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des Langues et Culture
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Faculté des Lettres, Langues,
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(FLLAC)

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Charles Dossou **Ligan**
Julien Koffi **Gbaguidi**
Gérard **Kédérébéogo**
(**Editeurs**)

ACTES DU PREMIER COLLOQUE SCIENTIFIQUE INTERNATIONAL DU LABODYLICAL EN HOMMAGE AU PROFESSEUR FLAVIEN GBETO

THEME

TERMINOLOGIES EN LANGUES AFRICAINES :
PRATIQUES ACTUELLES ET PERSPECTIVES
POUR LA PROMOTION DES PATRIMOINES,
LA SCIENCE, L'ENSEIGNEMENT ET LES
PRODUCTIONS SPÉCIALISÉES

17, 18 et 19 février 2021,
Campus universitaire d'Abomey-Calavi

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Laboratoire de Dynamique des Langues et Culture à Calavi

BP : 1049 Abomey-Calavi (Bénin)

Tél.: +229 95869956

Courriel : flavien.gbeto@gmail.com

Contacts des Editeurs

Charles Dossou **LIGAN**

+ (229) 97 87 01 44,

charles.ligan@flash.uac.bj

Julien Koffi **GBAGUIDI**

+ (229) 96 66 98 52

julienkoffigbaguidi@gmail.com

Gérard **KEDREBEOGO**

+ (229) 76 68 01 02

kedrebeogo_gerard@yahoo.fr

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Pascal TCHOKOTI

+ (229) 97 72 21 70

Charles Dossou **Ligan**
Julien Koffi **Gbaguidi**
Gérard **Kédrébéogo**

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Le président du Comité d'organisation

Mot des éditeurs

Nous sommes heureux de publier les actes du premier colloque international du Laboratoire de Dynamique des Langues et Cultures à Calavi (LABODYLCAL) qui s'est tenu à l'Université d'Abomey-Calavi sur le thème « *Terminologies en langues africaines : pratiques actuelles, et perspectives pour la promotion des patrimoines, la science, l'enseignement et les productions spécialisées* » du 17 au 19 février 2021.

Le présent document est une synthèse de toutes les activités qui ont eu lieu à l'occasion du colloque. Il regroupe les allocutions des officiels, les témoignages prononcés qui ont été par la suite transcrits, quelques images prises à l'occasion et 44 productions scientifiques répartis comme suit : 36 articles sélectionnés sur les 57 communications présentées au colloque ; 5 communications venant des personnalités scientifiques amies du professeur Gbéto et 3 communications plénières présentés lors du colloque.

Ce rendez-vous scientifique de haut niveau est organisé en hommage au professeur Flavien Gbéto qui égrène ses derniers mois en tant que grand fonctionnaire de l'Etat. Il a suscité un vif intérêt dans les sociétés savantes et dans les universités de dix pays à savoir : Bénin, Burkina Faso, Cameroun, Centrafrique, Congo, Côte-d'Ivoire, Mali, Nigeria, Sénégal, Togo. En témoignent le nombre de participants, la richesse des communications, et la quantité de manuscrits effectivement évalués et acceptés. Et c'est à raison que les participants ont recommandé, entre autres, à l'issue des travaux :

- la biennale du colloque international sur les terminologies ;
- la création d'une revue scientifique internationale spécialisée en terminologie, traduction et interprétariat ;
- la création d'un réseau de chercheurs sur les terminologies en langues africaines
- l'initiation des formations spécialisées à l'endroit des acteurs et professionnels impliqués dans l'apprentissage, la promotion

et la diffusion des langues africaines sur les questions de terminologies

- la formation des commissions de langues nationales à l'activité terminologique ;
- la production de dictionnaires unilingues et bilingues, ainsi que de lexiques spécialisés en langues africaines ;
- la création de manuels de vulgarisation terminologiques à l'usage des spécialistes de tous les domaines ciblés ;
- l'initiation des ateliers de restitution et de vulgarisation de ressources terminologiques au profit des différents corps de métiers.

