

**CORRUPTION AND DEMOCRACY AS INEXTRICABLE BED-FELLOWS: A CRITICAL
READING OF *MONEY GALORE* AND *A MAN OF THE PEOPLE***

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Abstract

Corruption is particularly associated with multiparty democratic governance practices in Africa. Although the phenomenon of corruption can be traced to every human society, irrespective of race or colour, it appears more pronounced in Africa than elsewhere. Africa's underdevelopment is largely attributable to the impact of corruption in the public sphere. The President of the Republic of Ghana in a recent speech described corruption as "Mass murder". It is significant to note that all the military interventions which truncated democratic governance from the 24th February, 1966 Coup d'Etat which overthrew Ghana's first Republican Constitution under the leadership of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah to the 31st December one that ended the reign of Dr. Hilla Liman, were justified attempts to fight the cancer of corruption. The competitive nature of multiparty democracy and the so-called 'winner-take-all' syndrome, coupled with the fervent desire of individuals or groups of people to capture and control the public sphere and resources of their countries, provide the driving motivation for corruption. This paper examines the various parameters of corruption and democratic politics in Amu Djoletto's *Money Galore* and Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People* so as to lay bare the intricacies of the existing relationship between the two phenomena, and how difficult it is to eradicate the former without annihilating the latter. It points out the fact that corruption is an integral component of democratic governance practices. Any successful fight against it can only be predicated on a drastic socio-cultural transformation driven by a concerted education towards this end. The study is posited in the theoretical framework of Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) of Van Dijk (2000).

Keywords: corruption; democracy; money; paternalistic dependency; personality cult.

Introduction

Corruption considered to be the bane of democratic governance practices is paradoxically an intrinsic component of it. This paradox is clearly brought to light in both Amu Djoletto's *Money Galore* and Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People*. Considering the furore over this phenomenon in public discourse across the globe and in developing countries in Africa, Ghana and Nigeria in particular, this paper examines its socio-cultural underpinnings, forms and manifestations, and impact as and an inherent component of democratic governance practices.

This paper seeks to argue that Djoletto and Achebe depict corruption and democracy as bed-fellows in *Money Galore* and *A Mann of the people* respectively. This is because corruption is ingrained in the socio-culture fabric of the characters who only put in place democratic institutions as a way of institutionalizing the very practice. Besides, it attempts to provoke intellectual discourse on the phenomena of corruption and democratic governance so as to generate critical debates and reflections on the way forward to the attainment of sustainable measures to addressing the socio-cultural, economic and political development challenges of African countries resulting from the inseparable link between corruption and democratic governance practices as exposed in *Money Galore* and *A Man of the People*.

The paper critically examines how the two novelists, combining metaphor, irony and sarcasm, bring to the fore the socio-cultural underpinnings of the paradoxical nature of the inextricable link between corruption and democratic governance, a great source of socio-economic and political perversion. It then identifies the forms and manifestation of the phenomenon of corruption and democracy as bed-fellows and its nefarious developmental impact, as depicted in the two narrative texts. In the face of the challenges the phenomenon poses to sustainable human development, the paper calls for the sensitization of all and sundry on the need for a concerted education geared towards behavioural and socio-cultural changes grounded on sound human values at the expense of pecuniary and material gains, power and self-aggrandizement.

Corruption is a phenomenon which is certainly the cancer of developing countries, to such an extent that one can wonder if the so-called developing countries are rather not "under-developing". Corruption can take several forms based on the society one is examining. In Western countries which have reached a certain standard of living, stringent measures and rules are put in place in order to avoid any act which can be classified as corruption and such acts vary from a gift received by a manager from a subordinate, a present given to a lecturer by a student, etc. Such measures put in place can be understood and are to be praised, since

they remind every citizen that accountability is the corner stone of every practice. One can therefore begin by saying that corruption is culture-related, and also related to the level of democratic and socio-political development that a country has attained because what is seen as corruption in the average Western country is seen as a normal act of generosity in Africa in most cases. Thus, a civil servant who returns from a trip sees it as normal or even compulsory to offer his/her superior a present bought in the country /city where he/she is coming from. A lecturer can receive a present from a student and no one can talk about corruption in such a case because such an act can be justified by the fact that the student found the lecturer's class to be more beneficial (knowledge-wise and education-wise) than many other classes.

