

Ahmed Draia University-Adrar
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Departement of English Letters and Languages



Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for a
Master's Degree in Literature and Civilization

Alienation in Ayi Kwei Armah's The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born 1968

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Academic Year:
2021-2022

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Dedication



شهادة الترخيص بالإيداع

انا الأستاذ(ة): احمد عبد الواحد
المشرف مذكرة الماستر الموسومة بـ: Alienation in Ayi Kwei
Arman the Beauty of ones are not yet Born.
من إنجاز الطالب(ة): ياسين لطيفة
و الطالب(ة):
كلية: العلوم والآداب
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14 JUN 2022

ادرار في

مساعد رئيس القسم:



- امضاء المشرف:

I dedicate my dissertation work to my family. A special gratitude to my loving parents, whose words of encouragement and push for tenacity ring in my ears.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my wonderful friends who have supported me throughout the process; I will always appreciate their help in developing my work.

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Abstract

Alienation is one of the disturbing realities facing humanity, thus this subject caught the attention of post-colonial writers like Ayi Kwei Armah. The objectives of this present study is to scrutinize this phenomenon of alienation in neocolonial Ghana in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968); investigating the role of the capitalist system as well as the role of the existing native elites in alienating the individual from society.

In addition, this dissertation illustrates the indirect moral influence of the Western commodity-based culture upon the individual through the main characters of Armah's debut novel *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968), as it examines the insights of the writer regarding his neocolonial society vis-à-vis alienation. The study tends to negotiate the theme of alienation through Ayi Kwei Armah's debut novel *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968). It discusses how this phenomenon arises in neocolonial Africa illustrating the reasons behind, and the outcomes thereof. The study zooms on the theme of alienation from Marx's point of view, as well as his insights on capitalism and commodity fetishism .

Key words: Alienation, neocolonialism, capitalist system, western commodity-based culture.

ملخص

يعتبر الاغتراب مشكلة من المشاكل التي تواجه البشرية ، لذلك جذب هذا الموضوع انتباه كتاب ما بعد الاستعمار مثل اي كواي ارماه. تهدف هاته الدراسة الى فحص ظاهرة الاغتراب في غانا ما بعد الاستعمار من خلال "رواية الجميلون لم يولدو بعد" للكاتب الغاني اي كواي ارماه. كما وتسلط الضوء على دور النظام الراسمالي ودور النخبوية المحلية كذلك في المساهمة في اغتراب وعزل الافراد عن مجتمعاتهم من خلال الرواية. بالاضافة الى ذلك توضح هاته الدراسة التأثير غير المباشر للثقافة الغربية على الافراد في المجتمع الافريقي بشكل عام واخلاقياتهم من خلال تحليل الشخصيات الاساسية في رواية "الجميلون لم يولدو بعد".

الكلمات المفتاحية، الإغتراب، الاستعمار الجديد، النظام الرأس مالي.

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General Introduction

General Introduction:

Alienation is a psychological state in which a person perceives himself as separate from his surroundings and disconnected from other people in his society. This study is conducted to address the phenomenon of alienation which is rooted in neocolonial capitalist societies (Ghanaian society in particular). It is important to be aware of the real reasons that maintain this phenomenon in neocolonial Africa (Ghana); especially that the Ghanaian people had experienced colonization, and they have had their lives shaped by it.

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born (1968) is a novel that tells the story of a man whose psyche is on the brink of collapse because of the money-breathing society he lives in (neocolonial Ghana). In this novel the writer depicts how people in his country build a false hope in their leaders, in the system; and how this eventually is aggravating the sense of alienation among them.

This research negotiates the role of the capitalist system¹ of the petty-bourgeoisie and its role in alienating and isolating the individual from himself mainly, and from his society. Also, it illustrates the impact of the western commodity-based culture upon the ideals and morals of the African people. Moreover, it demonstrates how materialism, which is the focus of the capitalist system, isolates people from themselves and from others.

In addition, the study traces the dimensions of alienation from the perspective of Karl Marx and Frantz Fanon, shedding light on how it is experienced by Ghanaian people. Furthermore, it shows the contribution of the native elite to the decay of society, and

¹ According to Britannica the capitalist system is a Western economic system, since the collapse of feudalism, in which means of production are privately owned and production and income distribution are largely directed through the operation of markets.

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making the ordinary man a passive object, struggling to build a healthy relationship with himself and with his loved ones.

Alienation has been a major theme to discuss in colonial and postcolonial African literature. In *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968), Ayi Kwei Armah speaks about the conditions in neocolonial Ghana as a typical for neocolonial African societies. The novel's events take place between Easter, 1965, and February 1966, when Ghana's first president, Kwame Nkrumah, was overthrown from power. Kwame Nkrumah as many other African leaders had plunged his country into a cycle of turmoil and problems. His reign was a harsh period where political corruption and economic dependence on Europe continued.

Methodology:

This study negotiates the theme of alienation in Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) by investigating the role of the capitalist system and native elites in neocolonial Africa, particularly Ghana. It analyzes the characters of the novel to illustrate how the mentality and morality of Ghanaians is becoming influenced by the Western culture of commodities in a neocolonial climate.

Through using some insights of Karl Marx on alienation and capitalism, the research will discuss the link between the alienated characters of the novel which are used by the writer and the reality that people (of Africa) are driven to in the neocolonial climate. By borrowing some insights from Marx' perspective of alienation, the research will show how man is estranged from himself, and isolated from others, it will also illustrate the role of the (African) native elite in maintaining the indirect dominance of the colonizer through the characters of the novel.

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This work will focus on the concept of alienation as well as its relevance to the social, economic and political life of the Ghanaian society. The study will determine how Ayi Kwei Armah had achieved this literary work through using the Marx's theory of alienation, as well as Marx's insight towards capitalism and commodity fetishism². The study will also show how Ayi Kwei Armah adopted some of the Fanonian insights in his work.

Moreover, Marx's understanding to capitalism and its effects on societies and individuals raises the problematic of how had individuals in neocolonial Ghana been mentally dominated by commodity and money, and how this later played the main role in alienating individuals from their communities and loved ones, as it created a kind of self-estrangement for them. Through adopting Marx's view point towards social classes, the work will demonstrate how Armah has made his work a tool to illustrate the elites' role in alienating the individuals and helping in the decadence of his country Ghana.

² Commodity fetishism: When material objects that are produced by human labor in a capitalists society start possessing social power.

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Chapter One:

1. Historical and Theoretical Backgrounds to Alienation in Postcolonial/Neocolonial Ghana:

In this early chapter, and in respect to the dissertation's concern with the theme of alienation in Armah's debut novel, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) this study postulates that Armah's novel engages with alienation as one of the outcomes and intricacies that were given birth in neocolonial/postcolonial Ghana. It assumes that alienation and neocolonialism³ are among the most recurrent issues and dilemmas of contemporary Africa. Thus, this chapter presents briefly the history of Ghana in order to give background on the main subject of study which is alienation, and the factors contributing to it. Also, this chapter presents brief definitions of the most important concepts and keywords, which are essential in theme construction.

