officials. One can see this by the difficulties that Kunle faced in his office. When the engineer, the contractor brings to him fifty thousands Naira in his office. He has rejected the offer because he does not want to influence the award of the totoro water project.

Political corruption is also mainly rooted in favoritism and nepotism. It serves only the leading team relatives.

Dogo, the Oribande court president, is corruptly appointed judge though he has not got any skill. With political corruption, it is not the right man at the right place but “Whom you know”. Despite his corrupt practices through the population, Dogo still be in office.

According to Moni’s explanation when Peju wants to know if they didn’t have any disciplinary committee to summon Dogo to stop his evil practices, Moni explains:

“He was brought before the judicial service committee on charges bordering on corruption and abuse of office. He was found liable. But at a crucial stage, the report and his file got missing in a mysteriously manner. Two office clerks were suspended for three months on that account. Whatever Dogo did; there was always someone to intervene because the permanent Secretary in the Ministry of information is his cousin, and always at hand to protect him” (Ogundimu, 2000: 97-98).

Such nepotism is a fertile land for corruption and it also occurs with politicians or top civil servants who protect their relatives.

Full adherence to mystic-political clubs like “Kokoro Aye” is also a key for political corruption where members are to protect each other. Ruth’s continuous stay in government heavily depends on her faithful adherence to Kokoro Aye klub. Members of this secret society cooperate and fully support one another otherwise she will have lost her teaching appointment over a year ago.

That is when she does a financially rewarding deal with a banker who is her student’s parent by leaking the examination questions on her custody. Unfortunately the student puts the questions on sale and jeopardizes everybody’s reputation. However, the klub has risen to the occasion and has nipped the scandal in the bud. All she suffers is a near promotion with a quick transfer from Dagbolu Grammar School to Momodu Comprehension High School.

These mystic-political clubs are a means where most of politicians take refuge. So when Ruth is introduced to the klub by Owolafe, she is told that the association is a reliable stepping stone to success, be it professional, social, economic or political. She later finds to her delight that is no exaggeration in all qualities attributed to the almighty special company. No matter what you do, the club protects you. This explains the role of associations or clubs linked to political corruption. Friends and kinsmen seeking favor from officials may impose difficult strains on the ethical disposition.

Political corruption is the mother of all corruption since the corrupt small civil servants justify their corrupt practices by the fact that their bosses also behave the same way.

Through *A Silly Season* one can see the case of Kayode the corrupt clerk when he states to Kunle who refuses to take bribe that «for someone pursuing a 20 millions contract, the governor wants five millions Naira cash.(Ogundimu,2008: 63) and through *Behind The Mask* while answering the old man who advice her for praying, Peju says:

” what kind of prayer? How do you start it...do you say,our father in heaven when you appears clearly to you that you are in your way to hell? When you know you are taking such a punishments because of inefficient governments, corrupt officers, greedy collaborators and helpless corporations where nothing works?(Ogundimu,2000:56)

Chief Ajijaye Minister of special Duties promises to help Kukoyi to secure an appointment as Sole Administration of Aroni local government before he has been dismissed.Kukoyi complains in this term:”Who else can get me that position now”(Ogundimu,2000:32).This assertion shows that with political corruption; it is not what you know but whom you know. It is not the right man at the right place but solidarity in nepotism. Only friends and kinsmen are the ones who are most of the time appointed. If you do not know anybody, you will have nothing.

In *Behind The Mask* we can see the case of a retired teacher who was made a court judge. The question is how a retired teacher can be made a court judge?Pejumakes a relevant analysis when she states that:“It is unfortunate that crooks like him should serve the state. And if this is the way he has done it,he must have carried out numerous financial raids on innocent people and spread corruption and bankrupt”. (Ogundimu,2000:89).

It is really unfortunate because in respected nations a court judge is a very skilled person qualified for his job which consists in judging, not a simple citizen turned into judge. When someone who is not qualified for a given job is appointed for the job, it may be the top authority’s fault. That is howpolitical corruption can be explained. This is the game of many political actors. Talking

about Chief Ajijaye, the former Minister of Special Duties,Pejusays thatthe «Dismissed Chief was sly, and shrewd, probably too shrewd. He knew where to stand when it mattered. He knew precisely how to shuffle and play his political cards to obtain the desired result” (Ogundimu, 2000:32)

This shows that most of the time people are appointed not by merit. When people are appointed not by merit but political cards played or by nepotism or favoritism, their only goal will be self-enrichment. That is what Akwa meanswhen she states:” When the governor of my own state makes the mistake of appointing me a commissioner, I will be in money within weeks” (Ogundimu, 2008, 20).

What is the mistake? It will be when the right man is not at the right place. It is also when one decides consciously to be corrupt. Talking about political or governmental corruptionand of its upsurge is what Akwa was explaining to Kunle the honest civil servant when he is trying to convince him to take bribe:

“Will you change the widespread practice of bribery and corruption? Don’t lose a golden Opportunity presented to you. Collect whatever the man bring and be quiet about it...you are part of a rotten fish.The rotten fish is surely the government and continues” if you don’t know as our people say a fish normally rots from the head.In our case, both the head and the tail is rotten. There is rot at the three levels of government: federal, state and local including all the ministries. What can a lone ranger like you do?”(Ogundimu,2008:24).