We can therefore say that in African societies in general, the communalistic culture makes it easy for gifts to be exchanged. The problem that this paper addresses is that this interest that we grant to our neighbor's wellbeing in Africa has metamorphosed into a poison or solid barricade that is preventing the advancement of African societies in a progressive socio-political, economic and cultural way. Except some few Eastern European countries, the most corrupt countries have always been in Africa. The most recent and striking case in Ghana is that the Ghana Police and the Office of the President in Ghana have been classified at the national level as the two perceived most corrupt institutions. Not a finger was raised or no measure has been put in place or taken in order to address this problem: the Presidency and Police are two institutions that constitute the "nerve" of governance in Ghana and when these two institutions are classified as the perceived most corrupt, one can see in that a tragedy. How can the average citizen live and prosper in such a condition?

According to transparency International, "Corruption is the abuse of entrusted power for private gain". It hurts everyone who depends on the integrity of people in a position of authority.

Reflecting on the phenomenon of corruption in relation to socio-economic and political development, the World Bank Group also states in an online report on its role in helping to combat corruption as follow:

Corruption is a complex phenomenon. Its roots lie deep in bureaucratic and political institutions, and its effect on development varies with country conditions. But while costs may vary and systemic corruption may coexist with strong economic performance, experience suggests that corruption is bad for development. It leads governments to intervene where they need not, and it undermines their ability to enact and implement policies in areas in which government intervention is clearly needed—whether environmental regulation, health and safety regulation, social safety nets, macroeconomic stabilization, or contract enforcement.

In the light of the above statement, the Bank notes that (t)he term *corruption* covers a broad range of human actions. Thus, “(t)o understand its effect on an economy or a political system, it helps to unbundle the term by identifying specific types of activities or transactions that might fall within it”. In considering its strategy therefore, the Bank sought a usable definition of corruption and then developed a taxonomy of the different forms corruption could take consistent with that definition. It therefore defines it in a straightforward manner as “the abuse of public office for private gain”.

The Bank intimates that Public office is abused for private gain when an official accepts, solicits, or extorts a bribe. It is also abused when private agents actively offer bribes to circumvent public policies and processes for competitive advantage and profit. Public office can also be abused for personal benefit even if no bribery occurs, through patronage and nepotism, the theft of state assets, or the diversion of state revenues. This definition is both simple and sufficiently broad to cover most of the corruption that the Bank encounters, and it is widely used in the literature. Bribery occurs in the private sector, but bribery in the public sector, offered or extracted, should be the Bank's main concern, since the Bank lends primarily to governments and supports government policies, programs, and projects.

According to the Durban Declaration (2002), “The erstwhile Organization of African Unity (OAU) may have been ‘the soul of the continent’ in fighting ‘for the integrity of Africa and the human dignity of all the peoples of the continent’”. But, to Nsongurua J. Udombana (2003), “it certainly was not ‘the soul of the continent’ in fighting corruption seriously. The body demonstrated a high degree of insensitivity and passivity towards corruption, allowing the ailment to develop into a pandemic”. An attempt to cure this indictment has led to the formulation and enactment of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Fighting Corruption. The Union on its part therefore states in this Convention that “Corruption” means the acts and practices including related offences proscribed in this Convention; (Article 1: 4). These acts and practices including related offences are further spelt out as follow:

This Convention is applicable to the following acts of corruption and related offences:

- (a) the solicitation or acceptance, directly or indirectly, by a public official or any other person, of any goods of monetary value, or other benefit, such as a gift, favour, promise or advantage for himself or herself or for another person or entity, in exchange for any act or omission in the performance of his or her public functions;
- (b) the offering or granting, directly or indirectly, to a public official or any other person, of any goods of monetary value, or other benefit, such as a gift, favour,

promise or advantage for himself or herself or for another person or entity, in exchange for any act or omission in the performance of his or her public functions;

- (c) any act or omission in the discharge of his or her duties by a public official or any other person for the purpose of illicitly obtaining benefits for himself or herself or for a third party;
- (d) the diversion by a public official or any other person, for purposes unrelated to those for which they were intended, for his or her own benefit or that of a third party, of any property belonging to the State or its agencies, to an independent agency, or to an individual, that such official has received by virtue of his or her position;
- (e) the offering or giving, promising, solicitation or acceptance, directly or indirectly, of any undue advantage to or by any person who directs or works for, in any capacity, a private sector entity, for himself or herself or for anyone else, for him or her to act, or refrain from acting, in breach of his or her duties;
- (f) the offering, giving, solicitation or acceptance directly or indirectly, or promising of any undue advantage to or by any person who asserts or confirms that he or she is able to exert any improper influence over the decision making of any person performing functions in the public or private sector in consideration thereof, whether the undue advantage is for himself or herself or for anyone else, as well as the request, receipt or the acceptance of the offer or the promise of such an advantage, in consideration of that influence, whether or not the influence is exerted or whether or not the supposed influence leads to the intended result;
- (g) illicit enrichment;
- (h) the use or concealment of proceeds derived from any of the acts referred to in this Article; and
- (i) participation as a principal, co-principal, agent, instigator, accomplice or accessory after the fact, or on any other manner in the commission or attempted commission of, in any collaboration or conspiracy to commit, any of the acts referred to in this article.