1.1 Brief History to the Gold Coast:

Ghana, or what was firstly named the Gold Coast by Europeans, had witnessed colonization with its effects and intricacies. According to Brukum, interest in what is now Ghana began when Portuguese first stepped on this land as traders. Portuguese navigators were the only ones to arrive in the fifteenth century in order to trade in gold, etc. However, other Europeans soon followed as competitors on gold and several other raw materials on this area. Later on, and with the need for labor forces in South as well as North America due to the development in plantation; The Gold Coast became an active spot in slave trade.

The Gold Coast became a British colony in 1874. When British colonization first stepped on the area they did establish some coastal forts on the shores in order to protect

³ According to Britannica, Neocolonialism is "the control of less-developed countries by developed countries through indirect means".

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their interests and maintain their dominance on the land. The British ruling of the land was not direct; instead, they did support the native chiefs of the area in order to be their eyes and hands in the land. The role of the native African chiefs at this stage was very important, as the British were keen to maintain their sway over the area by creating classes and elites. (101-122)

The creation of the category of the political elites⁴ by the British rulers was intended to maintain a durable dominance on Ghana. For this reason, elites were offered European education and privileges, while the rest of the people were not given the same privilege. Eventually, when the British left in 1957, the native elites in Ghana were positioned in power. They remained infatuated with the European life style, and with the expensive, luxury goods they enjoyed.

As it is depicted in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968), the British mode of colonialism affected Ghanaian society's structure, economy, life style and identity. This influence lasted in Ghana even after independence, causing more and more degeneration and despair among Ghanaian individuals. Armah's debut novel establishes a bonding between alienation, and the everyday economic, political and cultural life in neocolonial Ghana.

The novel also represents some ideas that ultimately reflect the lived conditions of the Ghanaian society, which are exemplified in the protagonists' everyday lives.

⁴ Political elites: government members who possess a great deal of power and who hold sway over wealth in society.

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1.2 Theoretical Background:

1.2.1 Alienation:

Alienation has many dimensions such as political, moral, economic etc. It has already been well investigated by different scholars and philosophers. This theme has been discussed in a broad range of fields such as philosophy, psychology, sociology, etc. Alienation as defined in Cambridge dictionary is “The feeling that you have no connection with the people around you or that you are not part of the group”. Encyclopedia Britannica defines the same term as: “The state of feeling estranged or separated from one’s milieu, work products of work or self”. (Augustyn et.al)

The concept of alienation became more eminent with Friedrich Hegel in the nineteenth century, and developed later by others. For Hegel, alienation occurs when the self-consciousness is viewed as separated from the objective world, “Spirit is understood as divorced from the objective world and so suffers a kind of alienation from itself.”(Alienation)

From the sociological point of view, alienation refers to the individual’s feeling of detachment and aversion from self and from society. In this sense, Karl Marx defines this term from a socio-economic and political perspective. For him, people are alienated from themselves, from others, and they have lost sway over their labor and products.

About political alienation, Marx says: “The state does not care about Individual’s existence, in a society without communion between people and that individual in his relation to such a state does not experience a feeling of solidarity, he is only able to relate himself to it as an isolated monad, an individual. Man’s inner life is divided in world split up in such a way” (qtd.in Saleem 70-71) the material existence of man defines his relation

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to the state; because the capitalist state is built on the private property and individuality principles and foundations. Thus the man is separated from the state and is not able to relate himself to it or to experience this sense of unity and solidarity with it.

Karl Marx developed this concept to describe the dehumanizing, isolating conditions that the individual work within in the capitalist system of production. The theory of alienation that Karl Marx developed, presumes that capitalism has ruined and devastated human relations. Workers under the capitalist mode of production are not able to construct a natural human relationship with others. They lose the ability to interact, or to think or to make their decisions concerning the products they participate in making. Workers are alienated because neither they are able to own the stuff they make, nor they are able to have a say over what they are making.

Karl Marks distinguishes types of alienation of man who work under a capitalist mode of production. The first type is alienation from things that the man produces. The second is the man's alienation from his own self and activity. The third one is alienation from the man's species. The last one is the man's alienation from others and society. (Iqbal Shah, 50) Thus alienation from the perspective of Karl Marx can be understood as a behavior and a psychological state in which the individual withdraws from his life and isolates himself from others in the society. This alienation manifests on the individual as desperation, frustration or other psychological problems. In his novel, *Armah* depicted this kind of alienation when he paid great attention to describe and visualize the workers state in the rail way station, in describing of the way they think, walk and sense, etc.

From the post-colonial psychoanalytic perspective, Frantz Fanon's central preoccupation concerning the concept of alienation was that of people who experienced colonialism. He mainly focuses on alienation as experienced by Africans particularly. In

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his first book, *Black Skin White Masks*, Frantz Fanon also contributes to the concept of alienation by investigating how the practices of the colonial masters are adopted by the colonized people, and how individuals, mainly the elites blindly imitate their masters:

Fanon demonstrates how pervasively dangerous alienation can be among the colonized populace. The compartmentalization of the colonial world has been systemically divided into a dichotomous milieu, placing one group superior over another. (Sahed, 36)

Frantz Fanon refers to alienation as being an outcome of the black and white relationship which is according to him a socio-political alienation that has deep impacts on the colonized individual. Thus, alienation here according to Fanon is the imitation of the oppressed or the colonized to the oppressor which is the colonizer. This kind of alienation is also reflected in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*, mainly in the character of Koomson, the Prime Minister and his wife, who struggle to imitate the European in the simplest thing of their lives.

1.2.2 Alienation in Post independence African Literature:

The notion of alienation assumed much attention in post-independence African literature, due to colonization and its legacy, which pervaded the African continent. European values and cultures which were brought about by colonization not only affected the cultures and traditions of the African societies, but it greatly affected the individual's life and generated a sense of inferiority and alienation in him. This influence did not vanish with the departure of colonial powers; instead, it kept haunting people in neocolonial African societies.

Colonialism and the resulting political, economic and social outcomes and depressions led many African scholars and novelists to pay great attention to topics that reflect the psychology and condition of the African individual. Alienation is a significant theme in contemporary African literature that "is often mirrored as a microcosm of the

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social or class tensions in African society at different stages of its history” (Nelson O, 11) it is often introduced by African writers as an outcome of constant stresses and turbulence that the African people constantly face.

1.2.3 Colonialism:

The general definition that is agreed on is that colonialism is the set of policies, plans and practices by which a powerful country take over or dominate another one which is less powerful. “Colonialism has also been seen as a form of exploitation, with emphasis on economic variables as in the Marxist-Leninist Literature, and as a culture-change process; as in anthropology” (J.Horvath 46) so colonialism means subjugating people on their lands and exploiting their human and natural resources. There are plenty of examples of colonialism in the world history one of them is the European colonialism to the African continent. The major impact of colonialism appears on two level, economy, and culture; these two directly affect the psychology of the individual.