L'opportunité de ce colloque thématique met au goût du jour une vision qu'il est nécessaire de traduire immédiatement dans les faits pour redonner confiance aux populations africaines disposant de savoirs énormes dans leurs langues maternelles. Occasion bien choisie pour partager la vision et les perspectives du Président du comité d'organisation qui, comme ses pères scientifiques, ambitionne de positionner les langues africaines dans toutes les activités humaines, cette rencontre scientifique a insisté sur la nécessité de doter les langues africaines de larges ressources terminologiques pour favoriser leur utilisation effective et durable aussi bien à l'oral qu'à l'écrit. Comme on peut le constater, les conclusions qui découlent de cette manifestation scientifique internationale portent les marques d'un renouveau scientifique pour la promotion des langues africaines. Et c'est sans surprise que son initiateur, monsieur Ligan Dossou Charles, a été plébiscité pour présider l'Association Internationale de terminologies en langues africaines créée à l'issue du colloque. Avec foi et détermination, il a pris ses responsabilités en activant la plupart des chantiers annoncés. /-

Les éditeurs

FOLKLORIC SEMIOTICS, SPIRITUAL REPRESENTATIONS AND PHRASEOLOGY OF CORRUPTION IN ANGLOPHONE AFRICAN FICTION

Par **Yémalo C. AMOUSSOU**
Université d'Abomey-calavi - FLLAC
cayemal@yahoo.fr

NB: TFA (=Things Fall Apart); NLE (=No Longer at Ease); AOG (=Arrow of God); MOP (=A Man of the People); AHS (Anthills of the Savannah); GOW (A Grain of Wheat); POB (=Petals of Blood); DOC (=Devil on the Cross); Mat. (=Matigari); WOC (= Wizard of the Crow); TIN (=the Interpreters); TBO (=The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born), OBI (=Obi), CHM (Chief the Honorable Minister).

Abstract : This paper studies the semiotics and phraseology of corruption through the folklore genre in Anglophone African fiction. Drawing on context, it has identified about 141 bribe-related instances (proverbs, stories, songs, etc.), analyzed and interpreted them to highlight the symbols and phrasemes used to represent bribery and bribe participants. The findings show that pro-bribery discourse differs from plain anti-bribery one as it functions to present the negative as if it were positive. Indeed, while one group makes use of metaphors of grace, spiritual identities, manducation, body parts, containers, food items, lubricants, etc. to justify their practice, the other resorts to excremental metaphors and unclean animals to denounce the scourge. As proverbs are found to be the dominant mode of expression, they give both enthusiasts and critics a powerful resource to justify their stand, though a few actors have a chichidodo-mindset about bribery.

Key words: semiotics,proverb,symbol,phraseology, bribery, bribe, unclean-animals, scatological.

Résumé : Cet article s'intéresse à la sémiotique et la phraséologie de la corruption à travers le genre folklorique dans la littérature africaine anglophone. S'appuyant sur le contexte, ce travail de recherche a identifié 141 séquences discursives (proverbes, contes, chansons, etc.), les a analysées et interprétées afin de ressortir les symboles et phrasèmes utilisés pour représenter le soudoiment, les soudoyeurs et les soudoyés. L'étude révèle que le discours pro-corruption diffère de l'ordinaire par le fait qu'il présente le négatif comme s'il était positif. En effet, alors que les uns se servent de métaphores de grâces, d'identités spirituelles, de manducation, des parties du corps, de contenants, d'aliments, de lubrifiants, etc., pour justifier leur pratique, les autres font usage de métaphores d'animaux impures et de la scatologie pour dénoncer ce fléau. Puisque le mode proverbial s'est avéré dominant, cela donne à chaque partie une ressource puissante pour justifier sa position, même si certains acteurs ont une attitude de chichidodo face à ce fléau.

Mots clés: sémiotique, proverbe, symbole, soudoiment, pot de vin, phraséologie, animaux-impurs, scatologique.

1. Introduction

As human language is creative, users always find ways to designate new realities, products, processes, inventions and technologies that they might not have dreamt of just a short while before their manifestations (Saussure, 1983; Aitchison, 1986). In addition, the fact that modern linguistics prioritizes the spoken language over the written one means that such realities can be better explored in the one form that is more likely to be originally used by stakeholders, namely in such an '*underground*' activity as corruption, before a fictional narrator could later recount them. That is why it becomes imperative for linguists of literature to pay attention to how such an ugly thing as bribery is encoded in the folkloric genre: proverbs, folktales, riddles and songs.

