



## A hidden transcript as discursive process and justification of acts of resistance in post-colonial African Novel

**Ahmed Dedo Gameda**

Department of Literature and Language, School of Foreign Language Studies, College of Social Sciences and Humanities, Haramaya University, Ethiopia

### Abstract

*This paper examines Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968) as a form of hidden transcript of resistance to the evils committed by post-colonial African elites. This is done by presenting selected texts from the novel and analysing it using principles of counter discourse which resists the and protests against the dominant discourse. Thus, the counter discourses have been achieved as a hidden transcript of resistance through non-euphemistic language intentionally employed to be rude and disgusting to show the intensity of the resistance and resentment at the post-colonial ills in Africa. The vehemently objected and detested conditions include moral decadence, rampant corruption and Europeanism dilemma and language has been used as a weapon of struggle and counter discourse to the empty rhetoric of the post-colonial leaders that resonated with, but empty spirits of hopes and transformations. To achieve this protest, explicit reference to and use of dirty language that are concerned with excretion, sex, blood and animal abuse are used to establish resistance through hidden transcripts. The language styles in short were deviations meant to counter deviations. The form of discourse important here is that of hidden transcript of resistance of the weak, the powerless, or the voiceless who are able to use only informal ways of protesting rather than directly and boldly confronting the pervasive moral conundrum. Analysing the use of non-euphemistic languages in the novel, it is concluded that indirect protest towards the existing post-colonial decadence, corruption, Europeanism dilemma and failed promise of African independence were reflected.*

**Keywords:** Armah; post-colonialism; Hidden transcript of resistance; excrement/shit; euphemism; counter-discourse.

*Next to death ... shit is the most vernacular atmosphere of our beloved country.*  
( Wole Soyinka, *The Interpreters* cited in Joshua D.,1999)

### 1. Introduction

African literature can be seen in to three major historical periods:precolonial,colonial and post-colonial.Many pioneering African writers were eduacted in the west and started writing African literature. These writers have applied knowledge gained there to African literature and contextualized it to colonial, neocolonial, and post-colonial circumstances. Post-colonialism, which which is a period focused on this article, in Africa covers the years between 1960 and 1970, a period in which most African states gained their political independence from

Europe (Pavlovski, 2004). African writers have been able to use African literature as a means to protest to both colonial and post colonial problems in Africa. Fashina rightly points out that “African scholars, critics, and writers converted their art to utilitarian value as aninstrument or ideological weapon of social-political change in post-colonial societies. (Fashina,2009:2).Liekwise, Achebe cited by Lindfors (1970,18) once sated in an interview in 1969 about the role of the writer that he believes that “it’s impossible to write anything in Africa without some kind of commitment, some kind of message,[...]”

Achebe in the same interview emphasised that African writers “whether they are aware of it or not, are committed writers. The whole pattern of life demanded that you should protest that you should put in a word for your history, your traditions, and your religion and so on”. Pavlovski also explains that most writers in post-colonial Africa and even before considered themselves “both as artists and political activists, and their works reflected their concerns regarding the political and social conditions of their countries” (2004), as a result they are expected to offer guidance to the misled post-colonial administrators as well as the societies, who rush after European ways and customs, in independent African countries. Duerden and Pieterse (1972) argue that should not take anything for granted rather focus on what is needed by the people, what writers can do and contribute for the people. If this is not the case by African writers then they are missing their appropriate functions as African writers (p.7).

Post-colonial African literature is highly characterized as a discourse of resistance and protest against the established remnants of western colonial systems. In this light, Darko (2000) describes Post-colonial African literature as “a synthesis of protest and imitation. It blends revolt and conciliation” (2). However, it is also important to revisit the African literature not only from the content point of view, but from the literary styles, language use, image formation and other discursive processes. Thus, most literatures produced in the post-colonial era were meant to resist to all problems created by the leaders or by the society themselves. According to Fashina “there were remarkable “protest literatures” from Anglophone writers like Soyinka, Achebe, and Ayi Kwei Armah from West Africa; Ngugi and Micere Mugo from East Africa; Nadine Gordimer, Bessie Head, and Athol Fugard from South Africa, and later in the 1970s, Tewfik al Hakim and Ebrahim Hussein from North Africa, among others (Fashina, 2009:2-3). In this regard, most African writers attempted to use African literature to contribute to the effort of Africa’s political and economic liberation. To directly quote Fashina, these writers have attempted “to appropriate the literary enterprise to the service of political and economic liberation of Africa, both from the vestiges of colonial domination and from the corrupt neocolonial administrations of the newborn African states” (2009).

Therefore, most works written by Ayi Kwei Armah, a West African writer, fall in to the category of

protest literatures. The role that should be played by African writers, among other things, is providing the role of the teacher to his people which Armah has been able to achieve as argued by Achebe and by Duerden & Pieterse during the high time in post-colonial Africa. Ogede (2000:4) contends that Armah’s name should be mentioned in line with Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, and Ngugi wa Thiong’o, as writers who dealt with “so honestly and courageously with the problem of contemporary Africa as Armah”. Furthermore, “Armah’s fight can be defined as a radical quest for a new direction that can change the fortunes of Africa and the black people” (Ogede, *ibid*).

Armah’s first novel has long been read and understood in different ways since its production at the end of 1960s. Most critics who reacted to this novel during the early 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s mainly emphasized on its negative side due to the bold and explicit use of languages that are considered offensive for referring literally to excrement, sex and sexual organs, blood and animal abuse. Quite recently, Kakraba (2011a) considered the novel as a therapeutic tool through the use of vulgar language that intentionally attempted to draw readers’ attention towards post-colonial ills of all kinds. Kakraba (2011b) citing Frederiksen, (1987), Wright (1989) and Amuta (1992:4), rightly points out that

*While many critics laud his narrative style and technique, others like, focus and criticize him for, what (Brown 2009:41) describes as his “searing novelistic indictment of post-colonial society”. Yet, others like Chinua Achebe see Armah to be too pessimistic. In spite of all these controversies, Armah’s soaring commitment to good governance and the retrieval of African traditional values are unquestionable. Armah’s novels, apart from their aesthetic beauty, are deliberately crafted as tools of resistance and liberation. They are, according to Chidi Amuta (1992:4), “novels of historical reconstruction”. They are meant to fight what Armah considers to be the injustices, prejudices and atrocities perpetrated over the years by foreigners and also by Africans on Africans.*