1.2.4 Post colonialism:

Post colonialism is a term which describes the period that follows colonialism. Whereas post colonial theory is a set of thoughts and concepts that are concerned with accounting the social, economic, historical, and cultural influence of the European colonial practices in the 18th and 19th century. The basic idea of postcolonial theory is that it is impossible to understand issues in the world unless we refer them to imperialism and colonialism impacts. (Elam) Some of the major scholars of this theory are Edward Said and Frantz Fanon. This theoretical approach is used mostly to analyze some subjects which relate to the colonized people and the colonizer such as: identity, racism, etc. Post colonialism examines how people in the places that experienced colonization such as

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Africa are oppressed by the practices that result from the hegemonic relationships between their ruling class and the colonial powers.

1.2.5 Hegemonic relationships:

Hegemony is a term that is employed in the post colonial theory to refer basically to the ascendancy of colonial powers over their ex-colonies.

Hegemony that initiated in the 1930s by Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, who illustrates the term as the spread control of one state over a confederation; this dominance reflects the successful strategies of the ruling class in prompting their interests that seemed to be the interests of all. Fundamentally, such domination is not necessarily exerted by military force or active persuasion, but rather in an intelligent way and a subtle manipulation over the sensitive aspects of life. (Ammari, Cherbi 27)

The term reflects the indirect way with which the imperial powers indirectly assert their influence and control over the colonized region. This influence can be seen in education, language, life style, etc. In *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* for instance, the writer pictures how the individual in his Ghanaian society cherishes the European life style and education, in the some characters like Koomson, Estella and Oyo, etc.

1.2.6 Neocolonialism:

Neocolonialism is an outcome of the practices of colonization. The term came as a description for the relationship that ties the colonial power with their ex-colonies. Neocolonialism term was firstly coined by Ghana's first president, Kwam Nkrumah, in order to elucidate and describe the nature of relationship between Ghana and the British colonization. In fact, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) offers a clear vision about the hegemonic relationship between Ghana and its ex-colonial power. It manifests how this relationship generates the society according to the novel and how this ultimately results in alienation.

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Neocolonialism can be seen as a new form of colonization, another version where the ex-colonial powers keep controlling, administrating and dominating their ex-colonies indirectly. This controlling happens through the ex-colonial power's exploitation of the raw materials and natural resources of its ex-colony with the help of the political elites. In *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968), the unnamed man whose work is at a rail way station bitterly notices the great number of trucks filled with resources. These trucks are smuggled from his country to Europe, with the help of the corrupt people and country officials.

1.2.7 Elitism:

Elites are the people who own a high position in society. They enjoy privileges that the other peoples in society do not. These people occupy the important positions in society and hold sway over the sources of power and wealth. In each field in society there is this category of people. For instance we have: religious, economic, scientific and political elites. These people are the minority in society. (Zuckerman, 236)

Elitism theory was first introduced by Italian social theorists Gaetano Mosca, Vilfredo Pareto and Robert Michels. (J.S..) The basic understanding of this concept is that this selected group of people is considered as the most suitable for leading the society; because they are seen as having high intellect, special skills, intelligence, wealth, etc. Thus they are eventually the chosen ones for holding power and authority in the society. When reading *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*; we discover that the writer has portrayed this category of people in is society and their role in corrupting and alienating the society of Ghana.

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1.3 Significance of the title:

The title of *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) which is deliberately written with a misspelling “Beautiful” expose one of the novel messages that Ayi Kwei Armah wanted to address. It presupposes that Ghana’s real heroes have not yet come, the ones who would uplift Ghana from its sufferance, because the ones who were thought to be its heroes who would bring with them the expected change, were a disappointment. The misspelling also suggests that the writer is pessimist about the future leaders and generations of Ghana, because even if they were beautiful, their beauty will not be perfect “beautiful” or completed.

2. Literature Review:

The theme of alienation has attracted much attention in post-independence African literature. European values and cultures which were brought about by colonization not only affected the cultures and traditions of the African societies, but it also affected the individual’s life, and generated a sense of inferiority and alienation in him. This influence did not vanish with the departure of colonial powers; instead, it kept haunting people in neocolonial African societies.

Neocolonialism was just another manifestation of colonization which contributed to the persistence of the influence of Western powers in every aspect of the African societies. For Kwam Nkrumah of Ghana: “Neo-colonialism is also the worst form of Imperialism. For those who practice it, it means power without responsibility and for those who suffer from it, it means exploitation without redress” (Nkrumah xi) In other words, neocolonialism was a mere extension to the previous military colonization that exploited the African continent and people. The only distinction this time was the natives’ exploitation of their own people.

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In the case of Ghana, like any other African country that gained its independence, the colonial powers were still indirectly dominating its economy and politics, through the native elite that were brought to power after independence. In *Neo-colonialism, The Last Stage of Imperialism (1965)*, Nkrumah declares: “Marx predicted that the growing gap between the wealth of the possessing classes and the workers it employs would ultimately produce a conflict fatal to capitalism in each individual capitalist state.”(xvii) The political elite who had stepped in the shoes of the colonizer failed to move their country towards recovery and economic growth. The gap between this higher class and the Ghanaian ordinary people enlarged, as this deeply affected people and crushed their hopes in a better future.

People’s great expectations and hopes after independence were crushed with the confrontation of the class divisions in Africa. Elites that were raised up and educated at the colonizer’s hands did not bother to improve their countries or to erase the effects of colonization. This formation of social classes in African societies did not only alienate people from their state or their wealth within the society; but it had much greater impact on individuals.

The phase that the African countries entered after independence, which was hoped to be that of prosperity, political and economic recovery and nation building, was shaped by harsh economic and political situations that capitalism and Western modes imposed. Post-African writers have tackled these issues of neocolonial societies in their works in order to awaken people and open their eyes to the realities.

Ayi Kwei Armah, in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born (1968)* raised the issue of the domination of local elites, of Ghana particularly and Africa generally, on power, and economic sources of the state; and how these resources were managed and used according

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to what serves their white master's interests. "After independence, some Africans thought that they were welcoming victory in its fullness but their fellow blacks use their power improperly, replicating the colonial forms of repression."(Macheka 14)

Political elites are the power holders in the country. They are the decision makers and the ones who control the body politics and governance. They are the top power class in a country. (Zuckerman) In *The Beautiful Ones*, Armah situates the political elites of his country in the position of the responsible for the deterioration that this country has undergone. In Ayi Kwei Armah's *Intellectuals of the African Renaissance*, Mami writes:

It seems that in Armah's analysis African politicians, from colonial times till the present, have not been able to envision an egalitarian ethical, economic and political system. Armah explains this unhappy state of events as a consequence of the kind of education these politicians received in the first place. (Mami)

Armah illustrates that politicians that were raised up and educated in the colonizer's schools are not able to make the expected changes or erase the effects of colonization. He embodied his vision in the character of Koomson, who stands to represent this category of society. Armah offers a dark image of neocolonial political elites of his country. He insists the fact that political elites created disillusionment for Ghanaians who fought with their souls for a brighter future in Ghana. Eventually, Ghanaians who had put all their hopes in their political elites ended up alienated from them, and alienated also from each other because they did not expect the miserable conditions they find after independence. Armah portrayed this climate of alienation in the confrontation of Koomson with the unnamed man, and later with his family. The gap between the man and his family enlarged when they started to realize the difference between the world that Koomson lives in, and the world they live in.

