

1 The Socio-Economic and Political Implications of the Various  
2 Episodes of Ayi Kwei Armah's Novel "The Beautiful Ones are  
3 not yet Born"

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7 **Abstract**

8 The purpose of this Article is to show how Ayikwei Armah has used ?The Beautiful Ones Are  
9 Not Yet Born? to reflect the Socio- Economic and political realities of the entire continent of  
10 Africa, with regard to the man-handling of the Economic phase of the different countries of  
11 Africa through the misuse of political powers by the African leaders. This development  
12 normally pushes the citizens of the different African countries into moral decadence. This  
13 research work aims at exploring the implications of Ayi Kwei Armah?s focus in writing this  
14 novel.

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17 **Index terms**— episodes, literary, corruption, politics, moral decadence, economic retardation, social  
18 injustice.

19 The Socio-Economic and Political Implications of the Various Episodes of Ayi Kwei Armah's Novel "The  
20 Beautiful Ones are not yet Born"

21 Introduction Africa is a continent that God in his infinite Mercy has blessed so much, with both human and  
22 material resources. It is however ironical to note that all that Africa has been blessed with are not put into  
23 proper use by the various leaders of the different African countries due to misuse of political powers, leading to  
24 the nose-diving dimension of the Economy of the various African Countries. Ayi Kwei Armah, a Ghanaian born  
25 writer seems to notice the luxurious life style of the African leaders at the expense of the economy of the various  
26 African countries and so put in place "The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet born" to Lampoon the African leaders.

27 It is our contention therefore that Armah has achieved his purpose of writing this novel, exposing the destructive  
28 tendencies of the misuse of political powers on the economy of most African countries. Armah, a morally upright  
29 literary writer has shown through his novel that no country can develop economically where politicians and other  
30 people in government are corrupt in the highest order.

31 "The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born" reveals Armah's disillusionment at what has become of independence  
32 in most African countries. Though Armah through this novel reveals the mess into which his country Ghana  
33 had been put by the regime of Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana. However, the political mess in  
34 Ghana at the time Armah wrote this novel, exemplifies the political mess into which the political leaders of the  
35 other African countries had subjected their countries into after independence, even till date. Without question,  
36 Armah has sign posted different Episodes in his novel that show the unbecoming attitude of the African leaders  
37 towards their people through misuse of political powers. Armah has also shown in this novel that the questionable  
38 character of most African leaders is exactly what has necessitated the depravity of the ordinary people in most  
39 African countries.

40 **1 II.**

41 Core Socio-Economic and Political implications that Ayi Kwei Armah Wanted to Show in his Novel

### 42 2 The Corruptive Activities of African Political Leaders

43 In many Episodes in "The Beautiful one are Not yet born" Armah Signposted the fact that African politicians  
44 are indeed very corrupt. Armah used the Character of Joe Koomson in this novel to depict the way African  
45 politicians often siphon public funds to enrich themselves at the expense of the ordinary people in the society.  
46 In the episode below, Armah revealed how Joe koomson-the Minister plenipotentiary used his political status to  
47 amass wealth to himself.

48 In this episode below, "The Man" the chief character of the novel visited Koomson in his house together with  
49 his wife "Oyo".

50 "The Man" was surprised by the quality of the things in Koomson's house, as well as the expensive nature of  
51 the property in the house."The Man" Thought of the idea below in his mind while in Koomson's: "There were  
52 things here for a human being to spend a life time desiring. There were things here to attract the beholding eye  
53 and make it accept the power of their owner. Things of intricate and obviously expensive design" (p.144)

54 In the episode above "The Man" was amazed at those things he saw in Koomson's house "The Man" is aware  
55 that Koomson could afford those things in his house, as a result of being a top ranking politician, using corruptive  
56 means to acquire many beautiful things for himself and his family. These characterize the way African politicians  
57 use dubious means to acquire many attractive things for themselves.

58 In another episode, the mother of the wife of "The Man" in her amazement of the stupendous riches of  
59 Koomson posited:

60 Aaaah, Koomson has done well, we must say it. He has done well for himself and for his family too (p.139)

61 In this episode, the old woman here was trying to praise Mr Koomson for being powerfully rich, not minding  
62 how he came about the riches. This epitomize how most ordinary African people do praise corrupt politicians  
63 about their riches, without bothering about the source of their riches.

### 64 3 The Luxurious Life Style Of African Politicians

65 In this novel, Armah revealed how African politicians live Luxurious life at the expense of the ordinary people in  
66 their societies. He used the character of Mr. Koomson-The politician to reveal this when "The Man" paid him a  
67 visit, Mr. Koomson ordered the steward in his house, saying: Atinga, bring the trolley and put different drinks,  
68 put also ice and put glasses four (p.148) In the episode above, the different drinks Koomson ordered for reflect  
69 the fact that Koomson has a lot of different assorted drinks in his house depicting his Luxurious way of life.

70 As an addendum to the earlier mentioned episode, Armah showed another episode in "The Beautiful Ones Are  
71 Not Yet Born" reflective of the carefree manner in which African politicians spend money. "The Man" and the  
72 mother of "The Man's" wife and Oyo" his wife were having a discussion with Koomson about the price of a boat,  
73 with which fishing business can be done. Koomson mentioned that one boat can be bought for "twelve thousand  
74 pounds" "The Man" and his family members shouted in amazement, claiming the money was too much, but  
75 Koomson said:

76 Twelve thousand pounds yes. But the money is not the difficult thing after all, the commercial bank is ours  
77 and we can do anything.