Contrary to the contents of the above Article, democratic governance practices in *Money Galore* and *A Man of the People* depict situations and characters marked by vulgar socio-cultural, economic and political corruption, selfishness, arrogance and nauseating greed. This development is what this paper examines in the subsequent paragraphs. This lends credence to the assertion in the topic of this paper that corruption and democratic governance are inextricable bed-fellows. Reasons for this relationship can be traceable to socio-cultural underpinnings, some of which are examined in the subsequent paragraphs.

Socio-cultural underpinnings of corruption and democracy as bed-fellows

A critical examination of the characters depicted in *Money Galore* and *A Man of the People* reveals that corruption is engrained in their socio-cultural fibre which serves as the material base for the conceptualisation and actualization of the democratic system of governance and its practices. This assertion finds expression in the words of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk that "Democracy has its faults, because people have their faults. Like owner, like store". Besides, reflecting on the centrality of culture to development, Claude Ake (1996: 15) also states that "(c)ulture, like the institutional framework, has been largely ignored as if it, too, had no serious implications for the success of development strategies". These statements clearly define the socio-cultural underpinnings of corruption and democracy as bed-fellows.

The socio-cultural underpinnings of corruption and democracy as bed-fellows are found in the characters' expressed-belief that the acquisition of wealth, regardless of the ways and means to achieve this, is a mark of distinction. This, they also believe, is part of providential blessings. To them, what defines a person is not good name or virtue, but financial and material possessions.

In *Money Galore*, for instance, Mr Benjy Baisi, a trustworthy civil servant who cherishes his hard-worn reputation over the years as headmaster of the fictional National secondary School in Cape Coast, is lured into corrupt practices by the School's bread contractor, Mr. Anson Berko who reminds him, Mr. Baisi, of the disgrace awaiting him when he dies without a house of his own at Anomabo, his hometown. Mr Anson reminds Mr. Baisi that he will retire as a pauper if he does not join in fraudulent deals with him to make money out bread contracts. He states:

[...] You're getting on towards fifty. The campaigns are going to start and I hear the new government will fix the retiring age at fifty-five." [...] How are you getting ready for it? You own no house. You've been having it good in a school bungalow. You don't even own a mattress, but you feel smug when you call me only a bread contractor. One day you'll sleep in a swish stone house in Anomabo with a bathroom a mile away." [...] "[...] Benjy, use your head. You're the headmaster of a big secondary school. What do you call it? National School, Cape Coast. You're old and you own no house. When you die there will be nowhere to lay your body in state unless you're put in Anomabo Town Hall, having been carted in a deep freezer from Cape Coast. By the way, have you people got a Town Hal?" (*Money Galore*: 5 – 6).

Infuriated by this talks, Benjy retorts angrily: "Anson, I'm a busy man. Stop talking rubbish. You've no right to alter the bread." (*Money Galore*: 6). To this retort, Anson replies vehemently:

I have. There is no flour in the country. I had to pay a deposit of five thousand cedis to the Grain Company to guarantee a regular supply. They were compiling a list of the big buyers. Then I had to pay two hundred cedis goodwill money to the top men through some anaemic-looking sub-accountant from Leklebidafor. (*Money Galore: 6*)

Benjy retorts further: “That’s bribery and corruption.” Anson agrees and justifies it: “Yes. I bribed to get the boys fed.” Benjy rejects this justification as he considers bribery and corruption as immoral. He therefore admonishes him: “You shouldn’t have done that!” To this, Benjy replies:

Why? It’s not in the Ten Commandments. Have you ever seen “Thou shalt not indulge in bribery and corruption” in the Bible? I wanted flour to feed your boys. The hyenas were in my way so I threw the carcass at them. My business isn’t charity, though. I’ve got to pass it on. Five thousand two hundred cedis isn’t small money. You can’t save that in five years. Benjy, be reasonable. I can’t lock up my capital. (*Money Galore: 6*)

In spite of all the attempts made by Anson to lure Benjy in corruption his remains adamant. In response to Anson’s question: “What’s your aim in life?”, Benjy replies: “Service, Anson, service. Selfless service” (*Money Galore: 8*)