Refrain about corrupted practices when in political power or position is like to swim against the tide. How can government workers make it withoutcorruption? When the head of the state is collecting bribes what can the members of his cabinet do?

By wasting the natural resources by squandering the nation’s wealth for their own benefit instead of using them for the well being of the whole population, African political leaders don’t care about the people’s welfare. That is what Pa shittu wants Kunle to know when he gets to the seat of government and declares:” however the people here were cheery in spite of their poverty and the state of want;in terms of welfare and social amenities, government had nothing for them.(Ogundimu,2008:12).

Why does government not have anything for its people? That is because of corruption, the misuse of public funds, embezzlement and sharing among the leading team at the top level. According to Akwa:” the leaders are teaching the art of corruption and the populace is learning fast. And according to Akwa, At the moment it is only those who pass the implicit aptitude test of palm greasing that are fit to participate in government because of nepotism” (Ogundimu, 2008:25)

2-3-Nepotism

Nepotism and favoritism is slightly the same thing. However this is seen as natural human proclivity to favor friends, family and anybody close. Honorable chief Nanga illustrates nepotism in *Achebe’s A Man of the People* by saying:” we should not leave everything to the high land tribe. My secretary is from there; our people must press for their share of the national cake”. (Achebe,1967, 11)

While asking Moni the Deputy Chief Registrar why a corrupted official such as Dogo permitted to work for the high court?Peju has been answered this way by Moni:

“It is a bit complex”Moni explained:He(Dogo)owes his continued retention to his many connections in the service...There was always someone intervene because the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of information is his cousin and always at hand to protect him” (Ogundimu,2000:97)

Favoring relatives, personal friends or kinsmen of an official,nepotism is a form of corruption in which an office holder prefers his or her kinfolk, tribe or family members. In this system, the appointees to official positions are selected only from a closed and exclusive social network such as the alumni of universities instead of appointing the most competent candidates.

When Yaro the head of the junta came to power, he appoints as a minister his first cousin who is very surprised as he acknowledges:”I was pleasantly surprised when I learnt that Yaro my first cousin was heading the military junta...he didn’t even inform me before I was made Minister.(Ogundimu,2008:104)Prof Dogo says.

What he also does is to introduce his alumni student Kunle to his cousin as he says: "I have discussed you with Yaro. I explained to him that you graduated as one of my trusted and hardworking students; I added that you would be a dependable partner responsible and honest manager. He was delighted to hear this; he said you were the type of credible citizens he would like to involve in his administration" (Ogundimu, 2008:104).

The Governor tells Kunle:

"Do you know how many citizens applied to be commissioners? More than seven thousands, seven thousand applicants for fifteen slots! Did you know that? I knew how important discussions were before you got the appointment...but at another level we had our discussions. I had my instructions and I gave you the appointment (Ogundimu, 2008:122).

So far he finally added that "your name came from the presidency". Certainly Prof Dogo suggested the name of his student to his cousin president Yaro.

According to Achebe's *A Man of The People* and Armah in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* quoted by Zanou:

"The political atmosphere in their respective novels perpetrates corruption. In Achebe's *A man of the people* the political situation is the direct outcome of the historical environment which in *No longer at ease* ushers in a new order under an alien people. Due to the historical and political environment; unscrupulous people exploit ethnic loyalty, nepotism and favoritism situations which facilitate the setting up of corrupt governments". (laureClemence ZANOU, 2012, 40)

In Achebe's *A Man Of The People*, power becomes a family matter. Chief Nanga's call to Odili Samalu, his former student at Anata Grammar School is edifying by the following:

I want you to come to the capital and take up a strategic post in the civil service. We should not leave everything to the highland tribes. My secretary is from there; our people must press for their fair share of the national cake. (Achebe, 1967:11)

In *A Silly Season* Kayode becomes a clerk through the help of the sister-in-law of his friend's uncle. Nobody gets a job without a help due to bureaucratic corruption.

2-4-Red tape

Do you want to swim against the stream? How many government workers can make it without this gifts which you label bribes? Auntie asks Kunle. (OGUNDIMU, 2008 :41)

Bureaucratic corruption occurs in the public administration. Corruption is so rough in public offices that if one want his file to be treated in the right time; he must secure it as they use to say “he must put a stone on it if not the wind will take it away”. It is because of the same reason why in *A Man of The People* Max, Odili Samalu’s friend has faced this problem when he says this “I have been on the waiting list for a telephone for two months. You see, I have not given anyone a bribe, and I don’t know any big gun” (Achebe, 1967:80)

This kind of corruption occurs at a low level and street level. It is the kind of corruption citizen encounter daily at places like hospitals, schools, public offices...etc. Bureaucratic petty corruption which is seen as similar to corruption of need occurs when one obtains a business from the public sector through inappropriate procedure start at the moment people have to bribe before having from office holders what they have been paid for. In Benin the expression “mettre la Pierre sur son dossier” to put a stone on your file so that the wing won’t take it away is used to explain bureaucratic corruption that is the reason why the engineer bring to Kunle the bag plenty of money just to make him influence the awarding of totoro water project. Nevertheless police corruption remains one of the important manifestations of corruption.