This paper draws on semiotics to venture into the representations of corruption through orature in order to come up with a repertoire of *symbols* and *phrasemes* commonly used in relation to bribery in fourteen African novels: Achebe (1958, 1960, 1964, 1966, 1987); Thiong'o (1967, 1977, 1981, 1987, 2006), Soyinka (1965), Armah (1968), Munonye (1969) and Aluko (1970). For that purpose, the study

is structured into three major sections, excluding the introduction and the conclusion. In the first one, a theoretical and conceptual framework is provided, with the semiotic-theory and phraseology/lexicology overviewed and a methodology proposed. The second one deals with the symbol-and-lexicology-based identification and analysis of bribery-depicting adages and tales and their participants. The last section recapitulates, discusses and interprets the major findings. As required in my field of specialization, the APA-referencing style is adopted in this paper.

2. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework: Semiotic Functions, Modes and Phraseology.

Though it might be difficult to define the word ‘*corruption*’ for the diversity of cultural and legal considerations that are to be covered (Agyena, 2019: 1-2; Bedzrak, 2016: 2; Boles, 2015: 147), it can easily be noted that one of its manifestations is linguistic. While it is reported that in Tanzania “*permits and licences arrive late or not at all unless certain palms are greased*” (IMF, 1999: 46), in India and Benin Republic similar adages are found that read: “In India, *you are greased from birth to death*” (BBC, 11/28, 2012) and “*If you don’t put a stone on your file, the wind will blow it away*” (Blundo & Olivier de Sardan, 2006: 21). As the items in bold type stand for ‘*bribe*’, it can be claimed that the language of corruption is likely to be metaphorical rather than straightforward.

As a result the phrase ‘*folkloric semiotics*’ is used to refer to the use and study of signs –i.e.: icons, symbols and indices, etc– in folklore (i.e.: proverbs, tales, songs and riddles) to represent bribe, bribery, bribers and bribees. As every sign is assigned three functions –ideational/representational, interpersonal/interactive and textual/compositional (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996: 40-41), it becomes difficult to represent an entity by a sign without expressing one’s attitude to it and without abiding by the basic principles on which such representations are made. These three aspects of sign meaning are summed up in table₁:

(*Table 1*; Summary of the three Metafunctions; adapted from Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996: 40-41).

<i>metafunctions</i>	<i>definitions or aspects of meaning</i>
ideational/representational function	“any semiotic system has to be able to represent, in a referential or pseudo-referential sense, aspects of the experiential world outside its particular system of signs”
interpersonal/interactive function	“any semiotic system has to be able to project the relations between the producer of a sign or complex of signs and the receiver/reproducer of the sign”
textual/compositional function	“any semiotic system has to have the capacity to form texts, complexes of signs which cohere both internally and with the context in and for which they were produced”

A Close look at those definitions helps to note that they all contain the strong modulator ‘has to,’ which means the three requirements for a sign system are all viewed to be compulsory. There can thus be no interpersonally and textually neutral representation as the social and ideological distance between the representer and the represented is likely to affect the representation just as the requirements of the mode are to do.

A sign is also theorized to take three possible forms: the iconic, the indexical and the symbolic modes. In general, a sign is iconic when there is a direct resemblance between the sign/signifier and the signified (e. g.: visually: a person and his portrait/photo/reflection; textually through the use of ‘like/as’ and orally through ‘recorded voice’ and ‘onomatopoeia,’ etc.). As for the indexical mode of a sign, it occurs when there is no causal or expectancy or metonymic or hyponymic relationship between the signifier and the signified (e. g.: ‘convalescence–rest’; ‘smoke–fire’, ‘egg–omelet’, ‘frowned face–anger’, ‘virus–disease’, ‘symptom–illness’, ‘laughter –joy’, etc.). The symbolic mode is generally associated with lexical metaphor as two distinct entities are brought together through some equative relationship (e. g.: ‘Paul is a lion’; ‘Jesus is the Lamb of God,’ etc.).

The word ‘*phraseology*’ is generally used to refer to a distinctive mode of expression that characterizes a particular subject area/field or a person.

It is seen as a branch of linguistics that studies set or fixed expressions – idioms, phrasal verbs, multi-lexical word units—whose meaning cannot be easily predicted by the combined meaning of each word (Cowie, 1998). Glaser (1998: 125) argues that a *phrase*/*phraseological unit* is “a lexicalized, reproducible bi-lexemic or poly-lexemic word-group in common use, which has relative syntactic stability, may be idiomatized, may carry connotations and may have an emphatic or intensifying function in the text.” With the morphological similarity between the ‘*phrase*’ and the ‘*lexeme*’, it is possible to view lexicology to be part of phraseology, or the two as complementary, with one working on the word level and the other on the phrase level (Lipka, 1992; Cowie, 1998; Blundo & Olivier de Sardan, 2006).