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Armah placed into context the troubles and intricacies created by neocolonial leadership. Through his characters, he portrayed how the African individual became condemned with self-estrangement and alienation within his own world, and with his own people. Armah's novel was published in 1968; that is, shortly after Ghana's independence that was in 1957. The incidents in that story were shaped by the conditions that the country experienced in post-independence period.

One of the main issues that Armah deals with in his novel is corruption. In the "*The Self and The World Against Which It Had to Live*": Neocolonialism and The Resistant Subject In Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968), Sara Jilani writes: "sad acceptance of the corrupt nature of the present poses, for Armah, an even greater risk than the corruption itself; as serious as corruption maybe, the acceptance of corruption has the country sleepwalking into economic dependency." (7) Armah pays a great attention to corruption as this latter is a result of the continuation of the neocolonial domination on his country. What is noticed in the novel is the writer's portrayal of his society as a society that accepts and welcomes corruption as a means of coexistence. So, alienation here is deeply rooted among the individuals who cannot accept corruption as a norm of living or as something normal. Eventually, they become alienated from the others who are satisfied with living in a corrupt climate.

Chapter Two:**1. Corruption and Alienation in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* 1968**

One of the remarkable features in Ayi Kwei Armah's novel is his concentration on the theme of corruption as a central issue. Corruption, being a common phenomenon in neocolonial African societies, aggravates the sense of alienation within the individuals' consciousness. Corruption enlarges the gap between people and their society. The individual ultimately feels isolated in an environment where he is overwhelmed by putrefaction, bribe, cheating and all the unethical practices. Furthermore, the individual's resistance of those unethical practices and his refusal to indulge in what seems normal and right in the eyes of others creates a great psychological pressure on him. He will be seen as an stranger in his own world.

In the novel, the unnamed protagonist cannot stop feeling guilty; despite the fact that he is convinced that his refusal to involve in what everyone else around is involved in was the right thing to do. But in a neocolonial society where human values and morals have been downgraded to commodity and commercial values, and have been condemned by the material benefit that it brings, the decision of walking against the current can only isolate the individual from his society and his loved ones.

In such a context, the individual experiences a kind of social alienation that stems from the daily exploitation, which takes the form of corruption and bribery. "The social relations that encourage individualistic consumption create a collective consciousness underwritten by cynicism and despair" (Lutz 102) and this is exactly what the of *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* suggests; it depicts the individual's attitudes towards money and commodity in neocolonial societies. The general understanding that the novel offers, involves the idea that wealth and money can only be reached by the illegal methods

and the involvement of oneself into corruption; and this understanding is a mere natural product of the capitalist system in neocolonial societies.

The characters' view and understanding towards wealth and money in the novel are grounded by the society they live in, by the neocolonial capitalist society which supports individualism and self-interest, and which considers material interests above all priorities "the pursuit of self-interest proves to be a profound act of self-betrayal that ultimately produces only loneliness and despair" (Lutz 106) Thus, individuals are driven to the false assumption that personal and material interests are the source of happiness and self comfort.

The loved ones serve as a supportive instrument that adds to the individual's sense of alienation and estrangement. Their ceaseless pursuit of happiness through following the illusion of material power and wealth put the individual in the position of the savior or the hero who is expected to make their ideal expectations come true. Thus, the individual became trapped with his loved ones' dreams that neither he is able to realize nor can he change or escape.

The writer employed a set of stylistic features in the novel in order to discuss how the pervasive corruption in his country directly reflected on the lives of individuals and led to their alienation. Some of those stylistic features were frequently used like: personification, imagery, irony, repetition, etc.

1. 1 Personification:

Personification is an important literary technique that enables the reader to understand, and emotionally interact with the characters, ideas or events of the text. Personification can be traced in almost every page in the novel of *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968). Armah employed it as a mean to clarify his ideas and vividly illustrate his point of view in the text. In the early first sentences of the novel Armah uses this technique of personification:

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

For example, here we notice that a non-human entity which is the light is given a human quality which is the act of moving with uncertainty. This expression is used to make the reader indulges in the mood of the gloomy dull moment, and to make him understand that the bus is somehow old especially that this expression is followed by another expression “as if its pieces were held together by too much rust ever to fall completely apart” which confirms that the bus is old indeed.

Other examples of personification can be found in the novel such us: “It was a very slow song, though every hole in it was filled with sounds that said too painfully much to the listening ear...” (Armah 59) the reader might notice that the sound, which is an abstract, is given a human feature which is the feature of saying or talking, as if the sounds were saying painful words that the listener, which is the ear, cannot bear. This is again rhetorically employed to transport to the reader a sense of bleakness and sorrow.

Also, this is another use of personification technique: “It was whispered how indeed such things are ever known? That the disease had completely eaten up the frail matter of his lungs, and that where his heart ought to have been there was only a living lot

of worms gathered together tightly in the shape of a heart.”(Armah 56) certainly the disease cannot eat, but it is a statement used by the writer to let the reader realize just how immense the damage and rottenness have been to the man's lungs after he died.

“And yet the wondering and the shaking and the vomiting horror are not all from the inward sickness of the individual soul.” (Armah 72) the writer attributed such human acts of wondering, shaking, and vomiting to an abstract feeling of horror in order to boost the reader’s ability to sense and realize the degree of that feeling of horror.

1. 2 Repetition:

Repetition, another technique, is used by the writer in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968). The audience’s attention might be concentrated on certain words and sometimes sentences that were repeated over and over. This automatically will bring to the mind of the reader that the repeated statement or word is actually central enough to receive this emphasis.

For Armah that seems an opportunity to reinforce certain ideas for the reader. For instance we notice that the word “corrupt” manifests more than ten times, along with the word “bribe” which is relevant in meaning and which manifests more than six times in the novel. There are also some other relevant words like “steal” which occur five times, and other relevant terms. This is to inform the reader that corruption is one of the central issues that Armah wants to emphasize on in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*.

Moreover, Armah expressed his point of view against the Ghanaian society by portraying the daily attitudes, and rotten atmosphere which the people live within. This point of view is understood by the repetition of words like “rottenness” which occur eighteen times, and filth, dirt, which is repeated over and over. Also, the term “money” manifests more than fifty times, etc.

Furthermore, Armah employed this technique to illustrate the Ghanaian people's habits during Passion Week "These were the men who had finally, and so early, so surprisingly early, seen enough of something in their own lives and in the lives around them to convince them of the final futility of efforts to break the mean monthly cycle of debt and borrowing, borrowing and debt."(Armah 25)

1. 3 Imagery:

Imagery is another literary device that is used by Ayi Kwei Armah for the sake of boosting the reader's ability of imagining the situations which the writer created. Armah gave also insignificant importance to the employment of figurative language and metaphors. The best example that could be given is the description of the rotten banister in the novel: The touch of the banister on the balls of his finger tips had something uncomfortably organic about it ...The banister had originally been a wooden one... The wood underneath would win and win till the end of time... The wood would always win. (Armah 14-15)

The detailed description of the banister and the filth on it has certainly driven the reader's imagination to envision the scene because Ayi Kwei Armah described the banister in a way that stirs up the reader's senses and makes him feels disgust as if he is experiencing the situation by himself.