2-5-Police corruption

To settle problems at the police offices or on our roads citizens, taxi drivers and traders have to bribe policemen in order to travel without problems. According to Ranti justice is not trust-worthy.

“it is an undoubted fact that justice (here the case of police justice) often swings right or left forward or backward according to where the higher bidder stands, this because administration of justice depends mainly on the quality of prosecution, and prosecution is in the hands of the rabbenia police who themselves, often sway to the side of the more generous proposer (Ogundimu, 1995:174)

Police corruption is a specific form of police misconduct designed to obtain financial benefits or other personal gain in exchange for not pursuing or selectively pursuing an investigation arrest or control aimed at influencing the impartiality.

Through the studied novels, in the Republic of Rabbenia only a foreigner or a damn fool will claim ignorance of police malpractices. One notices the case of Bayo who is innocently accused by the police man for firing James' house. Although James acknowledges the contrary by saying that:

“The fire had broken out from the kitchen where his elder wife had been roasting plantain and had slept off. He didn't suspect anybody in particular, but he knew he had many enemies around. From experience he knew that some jealous individuals did not like him... (Ogundimu, 1995:140)

But unfortunately the police sergeant asks James to rewrite the report in which Bayo will be charged for arson.

Why? Because according to Okafor the police man, Bayo is only a clerk but “when a lame man causes trouble, the trouble so caused invariably falls on the lap of the able bodied man (Ogundimu, 1995:182)

So they have charged Bayo just to jail him and extort his relatives. “How can you arrest me for one thing and charge me for another “(Ogundimu, 1995:143) Bayo wonders

Meanwhile James has produced a report which has been found to be unsatisfactory, the wrinkled corporal advises him to rewrite a new one in which Iyolade, Kudi and Rotimi are cited among witnesses of the fire incident.

Police corruption mainly occurs by their malpractices and their abuse of power on the people. When she comes back from the mortuary, Ranti faces such a difficulty as described in the following lines.

”After all,nothing incriminating was found on her,and she had not committed any known offence. But she cautioned herself; there were things she could not say out to these unthinking rogues. To ignore that fact was to make the same mistake as MrDeboye who believed that one could engage in a fair dealing with rabbenian policemen on the sole basis of logic; ethics or rationality”.(Ogundimu,1995: 166-167).

This is very serious if a police agent can act like that without any consequences on the society and its development.

Part two

**The consequences and suggestions to cope with
corruption in the focus novels**

CHAPTER THREE: CONSEQUENCES OF CORRUPTION

Known as the cause of the under development of most African countries what are the effects of corruption on the economy, on the family, on the society, and on politics?

3-1 Economic consequences

Everybody knows that Africa is full of natural resources: black Africa is the first provider of mineral products for Europe. It is one of the first world exporters of non combustible minerals. There are many important oil fields along the littoral of West Africa and Central Africa. Oil and natural gas are found out in abundance in the Sahara desert which can be one of the world's biggest producers of energy. There are a lot of rivers which can produce energy. We also have large forests with wild animals. In addition, fifty percent of African population is under 20 years old.

While considering all this wealth, it is unbearable that Africa remains underdeveloped. Why is Africa in this situation? Generally, corruption is the obstacle of economic growth of a nation by weakening the economic system. It is why, for late Prof Dossou-Yovo Noël: « La corruption est le sida des économies contemporaines, grande ou petite » (corruption is the AIDS of contemporary economies whether it is large or small) (Prof Noël Dossou-Yovo, 2010 :178)

It has a negative impact on the citizens' confidence in government and undermines the efficiency of services, and it also reduces the financial capabilities of the State. When the natural resources of the continent are cut up, misappropriated, and shared among the rulers, it is obvious that such

mismanagement will have a serious impact upon the economy. And post independent Africa is a continent where its corrupt leaders take the continents'

wealth as a heritage which must be shared among their family members. And it is common to hear the leaders say that ‘I have taken my share’. As such, how will the population’s well being be improved?

The economic growth of a nation is not effective when corruption is spread in that nation. Many billions of dollars are lost every year in corruption. But estimations are made by the World Bank, the International Money Found, and the African Union based on indicators establish after population are polled about their perception of corruption.

Thus, the World Bank and The International Money Found estimate that over US 1000 billion a year lost because of corruption.