However, none of these critics saw the text as a tool of resistance via hidden transcripts (Scott, 1990) of the subordinate and the powerless who cannot declare their resistance publicly rather achieved that only in a disguised form through the use of non-euphemistic language that refers to the predominant use of excrement and shit related concepts. This kind of resistance is possible through the use of various

mechanisms including language that is non-euphemistic which can be designed to offend the readers in an attempt to resist the intolerable and rampant post-colonial ills that devastated optimism and caused massive pessimism to dominate the psyches of the general public. The magnitude of the experienced pessimism is clear in the public outcry of the elites' headlong and explicit involvement in acts of moral decadence by considering them as normal actions and proper behaviours. So to help resist this type of acts of corruption, textual discourses like the text under discussion are meant to contribute as resistance literature and add value to the African writer's role as the teacher who provides guidance to his people. This is evident in the characters Armah created in the novel under discussion which has been demonstrated in detail along with examples cited from the novel itself.

The post-colonial African writers, including Armah, tried to fulfil their moral obligation by exposing social, economic and political acts that represented acts of betrayal and social destruction such as politicians' widespread involvement in corruption and their wanton engagement in other selfish practices. As a result, the form of the language used in this novel should be thoroughly scrutinized. Therefore, reasons for Armah to resort to predominant use of non-euphemistic language as a major style in a society who highly sanctions written or spoken language need to be carefully explored.

## 2. Objectives

The objective of this article is to examine Ayi Kwei Armah's novel *The Beautiful Ones are not Yet Born* (1968) as a form of ordinary, informal and individual resistance to the ills committed by post-colonial African elites in general and Ghana in particular. This is done by carefully analysing how Armah excessively and intentionally utilized non-euphemistic language as a hidden transcript of resistance. Hidden transcripts of resistance, according to James Scott (1990), are forms of invisible and informal force of resistance which are referred to as "hidden transcripts". These invisible and informal forms also include the explicit use of non-euphemistic languages related to excrement and shit, sex, blood and animal abuse that contradicts with the established norms of the people including the established systemic expectations of language use in general and the readers' expectations in particular. This explicit use of naked languages against the norms of the people and system of language is understood as

an attempt of resistance to all forms of problems existing in post-colonial Africa.

## 3. Conceptual framework

This article follows the principles of counter discourse as understood in post-colonial setting. Counter discourses are mechanisms by which the dominant discourses are challenged and if possible subverted. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969), Michel Foucault points out that "the production of discourse is at once controlled" (216) in an attempt to subvert "its power and its dangers" (216). In *Discourse/Counter Discourse: The Theory and Practice of Symbolic Resistance in Nineteenth-Century France* Richard Terdiman (1985) argued that counter discourses are meant to subvert the dominant discourses. Challenging and subverting dominant discourses are the major focuses of the 19<sup>th</sup> century counter discourse (Terdiman, 1985). According to Terdiman (1985), these counter discourses attempted to "disrupt the circuit in which the dominant construction of the world asserted its self-evidence, its naturalized currency. For the most part counter-discourses sought to imagine alternatives to such a mechanism". These preoccupations of counter discourses could be applied to the post-colonial setting for there exists dominant and discourses against such dominations. According to Tiffin (1987) subversion is characteristic of post-colonial discourse in general and Tiffin citing Lee (1977) therefore asserts that "post-colonial literatures/cultures are" as a result "constituted in counter-discursive rather than homologous practices, and they offer 'fields' (Lee, 1977) of counter-discursive strategies to the dominant discourse." Tiffin (1987) citing Terdiman (1985) and Harris (1985) also describes the condition of post-colonial counter discursive writings:

*The operation of post-colonial counter-discourse (Terdiman 1985) is dynamic, not static: it does not seek to subvert the dominant with a view to taking its place, but, in Wilson Harris's formulation, to evolve textual strategies which continually 'consume' their 'own biases' (Harris 1985:127) at the same time as they expose and erode those of the dominant discourse.*

Similarly African novels, according to Kehinde (2006), are so crucial instruments to dismantle "the hegemonic boundaries and the determinants that create unequal relations of power, based on binary oppositions such as "Us" and "Them"; "First World" and "Third-World"; "White" and "Black", "Colonizer" and "Colonized". In post-colonial setting, thus, more binary oppositions could be drawn based on these

hegemonic boundaries and determining factors suggested by Kinde, for example, “the powerful” and “the powerless”, “corrupt” and “uncorrupt”, “right” and “wrong”, etc. Preckshot (2003) and Said (1983) cited in Kihinde (2006), therefore, confirm that the “the primary concern of most post-colonial African novelists is to salvage the history of their people that colonialism has manipulated” acting as necessary counter discourse. A mode of thinking of the elites and the people in post colonial Africa is so strongly attached to the period of colonialism and missed its major target of decolonization of the mind as Ngugi(1986) aspired.

Discourse and counter discourses exist because of the existence of imbalance of power where one is dominant and the other subordinate. However, both the dominant and the dominated acquire power and can influence one another dominant. Foucault argues that ‘Power is everywhere’ and ‘comes from everywhere’ (Foucault, 1998: 63). In this sense, therefore, any group whether the dominant or the subordinate has its own power in power-relation processes and resistance to established norms can emerge from either the dominant or the subordinate. The word ‘resistance’ and related theoretical concepts have been important in social sciences’ discourses beginning from the days of Marx” (Theodoropoulou, 2009) and Foucault wants us to see resistance “as a chemical catalyst so as to bring to light power relations” (1982: 780). In this article an attempt is made to examine acts of resistance by the ordinary people whom, in power-relations referred to as the subordinates, in this novel from the perspective of James Scott’s concepts of “transcripts: ‘the public’ and the ‘hidden’ transcripts of resistance”. In line with this, attempt has been made to indicate that language used in the novel contradicts the established acceptable norms of communication. That is, language is designed deliberately to be non-euphemistic and as a result provoke resistance against the elites and public servants in post-colonial Africa who consider all forms of problems such as corruption as normal behaviours and actions.

#### 4. Hidden transcript of resistance vis-a-vis excrement and shit

Hidden transcripts are understood in this article as forms of counter discourses which are used by the subordinate groups as weapons of resistance. James Scott came up with the forms of everyday resistance by peasants in the soviet era in his work “*Weapons of the weak: everyday forms of resistance* (1985)” and

later on with the transcripts in his other book “*Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (1990)” in which both texts contributed a lot in our understanding of invisible forces of resistance. In this article, therefore, the focus is on non-euphemistic language used and its reference to excretion, waste, sex related, blood and expressions about animal abuse in the novel under discussion is seen as a form invisible and informal force of resistance which is referred to as “hidden transcripts” by James Scott.