Another good exemplification of imagery in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) is the picture which is drawn in the mind of the reader when reading the following passage: "The sun was high when he rose again. The sea looked lighter, with its greens and blues separate, not the indiscriminate dark color of the early morning. Waves, furling at the edges, came all the way and broke into little pieces each right on top of the last."(Armah 212) This description of the sea evokes the reader's senses to visualize the scene flexibly,

and would also go further to feel the pureness of the scene and the softness of the climate. Among all the filth and decay that the novel portrays, a scene like this one would be something unusual for the reader. Armah's employment of such pictures involves a message of hope and optimism.

The employment of imagery is so intense in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. Armah succeeded in communicating his ideas through the accurate description of the very small details which can help the reader in understanding the exact situation that the writer is tackling. As in this passage:

Outside, the sight of the street itself raised thoughts of the reproach of loved ones, coming in silent sounds that ate into the mind in wiry spirals and stayed there circling in tightening rings, never letting go. There was no hurry. At the other end there was only home, the land of the loved ones, and there it was only the heroes of the gleam who did not feel that they were strangers. And he had not the kind of hardness that the gleam required. Walking with the slowness of those whose desire has nowhere to go... (Armah 41)

Here the reader is able to assimilate and feel the despair and loneliness that invade the mind and thought of the narrator (which is the man here) who represents the Ghanaian individual's thoughts and feeling which he (the individual) is not able to articulate. Here the reader understands, the man is living in a dull gloomy atmosphere, and is uncomfortable with the confrontation of his family. The confrontation of the loved ones carries with it a lot of misery, and their looks carry a lot of blame, which their tongues cannot utter, which adds to the man's life more burden and alienation.

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born (1968), Armah deliberately used an offensive and tense language to shed light on the serious intricacies of the neo-colonial African society. For instance, Armah's description to the waste boxes:

The thing had been a gleaming white when it was first installed, and that was not so very long ago. Now even the lettering on it was no longer decipherable. It was covered over thickly with the juice of every imaginable kind of waste matter...The box was one of the few relics of the latest campaign to rid the town of its filth. (Armah 8)

This description of the waste boxes, which creates disgust and revulsion, is used by Armah as a metaphor to attack African postcolonial powers countries Ghana, which have recently gained their independence but can't get rid of the rottenness and corruption which pervaded in the society since colonization.

1. 4 Irony:

Irony served as powerful tool in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968), Armah created some situations where he was able to address the idea that he wanted humorously and indirectly. The scene of the conductor of the bus station when he was smelling coins and then discovered that he was watched, involved a certain ironical idea in it:

The eyes frightened the conductor. Even the mere remembered smell of the cedi was now painful, and the feeling in his armpit had suddenly become very cold. Was this the giver turned watcher already? ...a savage indignation filled the conductor. The watcher was no watcher after all, only a sleeper. (Armah 4-6)

The fact that the watcher is no watcher at all, only a sleeper, mirrors the Armah's idea that in the Ghanaian society everybody is involved in corruption, and even the ones who decided not to involve in what everyone around them is involved in, preferred to take the position of the sleeper.

Armah employed this literary device not just to expose his society's degree of degeneration but also to criticize Nkrumah's rule. This is clear in the ironical statement: "...these were the socialists of Africa, fat, perfumed, soft with the ancestral softness of chiefs who have sold their people and are celestially happy with the fruits of the trade."(Armah 153-154) Armah uses the teacher's voice in the novel to harshly attack Nkrumah's reign who had returned Ghana much like it was in the colonial times. He seemed to be a man of hope at first, however, during his leadership the native elite had become more powerful; and they had the chance to control the country's wealth and

ressources. The gap between the poor classes and the high classes grew, and misery pervaded the society and the spirits of the people more and more.

The writer also devotes much attention to scoff at people who try to be white and behave like whites talking like them, or adopting their life style, etc., holding in the idea that everything related to the whites is supposed to be appealing, superior, and catchy.

Armah also created some ironical situations in the story which unfold some of the characteristics of the neocolonial Ghanaian society. For instance, the situation of a messenger who won a sum of money in the lottery and was not able to get it, so he was trying to corrupt a public officer to get his money, “I hope some official at the lottery place will take some of my hundred cedis as a bribe and allow me to have the rest.”(Armah 22) Because “It costs you more money if you go to the police, that’s all.”(Armah 22).Armah ironically writes that: “...the Ghana lottery is more Ghanaian than Ghana.” (Armah 22) meaning that the Ghanaian neocolonial society obliges people to corrupt and to be corrupted for the sake of tacking their rights. For the man in order to take his money which is his own right he is obliged to involve in corruption and bribery

1. 5 The Expository Technique:

The expository technique is an important literary device which Armah used as a writing rule in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born (1968)*. Through the expository technique Ayi Kwei Armah was able to render the events and characters of the novel instead of just telling what happened. Plenty of examples can be found in the novel like when the unnamed protagonist was offered a sum of money an bribe and he refused to take it: “The man looked at the face before him, pleading with the words of millions and the voice of ages, and he felt lonely in the way only a man condemned by all things around him can ever feel lonely...“I will not take it,” he said, too quietly, perhaps.”

(Armah 36) Instead of just telling what have happened with the man or what the man's reaction was, the writer goes further to describe how he did it and even how he felt at that moment.

Other examples about the showing or expository technique: "...even the cold feeling gave him a vague freedom, like the untroubled loneliness he had come to like these days, and in his mind the world was so very far away from the welcoming sand of the beach beneath him." (Armah 210) The expository technique here allows the reader to indulge in the sensory details of the character's emotions; Instead of directly telling the reader what the protagonist felt while walking on the beach, Armah describes the way he walked and how he thought at that moment to let the reader sense, thus guess how the protagonist exactly felt.

1. 6 Flashbacks:

Flashback are utilized in *The Beautiful Are Not Yet Born*, wherein Armah interrupts the flow of the events of the novel to condense all what Ghana and Africa went through since the departure of colonists in one exemplification. The man evokes a story from his childhood about the child who had "... been born with all the features of a human baby, but within seven years it had completed the cycle from babyhood to infancy to youth, to maturity and old age, and in its seventh year it had died a natural death..." (Armah 73) this brief return of the man's thinking to the past unfolds Armah's unspoken point of view concerning Africa's independence and neocolonial leaders' regimes.

Another example of this literary device is the teacher's story that he recalled about the days just after independence of Ghana, when everyone who fought for it was filled with enthusiasm and happiness for a better future, and a better life for the Ghanaian

people, to realize out later on that “it is only that victory itself happens to be the identical twin of defeat.”(Armah 74)

1. 7 Multiple Points of View:

The novel of *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* was weaved by a multiple points of view which voiced out Armah's thoughts at the end. The omniscient narrator is the most used in the novel. Armah used this kind of narration to connect the reader's mind with the concealed parts and aspects of the story and characters; which are not told by the characters themselves.