From all the above interactions between Mr Baisi and Mr Berko, it is obvious that corruption is fuelled by socio-cultural inclinations. However, Mr Baisi proves to all that there are still strong-willed persons who will at all time resist the lures of ill-gotten wealth and stick to strong humanistic values summarized in the adage that “Good name is better than riches”. The incorruptibility of Mr Baisi is also shown when he defies the threats of Mr Abraham Kafu, the senior History master of his a school who wants him to burn the rules to get him promoted prematurely. Responding to his undue request, Mr Baisi states: “My interest and loyalty are given to the work. Not to individuals.”(*Money Galore: 10*). Mr Kafu who is described as loving “two things most: politics and himself” is a replica of Achebe’s Chief Nanga in *A Man of the People*. Like Chief Nanga, Mr Kafu show how democracy and corruption are intrinsic bed-fellows. On the premise that “(t)here is no money in teaching, and if you want a promotion just to earn a little more, you have to appeal and appeal to some devil either here or in the Department” Kafu resolves to quit teaching: “It makes me angry. The job carries no respect. I must get out of this rat hole, Osofo.” (*Money Galore: 16*). He declares his intention to go into politics so as to make ends meet: “The country needs intellectuals in parliament. Men like myself who know their books, to reconstruct the country.” He proudly reiterates to his interlocutor, Osofo, his academic credential and the centrality of money to make him succeed in politics in the following words: “Osofo, [...] You

know nothing about politics! We are the intellectuals and we're going to reconstruct the country. Money is what I need to fight the elections, and Baisi is in my way. I'm going to fight him!" (*Money galore*: 16). The brutish and corrupt nature of democratic politics is clearly underlined in the above resolve of Kafu. The success of his ambition is mainly rooted in the fact that electorate is largely ignorant of who he is and what his real intentions to enter politics are. Furthermore, there is a rising cynicism among the disillusioned electorate.

Ignorance and cynicism are key factors in this study of the inextricable nature of democracy and corruption. In *A Man of the People*, the reader sees the Nigerian society in the early days of independence, when the white rulers have left and the reins of affairs are in the hands of Africans. The book is a crafty satire of all the elements which contribute to the inextricable nature of democracy and corruption in Africa, it is a perfect "case-study" of that miserable and deplorable situation. African traditional values are reduced to tribalism, ignorance and cynicism (p. 2) replaces political and ideological education, competent technocrats are wrongfully branded as the enemies of the progress of the country. Local populations are kept in the deepest ignorance so that they can be manipulated by semi-literate people who found themselves at the realm of political affairs. Achebe succeeds in concentrating all these vital issues through the 'casting' or 'molding' of the main character in the novel, Chief Nanga. One point that the critical reader cannot fail to notice is that *A Man of the People* is a novel that mirrors the situation of the average African country today. Achebe was certainly ahead of his time, the timelessness of this novel strikes the reader. African democracy therefore started on a wrong note, since the leaders who took over after the colonizers and the first military regimes were not the right crop of people to rule the nations. They were simply people whose main interest was their own profit, and they woefully lacked ideological education and the development of the nations was not their main concern. In *A Man of the People*, one notices the mixture of African cultural values, and the advantage that such a situation provides the politicians with. It therefore become glaring in such a context that democracy and corruption become bedfellows and the reason that Achebe assigns to such a disheartening phenomenon lies in this expression: "as long as men are swayed by their hearts and stomachs and not their heads"(p.73), such things will exist. A simple meeting between a politician and students is turned into a grotesque celebration aimed at honoring the politician. This in itself shows how disorder and confusion were at the center of events in that "democratic country". Chief Nanga is welcomed to a political rally the following way in the novel:

That afternoon he [Chief Nanga] was due to address the staff and students of the Anata Grammar School where I was teaching at the time. But as usual in those highly political times the villagers moved in and virtually took over. The Assembly Hall must have carried well over thrice its capacity[...] Five of six dancing groups were performing at different points in the compound[...] The arrival of the members of the hunters' guild in full regalia caused a stir. Even Grammar-phoné stopped- at least for a while. The people never came out except at the funeral of one of their number, or during some very special or outstanding event. I could not remember when I last saw them [...] Most of the hunters reserved their precious powder to greet the Minister's arrival-the price of gunpowder like everything else having doubled again and again in the four years since this government took control (pp.1 - 2)

This passage shows how incapable the local people are when it comes to analyzing the political and economic situation of their country. They do not link the rising price of basic items to the decisions of their political leaders. Shooting a gun which is ordinarily reserved to activities like hunting or war in Africa or showing honor to dignified and patriotic leaders or citizen, is used to welcome Chief Nanga, a corrupt politician.