With careful analysis of counter discourses, one can draw clear connections between resistance and the ideas of hidden and invisible power. That is, hidden forms of power can be used by powerful groups to keep certain issues off record, and also relatively helpless groups can use strategies of resistance which ‘hide’ their actions from the powerful or which use codes to make them invisible to avoid prosecutions. According to Gaventa (2003) an instance may be found in the case of the resistance history of African-American through their spiritual actions, which were sometimes used in the times of slavery as codes for communication, masking hidden messages from the workers under the pretext of singing a hymn. Scott’s concept of ‘transcripts’ (hidden and public), are strongly related to the idea of resistance, which are conventional ways of behaving and speaking that fit particular actors in particular social settings, whether dominant or oppressed. Scott considers such resistance as a subtle form of challenging ‘public transcripts’ by making use of prescribed roles and language to oppose and protest the abuse of power by the elites employing things like ‘rumour, gossip, disguises, linguistic tricks, metaphors, euphemisms, folktales, ritual gestures, anonymity’ (Scott, *ibid.*: 137).

However, more important in the current investigation of the novel under discussion is the idea of hidden transcripts. Abdi (2010) citing Scott (1990) wisely summarized hidden transcripts, which makes it compulsory to use his exact words, as follows:

*The hidden transcripts refers to discourses and practices that occur “offstage” and “beyond direct observation”, is filled - among subordinates - with emancipatory and metaphorical “folktales”, “rituals”, “rhetoric”, “jokes and rumors” and – at the same time – with forms of “disguised, low-profile, undeclared resistances”, or “infra-politics”, which are not “substitutes” for the direct public confrontation of the oppressed ones against oppressors, even are not for “relieving the tensions”*



of subordinates, but rather are “silent partners of ... loud form of public resistance[s]” and are necessary in order to break the border between the hidden and public transcript or, in other words, to have a “public declaration of the hidden transcript” one day (Scott, 1990: 4, 184, 185, 198, 199, 202).

These forms of hidden transcripts are crucial in resistances waged by the powerless groups who cannot declare their oppositions publicly. Similar instances of resistances were analysed in the current article to understand how hidden transcripts achieved their role as an indirect voices for the voiceless who have no way to break the dominant discourses of oppression.

Scott wants us to consider resistance not as ‘organization’, but as less visible, everyday forms of indirect resistance such as ‘foot-dragging, evasion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander and sabotage’ (Scott, 1985). These methods are particularly effective in situations where violence is used to maintain the status quo of the dominant, allowing ‘a veiled discourse of dignity and self-assertion within the public transcript... in which ideological resistance is disguised, muted and veiled for safety’s sake’ (Scott, 1990: 137) as in this novel where individual resistance is achieved in a disguised form only through writing using a language that is offensive due to its non-euphemistic nature that intentionally provokes anger and opposition on the side of the reader for its violation of norms of communication. Similar forms of resistance are observed in the novel under discussion through the protagonist’s and few other characters’ resistance using languages that are intentionally non-euphemistic and are forms of taboos which are sanctioned by different communities in Africa. In other words, the novel under discussion presents few individual characters’ acts of resistance in post-colonial Africa against the elites and their systems which is plagued by corruption, moral decadence and Europeanism dilemma. Likewise, Lisa McNee (1990:254) in her analysis of this novel contends that “Individual acts of resistance to the “gleam” of wealth and power, which can only be obtained by robbing the nation, seem to be the only answer in *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968).” For instance, what has been represented in the following extracts in which both characters believe everyone must share his/her part of the country’s riches whether it is through legal means or not and pave the way for others’ as well:

*“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, 19); “Then the fingers brought out two carefully held notes, two green tens. The man said nothing. The visitor put the ten cedi notes under a stone paperweight on the table behind the man, to his right. The visitor drew his hand back from the table and the notes and stood staring at the man in front of him. The man said nothing. ‘Take it,’ the visitor said. ‘One for you, and one for him.’ ‘Why should I?’ The look on the visitors face made it plain that to this kind of question no sane man would give an answer... (Armah, 30).*

The normalization of corruption is further confirmed by the way the giver reacted, in the extract above, when the man refused to accept the two ten notes as a bribe and help the Timber man in transportation of his Timbers. In other words, the Timber man, who represents members of the society, has already made up his mind that no one in the country will refuse taking bribes. So he expected no refusal to take the bribe because that is how everything was functioning - everyone takes their shares of the riches of the country asserting that corruption is normalized in post-colonial Africa in general and Ghana in particular.

Moreover, it should be understood that words or phrases explicitly referring mainly to excretion, waste, sex, animal abuse and sometimes blood are actually considered as taboos in many cultures. As a result such words are non-euphemistic and are sanctioned to be used in some circumstances. However, deliberate use of them in this novel is purposively designed to achieve resistance, by violating their norms of communication, towards the ills of the society including the elites in post-colonial Africa.

##### **5. Use of Excrement and shit vis-a-vis avoidance of euphemistic language in literature as a hidden transcript of resistance**

The dictionary meaning of ‘excrement’ and shit is almost similar. According to Webster’s College Dictionary, excrement is any waste matter discharged from the body, especially faeces; and ‘shit’ nearly means the same though has multiple uses in different contexts. In many communities in Africa and elsewhere language is usually censored and judged as right or wrong based on the contexts it appears in. Hence, among other things *excrement and shit* is the concept where this censorship is highly considered as it had, according to Morrison (2008), “social, cultural, and even theological repercussions.” Moreover, it is further argued that though it is natural to excrete, yet, as Mary Douglas and Julia Kristeva show, excrement,

menstrual fluids, mucus, and spit all constitute fluids ejected from the body that are perceived as taboo and unclean (Morrison, 2008: 53). She also argues that excrement could be considered as being offensive (p. 7). Morrison wants us understand that an action figuratively compared to excrement refers to the moral aspect of excrement which actually is not naturally part of it. For her filth also is similarly important linguistic concept which carries various meanings (Morrison, 2008: 40). Reading the novel under discussion one can easily come across this kind of excrement, shit, waste, and filth explicitly referred to violating expected form of communication