The African Union has estimated that African economies lose over 148 billion every year to corruption. It is obvious therefore that a country with rampant corruption will have a declining growth rate and a bad living condition standards. When scandalous deals take place and involve high sums of money which one does not ever believe it can exist in the country, to control corruption will be difficult if not impossible, because those who must take repressive measures will discover that a big bone is stuck in their throat and as such, they will be unable to bark. One is wondering that if this evil is not African leaders’ wiling motto what will African continent looks like? Such wondering can seek an answer in Chinua Achebe’s comment in his essay *The Trouble with Nigeria*:

The countless billions that a generous providence poured into our nationalCoffers in the last ten year (1972) would have been enough to launch this nation into the middle-rank of develop nation and transformed the livers of our Poor and needy. But what have done with it? Stolen and salted away by people in power and their accomplice. Squandered in uncontrolled importation of all kinds of useless consumer merchandise from every corner of the globe.Embezzled thought inflated contracts to an increasing army of party loyalists twohave neither the escalation salaries of a grossly overstaffed and unproductive public service. And so on ad infinitum (Achebe, 1983:23)

After all what the same population has gone through to obtain freedom from their white masters hoping that things will change when they govern themselves

still continues. If the population has ever imagined that this is how their continent is going to be governed, will they accept to give their life to chase away the colonizers? The dishonest activity has also a negative impact on family.

3-2 CONSEQUENCES ON THE FAMILY

People's living conditions are bad. No money is found by the lower people class. The situation is so hard that people starve. It is so hard that some could flee their responsibilities. Even how to dress themselves is a big problem which appears before them as a rock as the man complained by the woman in *The Beautiful Ones Are not Yet Born*:

The woman directed an unbelieving glance at the man and 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 nobody, nobody to buy you shoes, so your little toes will all be destroyed" (Armah: 1968, 122-123).

The consequence of corruption is felt in every sector even in family and social relations. When in a family, all but one is for the immoral activity; such a person is subjected to all sorts of treatments. In the same way, on a social tight, when one is alone against many on a very sensible topic such as corruption, the relation is vowed to failure. Such situation have been treated by Adetunji Suleiman Ogundimu in his novel *A Silly Season*, Chinua Achebe in *A Man of the people*; Ayi Kwei Armah in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, and many others.

In *A Silly Season*, kunle Bangbelu, a responsible civil servant, is opposed to his mother and his aunt on the one hand and on the other hand, he is in conflict with his friend and his girlfriend, because he has refused to take bribe. As such, he is treated as a "homeless pauper", "an unwise man", "a lazy man", a "miserable man" and a "fool" by own blood and flesh mother. Such is how she son through these sentences.

“Do you want to die a homeless pauper like your father (Ogundimu, 2008:34); or “You cannot continue throwing good food away like a reckless housewife toying with her evening meal? (Ogundimu, 2008:35) or “If you throw your dinner to the dogs, you’ll go to bed on an empty stomach; that will be out of your negligence. And, just like hunger punishes laziness, poverty punishes negligence?”; or ultimately, you’ll curse your folly and end up like your father. (Ogundimu, 2008:35)

It is painful to hear a mother assaulting her son because the son is against corruption and refuses to take bribe. Normally she must support the rare grain her son is so that the son can feel happy to continue fighting for his nation? Unfortunately, she is urging him to steal his nation’s wealth and to what he does not deserve.

Besides, the same Kunle will be in conflict with his friend Akwa and his girlfriend Abeji for the same problem, corruption. That is why Akwa is questioning Kunle: “And you are the one to change the widespread practice of bribery and corruption? Come out of your dreamland and get down to business!” (Ogundimu, 2008:24)

The only crime Kunle has ever committed is to reject corruption. In the same way, in Armah’s *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, the nameless man, a well constructed and a responsible civil servant, is in trouble with his own wife and his mother-in law because he also has refused to take bribery and as such, he is called names such as “chichidodo” , “onward” , “Christian soldier”: The woman stares unbelieving at her husband, then whispers softly, ‘chichidodo’ (Armah, 1968:43).

On the same ground, in Achebe’s *A Man of the people*, Odili is viewed as a “mad man” by his own father because he also refuses to collect from Honourable Chief Nanga the “two hundred and fifty pounds”:

“Amad may sometimes tell a true word, said father, but you watch him, he will soon add something to it that will tell you mind is still spoiled. My son, you have again shown your true self when you came with a car; I thought to myself: good, some sense is entering his belly at last ... But I should have known. So you really want to fight Chief Nanga! My son, why don’t you fall where your piece could be gathered? If the money he was offering too small why did you not so? Why did you not ask for three or four hundred?” (Achebe, 1967:131)

Due to corruption, a son is opposed to his mother, a son is also opposed to his father, a husband is opposed to his wife, and a friend is opposed to his friend. As a consequence, corruption is felt on every sector especially on the society.

3-3 Social Consequences

Another evil of power in Africa is to use power or one's position to get rich. There can be no doubt that most African go into politics to make money. They nourish a personal ambition which is characterized by a very bad cupidity. They don't think about the interest of their people but about their pocket. A parliament member works twice or thrice a month in Benin but receives every month more than 2,000 000 millionsfcfa as much as what the middle class worker gets in ten years of hard working.