3. Analysis of Folkloric Semiotics and Phraseology of Corruption in the Novels

Corruption is presented as a privilege and social etiquette. There are proverbs and symbols that praise and celebrate moral waywardness and corrupt people. In sayings (n^{os} 1-4), the highlighted signifiers ‘positively’ present ‘*a bribe*’ as ‘*a normal honour-prize*’ or ‘*a perk of office*’ to an office-holder and thus must not be criticized while others (n^{os} 6-10) portray bribe-rejecters to be ‘*abnormal, foolish, corrupt and mad*’:

- (1) “I have brought you **this little kola**: as our people say, a man who pays **respect to the great**paves the way for his **own greatness**. I have come to pay you **my respects** and also to ask **a favor**” (TFA: 14)
- (2) “Our people say that if you pay **homage to the man on top** others will pay **homage** to you when it is your turn to be **on top**” (NLE:18).
- (3) “I don’t care if you respect me or not, but our people have a saying that if you **respect** today’s **kings** others will respect you when your turn comes” (MOP: 70)
- (4) “What **a fool!** ... Why is he envious now that **the warrior** is eating **the reward of his courage?**” (MOP: 155-6).
- (5) “I see, it is a case of those who labour at **the altar**; they shall live upon **the altar**” (CHM: 30)
- (6) “This civil servant has said openly that he does not believe in the principle that **those who serve at the altar** should eat **the crumbs that fall from the altar**” (CHM: 141)
- (7) “Our people’s **custom** is that a visitor must be **entertained**; and why should **that custom** not apply to us when we visit people and places?” (Obi: 87)

While the Biblical parable of ‘*the altar*’ and ‘*the altar attendant*’ (1 Corinthians 9:13) is de-contextualized (*n*⁰6) to justify the homage-function of corruption (*n*^{0s} 1-5), it is entailed that anyone who rejects the altar-principle (*n*^{0s} 6) or ‘*the visitor-entertainment culture*’ (*n*⁰ 7) is viewed to be abnormal. Likewise, bribe-takers are often heard to justify it with the African adage ‘*the goat eats where it is tied/tethered*’ (Blundo & Olivier de Sardan, 2006: 14) and most users of this saying see their political appointment as ‘*the key to*’ ‘*wealth and privilege*’ (*n*^{0s} 1-5). Like the corrupt officials (*n*^{0s}6-7), most bribe-eaters argue that “*taking gifts as a leader is a time-honored tradition we have grown up with*” (Bedzrak, 2016: 2) and that “*he who is sent by the king is himself a king*” (Blundo& Olivier de Sardan, 2006:7). This means that they hide behind culture and a spiritual/political principality to normalize and justify their deeds.

As a result of this cultural and spiritual back-up, those who reject or denounce bribery are seen as wicked, foolish or mad, as in these other examples: .

- (8) “People called him *a wicked man*, others said he was *foolish*, just because he refused what they emphatically called *Reward*And people said things: Joe was *wicked*; Ephraim would send thunder to strike him...He merely laughed: he had been waiting for the thunder since then...” (*Obi*: 87-88)
- (9) “We therefore call on the government to remove immediately *this satanic civil servant* before he does more damage to the cause of our great party” (*CHM*: 142)
- (10) “Tell them that this man had used his position to enrich himself and they would ask you...–if *a sensible man* would spit out *a juicy morsel* that *good fortune* placed in his mouth” (*MOP*: 2)
- (11) “It might be thought to be foolish for a man to spit out *a morsel* which *fortune* had placed in *his mouth* but in certain circumstances such a man compelled *respect*” (*AOG*:175)
- (12) “Let us now and for all time extract from our body-politic as a dentist extracts *a stinking tooth* all those *decadent stooges* versed in text-book economics and aping the white man’s mannerisms and way of speaking” (*MOP*: 4)
- (13) “You should be proud that you have a husband like Joseph –somebody who has overcome *those temptations* to which others in his position have yielded” (*Obi*: 6)
- (14) “He was *indeed very glad*: he never yielded to *the temptation* and he had *no remorse* about what he once did to Ephraim” (*Obi*: 88)