Illiteracy is a tool which is used in such a situation for the goals of a few rich 'power-drunk' ones to be achieved. The education field is used as a stepping stone, not a devotion or vocation. Chief Nanga entered the political arena, from the educational field; as a school teacher, she forced his way into the political scene and joined the group of those who were driving the country to its doom. One can see in such an act the degrading role which is given to education. People join it as a 'transit point' in order to reach "higher heights" which are nothing but the accumulation of personal gratification and self-satisfaction. The narrator Odili Samalu who himself is a teacher recalls the days when Chief Nanga was a teacher: "Sixteen years or so ago he [Chief Nanga] had been my teacher in standard three and I something like his favorite pupil. I remember him then as a popular, young and handsome teacher most impressive in his uniform as scoutmaster [...] Nanga must have gone into politics soon afterwards and then won a seat in parliament.(It was easy those days-before we knew its cash price. I used to read about him in the papers some years later (pp.2-3). Several political parties had sprung across the country (Nigeria in this context) and in Africa at that time. Africans were experiencing the first days of independent rule and there is rampant proof from Literature that those early democratic days were simply a game "arrivism", tribalism, greed and deceit. The African masses that were the voters were simply the "ladder" on which dishonest people climbed in order to reach what the narrator refers to in the novel as "their share of the national cake" (p. 13). The evolution of Chief Nanga, from a school teacher to a

famous minister in the mist of political parties that lack solid ideological foundation is captured in these lines:

Mr. Nanga was an unknown back-bencher in the governing P.O.P. A general election was imminent. The P.O.P. was riding high in the country and there was no fear of its not being returned. Its opponent, the Progressive Alliance Party, was weak and disorganized. (p. 3)

It is therefore not surprising to see chief Nanga advising the young teacher Odili, the narrator to leave the teaching field and forget about furthering his studies. He rather advises the young man to enter politics and buy himself a car (p. 35). Being a politician is therefore synonymous with living in wealth, acquired through foul means.

Mad-rash for money and acquisition of properties and sexual pleasure are also used as tools in such a process and it ultimately leads to the use of all means to achieve one's aims. Money and women become the two main "ones" after which corrupt politicians tirelessly yearn; greed and corruption of leaders in a democratic Nigeria is associated to blatant corrupt morality in the novel understudy: the regrettable nature of the connection between democracy and corruption does not spare women. They are literally turned into gullible 'sex toys' by the leaders and the tragedy of the whole thing is that the majority of women approve of this treatment. Chief Nanga sees nothing wrong with 'sleeping' with young Odili's girlfriend Elsie when the latter comes over to spend the night with her boyfriend. When Odili expressed his disgust and the betrayal, Chief Nanga did not see anything wrong with what he had done, since Elsie was not married to Odili. This is his reaction to the young man's discontent:

Don't be childish, Odili,' he said paternally. After all she is not your wife. What is all this nonsense? She told me there is nothing between you and she and you told me the same thing...But anyway I am sorry if you are offended; the mistake is mine. I tender unreserved apology. If you like I can bring you six girls this evening. You go do the thing sotay you go beg say you no want again. Ha, ha, ha, ha! (p. 81).

The use of pidgin is significant here: It translates the subaltern nature and rottenness which Chief Nanga and his allies attribute to women. The same sexist consideration can be extended to Edna, the young girl who is to be Chief Nanga's second wife because he paid the girl's school fees and supports her parents financially. The first wife in this case is in favor of her husband's decision because she thinks that a younger and more educated woman befits her husband's new status as a minister. When Odili tries to talk Edna out of the idea of marrying Chief Nanga, her reaction and words are the following: "She got up from her seat and went back to the window. "He paid for me to go to College, she said". (p. 110)

Blackmailing is also a strategy used by political leaders in the manipulation process. They turn innocent people into victims in the eyes of the public. In *Money Galore*, Mr Baisi is a victim of Mr Kafu's blackmail for having refused to unduly aid the latter's promotion. Explaining to Kafu why he (Mr Baisi) has not written the petition required for the promotion, Mr Baisi starts:

Apart from the seven years required for the post, you haven't demonstrated you can be an efficient assistant headmaster. In my view, your problem is not inability but willful neglect and blackmail. Kafu, why can't you take interest in your work and in the school? (p. 18).

Indeed, Kafu is insolent, arrogant, irresponsible and morally bankrupt. He neglects his duties as assigned to him by the headmaster as a result of drunkenness. The inadequacy of his salary should be due largely to laziness and reproachable attitude to work. Here is preparing to join politics with his immoral and questionable character.