African political leaders do not care about the people's welfare. That is what Pa Shittu wants Kunle to know when he got to the seat of government and declares: however the people here were cheery in spite of their poverty and the state of want, in terms of welfare and social amenities, government had nothing for them. (Ogundimu, 2008:12).

There is neither hope of a brilliant future for a community if corruption spread in neither that community nor any chance of development if this dishonest activity is rampant in a given society. Corruption helps erode moral values, weaken institutions, develop a sense of insecurity, and perpetrate poverty in a community where it operates.

Corruption is also seen as an obstacle of national development. Because, all the natural resources, all the nation's wealth, which normally must be used to improve the miserable living condition of the population, to boost the national economy and to generate job opportunities are embezzled, and shared among the leading team. As such, it will be difficult, if not impossible to save the population from their poverty, and their misery.

It will also be difficult to make ends meet and to attain a good social level. public money that is used to build huge official residences where ministers do not know in which particular room to spend their night, must normally be used to do something better for the improvement of the people's living conditions.

Odili Samalu does not ever imagine or dream that with their state level their underdevelopment and social status, there are some citizens in the same nation living in opulence with the state money. For, the conditions in which he has lived in Giligili with his half sister are so awful that he does not expect to see in his life such a building full with blinding expensive furniture:

The only excitement remember in Giligili was our nightly war rats. We had two rooms in the large iron roofed house with its earth wall floor. My sister and her husband end two small children slept in one and the rest of us-three boys-shared the other with bags of rice, gari, beans and other foodstuffs. And, of course, the rats. (Achebe, 1967:44)

Elsewhere in the same novel, it is said to the same Odili that:

“That row of ten houses belongs to the Minister of Construction. They are let to different embassies at three thousand a year each.(Achebe, 1967:58).

While some citizens are homeless and are suffering, African leaders are wasting money. The money that has been used for the sake of the well being of a single human being must have been used for the well being of the nation as a whole. In the same way, while some citizens are languishing in poverty, dying of starvation with no one to help them, the leaders are living in opulence and are playing with the money of their country. There is a regretful situation in Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* where a woman comes to the man's house to beg for sugar. It is an old woman with her breast barely covered by her cloth, holding a little chipped enamel bowl at the tips of her fingers.

“Good evening”, she says. Here I am again Sugar. Would you be pleased to lend me a little sugar! Just for my children. (Armah, 1968:43)

It is indeed painful that what must be used to appease the suffering of the poor citizens a little bit is wasted by high officials in drinks, buildings, foods and clothes.

The under-development of African nations is aggravated by corruption, as it discourages both foreign and domestic private investments, thus reduces available resources for infrastructure. Corruption also acts as a form of taxation on the poorest; it feeds political and social tensions, and sometimes leads to entire nations going out of control. As Professor Noël Dossou-Yovo points out in his book *Et Pour quoi l'Afrique refuserait-elle le Développement*:

En tout état de cause, la grande corruption (dont se rendent coupables les hauts fonctionnaires, ministres et autres chefs d'Etat et qui visent à influencer les grandes décisions) peut détruire des nations entières. Là où la grande corruption bat son plein, il n'y a guère aucun espoir de contrôle sur sa toute petite sœur.

[From every state of thinking, corruption at higher level (which embodies high civil servants, ministers and other head of state which aim to influencing the important decisions on the nation) may destroy the entire nations. Where the grand corruption takes place, there is no hope of controlling the petty one] (my own translation) (Dossou-Yovo, 2010:173)

The most regretful thing in the matter is that there is no one to denounce the silly activity. For, whoever does it, is either reduced to silence, he is jailed, or killed: The same Prof Dossou-Yovo notices that:

Il est évident que des ministres et fonctionnaires corrompus ne peuvent pas permettre qu'une liberté de la parole et une presse libre ne dévoilent leurs activités inavouables; pas plus qu'ils n'admettraient une initiative similaire de la part d'une opposition parlementaire. En tout état de cause, la richesse provenant de la corruption en question peut également jouer un rôle significatif en permettant aux politiciens corrompus de demeurer au pouvoir par les moyens sous tendus par la corruption.

It is evident that corrupt ministers and civil servants may neither accept that any freedom of speech and media denounce their hidden activities; nor admit a similar initiative from a parliamentary opposition. From every state of thinking, the corruption wealth may also play a significant role by helping the corrupted to stay on power by every corrupted trick] (Noël Dossou-Yovo, 2010:178) OUR OWN translation

The same goes on when leaders concede and take bribes on behalf of their society it is the life of the latter which is at stake. For, when instead of doing their job properly, the leaders share the money of the state among themselves; it is the poor population which always pays for it.

If such are the consequences of the immoral activity on the community, what are the ones on politics?