The omniscient narration overwhelmingly manifests in the novel: “The driver climbed down onto the road from his seat...” (Armah 15); “Inside the bus the conductor took down his bag...Then he sat down heavily with his legs dangling down the front steps and closed his eyes...” (Armah 15); “The man looked steadily at the visitor.”(Armah 35); “he slides his chair over to the right and puts his head down...” (Armah 130) “He felt very free and very light, and walked with slow steps...” (Armah 145) the omniscient narrator is often the storyteller in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* who is used by Armah in order to smoothly connect the novel's parts and dive deep in the characters consciousness to unfold their personality and attitudes.

The writer occasionally uses the unnamed protagonist of the story to tell and reveal some aspects of him and of other characters in the novel, example: “I would find a way to be closer in goodness to those to whom my impotence has brought pain...” (Armah 85), “I feel the regret, and that is why it will not leave me alone, least of all these days...” (Armah 86), “So the loved ones are in the lead when we are stripped of the little self-respect that remains at this age. (Armah 113) Armah uses another voice to expose his point of view, which is the character of teacher. Although the character of teacher has no

physical role in changing the course of the novel's event, yet the writer devotes a large part of the novel, to engage in Ghana's economic and political situation through the voice of this character.

Chapter Three:**1. Commodity Fetishism and Alienation in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born***

In a novel that investigates the political, economic and socio-cultural outcomes inherited by colonization, and the every-day life in neo-colonial Ghana, Armah tries to scrutinize and expose the effects and risks which African and Ghanaian people go through while living in such conditions. In *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968), Armah created plethora of characters and events that simulate neocolonial Africa's reality.

The presence of a nameless protagonist in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* indicates that all what this protagonist goes through is a mere reflection to the reality and experiences of each African individual who lives in, and witnesses the effects of neocolonialism. The unnamed protagonist "the man" lives in a constant inner conflict, in a society where the subject's existence is determined by money and commodity. The man can't indulge in or accept the fact that money is the power that enforces itself into existence.

In *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968), Ayi Kwei Armah discussed alienation as being one of the troubles of neo-colonial world life and a natural consequence of the everyday life in such a society; thus, he depicted the characters of the story as being trapped in a senseless world by themselves, by the attitudes of society, and by the reproach of the loved ones.

For in the full sense, Armah presented Ghanaian society as a "socialist" (Lutz 96) society in which materialism⁵ defines and dominates the human relationships on the other

⁵ Valuing material things, wealth and money above all

hand: “The desire to consume has created extreme forms of individualism responsible for the fragmentation of all social bonds and a collective experience of social isolate.”(Lutz 95) the issue is dramatized in the characters’ relations of the novel, which are not able to achieve psychological well-being; because they are unable to keep up with the wheel of capitalism and commodities.

Armah asserts through the novel that individuals in neocolonial society like Ghana have become eventually more like negligible machine that carries inside it an alienated consciousness struggle to fulfill a corrupt society’s expectations.

The power of money and commodities also enforce a sense of alienation and despair among the workers at the railway station; where they work pointlessly the whole time under such conditions of the system of production, in which the worker is treated like a mere passive object, as Ayi Kwei Armah describes the workers in the novel like the “walking corpse” (2):

The night was the end of a long day filled with two jobs pieced together, and the night cleaning job was number three. So even at the beginning of the night the sweeper was tired and almost walking in his sleep... everyone before him had crawled with hope along the same unending path, dreaming of future days when they would crawl no longer but run if they wanted to run, and fly if the spirit moved them... so heavy are the small, ordinary days of the time. (Armah 38-39)

In this passage, Ayi Kwei Armah negotiates the fact that the process of production and commodity fetishism has psychological effects on the individual; and throughout the description of the sweeper and the new worker in the railway station, Armah portrays the helpless, empty, exhausted souls, which are transformed into instruments; or machines that should operate all the time to fulfill their needs.

Through Marx's understanding to the novel’s vision, the individual’s value as a human is downgraded to be less than the value of a commodity or an object. In other words, the human being is worthless, this is exposed in the conductor’s insult to the man

when he throws him out of the bus saying “...Article of no commercial value! You think the bus belongs to your grandfather?” (Armah 6) so in neocolonial capitalist society, the individual is not valued as a human being, instead he is always defines by how much money he posses.

2. Internal Desires and Alienation in *The Beautiful Ones*:

In *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968), the writer makes attempts to show the "...complex, often contradictory relationship between subjective desires and the objective social structures in which individuals unsuccessfully seek to satisfy or articulate them." (Lutz 96)

Collecting was always easier around Passion Week... but at the same time not as satisfactory as in the swollen days after pay day...when all this walking corpse holds out is the exact fare itself, no more, no less? ...The men who dreamed them walk like rich men, and if they give a fifty-pesewa coin they look into the collector's eyes to see if he acknowledges their own importance. (Armah 2)

Armah in this early passage negotiates the fact that people's self-esteem and value is dependent on money, people look for a little bit of estimation, and appreciation in others' eyes; and even with abundant money, this estimation and appreciation are not real, only temporarily, in a miserable attempt to convince oneself of its importance. In other words, humans have become doomed to constant deterioration, frustration, and delusional happiness, since their value has become completely confined to money under capitalist conditions.

Indeed, the encouragement of consumption mentality in neocolonial capitalist societies creates intricacies and psychological crisis in social and familial relationships, and prompts the individual's alienation and estrangement from others. Consumption and commodity fetishism thus is just another facet of slavery, as it traps the individual's consciousness and mind rather than body, as Lutz in *Pessimism, Autonomy and Commodity Fetishism* in "Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*" asserts that: "...those who live in a society driven exclusively by the desire of material gain and social recognition ...suffer from a form of imprisonment imposed both by external

forces and internal ones.”(105) Armah provided a clear depiction of commodity fetishism and consumption mentality in the novel:

Now and then the headlights of some oncoming vehicle came and blinded him and afterward the darkness of the night was even deeper and more infinite than before, so that a little of the lost comfortable feeling of the man alone in the world outside, so unlike the loneliness of the beloved surrounded by the grieving loved ones, came back to him in little frustrating sweet moments that were gone before they could be grasped. (Armah 57)

As it is evident in this part of the story, the feeling of loneliness, disillusionment and alienation is so rooted in the man’s psyche that the passing of a car with a bright light evokes the feeling of estrangement within him; the car that he can’t have even if he devoted all his time to work and buy it . The idea is, being haunted by the loved ones’ dreams and by his inner desires that he cannot afford to fulfill, makes him underestimate himself and his value as a human being.

Furthermore, the individual in the capitalist world is always enslaved to what this system imposes; Armah expresses through the novel the concept of freedom, to hint at the fact that man is never free even when he thinks he is indeed, “the freedom of enslaved men” (Armah 93) the fact that individual in neocolonial societies is always subjected to the internal and external desire, and he not able to break out from the chains of money, he is free to chose what to buy or to consume, but he is not free not to buy or consume, which what society imposes.