In *A Man of the People*, Odili Samalu is beaten by one of Chief Nanga's party members and 'thugs' for belonging to a party, the Common People's Convention, that opposes his [Chief Nanga's] and also for having the guts to show up at a rally organized by Nanga and his supporters. The narrator puts it in these terms:

I stretched my hand to take his. But instead of a hand-shake, he smartly described an arc at my head and knocked off my red cap. The small crowd thought it was very funny and laughed boisterously. I decided to remain cool and dignified, I bent down to take pick up my cap and to my greatest shock and mortification the rascal kicked me behind (p. 114).

The violence and tension reached its peak when Odili is mercilessly, publicly and physically knocked out by Chief Nanga himself:

He pulled the microphone away smartly, set it down, walked up to me and slapped my face. Immediately hands seized my arms, but I am happy that he got one fairly good kick from me. He slapped me again and again [...] blows were raining as fast as rain on my head and body until something heavier than the rest seemed to split my skull. (pp. 157 - 58)

The Press or the media play a vital, interesting and distorted role in this study. The press which is an important organ used to ensure the freedom of speech and the ventilation of information is under the control of politicians. Journalism becomes "griotism", the art of singing the praises of the master. The Press writes only what is pleasant to the ear and "popularity" of the African "democratic leaders", thus, contributing to misinform the populations and consolidate the power of the corrupt leaders who are portrayed and hailed as saviors. In spite of Kafu's questionable character at National Secondary School in *Money*

Galore, The Liberation Party press, *The Liberator*, described him as “a young, energetic intellectual, hardworking, frugal, and a champion of the masses who wants to rid Accra Central of poverty, unemployment, congestion and the hoarding of smuggled goods.” (p. 20). It further states that “Mr Kafu is the man to shake up the bloated, privileged and reactionary civil service and cleanse the public services once and for all of bribery and corruption.” (p. 20)

Achebe’s Chief Nanga’s empty and poor speech in *A Man of the People* is associated with this caption: “An unprecedented crowd in the annals of Anata” (p. 11). Moreover, the Minister of Finance’s austerity measures is twisted and turned against him to portray him as a public enemy to be hunted down. The manipulative role of the media exposes the hypocrisy inherent to democratic politics which appears to rhyme with “polytricks”.

Hypocrisy is central to this study and takes several forms. It is a kind of moral corruption which results from selfishness and self-centeredness. One can simplify that ramification and diverse dimension of hypocrisy by a single statement: politicians do not apply what they preach. For instance, the political activities of Mr Kafu who is described as ‘a man to [...] cleanse the public service once and for all of bribery and corruption’ in *Money Galore* are financed the ill-gotten wealth of Mr Nee Otu Lartey.

As supervisor, he displayed tremendous resourcefulness. He was responsible for the maintenance of government quarters and bungalows and began to divert large quantities of materials into his private depot in Nima, Accra. All he had to do was to over-requisition stores, or, instead of replacement, he would order repairs and again divert the stores. Those under him soon learnt the art and he pretended he did not know. He was in the supervisory post for five years, during which time he put up a three-story house block of flats to let and a comfortable six-room, one-story house to live in himself. With a capital of two thousand cedis, and after the necessary contacts with engineers, architects, quantity surveyors and permanent secretaries, he set up shop as a full-fledged contractor. He was so enterprising that he managed to become a Category B contractor in no time, his contracts spreading across the country. (pp. 21 – 22).

This is the man Kafu relies on to launch his political career in as parliamentary candidate for the Liberation Party in Central Accra, with the promise to up-root bribery and corruption. As the adage goes, ‘Show me your friend and I will show you your character’.

The scandal that occurred at Honorable Simon Koko’s house – he is the Minister for Overseas Training- in *A Man of the People* is pathetic and ridiculous. The campaign for the consumption of national products is named OHMS (Our Home Made Stuff) and when Honorable Koko’s cook serves him OHMS coffee because they ran out of Western made Nescafé, the minister thinks that he has been poisoned and panics, creating a scene:

Chief Koko explained that nothing warms the belly like hot coffee and proceeded to take a loud and long sip followed by a satisfied Ahh! Then he practically dropped the cup and saucer on the drink-table by his chair and jumped up as though a scorpion had stung him. “They have killed me,” he wailed, wringing his hands, breathing hard and loud and rolling his eyes (p. 39).