3-4 POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES

The consequences of corruption are also on politics. A person to whom power must be given must be a well composed person, a pragmatic and realistic person, who must only have in mind how to rule a nation in the adequate way. Instead power is given to unscrupulous politicians, criminals and armed robbers, who only want to make profit of their position to rob their nation's wealth and put their population on their knees:

“That’s all they care for; he said with a solemn face, ‘women, care landed property. But what else can you expect when intelligent people leave politics to illiterates like Chief Nanga? (Achebe, 1967:87). Max kulamo tells Odili.

Such criminals and robbers are The Honorable Chief Nanga and his staff in Achebe’s *A Man of the people*, Koomson and his team in Armah’s *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, the military president and some of his government member in Ogunjimi’s *A Silly Season*. Such politicians do not have any education for ruling a nation: “A man need not be an economist to be Chancellor of the Exchequer or a doctor to be Minister of Health”. (Achebe, 1967:5). And as a consequence the political situation of their nation is regretful and their nation is ruled anyhow.

The leaders, who know how to bribe the innocent population and how to play the dirty game, only want to use the poor population as a ladder on which to climb so that they can steal the wealth of their nation and fill their bank account in western countries. Such is what Kayode the clerk reveals to Mrs. Banji in *A Silly Season*: “Even the Military president is eating and smiling; Ask French bank! Or check the President’s accounts in Germany. They will tell you that our President is a multi-billionaire.” (Ogunjimi, 2008:95)

He even puts “s” to account to mean that the President has many accounts in Germany. While they are elected to take care of their nations and citizen, the

only thing which crosses their mind is how get away with their nation's wealth.
What are then the means that must be used to fight this evil practice?

Chapter four: Suggestions to cope with corruption

4-1-CHILDREN'S CIVIC EDUCATION

Although Kunle lives in the same corrupt society, he is not corrupt because

of the education given to him by his father.

In order to avoid corruption to the younger generation, children's civic education is of a paramount importance. Children who are really informed about corruption, its manifestations and consequences, are likely to avoid it when they grow-up. Children's education on corruption should be done at two levels: first in their families and later at schools.

Families in general and parents in particular are the first people who usually involve themselves in children's education at the early age. Therefore it is up to them to do their best and educate children through words and behaviors in order to shape their mind for future good habits in society.

At their early age most children are in a great need of copying adults in anything they say or do. Parents should try to show through their behaviors that other people's belongings should be kept well and should not be damaged. Children must be taught to take care of their parents' belongings and do the same to anything that belongs to other people. Parents should avoid using badly or damaging other people's belongings in front of their children. Parents should also avoid abusing people or saying bad words in front of their children.

It is necessary for parents to apologize when they have unwillingly damaged other people's belongings. Parents should also avoid lying, cheating or stealing in front of their children because they are sensitive to anything people do or say in front of them. For example a parent who has borrowed money should be honest enough to pay back his creditor in due time. In short, parents should do their best to make their children know that good care should be taken of other people's properties.

Parents who work in the public administration should avoid using badly public property or taking them for their own belongings. They should teach their children the necessity of loving one's country and its leaders, the

importance of self-sacrifice in the public administration. Parents should do their best to be the good models for their children.

When parents have succeeded in giving good civic education to their children, the task will be easier for teachers at school.

At school, children are put into contact with public things such as furniture like benches, chairs and tables. As young schoolboys and schoolgirls it is necessary to teach them how to use the school furniture and avoid damaging them. Punishments are necessary in the case of a student's damage to school furniture. The other way of making students respect public things is to take good care of ourselves. Therefore teachers should behave well in front of their students and avoid damaging them.

Teachers should always come to school on time. They should also wait for the end of the hour before *going* back home. Teachers are usually regarded as the models of their students because anything they do is easily copied by their students. Besides the children's civic education, other measures are necessary to put an end to corruption.

4-2 THE RIGHT MAN IN THE RIGHT PLACE

In *The Interpreters*, Sagoe gets his job in *The Independent Viewpoint* not only because of his degrees but because of the bribe he has given to Chief Winsala and Sir Derinola. In the country in which young graduates have to bribe before securing their job, efficiency will take a long time to come. Sagoe has the degree of journalist and his case is quite different from what usually happens nowadays. As a matter of fact, a lot of people are offered jobs which they do not deserve as they bribed directors. To be appointed in some cases, people are offered jobs on the basis of their belonging to the political party in power or because they are relatives of political leaders. Such practices which are common in the developing countries really hinder the development of the post-independent

Africa.

As a matter of fact, a worker who is doing a job, he is not really qualified for, can't be efficient. On the contrary he will easily yield to corruption and other social evils such as negligence and lack of professional consciousness. A worker who doesn't deserve the job he is doing will neither take care of it nor be afraid of losing it.

At school, it is necessary for students in general and girls in particular to deserve their passage to upper forms. In the case a student's passage to an upper form is due to cheating or the teacher's help, it will be very difficult for the student to understand lessons and work hard. As the student hasn't got the level of the form in which he or she is "pushed", he or she will find tests difficult and will easily fail.