It must be noted that Odili's 'denunciation' of Nanga as 'an honorable a thief' (MOP: 155) and his rejection of his bribe-scholarship get him treated as both 'a fool' (n^{0s} 4, 10) and 'a madman' (MOP: 132, 135) while the bribe-eater is adulated as a hero (n⁰ 4); George's rejection of party corruption has him identified as 'a satanic civil servant' that must be transferred or sacked (n⁰ 8); and Joe's rejection of bribe and denunciation of a corrupt officer (n^{0s} 7, 9) gets him similarly stigmatized. Likewise, Ezeulu's refusal of 'a juicy offer' to be the white man's chief (n⁰ 11), Makinde's objection to truncating figures to suit party guidelines (n⁰12) have them psychiatricized as 'insensible, foolish, mad men'. Despite this, Joe is praised for his resistance to the 'temptations' – 'bribery, polygamy and adultery/fornication' – (n^{0s} 13, 14), Ezeulu for his rejection of 'the juicy morsel' (n⁰11) and Makinde's team as 'all university people and highly educated professional men' (MOP: 4). It can thus be claimed that bribe-inclined discourse functions as doublespeak to demonize and stigmatize honest people and to worship the corrupt.

The language of corruption is found to often use such metaphors of food as 'kola/kolanut', 'a cup of tea', 'a glass of whisky', 'fruits', 'sweet juice', 'sweetberry', 'honey', 'apples' and 'ugali' etc. to designate 'bribe.' In these sayings, these items not only stand for 'bribe' but also for its catalyzing agent:

- (15) "I beg you to accept **this little kola**: it is not to pay you back for all you did for me: A child cannot pay for its mother's milk" (TFA:117)
- (16) "They said a man *expects you to accept 'kola'* from him for services rendered, and until you do, his mind is never at rest" (NLE: 80).
- (17) "This is **just small kola**: we shall make good friends; don't forget the name" (NLE: 152)
- (18) "He was convinced that the men spoke the truth but it was necessary to frighten them a little, if only to coax **a sizeable 'kola'** out of them" (AOG: 154)
- (19) "If you had met the owner of the house, he *would* have given you more hospitality: *would* you accept **this small 'kola'** on his behalf?" (AOG: 154)
- (20) "When *the Sanitary Inspector* looks under the bed he's looking for **kola**, *not tanwiji*" (Int.: 85).
- (21) "The policeman...*raised his right hand and in a slow gesture pointed to his teeth*....*Usually*, its maker *would add* the words, 'Even **kola nuts** can say 'thanks'' (TBO:182.)

- (22) “Anybody who wanted a council house first *had to* buy me **a cup of tea** worth 2000 shillings” (DOC: 116)
- (23) “Winsala *would* vote for *whichever hand* placed **the glass of whisky** by his side” (Int.: 77)
- (24) “Do your job... use *the very samerazor...*, then come and greet our foreign guests over **a glass of whisky**” (WOC: 197)
- (25) “How can you stay here like **a fool**...while your contemporaries out there *are munching the fruits of freedom?*” (DOC: 111)
- (26) “**The sweet juice** would spill out of the corners of my mouth before I learned **to eat** more discreetly” (DOC: 116)
- (27) “**The beekeeper** who postpones collecting **the honey** finds that **the hive** has collapsed” (DOC: 104)
- (28) “But they say that God above *does not eat ugali*: He brought us this woman and these teachers who know more about these things than we do” (POB: 180)
- (29) “And because God is truly **no ugali eater**, one morning Kareendi lands a job without having to visit any hotel for modern love” (DOC: 19)