The cook’s actions and explanations show the hypocrisy of the authorities behind the OHMS policy:

Why I go kill my master?’ he asked of a new considerably sobered audience. ‘Abi my head no correct? And even if to say I de craze why I no go jump for inside lagoon instead to kill my master?’ His words carried conviction. He proceeded to explain the mystery of the coffee. The Minister’s usual Nescafe had run out at breakfast and he had not had time to get a new tin. So he had brewed some of his own locally processed coffee which he maintained he had bought from OHMS. (p. 39)

The hypocrisy also appears when corrupt political leaders tarnish the reputation of the educated citizens, while they themselves secretly go to be attributed degrees in Western Universities in areas that they do not know anything about; while educated ministers are being embarrassed, rejected and as branded as public enemies, the political leaders are interested in being crowned with degrees from overseas universities. After the Minister of Finance and his close allies and colleagues were gotten rid of, Chief Nanga proudly announced during a rally that he was going to be awarded a doctorate degree. The sad reality is that he knew nothing about the field related to that degree; they toy with education and those who take education seriously are forced out of the scene and neutralized forever. The narrator put it in these terms: “They are going to give me doctorate degree; he announced proudly. ‘Doctor of Laws, LL.D’” (p. 20). The sad fate of the Minister of Finance who is branded as an enemy of the people and an agent of foreign institutions is captured at length by Achebe. As a qualified civil servant endowed with the required knowledge and skills to perform his duty, he presented to the government a plan that could help salvage the country from a looming economic crisis. His suggestions were rejected because they would lead to the ruling party losing the coming elections. Everything is done to cling to power and a general witch-hunting is launched against all the honest technocrats who are interested in only one thing: the development of the country, and ensuring better living conditions for the average citizen. This is how the Minister of Finance and his other good colleagues were vilified, dismissed and humiliated by the Prime Minister:

Then came the slumping in the international coffee market. Overnight (or so it seems to us) the government had a dangerous financial crisis on its hands. Coffee was the prop of our economy just as coffee farmers were the bulwark of the

P.O.P. The Minister of Finance at the time was a first-rate economist with a Ph.D. in public finance. He presented to the Cabinet a complete plan for dealing with the situation. The Prime Minister said 'No' to the plan. He was not going to risk losing the election by cutting down the price paid to coffee planters at that critical moment; the National Bank should be instructed to print fifteen million pounds. Two-thirds of the Cabinet supported the Minister. The next morning the Prime Minister sacked them and in the evening the broadcast the nation. He said the dismissed ministers were conspirators and traitors who had turned up with foreign saboteurs to destroy the new nation. (pp. 3 - 4)

The incongruity of the Prime Minister's decision and that of the government in general is that while they do not trust the national experts, they prefer dealing with Europeans. This can partly be explained by the lingering and ever present effect of colonization and also by tribalism. The party in power might think that the Nigerian graduates in the government would be interested in "sabotaging" their plans, while Europeans would have no interest of that sort. Chief Nanga expresses the hatred they have for people like the Minister of Finance, who has been branded with his colleagues as a gang (p. 5) and prefer dealing with Europeans. In his telephone conversation with the Minister of Public Construction whom he is convincing of the need to tar a road that will pave the way to victory during the coming elections, Chief Nanga expresses his lack of trust for the national experts:

Look T.C. we agreed that this road should be tarred. What is this dallying and dallying...? Which expert? So you want to listen to expert now? You know very well that you cannot trust these our boys. That is why I always say that I prefer to deal with Europeans...What? Don't worry about the Press. I will make sure that they don't publish it..." (pp. 47 - 48).

Impact of Corruption and democracy as bed-fellows

The impact of corruption and democracy as bed-fellows is three-dimensional: social, economic and political.

The social dimension is presented in the form of a perversion of human values leading to a disintegration of social relationship in both novels. Friends and colleagues become enemies because they belong to different political parties or persuasions, or hold divergent view. Hence in *Money Galore*, Mr Baisi, for refusing to burn the rule to aid the promotion and inordinate political ambition of Mr Kafu, is maligned and blackmailed by the latter who undermines his authority as headmaster of National Secondary School and openly abuses and threatens his life (pp. 16 – 19). Odili and Chief Nanga, his former primary school teacher, have become sworn-enemies in *A Man of the People*.

Once on the political terrain, both Kafu and Chief Nanga forget about their modest beginning as poor school teachers. They display vulgar opulence, drink expensive and exotic

liquor and choose the houses in plush areas in the capital. Their new taste also goes hand in hand with sexual promiscuity; and public deceit in their numerous unrealistic promises to the unsuspecting masses. The aggregate effect of all these is an abject bastardization of the media embroiled in misinformation, character assassination, demonization, spinning and fact-twisting for selfish political advantage. Disillusioned in the light of this development, the people become cynical and derailed in the quest for sustainable development.