In an attempt to expose the impact of explicitly using concepts related to excrement and shit, to use the exact words from her, Morrison (2008) writes as follows: "Excrement may make us giggle or disturb us, discussing excrement may seem distasteful and low, and dwelling on it may be perceived as unseemly." (7) She further argued that excrement is "present in our public discourse, from best-selling children's books, such as *Walter the Farting Dog, Everyone*" (Morrison, *ibid*: 7). Let us consider the use of excrement related language from the novel in the following extract:

*He licked the wetness around his chin, but the operation was unsuccessful. The mess was more than he had realized, and he had to wipe it off with his palm. He looked at his hand, all covered with his own viscous ooze (Armah, 6).*

The use of expressions such as "*licked the wetness around his chin*", "*viscous ooze*" in the novel shows the moral decadence of the people involved in post colonial Africa and may also suggest metaphorically that they do not care a bit about their actions provided they feel that it is good for them. In the above extract, therefore, it could be understood that the post-colonial troubles Africa as well as Ghana faced cannot be easily eradicated like "the mess on the man's chin" which could not be easily removed by licking alone needing even more effort to remove it.

As a result, it is often referred to by many alternative terms which are rather euphemistic in their nature and are therefore less offensive. Abrams (1999: 83) writes about euphemism as an inoffensive expression used in place of a naked one that is felt to be disagreeable or embarrassing. He further explains that euphemisms are used frequently with reference to such subjects as religion ("Gosh darn!" for "God damn!"), death ("pass away" instead of "die"), bodily

functions ("comfort station" instead of "toilet"), and sex ("to sleep with" instead of "to have sexual intercourse with").

Burridge (2012) also refers to euphemism as it is characterized by avoidance language and evasive expression. She further adds that euphemisms are created when speakers or writers are encountered with "tricky problem of how to talk in different contexts about things that for one reason or another we would prefer not to speak of unrestrainedly in the prevailing context." Burridge elaborates, euphemisms are verbal escape hatches created in response to taboos. These include the usual suspects — private parts, bodily functions, sex, anger, dishonesty, drunkenness, madness, disease, death, dangerous animals, fear, God and so on — as Adams and Newell [1994: 12] describe 'an infinite variety of things that go bump in the night'. This asserts that when one wants to deal with such things as private parts, bodily functions, and the concept of sex, and other similar issues in public discourses, one needs to use euphemistic languages. If, however, writers reside in the use of non-euphemistic languages instead of using less offensive words and expressions in referring to any form of excrement and shit, for example, it must be for achieving certain special effects, as in the novel under discussion such as resistance to the established norms of the people, system of governance and so on. To cite an example from the novel, the writer could have used less offensive expressions only such as "The driver cleared his throat" without adding more disgusting expression describing the amount of mucous the man is spitting as being generous as in the following extract:

*'The driver cleared his throat and spat a generous gob of mucous against the tire, and began unhurriedly to inhale his smoke.'* (Armah, 1).

This kind of avoidance of employing euphemistic languages throughout the novel contributes to the special effects the writer intends to send across to the reader which is a hidden form of resistance of the characters who are powerless, unlike publicly declared ones, to the ills of post-colonial Africa using language as a tool.

## 6. Discussions

### **Excrement and shit, as a weapon of resisting and exposing the ills of post-colonial Africa: rampant corruption, greed, and moral decadence**

As discussed earlier, in this paper emphasis is placed on the choices of language that are not used commonly in all contexts because of their acceptability

and unacceptability based on rules of public discourses. Human beings usually censor words as appropriate in some situations and the opposite in the other. So, the use of euphemisms to refer to some words that are usually considered inappropriate in certain contexts is highly advisable. According to Cambridge Advanced Learner's dictionary, euphemism is formally defined as an indirect way of saying something, especially when talking about something unpleasant. Leach (1966) as cited in Murphy (2010) identified three major categories of such words and phrases. First, he identified dirty and filthy words that are concerned with sex and excretion, such as "bugger," "shit"; secondly he came up with words that are related with the Christian religion, such as "Christ" and "Jesus"; and finally he identified words and phrases which are used in "animal abuse" (for instance, calling a person by the name of an animal), such as "bitch," "cow", etc.

In many cultures including African, it is not normal to refer to the genitals, the concept of sex and is wrong to call or insult people by different animal names. So if one uses these kinds of languages in an open and direct manner, he or she will offend the listener or the reader. When one reads the novel under discussion, however, it is also evident that one will come across overwhelming instances of an open use of non-euphemistic languages, rather than euphemistic ones, especially to those about bodily excretions, sex and sexual organs and animal abuse as in the following extracts:

*'Uncircumcised baboon'.(Armah,9)*

*'Moron of a frog'. (Armah, 9)*

*'Your mother's rotten cunt!'(Armah, 9)*

*Left-hand fingers in their careless journey from a hasty anus sliding all the way up the banister as their owners made the return trip from the lavatory downstairs to the offices above.(Armah,12)*

*Right-hand fingers still dripping with the after-piss and the stale sweat from fat crotches. (Armah, 12-13)*

*In the ditch running along the left track, the unconquerable filth was beginning to cake together in places, though underneath it all some water still managed to flow along... (Armah, 22-23)*

*Bloody fucking sonofabitch! Article of no commercial value! You think the bus belongs to your grandfather? (Armah, 6)*

From the above examples we can understand that the writer is able to make us feel violated for we do not like to hear or read this kind of bold reference to

the genitals, and animal abuse expressions.

This kind of reference to the private parts and animal abuse languages is considered wrong in our discourses and, therefore, are highly sanctioned in many cultures in Africa and elsewhere. This action violates the normative behaviour of communication and a reader will find it so annoying that he or she will respond with a strong reaction. This sense of being violated or annoyed by the language use is the objective of hidden transcript of resistance towards the post-colonial elites' or people's misdeeds as depicted in the novel, *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*.