He will always be tempted by cheating in all his or her studies. In such cases, exams become real nightmares for students. As a matter in fact, these students have got used to helps and will be expecting them from anybody they come across. Students who have passed their exams after being helped or cheating won't be efficient in the future when they get jobs.

They are more likely to yield to corruption than other students who have worked without cheating and passed to upper forms owing to their own efforts. When the right man is put at the right place it is necessary for the workers to change their mentality.

4-3 THE CHANGE OF MENTALITY

In *No Longer At Ease*, at a party organized by the Umuofia Progressive Union the Chairman asks Obi: Have they given you a job yet? (Achebe, 1967: 38)

In Nigeria the government has nothing to do with people. It is an alien

institution and people's business is to get as much out of it as they can without getting into trouble.

The quotation above reveals the common state of mind of the masses after the independence in Africa. It is an expression of the people's disappointment brought about by the government's estrangement and insensitivity to their daily problems.

Politicians promise a lot of things during electoral campaigns and hardly fulfill few of them after being elected. They usually pay lip-service to the welfare of the masses whereas they are working for their own interests in reality. Such behaviors disappoint the masses who finally regard themselves as aliens in their own country.

Therefore it is necessary for the government to be close to the masses as much as possible in order to be aware of their various needs and problems in so as to help them find adequate solutions.

The government should do its best to be transparent in the use of the public funds and accept self-sacrifice. Politicians as well as civil servants should know that public things and especially public money requires the same care as their own properties.

Instead of always thinking about their own interests, politicians and civil servants should devote themselves more to the welfare of their community and avoid negligence and inefficiency at work.

The masses should avoid putting a barrier between themselves and the government. The government is part of the masses. Public money should not be regarded as a "common cake" of which they could get as much as possible. Beside the change of mentality it is necessary for the government to pay the workers adequate salaries.

4-4: ADEQUATE SALARIES TO CIVIL SERVANTS

Everybody is in need of a good living condition. In order to satisfy ends, civil servants should be paid good and adequate salaries. In most developing countries, Civil servants' salaries are too low.

The paradox is that the politicians who don't work as much as the civil Servants earn very high salaries. During their career, most workers realize that they cannot succeed in fulfilling their essential needs if they keep on being too honest.

Some civil servants are faced with family problems they cannot solve if they do not resort to corruption which they find as the best way out of their problems.

Salaries of the civil servants should be increased in proportion not only to their degrees, but also to the jobs they are doing. The teacher's case needs to be seriously examined by the government as they work a lot but earn very low salaries.

Besides the increase of salaries which is very important in the fight against corruption, special institutions should be set up in order to punish the corrupt people, whether they are politicians or civil servants.

4-5 PUNISHMENT OF THE CORRUPT ONES.

One of the ways to fight efficiently against corruption is to punish the corrupt ones. The lack of punishment will lead to the spread of the evil. Civil Servant as politicians should be really punished.

What we unfortunately face in developing countries is that big corrupt politicians are not punished. Contrary they are offered important posts as if the government is congratulating them for their acts. Those who are usually punished are the little civil servants. Such a situation is skillfully pointed out in Soyinka's *The Interpreters* as follows:

Run, you little thief or the bigger thieves will pass a law against your existence as a menace to society. Sagoe follows them running, Barabbas from the same crowd which will reform tomorrow and cheer the larger thief returning from his twentieth

Economy Mission and pluck his train from the mud, dog-wise, in their teeth.(Soyinka, 1970: 57)

The bigger thieves are the corrupt politicians such as Ministers and their accomplices who are part of the corrupt ruling system. They keep on their fraudulent practices because the masses are powerless and have to keep quiet about everything.

To punish "the bigger thieves", it is necessary to set up institutions specialized in trying their cases. Such institutions should be international so that they might act without any influence of the corrupt ones.

The other punishment that can be implemented is shaming the perpetrators of the evil. This process involves immortalizing the names of corrupt public officials by using funds recovered from them to set up infrastructure project, which are named after them in a negative manner.

The idea is that as soon as they are prosecuted and convicted, the money recovered from them should be used for a road, a hospital, a school, or such others project of national significance. Bold signposts, with the person's pictures are then erected around the project; with inscriptions to the effect that the project is executed with stolen money recovered Mr. XYZ.

When the fund recovered is small to complete any infrastructure project, it should be used to procure text books and exercise books for distribution to students in primary and secondary schools, with the inscription that the books are printed with stolen money recovered from XYZ.

That way, at a very early age, the students will get to know that it does not pay to steal public funds. A national cenotaph of dishonor should be build where the names of all convicted of corruption charges will be engraved, for posterity. Future generation would be able to refer to this cenotaph, and the list will continue to grow as soon as persons are convicted.

Since one of the objectives of corrupt officials is to acquire a larger than life stature within their community and outside it, they would have achieved that objectives, but forever ruined their reputation and that of their

families, and the shame of it will hang on them and members of their families for generations to come, and prevent them from ever again aspiring to hold public office. It will also act as deterrence to others.