This internal force that pushes the individual towards participating in this system of production and consumption by spending time seeking material gain and luxurious stuff and wealth manifests through some characters’ attitudes in the novel like Oyo’s infatuation with trendy, expensive and imported commodities like “the British White Horse whiskey and Vat 69.”(Armah 139)

Not only the internal desires and the loved ones' expectations that contribute in the imprisonment and alienation of the self, but time also became a tool of despair and loneliness, it became transformed to an important tool and a focal point in the system of production and consumption "...time represents the fetishizing of social relations within the system of production and exchange, a process that imprisons those who participate in it by subverting their individual and collective autonomy." (Lutz 99)

Spending long time in a profession that does not change the reality of a person and does not contribute to the fulfillment of his material desires would only aggravate his estrangement. The notion of "driving fast" in the novel which is the way for success and happiness according to Oyo, the man's wife, is also the basis of the continuation of the capitalistic system of commodity fetishism:

Next, she let me know that human beings were like so many people driving their cars on all these roads. This was the point at which she told me that those who wanted to get far had to learn to drive fast. And then she asked me what name I would give to people who were afraid to drive fast, or to drive at all. I had no name to give her, but she had not finished. Accidents would happen, she told me, but the fear of accidents would never keep men from driving, and Joe Koomson had learned to drive. (Armah 68)

The man's wife considers that Joseph Koomson, the corrupt Minister is successful, simply because he was able to "drive fast", he was able to find a way for himself and find a place between the rich and the velvet class of society. This shows how in the capitalist world driving fast seizes the opportunities that elevate people into the world of affluence, instead of wasting time in jobs for which no material benefit is sought from. The man's inability to provide material needs to his wife and children, without being corrupt, increases the sense of despair within himself:

So how was a man ever going to be able to fight against all the things and all the loved ones who never ceased urging that nothing else mattered, that the way was not important, that the end of life was the getting of these comfortable things? For the self, or if not for the self, then for the loved ones, for the children. Nothing else mattered. (Armah 177)

By this point Armah in the novel expresses the fact that the relationship between commodity or material stuffs and the human self is kind of fateful; because the happiness or the wretchedness of the self became completely dependent upon material needs; thus the individual in neocolonial capitalist world suffers constantly from “...either the getting of, or fighting the desire to get, comfortable thing...” (Jilani 1)

3. The Role of Religion in Neocolonial Capitalist society Through *The Beautiful Ones*:

Oppressing the desire to get these comfortable things for one's self, and its (self) continuous "...struggle to resist the allure of the gleam ..." (Dunham 288) cannot end its psychological torture or sufferance. However, the self is always looking for alternatives to alleviate the pain of alienation and loneliness it is experiencing, which results from the material relationships and the resulting frustration. The story of Rama Krishna in the novel mirrors the inner suffering people in neo-colonial societies go through and how they pursue the soothing of faith to relieve some of the pain.

Rama Krishna, the Ghanaian man who changed his name and adopted a new life style and religion to escape from "...everything close and everything known, since all around him showed him the horrible threat of decay. (Armah 55) was not able to resist the despair and decay which are rooted within the self, and even the verses and words of the Prophet Gibran that he read in a helpless way to satisfy himself "...never were able to put at rest the grieving soul of the friend."(Armah 56) The man's resort to religion gave him a temporary feeling of inner peace and contentment, but this did not prevent the decay and despair pervaded in the society to get into his spirit "It was of consumption that he died, so very young, but already his body inside had undergone far more decay than any living body, however old and near death." (Armah 56) Here Armah illustrates the function of religion in neocolonial capitalist society as a refuge from the harshness of materialism and corruption, as Karl Marx claims that "religion... is the opium of the people".(Mckinnon 15)

Karl Marx considers religion as a mere distraction that attempts to divert the concentration of the alienated people from the reality of their exploitation, and from the

root causes of their sufferance and decay in neocolonial capitalist societies; as it draws a false illusion of hope and comfort within the self of the oppressed, thus supporting the endurance of the sway of the power of material and inequality of social relations.

There exists also Marx's perspective of alienation in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968); it is depicted when the workers such as the man, spend their whole time in the railway station working to make a living for them and for their loved ones. Even though they work very hard and can barely keep working for extra hours, they are still unable to meet the minimum demands of their lives, or to provide their basic needs.

The sense of alienation here arises within the self of the individuals from the fact that those who work under the capitalist mode are separated from the whole process of labor. They do not have a say upon the stuff they are making, as they are also deprived from the benefits and the profits of their jobs, because the real profit goes to their master's pockets. So here "... labor under capitalist modes of production and the laws of exchange and private ownership, becomes a mere means of self-preservation...humans become alienated from their own species and reduced to an animal-like existence." (Christ 557)

4. Native Elitism and Alienation in *The Beautiful Ones*:

In *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968), Armah attributed the sense of alienation of the individual in neocolonial African societies to the overpowering of the ruling elites that have controlled the sources of wealth of their countries to what serves their colonial masters. The elites were positioned in the leadership to reconstruct the newly independent country and to speak of the people; however they have downgraded the society's values and principles by exploiting their own people much like the colonizers have done.

This situation might bring to the mind the story of Georges Orwell's *Animal Farm*; the way animals especially pigs fought human for freedom and independence; and the way they stepped in the same shoe later on to start to act like human, to exploit other animals and deceive them under the title of leadership. The story briefly shows how social classes in neocolonial societies such as Ghana are constituted, and it also shows how some inner desires for leadership and lust for wealth oppress and alienate other people of the lower classes.

The way that Koomson and Estella are portrayed in the novel shows to what extent they are trapped by their own desires of wanting to be surrounded with the glitter of everything that seems European or that belongs to the whites, which shows how much the high classes of neo-colonial societies like Ghana are completely subjected and chained to their white masters' identity. This idea of revering all what is white is explained by Armah through Frantz Fanon's understanding.

In *Black skin White Masks* (1968), Fanon demonstrates how the oppressed takes the burden of indulging himself in the oppressor's culture and world "... which is a fundamental and impossible enterprise to validate oneself and attain self-respect by

moving closer to whiteness. The problem, again, is the African's false belief in their inferiority." (T. Nichols 29) this feeling of being inferior to European and Western cultures pushes individuals in neocolonial societies to live in a constant struggle and race against time to prove their existence as an entity that is melted in anything that belongs to the world of their superiors.

As shown in the novel, the unnamed man as well as the teacher represent the individual's pursuit of the sense of belonging and recognition by the loved ones in neocolonial societies, however, they stand as mere passive objects that have no power but will "...to touch and be touched by the loved ones..." (Armah 64) This natural desire of interacting with the loved ones cannot be achieved simply because even what seems as a source of hope and pleasure cannot but add a little to the turmoil and rigidity of relationship with self and with the loved ones.