While the first two symbols (n^{0s} 15-16) refer to ‘*post-service gift*’ and are viewable as ‘*tips*’, most others (n^{0s} 17-21) are demanded/offered as a condition to render/receive a service. It must be noted that the bolded signs and phrasemes (n^{0s} 22-27) and the likes are used to represent bribe or bribe-collectors in Thiong’o’s fiction. Though the Gikuyu word ‘*ugali*’ means ‘*maize-meal*’, it is used to refer to ‘*bribe*’ or ‘*corruption*’ (n^{0s} 28-29) to indicate that God does not require a bribe before granting anyone favor. While the modulators and strong modalisers ‘*expects to*’ (n^0 16), ‘*was convinced that, was necessary to*’ (n^0 18); ‘*would*’ (n^{0s} 19, 21, 23, 26), ‘*had to*’ (n^0 22), etc. make bribe a socio-cultural expectation and thus the language of bribery function as a social-pressure tool, it is made clear (n^{0s} 20-21) that odd gestures and utterances from a service-provider are indices for the receiver that bribe is being required. Indeed, corrupt practices worsen because it used to take both body and verbal discourse to ask for a ‘*kola nut*’ but the officer (n^0 21) just points to his teeth and leaves it to the waiting driver to guess and either do the expected thing or rot in the sun. As the modalisers ‘*would*’ or ‘*used to*’, an index of the past habitual, and ‘*usually*’ (n^0 21) show, bribery seems to worsen and spread from one regime to another.

In these other examples, the corruption parlance contains consumption and body metaphors like ‘*to eat/to chop*’, ‘*to drink*’, ‘*to lick*’,

'empty hands', 'the belly/gut', 'whole meal', 'whole number,' and body excrements like 'fat-drip/flatulence/carcass/shit' to express its manducatory, detrimental and distasteful functions, as in these examples:

- (30) "Don't you *know anyone big, a big brother, somebody....Mkono mtupu haulambwi*" (POB: 104)
- (31) "'He who has ears should hear: he who has eyes should see: this is New Kenya: No Free Things: *Mkono mtupu haulambwi! – if you want free things, go to Tanzania or China!*" (POB: 255)
- (32) "Sister Kareendi, the case of *a fool* takes a long time to settle...No man licks *an empty hand*...He who wishes to sleep is the one who is anxious to make *a bed*." (DOC: 19)
- (33) "One portion and another portion, seized from this and that hand, become *a whole meal* in *the belly* of him who grabs from the poor" (DOC: 117)
- (34) "A piece here and a piece there collect in *the belly* ... to make *a whole number*" (DOC: 116)
- (35) "This will give us more time to live off *the fat* of the land, and as you know that which is safely in *the belly* never betrays its presence to *inquisitive eyes and ears*" (DOC: 117)
- (36) "*The fat-dripping, gummy, eat-and-let-eat-regime*....inspired the common saying that a man could only be sure of what he had put away *safely* in *his gut* or, in language evermore suited to the times: '*you chop; me self I chop, palaver finish*...." (MOP: 167)
- (37) "The greatest thing, *as the old people told us*, is reminiscence; and only those who survive can have it. Besides, if you survive...it may be your turn *to eat* tomorrow... your son may bring home *your share*" (MOP: 162).
- (38) "The man had wrenched my girl-friend...and led her to bed under my very eyes and I ...could do nothing...because the man was a minister bloated by *the flatulence of ill-gotten wealth*" (MOP:85)
- (39) "*The carcass* of the MD...swelled, spurted *greasy globules* of the skin in extreme stages of *putrefaction* and burst in an unintelligible stream through *the ruptured throat*" (Int.:78)
- (40) "*Shit* is *still shit*, even by another name: the battle lines are *murky*, but they have not changed" (WOC: 756).
- (41) "He who carries *the carcass of an elephant* does not search for *crickets* with his legs: It was like the man in the proverb who was carrying *the carcass of an elephant* on his head and searching with his toes for *a grasshopper*" (MOP:80)
- (42) "In the mouth of our people there is no greater condemnation than that proverb about *the man taking things away until the owner at last notices*. It was not just a simple question of *a man's cup being full: a man's cup might*

- be full* and none be the wiser, but here the owner knew, and the owner, I discovered, is the will of the people” (MOP: 97). ‘
- (43) “People would say that *Mr. So-and-so* was **a gentleman**: he would take **money** but he would do **the stuff**, which was **a big advertisement** and others would follow” (NLE: 153)
- (44) “*If our people understand nothing else they know that* a man who takes **money** from another in return for **a service** must render that service or remain vulnerable to that man’s **just revenge**: neither God nor juju would save him” (MOP: 142)
- (45) “You may be right but *our people have said that* **a man of worth** never gets up to unsay what he said yesterday” (MOP: 152).