78 (p. 136) In the episode above Koomson's statement is indicative of the fact that money, however big is nothing  
79 to him. This episode exemplifies the lavish manner with which African politicians buy whatever they want  
80 because they believe they can lift any cash from the government purse without any problem. The resultant effect  
81 of this lavish spending is the killing of the economy of the different African countries.

### 82 4 Putting The Economic Phase In Jeopardy

83 Ayi Kwei Armah, has used "The Beautiful one are Not yet Born" to showcase the fact that it is indeed as a result  
84 of the corruption in the highest order in different African societies that the economy of the African countries  
85 keeps nose -diving. To Armah, the corruptive activities of the African leaders are what is putting the Economic  
86 phase in serious Jeopardy. The Episode below Justifies Armah's view in this direction "The Man" went to a  
87 public toilet and saw some inscriptions on the wall of the toilet:

88 Money Sweet Pass all who born fool socialism chop make I chop, Contrey Broke (p.106)

89 The episode above is indicative of the fact that there is corruption at the highest level in the world of this  
90 novel. "Chop make I chop" in the above episode implies that while the politicians are lifting the money they could  
91 from the government coffers other members of the society too are busy stealing in whichever way the opportunity  
92 for them to steal comes. "Contrey Broke" in the episode suggests that after people have carried money from  
93 different angles, then the entire country goes down being broke. This episode above clearly shows the negative  
94 effect of corruption as going on in different African countries. The episode also gives the impression that when  
95 politicians are corrupt, the people under them have the possibility to be corrupt, after all people are watching  
96 what their leaders are doing on a daily basis.

### 97 5 The Frustration Of The Morally Upright People

98 Furthermore, Armah has used his novel "The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born" to portray the fact that in any  
99 society where there are corrupt people, the morally upright ones in the society will always be frustrated. In one  
100 of the episodes in this novel, "The Man" a morally upright railway worker becomes frustrated as a result of the

101 pressure mounted on him by his wife and other family members to join in the activities of the corrupt people in  
102 the society, particularly using his office to help himself, but he never consented this negative idea. Mr. Koomson,  
103 the politician was the classmate of "The Man" while in school, but Koomson became rich due to his corruptive  
104 activities as a politician. "The Man" at a point in the novel, while discussing with the "Teacher", another morally  
105 upright person in the novel said: In the episode above "The Man" expressed his frustration over the mess in the  
106 society which he has refused to be part of. "The Man" distances himself clearly from the corruptive activities of  
107 the society. ThisIb) c) d)

108 frustration above arises from the fact that though he hates corruption and he does not engage in it, but he  
109 keeps wondering whether his decision to avoid participating in the corruptive activities of the society is right  
110 or wrong. The episode above exemplifies the frustration of most ordinary African people in different African  
111 Societies, seeing how some people are siphoning money and could not join in this nefarious activity, due to their  
112 principle of honesty.

## 113 **6 The Depravity Of The Ordinary People**

114 Amah has shown in this novel that when corruption is perpetrated by the political leaders, the possibility is there  
115 for the ordinary people to also engage in corruptive tendencies. The episode below shows how the people at the  
116 lowest ebb often engage in corruptive activities, since the leaders are also corrupt.

117 A messenger at the railway corporation had won a lottery but because he knew that many people are neck  
118 deep in corruption, he started doubting whether or not he would be given the entire money accruable to him,  
119 and so he said: I hope some official at the lottery place will take some of my hundred Cedis as a bribe and allow  
120 me to have the rest (p.19)

121 In the episode above, Armah showcased the fact that since corruption is everywhere; no one can get what  
122 is due to him fully in terms of money, because the entire, society is a depraved one. The episode above also  
123 epitomizes the doubts in the minds of the people in most African countries, wondering at all times whether they  
124 will not part with some of their money in order to get what they should get. To Armah, a corrupt society is a  
125 society of injustices.

126 In addition to the highlighted episode earlier on the depravity of the ordinary people in this novel Armah  
127 signposted an episode in which a timber contractor tried to bribe "The Man", in order to get a space in the  
128 train to move his woods from the bush. "The Man" found the bribery act quite offensive and so rejected it. The  
129 discussion of the rich timber contractor and "The Man" goes, with the businessman saying: Take one for yourself  
130 and give the other one to your friend. I myself will find some fine drink for you. Take it. Take it, my friend.  
131 The episode above shows the level of depravity of the entire people of the society in the world of this novel. The  
132 bribery episode above is a representation of how people in different African societies do engage in bribing their  
133 ways to get favors, which Armah considers to be awful and particularly detestable. The writer tries to tell the  
134 readers that it is indeed bad for the people to bribe their ways at whatever time, as this will not make any society  
135 grow.

136 III.

## 137 **7 Conclusion**

138 In conclusion therefore, it is germane to say that "The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born" has been Ayikwei  
139 Armah's weapon to lambast the misuse of political powers by the African political leaders, for corruption will  
140 always keep destroying the economic phase of the various African countries. "The Man" in the novel represents  
141 Armah himself. Furthermore, the honesty posture of "The Man" in this novel, represents Armah's principle of  
142 honesty.

143 Ahmah is African who believes so much in the well being of the African people and so he used this novel to  
144 condemn bad governance of African leaders, such that there can be a change for the better in the economic and  
145 political terrain and by extension putting African people in different African countries on a better pedestal.

146 Ayi Kwei Armah has used this novel to expose corruption at both the highest and the lowest level in the  
147 various African societies and he has sent the message straight that the people of Africa, both leaders and their  
148 subjects should eschew corruptive tendencies, for corruption and other vices are ill wind that can blow no one  
any good.

Do I have some part missing? Teacher, this  
Koomson was my own classmate. My classmate.  
So tell me what is wrong with me?  
(P. 57)

Figure 1:

## **7 CONCLUSION**

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