Use of euphemism is a common phenomenon in many cultures including Africa. As discussed earlier Leach (ibid) identified three types of euphemistic words and phrases of which one group is those referring to dirt, excretion and sex related. Topics related with sex and excretion of human waste are usually considered as taboos that should not be used in public discourses in both western and African cultures. However, in this novel the writer predominantly uses non-euphemistic languages related to these matters calculatingly violating the reader's expectations so as to show his disapproval of their misdeeds and corruption comparing with and explicitly referring to those words or expressions of human excretions, wastes, and sexual organs which should not have been referred to so explicitly instead euphemistically. When a reader comes across, for example utterances such as *"Your mother's rotten cunt!'(Armah, 9)"* or *"Hot smell of caked shit split by afternoon's baking sun, now touched by still evaporating dew... '(Armah,40)"*, he/she will obviously be highly offended and feels that the writer is violating rules of social discourses. However, in this case the writer has achieved his purpose in resisting to the decayed moral and norms of the system, the elites and the society in general. Moreover, the writer has metaphorically showed us that post-colonialism has become 'shit' that stench from a distance unlike a good 'cake' that attracts us from afar.

Furthermore, "euphemisms are sweet-sounding, or at least inoffensive, alternatives for expressions that speakers or writers prefer not to use in executing a particular communicative intention on a given occasion" (Burrige, 2012: 6). However, this novel has a pile of non-euphemistic words and expressions employed very explicitly. As discussed earlier, one can argue that using non-euphemistic language throughout the novel is to violate the cultural expectations of



societal censorship via the language we use every day, i.e., making our language more offensive and possibly disgusting. However, Armah's selection of words are barely sweet sounding as explained by Burrige, but are even more uglier expressions as in the following examples from the novel:

*Again his nostrils lost the smell of the cedi's marvelous rottenness, and they itched to refresh themselves with its ancient stale smell. (Armah, 3)*

*..The conductor cleared his throat and ate the phlegm... (Armah, 5)*

It is not commonly heard when people publicly say "marvellous rottenness", and "he ate the phlegm". We usually do not like to hear someone saying explicitly 'I ate the phlegm' which is normally supposed to be spat out not eaten and it can be considered paradoxical to combine the word 'marvellous and rottenness' for each expressions has positive and negative meaning, respectively.

From the above examples, we can see that the writer resorted to kinds of words to have a direct and at the same time explicit association with the words they were selected to refer to or stand for deliberately avoiding euphemisms. In other words, Armah used these words to be even more offensive, disgusting, unpleasant, and resistant to the reader and as a result making it a hidden transcript of resistance to their actions and behaviours. The deliberate use of such language in public, as in this novel, has turned them into taboos and increased the degree of resistance and protest towards what is happening in post-colonial Africa. Similarly, in his analysis of this novel, Joshua (1999) in the article "Excremental Post-colonialism", mostly argues that literary production that focus on post-colonialism mainly work with the figurative "excrement", the "waste", that the colonizer left as a legacy to the colonized. In this novel, Joshua further underlines that "shit (not to mention its corporeal familiars phlegm, drool, vomit, sweat, piss, and blood) emerges as an index of moral and political outrage in a new Ghana bedevilled by greed and bureaucratic corruption". To cite an example, one intends to smell something in cases where what one smells is a pleasant odor or when one wants to find out what it smells. However, ironically one of the characters in the novel "the conductor" was enjoying a disgusting smell which is open non-euphemistic and metaphorically underlining what post-colonialism looks like as in the following extract:

*'It was a most unexpected smell for something so new to have: it was a very old smell, very strong,*

*and so very rotten that the stench itself of it came with a curious, satisfying pleasure... (Armah, 3)*

The conductor's reaction to the bad smell resembles a reaction people show when they come across the "Arabian Perfume" as emphasised in Shakespeare's Macbeth: "Here's the smell of the blood still; all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!" (Shakespeare, William, 1564–1616). This act can be compared to wanting others' property or money, as in the case of the "cedi" the conductor collected on that day that does not belong to one but a state in which corruption prevails never cares for what belongs to whoever and there is no moral ground that dictates corruption and greed as wrong or right because individuals, elites and all members of the society except few people, like few characters in the novel, are all corrupt and would want to enjoy what is not theirs. So it can be understood that post-colonialism is full of wrong deeds such as rampant corruption and immense greed in which the main actors, people, rush to fulfil it.

In the following extract we can witness the man's position regarding the rotten, metaphorically refers to getting rich with bribes, ways of getting rich. He describes that everyone knows the right way of getting rich but that chance is so rare, in his own words—"so ridiculously small":

*How could a man be right in the midst of all this, wanting these things against which the mind sought to struggle ? It was not the things themselves, but the way to arrive at them which brought so much confusion to the soul. And everybody knew the chances of finding a way that was not rotten from the beginning were always ridiculously small. Many have found it worthwhile to try the rotten ways, and in truth there was no one living who had the strength to open his mouth to utter blame against them. Many had tried the rotten ways and found them filled with the sweetness of life. The rest were waiting for their turn, an opening along the same old ways (Armah, 144-145).*

Moreover, he admits that he himself is fighting with the temptations of following the rotten ways as it is inevitable for everyone to be corrupt some day that "The rest were waiting for their turn..." (Armah, 145) though it is obviously a wrong move by any measurement to get rich through corruption.

Corruption and greed has become a commodity that is owned by every person from the elites to the members of the society. So, opposing or ignoring corruption and accumulation of the riches of the



country is a thing of necessity for almost everyone in Africa in general and Ghana in particular. In the following extract, for instance, it could be deduced that the wife of the protagonist, one of the only few persons rejecting corruption, detests her husband's actions for not taking bribes:

*'Oyo flung my uselessness at me again this night,' he said.*

*'What happened?'*

*'She called me the chichidodo.'*

*'Ah, it's a proverb, no? The bird eats shit, hates worms?'*

*'Yes. Only the other way round, Teacher.'*

*'Why did she say that?'*

*'I told her what happened at work today. A man came to me with a bribe.'*

*'And murderer that you are, you let it go?'*

*'I let it go, 'the man said.*

*'Expect no forgiveness from your family, then.'*

*[...]*

*'They want what they see others enjoying, that is all.'*

*'And it doesn't matter how they get it.'* (Armah, 53-54)

The wife called the man a 'chichidodo', comparing him to a bird that eats the worms but hates the shit it came from. Her strong desire towards wealth gained by corruption shows that it has been normalized so nobody should ignore doing it. The Teacher is one of those who understood earnestly about the evilness of corruption and greed and opposed to it at all. However, when the man came seeking advice from him, the Teacher told the man that he never be forgiven from his family indicating that the society has taken for granted accumulating wealth as necessity in whatever means they could come across. This also indicates the moral decadence of those involved in these kinds of actions.