The Swahili proverb used to deny both Karega and Abdulla a job ($n^{0s}30-31$) means “*an empty hand cannot be licked*” and turns out to be the same as the one used to demand sex as a condition to give Kareendi a job ($n^0 32$). While bribe-exchange is viewed as an index of the capitalist economy ($n^0 31$) and the theory that the belly is the destination and safety bank for bribe is encoded ($n^{0s}33-36$), it must also be noted that many sayings ($n^{0s} 34-42$) entail that bribery functions to encourage greed, gluttony and accumulation and that despite changes in names and slogans, successive regimes get *more* and more corrupt and must be fought. Indeed, the use of words like ‘*carcass*’, ‘*greasy globules*’, ‘*putrefaction*,’ and ‘*shit*’ to describe corrupt officials indicate hostility to them, just as the denunciation of ‘*the man who takes away until the owner notices*’, ‘*thefull-cup-man*’ who robs ‘*the empty-cup one*’ ($n^0 42$) and the ‘*elephant-carcass-carrying man* searching for grasshoppers with his toes’ ($n^0 41$) means that bribe-eaters should not ‘*overdo*’ for fear of triggering the wrath of the people against them. In addition, as it is stated ($n^0 44$), bribe functions as an unbreakable oath or covenant to spiritually bind the taker to do what it is given for. As a result, a faithful bribe-eater is advertised as ‘*a gentleman*’ for fulfilling his part of the deal ($n^0 43$) while a disloyal one is warned against not ($n^{0s}44-45$). Indeed, as ‘*the belly/gut/stomach*’ is viewed as the safety bank for bribe ($n^{0s} 33-36$), the latter helps to activate the binding-force of the salt covenant, whose breach is rewarded with curse and death: “*A man who eats another’s salt is bound to look after his interests*” (Ezra 4: 14).

As the ‘empty-hand’ symbol (n^{0s} 30-32) indicates, the bribery parlance is also found to resort to metonymic phrasemes and containers like ‘heavy bag’, ‘grease the palms’, ‘visiting cards’; ‘visiting envelopes’; ‘best wishes-card’, ‘the biggest envelope,’ ‘fatter envelopes’, and ‘gifts’, to refer to bribe:

- (46) “We are waiting here, like *a babe* cutting *its first tooth*: anyone who wants to look at *our new tooth* should know that *his bag* should be heavy” (MOP:141)
- (47) “Supplying vegetables to Nairobi was a lucrative job, especially if you *oiled smooth* with money your relationship with the traffic and market police...” (AGW: 52)
- (48) “There was a time when I thought a person *could* do business in a righteous way, without *greasing palms*, and remain incorruptible” (WOC: 211)
- (49) “He...ignored all the hints about *greasing the palm* of the messenger: the aid was compelled to wonder, ‘What kind of person is this who does not seem to know that *the carrier of a message must eat*?’” (WOC: 109)
- (50) “Tajirika would make sure that he extended to the officer what he called *best wishes* wrapped in *Buri* notes and stuffed in an envelope that bore: *best wishes* for a Happy Christmas...” (WOC: 226)
- (51) “Go straight to the question of *envelopes of self-introduction*” (WOC: 529)
- (52) “When the Aburirian business community learned that he had been accorded *the unique honour* to serve...they started visiting him, giving him what they called *their visiting cards*” (WOC: 535)
- (53) “There are some who have been to visit him twice or thrice with *newer and fatter envelopes of continuous self-reintroduction*” (WOC: 531)
- (54) “I swear that I have nothing whatsoever to do with *these visiting envelopes*.” (WOC: .535).
- (55) “One *had* to be careful soliciting *grease for one’s palms* until one was sure of the carrier’s real owner” (WOC: 117)
- (56) “I just didn’t want anybody to think that Odili Samalu was capable of *stooping* to obtain a scholarship in any *underhand way*” (MOP: 26)
- (57) “The company that won the tender ... was Italian; but of course, it *had*... to first give me *a small back-hander*...” (DOC: 116)
- (58) “She has said to the man...: ‘*nopetrol*, no fire...The table is *dry*’” (NLE: 103)
- (59) “When a policeman wants a bribe...he says, ‘*it is very cold today, even if it is as hot as hell*’” (WOC: 406)
- (60) “Tell my in-law that the treatment of his wife’s mother is costing me *water and firewood*” (MOP:104)