In the novel, the characters are surrounded with filth, gloom, and despair in their world; but among all this decay that traps them there stand something appealing, something beautiful, shiny and attractive; it is the Atlantic Caprice hotel which amazingly stand high and gleaming among all the decay that surrounds it. Ones looking at this gleaming building, the man cannot prevent the feeling of loneliness and self-contempt:

But then, if there were any angry ones at all these days, they were most certainly feeling the loneliness of mourners at a festival of crazy joy...The gleam, in moments of honesty, had a power to produce a disturbing ambiguity within. It would be good to say that the gleam never did attract. It would be good, but it would be far from the truth...It was getting harder to tell whether the gleam repelled more than it attracted, attracted more than it repelled, or just did both at once in one disgustingly confused feeling all the time these heavy days.(Armah 12)

This gleam or "insulting white" of that luxurious hotel as Armah calls it recalls within the self of those looking at it of their helplessness, and their inability to fulfill the aspirations of their loved ones, as it deepens the sense of alienation. The gleam stands for the unachievable desires and dreams of the poor people, dreams and desires for things that

have no utilitarian importance or use, for thing that their only value is that they have been possessed, used and declared to be valuable by the white masters and their ancestors from the native elite and high classes. (Dunham 287)

The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born attributes the mental psychological and social alienation of the individuals to the neo-colonial conditions of societies in Africa. It does propose that alienation became a topical issue that is daily experienced in the contemporary African existence. It also suggests that the wealthy as well as the poor are alienated. The poor people are estranged and isolated from their world because of their inability to catch up with the wheel of capitalism, money and luxury that is experienced by the rich. On the other hand, the rich are alienated because of their constant pursuit of commodity; and culture of their white masters, and their inability to be fully merged in their world.

Ayi Kwei Armah also attributes the sense of alienation and estrangement to the kind of relationship between the state or the power holders and the oppressed individuals through the example of his country Ghana and Kwam Nkrumah that is explored in the novel.

Moreover, Armah sheds light on the oppressed individuals of the society who are put in the position of the victim, and their will to realize the position of the oppressors only to escape the position of the victim. In other words, Armah's discussion of the idea of "freedom of the enslaved" suggests the fact that people in neocolonial Ghana are mentally enslaved. They see their freedom in the lives of the native elites of their country.

5. Seeking Whiteness in *The Beautiful Ones*:

Alienation is also viewed in the novel as being a result of the blacks and whites relationship, the black's desire to be a white and look like white which is a desire that can lead only to self-deception and estrangement according to the novel. This constant pursuit of this desire is viewed as a mental enslavement.

The elite's role in neocolonial societies like Ghana is to guarantee the endurance of the colonizer's influence and domination on the colonies, as they are referred to in the novel: "the living ghosts" (Armah 76) which is an expression used by Armah to refer to colonial powers as being the ghost of colonization which is still haunting people even after the departure of the real colonizers.

People in neocolonial Ghana struggle to maintain their status closer to white masters, as shown in the novel, for the sake of taking the privilege of being looked at as white, but, "on the deeper psychological level, the price extracted for the internalization of white values was black degradation and self-hatred." (Oluoch-olunya 26) This strong desire of seeking the ambition to be involved in the world of the whites is generated from the fact that anything that is pure and beautiful is associated with the white skin; thus the non-whites, considering themselves as inferior to the whites, attempt to identify themselves as whites. This attempt which is represented in the imitation of whites' language, life style, culture, and the adoption of the whites' ideologies, results a kind of self-alienation and estrangement from what constitute their own identity, because the desire (to be considered as white) is never fulfilled.

General Conclusion

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Self-estrangement and alienation of the individual from the society became rooted in neocolonial Africa due to a variety of factors. The alienated individual starts to experience the world and the environment around him as something strange and different for himself. That is why the individual struggles to build a normal relationship between him and the outside world. The argument in this paper was that the mental and social alienation in neocolonial Ghana is an outcome of accumulating economic problems in particular as well as social ones. It is argued furthermore in this research paper that capitalism is the main source of the individual's alienation as it serves the commodity fetishism and consumption. Also the argument that was proved by reading Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) is the native elites' role in adding to alienation and decay of the society through their corrupt practices and attitudes.

In *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968), Armah's debut novel, alienation is introduced in its different dimensions as one of the main themes of the novel, and as one of the central problems that face the Ghanaian individuals who had already experienced colonization and its outcomes for years. Most of the readings that had been conducted on this theme in the novel offer an analysis to the phenomenon of alienation from an existentialist perspective, which emphasizes the inner despair and disillusionment of the individual. Whereas this study offers an analysis to alienation as a crucial issue that is generated in the societies that had experienced colonization and its effects.

The research investigates how this phenomenon of alienation is rooted in neocolonial societies particularly in Ghana. It examines how neocolonialism aggravated this phenomenon and the way it contributed in making the individual feels more estrangement in his society. It suggests further that capitalism with its influences on the

General Conclusion

society had made the individual an alienated, passive object. It also discusses the Western commodity-based culture's impact on the psychology of the individual in neocolonial Ghana through negotiating, examining and analyzing the novel's characters and incidents.

Besides, this research paper explores the role of the native elites in contributing to the degeneration and decay of the society of Ghana. Also it does explore how the writer Ayi Kwei Armah engaged in criticizing elitism and social classes in neocolonial Ghana and how he portrayed their attitudes and corrupt practices in the novel. Furthermore, the research paper illustrates the way capitalism and commodity fetishism has affected the moral values and principles of the Ghanaian society, as well as showing their role in alienating the individual from himself, as well as from his society and loved ones.

This research also is conducted to address the role that the loved ones play in aggravating the sense of alienation and estrangement for the individual, through analyzing the characters' relationship with each other in the novel. Through a Marx's understanding to the novel, this paper discusses some concept such as work and religion, and how their function in increasing the sense of alienation of the individual.

By analyzing and interpreting the writer's insights that are embodied in the novel, we understand that alienation of the Ghanaian individual is actually a result of some neocolonial capitalist practices and attitudes in Ghana; and by applying some Marx's insights towards capitalism and how it isolates people from each other and from society, we conclude that the capitalist system is actually a system of alienation for what it impose on society and on the psyche of the individual particularly. The pursuit of money and power and the failure to catch up with the wheel of capitalism as it is shown in the novel, enforces a kind of estrangement within the self of the individual which makes him alienate

General Conclusion

himself from his society and loved ones and the character of teacher is good example on that.

The reading of the novel from Marx's point of view particularly shows us some of the intricacies that drive the individual towards suffering from alienation and estrangement, one of them for instance is the resort to religion as a refuge from the society's harshness, in the example of Rama Krishna which is portrayed in the novel.

This study gives an insight on the phenomenon of alienation not just as a humanitarian problem which affects different societies, but it identifies alienation as an excessively widespread phenomenon in African societies in particular. From the example of the country of Ghana that is dealt with in the novel, it is possible to generalize the findings of this research on the whole African continent; because Africa in general had lived a time of colonialism and post colonialism; as it experienced the exploitation of the native elites and the intricacies of capitalism. It can also be generalized on societies that experienced colonization and capitalism.

The novel pushes the reader to detect the political issues and the role of government in the individuals' lives; it offers a strong and clear vision to the impact of the relation with the state through the individuals' daily lives. Hence, this study gave some attention to the role of the state and the corrupt leaders in maintaining alienation and decay in their society. So we can argue that this work can give an idea to other researcher of the same field to investigate the relation between politics and alienation in neocolonial societies for instance. This research can also be a motive for other researches to advance research on alienation from Marx's point of view rather than existentialist one; and to search into this phenomenon from other dimensions.

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