The difficulty of the trouble Africa is in has been clearly demonstrated in the psychological makeup of the people in post-colonial Africa. Critically understanding the meaning in the following example suffices the view raised here.

*He licked the wetness around his chin, but the operation was unsuccessful. The mess was more than he had realized, and he had to wipe it off with his palm. He looked at his hand, all covered with his own viscous ooze* (Armah, 6).

The use of expressions such as "*licked the wetness around his chin*", "*viscous ooze*" in the novel shows the moral decadence of the people involved

corruption and accumulation of wealth in post colonial Africa and may also suggest metaphorically that their greed made them not care a bit about their actions provided they feel that it is good for them. In the above extract, therefore, it could be understood that the post-colonial troubles Africa as well as Ghana faced cannot be easily eradicated like "the mess on the man's chin" which could not be easily removed by licking alone needing even more effort to remove it.

### **Excrement and shit, Hidden transcript of Resistance to People's Wrong Actions and Behaviours**

Post independence Africa is characterized by all forms of misdeeds which were carried out by the elites and other parts of the society. This has been demonstrated in the novel under scrutiny. Some of the wrong actions are lack of respect of the elites and politicians for their people; of the civil servants for the people they provide service to. These lacks of respect are depicted by: use of offensive, non-euphemistic languages related to excrement and sex publicly; and abuse of power and misuse of the public properties and the public spheres.

As noted earlier many communities in Africa have a strong habit of using of some words, expressions, and concepts in some contexts and not in others. Some of these languages and concepts are those related to excrement and waste from human body and those related to sex and sexual organs. For these kinds of names and words, many communities in Africa and elsewhere have replacements which are less taboo, less offensive, and less literal. As a result, referring to such highly sanctioned issues with their given names and words is considered violation of societal norms of communication and results usually in punishment s which may include despising one who uses it, ignoring or avoiding responding to it and so on. More importantly, avoidance of using euphemisms, which are readily available for such words, offends the readers and results in an indirect form of resistance against the laid norm of the people. This by implication is a form of resistance against their wrong doings. These wrong doings includes ills of the society such as rampant corruption, moral decadence, and failure of the whole system of ruling including people's wrong behaviours and actions. This form of protest using language and writing is considered as a hidden transcript of resistance which is usually practiced by the subordinate groups or the powerless who for one reason or the other cannot carry on the public transcript of resistance, which includes public confrontations

with anyone whom they are fighting including establishments. In the following instance the normal human excretion has been given extra feature and made to be disgusting and repelling because of how the writer described the flow of mucous out of the sleeping man's mouth in the bus.

*Then a savage indignation filled the conductor. For in the soft vibrating light inside the bus, he saw, running down from the left corner of the watcher's mouth, a stream of the man's spittle. Oozing freely, the oil like liquid first entangled itself in the fingers of the watcher's left hand, underneath which it spread and touched the rusty metal lining of the seat...* (Armah, 5).

One can see from this how the writer attempted to depict the action of the movement of the man's spittle that the narrator himself/herself was angered and reacted with 'indignation' for it seems unnatural due to the way it is portrayed. This should be understood as a hidden transcript of resistance that resulted in opposition from the conductor who represents individuals in the society.

If we carefully scrutinize the following utterances, we can see that there is a strong and deliberate discursive violation in which the writer provided inappropriate feature to human spittle which is not smelly like other bodily waste: "*Are you a child? You vomit your smelly spit all over the place;* and as in the following extract it can be understood that the writer is successful in creating a situation in which the man is ashamed of his spittle which he naturally could not have easily controlled it for he was sleeping. In this case the conductor compared human 'spit to 'shit' which is inappropriate comparison boldly creating a kind of resistance to readers showing implicitly and metaphorically that many deeds in post-colonial Africa were wrong and disgusting:

*"Why? You don't have a bedroom. Or were you waiting to shit in the bus?"* (Armah, 6)".

These conditions show how Armah has successfully created resistance and protest even among the characters in the novel. Therefore, when a reader comes across such instances while reading the novel, he/she will be outraged by the language used to describe the situations. That outrageous feeling from the readers and characters is a form of hidden or informal resistance to what is going on in post-colonial Africa.

*'Uncircumcised baboon'.* (Armah, 9)

*'Moron of a frog'.* (Armah, 9)

*'Your mother's rotten cunt!'* (Armah, 9)

*Bloody fucking sonofabitch! Article of no commercial value! You think the bus belongs to your grandfather?* (Armah, 6)

In the following extract from the novel it is easier to witness more instances of ill-mannered behaviors and actions among the public servants, in this case the bus driver and the conductor:

*With a wholly unnecessary burst of noise a bus comes and stops with its entrance door a yard beyond the bus stop opening. The waiting people slide toward it, but the conductor walks away down the road. In a few moments the waiters can hear the sound of his urine hitting the clean-your-city can, He must be aiming high. Everyone relaxes visibly. The poor are rich in patience. The driver in his turn jumps down and follows the conductor to the heap. His sound is much more feeble. For a long time they stand by the heap laughing and talking...* (Armah, 39)

Some of the ill-manners and wrong actions indicated in this extract are unnecessary burst of noise by the bus controlled by driver, which the driver does not need to disturb the people with, the conductor urinating publicly on the clean-your-city can, spending much time while urinating though people are waiting to board the bus. These actions indicate that the moral standards have failed and everyone is doing what they can to abuse their power. That is, the bus driver and the conductor represent the public servants who are abusing their power by not rightfully delivering their services to the mass. Such wrong doings are witnessed everywhere in post-colonial Ghana in particular and post-colonial Africa in general. These kinds of behaviours are not openly opposed by the mass but only few people oppose these actions informally as witnessed in the novel that few individual characters have tried to successfully protest this matter. What is more, in the following extract it could be observed how ugly it is to commit crime of corruption on the poor and the results of such conduct could be disastrous for those involved in the manipulation of their power:

*The shiny eyes closed for a brief moment, then when they opened again Koomson seemed to have recovered from his fright and he leaned forward and whispered into the man's face, 'They will kill me.'*

*His mouth has the rich stench of rotten menstrual blood. The man held his breath until the new smell had gone down in the mixture with the liquid atmosphere of the party man's farts...* (Armah, 163).