On the economical front, the phenomenon of corruption and democracy as intrinsic bed-fellows leads the dissipation of scarce resources, fraud, unemployment, depletion of state resources, misappropriation of state resources in the pursuit of personal ambition, inflation, and economic hardship. It give rise to unethical economics (geared towards wooing and winning the electorate) to the detriment a sustainable ethical economy base on real economic indicators vis-à-vis factors production. E.g.: Following “the slump in the international coffee, the Minister of Finance, a first-rate economist with a Ph.D. [...] presented a complete plan for dealing with the situation”. Unfortunately, “The Prime Minister said ‘No’ to the plan”. The reason being “(h)e was not going to risk losing the election by cutting down the price paid to coffee planters at that critical moment; the National Bank should be instructed to print fifteen million pounds” (*A Man of the People*: 3). .

The political dimension of the impact corruption and democracy as bed-fellows can be found in the activities of the various characters in the two novels. The political activities in both *Money Galore* and *A Man of the People* are shrouded in corruption. Political party leaders and activists are engrossed in manipulation, blackmail and misinformation. This leads to the bastardization of politics and political leadership; cronyism and nepotism; political blackmail between politicians and the electorate; defamation of the electoral systems; general breakdown of law and order; disillusionment; etc. it is indeed this dimension that gives the two novel their satiric tonality.

Towards surmounting the socio-cultural, economic and political development challenges of corruption and democracy as bed-fellows

Purging democracy of corruption requires a dramatic socio-cultural transformation starting from a mental revolution. This calls for clearly and purposefully desired educational programmes geared towards depoliticizing corruption and objectively dealing with it as a Human Rights issue, for that matter, an implicit genocide. Education, invariably, plays a vital role in solving this problem that faces most African countries. The reality is that what we call democracies in developing countries, especially Africa, are rather pseudo-democracies. It simply does not make sense to ask people who cannot read and write, people who cannot

afford three meals a day and basic healthcare, to go and vote for a leader. Such innocent poor populations cannot do any critical reading of a candidate's manifesto. They therefore vote along tribal lines or religious affiliation, or after they have been baited with insignificant bribes. Educating citizens of democratic countries about what democracy really is and should be; and what their rights and responsibilities are, will invariably lead them to eschew irresponsible behaviours which underlie corruption.

Educating citizens to be alive to their civic responsibilities by obeying the laws of their countries and resisting the demand and payment of illegal money for statutory services rendered, will enhance the fight against the ills of corruption.

Educating citizens on the need to protect the integrity of their sovereignty as guaranteed in the constitutions of their countries by not exchanging their votes for financial or material inducement will curtail the desire for political office seekers to engage in corrupt practices to raise the required financial and material to buy out the electorate.

Conclusion

Combining humour and irony in a livid and poignant language, both Djoletto and Achebe vividly depict the paradoxical relationship existing between socio-economic perversion and politics. This points to the existence of an inextricable link between corruption and democratic governance practices. Considering the fact that political parties and democratic governance institutions as portrayed in the two novels are products of societies, there is no doubt that they reflect the qualities and virtues of these very societies.

In this respect, perverse socio-economic and political institutions are established and run by perverse men and women in societies in which they found. Multiparty democratic governance practices which are by-products of crony capitalism are by their very nature imbedded with all forms of corruption as pointed out in the reflections of the World Bank Group earlier quoted.

Consequently, a successful prevention and combat against corruption must start from a radical socio-cultural transformation. This calls for a concerted effort in designing and running a new human-values based socialization programme across the world. Such a programme will help reshape mentalities and refocus human attention on sustainable behavioural patterns that will in the long run lead to sustainable human development across the globe. This programme should be geared towards upholding and promoting humanistic values at the expense of avid and selfish pursuit of money and power. Anything short of this can only lead to the entrenchment of corruption-ridden democratic governance practices and all their impact on socio-cultural, economic and political development of the human society in

the world, particularly in Africa where poverty and deprivation have made the phenomenon more pronounced. In all this back and forth between democracy-corruption and military coups, the hope comes from one thing solely: Educated ideological and committed leadership, sustained with integrity, selflessness, and placing the relentless pursuit of the satisfaction of the basic needs of the average citizen at the core of the manifesto of politicians. Maxwell Kulamo, Samuel Odili and Eunice set an example which has to be emulated if Africa wants to get out of what seems to be its destiny or its eternal curse.

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