Conclusion

Corruption is a serious problem that weakens societies, ruins lives and impedes development. As one of the world's most populated areas it is vital that Africa tackles the problem with increased vigour.

Effectively, addressing corruption on the continent must become a development essential requirement as African countries can't bear the cost of corruption. As ever it is the poor who suffer most from corruption, but as a threat to the continent, fighting corruption must be the shared responsibility of

every African if one wants our continent to achieve its development, growth and prosperity. The few solutions we have submitted in this work are not enough to put an end to corruption. Nevertheless, so make other to complete the list, they will surely contribute to the fight against the system. It is appropriate to emphasise the importance of good policies toward controlling corrupt behaviors but it is also very important to put a special attention on human being because it is human being who leads the different institutions in society.

Even if one creates institutions to fight the plague, it is human being who will implement the laws. That is why a special attention must be put on the civic education of the children who will be the leaders of the future. That is why in the fight against corruption man is at the centre of all.

My suggestions on how to control corruption include to:

- Prohibit bribery in all civil services.
- Encourage a free press to report corrupt practices in the society.
- Organize civil society to address the problems of corruption brought to light by the process of transparency and the activity of the media.
- Introduce into government anti-corrupt bureaus which will identify corruption practices and bring them to public attention.
- Fight against impunity and put a special attention on civic education of the young people.

In his novels, Ogundimu presents a dark future that can only be avoided by a good store of courage and willingness. One has to read the real problem of development raised throughout the productions.

Nothing in the process leading to men's happiness misses in Ogundimu's novels, from social welfare to politics going through economics, the basic matter is how to eradicate corruption and exploitation of man by man in order to enable the individual to live in perfect harmony with society.

Also, it is to promote individual creativity which is the justification of the

perpetual struggle in which the human being is involved.

Ogundimu denounces the animosity, the immorality of man and social injustice. He shows the tendency of the ruling class selfishness instead of serving their countries. The three studied novels are also an appeal of Ogundimu for social revolutions to protest against the leaders' deviance and abuses in the exercise of their power. For him the people should call on the leaders to account for their social achievements.

As a matter of fact, Ogundimu makes everybody become aware of his responsibility, especially political leaders who are the main target of his criticism. Africa is number one on the list of the under-developed areas of the world.

However, Africa can come out of this situation. The negative aspects one observes on the continent today can be turned into feat. All that we have to do is to decide.

Thus, our misery will be changed into riches. Albert TEVOEDJRE is entirely of this philosophy. Accordingly, he encourages us through the significant title of this book: *Lapauvreté, richesse des peuples*.

We have to understand that our poverty today should set up our tomorrow's fortune. In other words, the misery and poverty we experience must incite us to be creative and hard-working for future brightness.

Then our leaders must turn their speeches they say everyday into concrete realities and fact. They have the duty to couple their deeds with their speeches. Thus everybody will be happy and peaceful.

To arouse reflexion and foster a constructive introspection are the main purposes that Ogundimu aims at, for the present and the future of Africa, he thinks, it is important to take quick measures.

Even if there is no miracle solution, there are, however a number of conditions that we find out at full length of the studied novels. There must be a sane political and social environment in which everyone feels at ease to belong to a

country or a continent. Each Africans has to do an effort on his side to change something. Political leaders have to question themselves about the way they lead their respective countries, and the masses to wonder if their behavior is inductive to development. In general, Africans must be given a civic education, they must be inculcated a good morality, their mentalities must be desintoxicated as early as possible.

Thus there will be full commitment of every African-man-woman-child or adolescent to the common cause of development for one's happiness and comfort. One of Ogundimu's main objective is to show Africans their true and unquestionable share in their fate and force them to accept it because most of the time they don't realize that they are their own destroyers as Alpha Blondy says :les ennemis de l'Afrique sont les Africains. The real enemies of Africa are Africans themselves. To make them understand it clearly, he digs in their past to find the true explanation.

For him what happens today has its roots in a far remote history, that's our culture. So it is to this remote past that Africans have to go back to find solutions to the situation. To go back, not to repeat it, but to find solution through it.

For him it is not a dead society he wants to bring back to life, on the contrary it is a new fortunate society we have to create with past splendor. That's his philosophy as Soyinka says somewhere: " The writing must not consist of writing well-built literary phrases as required by Shakespearean pure tradition but of making a country, a continent, coming to grips with their past their present and their future.

Today it is no use seeking to know who is right in details but to know what is the best solution to set off Africa on the process of a sustainable development. If Africans show a little intelligence and if they put their forces together, they can achieve an astonishing fortune.

Moreover, the vision of every African today about the development of the continent is: feeding security, basic health aids and education for everyone;

full participation of the people to development process and political decisions. It is then clear that to come out of our fight is no longer the task of only those who occupy political leadership positions in our countries, but it is a task which all sections of our communities must participate responsibly in. But for the moment those already in power have the duty to facilitate everything by restoring social justice and peace all over the continent. Let's hope that they have understood this appeal.

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