

Correction of the Exam Paper : Post-colonial African Novel / 2021 – 2022

Topic : Show that Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* denounces post-independence African leadership.

Ayi Kwei Armah's novel "The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born" is often interpreted as a scathing critique of the post-independence leadership in Africa. The story, set in Ghana during the early years of independence, explores the disillusionment and moral decay that characterize the political and social landscape in a newly liberated nation. Several key themes and narrative elements in the novel contribute to its denunciation of post-independence African leadership:

1. **Corruption and Moral Degradation:** The novel vividly depicts the rampant corruption and moral degradation among the ruling class and political elites. Armah's portrayal of bribery, embezzlement, and nepotism within the government and society at large reflects a disillusionment with the failed promises of post-independence leaders to prioritize the welfare and development of the nation.
2. **Lack of Accountability:** Armah's narrative emphasizes the lack of accountability and transparency among the political elite, revealing a system where those in power exploit their positions for personal gain without regard for the well-being of the citizens they are meant to serve. This portrayal serves as a critique of the failure of the newly independent governments to establish accountable and responsible leadership structures.
3. **Social Injustice and Inequality:** The novel highlights the stark disparities between the privileged few in power and the impoverished masses, underscoring the widening gap between the ruling class and the common people. Armah's depiction of social injustice and economic inequality reflects the failure of post-independence African leadership to address the fundamental needs and aspirations of their people.

4. **Betrayal of Ideals:** "The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born" also underscores the betrayal of the initial ideals and aspirations of the independence struggle. The protagonist's internal conflict and disillusionment with the prevalent corruption and moral decay symbolize the disillusionment of the broader population with the post-independence leaders, who have failed to uphold the values of freedom, justice, and equality that were central to the liberation movements.

Through its vivid portrayal of the social and political landscape in post-independence Ghana, "The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born" serves as a powerful indictment of the failure of African leadership to fulfill the promises of liberation and independence, presenting a searing critique of the moral bankruptcy and systemic corruption that plague the newly independent nations.