The non-euphemistic language used to describe the minister's mouth bad smell in the above extract is

so disgusting that the author has achieved what is referred to in this paper as hidden transcript of resistance towards the ills of post-colonial elites and leaders such as the minister-Koomson who is afraid now for his life during the coup after realizing the sheer massiveness of the wrongs he had committed to the people he was elected to serve. The minister took refuge to the man's house which in the normal days could not be his primary choice of place to go to. From the way he acted it could be comprehended that he is struggling with shame and intra-psychic crisis. If one commits a crime to his people he or she could not recognize it in the good days but only when trouble comes; such is the condition he is in now.

Among the various wrong actions committed by post-colonial administrators, misuse and abuse of the public money is so common that even a housewife who does not have direct access to the public property is very eager much to put hand on it. And therefore to demonstrate resistance, throughout the novel 'the man' uses the Teacher's guidance on major issues and concerns. The issues are also so crucial for Africa's future for the current Africa described in the novel is so harshly misused and abused as could be seen in the instance:

*"I wanted to come and see you," the man said.*

*The listener shook his head reprovingly:*

*'Running from family peace again.'*

*'It is serious, this time.'*

*'It is serious, every time.'*

*'You can laugh,' the man said.*

*'You really think so?' asked the naked man. 'You really think I can afford to laugh?' He was smiling.*

*'Well,' the man said, 'you have not made the most serious mistake.'*

*The naked man laughed out loud. 'You wouldn't want my life, I tell you.'*

*'Teacher, you reduce everything to a joke.'*

*[...]*

*'Oyo flung my uselessness at me again this night,' he said.*

*'What happened?'*

*'She called me the chichidodo.'*

*'Ah, it's a proverb, no? The bird eats shit, hates worms?'*

*'Yes. Only the other way round, Teacher.'*

*'Why did she say that?'*

*'I told her what happened at work today. A man came to me with a bribe.'*

*'And murderer that you are, you let it go?'*

*'I let it go, 'the man said.*

*'Expect no forgiveness from your family, then.'*

*[...]*

*'They want what they see others enjoying, that is all.'*

*'And it doesn't matter how they get it.' (Armah, 53-54)*

It could be observed from the text above that avoiding bribes obviously is considered wrong by the public which is represented by the man's (protagonist's) wife. The teacher provides him with an advice that what he did was wrong in the eyes of the society that is on the verge of decadence due to corrupt system which offers no other ways but to prosper. As a result of his honest behaviour and opposition to misuse of the public money, the family, especially the wife was annoyed, revolted angrily and vehemently and took her husband's behaviour as an immoral act against the interest of his family. The disagreement between the man and his wife was so high and intense that he was obliged to leave the house to visit his guide 'the Teacher' for an advice. The man was trapped in the tensions which two incompatible moral standards has caused, the moral standard of honesty and the moral decadence within which acts of moral self-control has become an act that is worth dismissing. This is a reflection of the author's artistic portrayal of what the role of writers in Africa in general and his own role in particular should be like. What is more, the fighting between the man and the wife is an incident in which two contradictory dimensions of morality are trapped in tensions. The high pitch of the woman shows the acute power of the immorality and its self-imposition of moral remnants.

Thus, Armah seeks a future for independent Africa in which its elite public servants and politicians respect public and its property by avoiding abuse of powers and misuse of the public fund. This future sought by Armah can be observed as depicted in the following extract from the novel in a form of stream of consciousness in the major characters' mind:

*The naked man stood up on the bed and tried to reach over to the door and take down a pair of trousers hanging on a nail behind it, but at his touch the door swung left and away from him and he had to jump down and go around to get the trousers. He slipped them on over his naked body and took down a T-shirt from another nail. As he put it on the man on the desk watched him closely, wondering how a man like him could see so clearly through the rot and yet find the strength to live in it, against it. The man remembered*

times when Teacher had talked with eagerness about hopeful things, but then always there was the ending, when he would deliberately ask whether the rot and weakness were not after all the eternal curse of Africa itself, against which people could do nothing that would last. (Armah, 91).

In the above extract, the writer establishes that Africa's problem is not something that could not be overcome as shown with the analogy of the door swinging away from the man trying to reach his pair of trousers behind the door. The writer also attempted to demonstrate the fact that everyone should critically evaluate the state in which Africa is, that is, in 'the rot' as could be observed from the extract above and try hard to create a bright Africa's future as demonstrated in the man's observation from the teacher's speech: "Teacher had talked with eagerness about hopeful things" and that eternal curse is not and should not be Africa's future.

#### **Hidden transcript of Resistance to Europeanism dilemma**

In *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* Armah has created a character that has no political power but has individual power of resistance against the existing socio-political dynamics of the post-colonial era in Africa in general and Ghana in particular through the careful and deliberate use of non-euphemistic language. Derek Wright (1990) in his review of Armah's novel writes that in most of Armah's novels including the one under discussion, Armah clearly focuses on the sterility, corruption, and economic stagnation of an sluggish ruling bourgeoisie whose chief job is to defend the investments of the entrepreneurial European prototype which it portrays (p.29). This investment of the Europeans includes their culture and language among other things. For example, in many parts of the novel it was revealed that many characters except "the man" and "the teacher", tries hard to speak like Europeans revealing to the reader that they are in what can be referred to as a 'Europeanism Dilemma' at the same time defending, what Wright (ibid) explains, investments of entrepreneurial of European prototype.

In the extract below we see that African elites trying hard to imitate the Europeans English dialects, their constitution, and even push African people to trust in the Europeans.

*There is something so terrible in watching a black man trying at all points to be the dark ghost of a European[...]. They came late and spoke to their servants in the legal English they had spent their lives*

*struggling to imitate, talking of constitutions and offering us unseen ghosts of words and paper held holy by Europeans and they asked us to be faithful and to trust in them.[...]. How could they understand that even those who have not been anywhere know that the black man who has spent his life fleeing from himself into whiteness has no power if the white master gives him none? How were these leaders to know that while they were climbing up to shit in their people's faces, their people had seen their arseholes and drawn away in disgusted laughter. We knew then, and we know now, that the only real power a black man can have will come from black people. (Armah, 82-83).*

One can easily witness how the character reacts to African elites' imitation of European ways for which they feel that they are supposed to use "Legal English", which according to them, is sign of civilization. The man, who is the protagonist in this novel, used languages about excrement and related concepts and figuratively resisted their unnecessary copying of European languages.

The following extract also shows how people behave in post-colonial Africa in their attempt to resemble their colonizers by imitating their language and way of speaking:

*...in which the efforts of a Ghanaian struggling to talk like some Englishman....*

*'Erm, wort cin I dew for yew?'*

*'Slip'....*

*'Eouvatime sleps, yew mean'....*

*Yes, overtime slips' (Armah, 24-25)*

To present more evidences about Europeanism dilemma portrayed in the novel under discussion, let us see the following extract in which an old woman who sells bread on the street utters:

*'My own lord, my master, oh, my white man, come. Come and take my bread. It is all yours, my white man, all yours.'*

*The car door opens and the suited man emerges and strides toward the praise-singing seller. (Armah, 37)*

Here the suited man is Koomson, the minister, big official in the government and member of the parliament, ironically black but liked the resemblance he was afforded with the white man by the praise-singing seller. His appreciation to be compared to the white man is further confirmed by the fact that he was compelled to buy extra bread though he had bought enough loaves of bread earlier no matter how strong resistance faced him from his wife who was waiting in the car.



Resistance to Europeanism dilemma is further witnessed when the protagonist shows that politicians, government officials and ordinary citizens desiring to be like white people and use their products which they do not afford. The protagonist protests that our women and men are in many respects trying to be like Europeans, longing for European liquors, cars and using driver's in European uniforms as in the text that follows:

*There is no difference then. No difference at all between the white men and their apes, the lawyers and the merchants and now the apes of the apes, our party men. And after their reign is over, there will be no difference ever. All new men will be like the old. Is that then the whole truth? Bungalows, white with a wounding whiteness. Cars, long and heavy, with drivers in white men's uniforms waiting ages in the sun. Women, so horribly young, fucked and changed like pants, asking only for blouses and perfume from diplomatic bags and wigs of human hair scraped from which decayed white woman's corpse? Whisky smuggled in especially for the men who make the laws. Cigarettes to make those who have never travelled cry with shame. How can Koomson return to us? What has he got to say to those he used to work with? Will he come down to see the bodies he left behind and not say a word? [...]. He has come here often, but only like a white man or a lawyer. Swinging time at the Atlantic-Caprice. Young juicy vaginas waiting for him in some hired places paid for by the government. Important people must relax on weekends. (Armah, 89-90)*

It can also be observed that our women apes European ways and willing to sleep with anyone who is able to offer these products which are expensive but not for the politicians and other officials who affords them. It suffices to understand the strength of resistance to Europeanism dilemma through the deliberate use of languages that are non-euphemistic like comparing the lawyers, merchants, and party men to apes, sex related matters, which is highly sanctioned, used openly in the extract above. It so vehemently opposes to the power abusers by an explicit reference to Vagina as "Young juicy" and also it is an overt disprovable to the elites abusing their power and the public fund in places that represents Europeans such as "Atlantic-Caprice" as referred to in the novel. These explicit references to such private parts clearly offend the readers and strongly oppose the actors involved in the actions of abuse. The cars, the drivers' in white uniforms, and the bungalows, are all representatives of the colonial administrations but ironically the

independent African leaders' are referred to as aping these ways and materials by Europeans.

Hence, to create a platform for resistance against this sterility, corruption and moral decadence, Armah has deliberately created non-euphemistic languages related to excrement, shit, sex related, and animal abuse and fed it mainly to the hero of this novel who is simply referred to as "the man" who employed these kinds of language throughout the novel in the first person narrative techniques. The artistic manipulation of language in this novel has achieved refusal to accept what Wright (ibid) referred to as "a society caught in a trance of whiteness, where everyone from the government minister to the lowliest clerk apes European manners and aspires to Western patterns of middle-class consumerism, privilege, and snobbery" (P.29).

## 7. Conclusions

Post-colonial Africa is characterized by rampant corruption, moral decadence, greed, Europeanism dilemma, especially of the elites and the public servants. It is also characterized by failed promise of independence by the same people who struggled for the freedom of their people. There were many forms of oppositions from the people of Africa towards their leaders and the elites during this period. Some of the oppositions were publicly declared and others were not. Therefore, the purpose of analyzing the novel under discussion was to examine undeclared form of resistance waged against African Post-colonial elites who took on power and the public service. Thus, it has been attempted to analyze the language style used by the author of *The Beautiful Ones Are not Born*. The language is highly non-euphemistic and wisely designed to be rude and repulsive. As a result, a form of resistance which is not publicly declared rather informal has been achieved. This form of resistance is described by Scott (1990) as hidden transcript of resistance, and it is directed towards post-colonial African elites and public servants, as shown in the analysis. In the analysis it is witnessed that the use of non-euphemistic languages related to excrement and shit explicitly that contradicted with the established norms of the people including the established systemic expectations of language use in general and the readers expectations in particular is able to create an outrageous feeling of annoyance in the readers. It is argued that this feeling is important output of hidden transcript of resistance due to the language use which contributes to the readers' understanding of some of the misdeeds, including corruption, greed, and Europeanism dilemma, of post-colonial African elites

and public servants.

This article, hence, examined Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* as a text used for resistance of the major character and few other characters using the language form readily available to them against the established system in post-colonial Africa in general and Ghana in particular. It did so by showing how the major character is able to refuse and resist the corrupt system in which every part of the society ranging from house wives, business people, and civil servants to the higher officials including ministers and members of the parliament conform to and consider taking bribes as usual practice.

Therefore, this novel should be read as a wish for seeking a new and true nationalists for post-colonial Africa who would prove to Africans that there are nationalists left in the land and will come to their rescue. Ogede(2004) also confirms that "Armah's fight can be defined as a radical quest for a new direction that can change the fortunes of Africa and the black

people". This quest as is metaphorically and symbolically portrayed in the following extract in the novel *The Beautiful Ones Are not Born*:

"Under a dying lamp a child is disturbed by a long cough coming from somewhere deep in the center of the infant body. At the end of it his mother calmly puts her mouth to the wet congested nostrils and sucks them free. The mess she let fall gently by the roadside and with her barefoot she rubs it softly into the earth... (Armah, 35)".

The role the mother played for her child, as seen in the above extract, is the metaphor of showing what African elites, who took on power after independence, should do for Africa – 'Sucking Africa free from every form of problems discussed throughout this paper'. Finally, it is should be understood as a revelation of the weakness of African independence which was still captured in the dilemma of whiteness and Europeanism on top of the existing ugly face of corrupt leadership and corrupt independence.

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