While an elderly local councilor (n^{0} 46) plainly uses the metaphors of ‘*the babe*’, ‘*a new tooth*’ and ‘*a heavy bag*’ to demand bribe before his area votes for a party, many big shots are found to use less straightforward

phrasemes (*n*^{0s}47-59) for the same reality. While ‘*money*’(*n*⁰47) is the hyponym for most code-names for bribe, it is entailed (*n*^{0s}48-49) that bribe-free service gets so rare that those reluctant to give it are deemed abnormal. Though the puffed-up phrasemes (*n*^{0s} 50-55) show the bribery jargon is widespread and densely lexicalized and that such modals as ‘*should*’ (*n*⁰ 46), ‘*couldn’t*’ (*n*⁰ 48), ‘*must*’(*n*⁰ 49) and ‘*would make sure that*’ (*n*⁰ 50) still make it a social expectation, the modulator ‘*had to*’ (*n*⁰ 55) expresses the restriction that bribe-request can be a curse if the carriers of the big-shots are harassed. It is noted that such orientational metaphors as ‘*under-the-table*,’ ‘*underhand*’ and ‘*backhander*’ (*n*^{0s}57-58) stand for ‘*bribe/bribery*’ (Blundo& Olivier de Sardan, 2006:13), just as are the bolded phrases (*n*^{0s}58-60).

As the covenant-function of bribe (*n*^{0s} 43-45) suggests, there are proverbs, tales and phrasemes that help to create some close link between corruption and witchcraft. Indeed, competition for ‘*juicy positions*’ makes bribe-eaters call on witchdoctors and idols to outperform and disqualify their rivals and to protect their fortune, as in these quotes :

- (61) “Why have you come to my cave with *empty hands*? Does a man take *an empty basket* to market if he is planning *to barter* his wares?” (DOC: 64)
- (62) “*The mirror* sees and sends back only what is placed in front of it: *you place more, it sees more; you place less, it sees less*” (WOC: 151)
- (63) “*But I must warn you that a god* who demands the sacrifice of *a chick* might raise it to *a goat* if you went to ask a second time” (AOG: 209).
- (64) “I will place *an offering of the biggest envelope possible* before *the oracle* and I am sure it will please *the mirror*” (WOC: 151)
- (65) “It is like *a scale*: there are two ways of changing *the balance* between two opposing forces: you either *add weight* to one side or *you remove weight* from the opposite side” (WOC: 151)
- (66) I want you to add *firmness to my hands, smoothness to my tongue, and power to my eyes*, so that when I meet Chairman Titus he and I will *bond* immediately.....*cause their eyes to run with filth* so that when they try to make him captive to their wishes they will only *disgust and repel* him”(WOC: 149-50)
- (67) “Do you know the story of the great battle between *the Sun* and *Wind* over who could make Man take off his coat? *Wind* made *Man* only cling more to his possession. *Sun* made him *surrender it willingly*. *Wizard of the Crow*, make my enemies *the Wind*. Make me *the Sun*” (WOC: 150)
- (68) “Kaniürü did not like Tajirika’s release from jail....Tajirika’s release from jail was *the fly in his ointment*” (WOC: 447)

As can be noticed, bribe-hunters are ready to bribe and lobby sorcerers with big money to raise their chance to win ‘*juicy contracts*’. While a demon (n⁰61) uses the same ‘*empty-hand*’ symbol (n^{0s} 30-32) to demand a sacrificial bribe from a once respected elder, a witch-doctor (n⁰62) and an idol-priest (n⁰63) also use symbols to demand a bigger sacrifice if the bribers want bigger results. Drawing on the proportionality between sacrifice-size and bribability (n⁰ 62-64), the ‘*empty-hand man*’(n⁰61) has to offer his soul and the businessman (n⁰64) ‘*the biggest envelope*’ to get the wizard to use a ‘*spiritual scale*’ to raise his power and reduce his rivals’ (n⁰ 65) and ‘*magical magnet*’ (n⁰ 66) to repel his rivals from the contract-giver and to magnetize himself to him, as the scent and stink cognates show (n⁰ 66). From the Sun-Wind tenor (n⁰ 67), it can be noted that the big shot wants the most oppressive power to mercilessly rob more than his rivals. While Tajirika and Kaniürü need magic to prevent their ill-gotten wealth from ‘*the wind*’ (WOC: 330), for ‘*he who sows the wind reaps thunderstorm*’ (Hosea 8: 7; Proverbs 22:7), the Sun-symbol shows that the tycoon is beyond the range of their protection. As office-holding and sudden wealth are synonymous, Kaniürü(n⁰ 68) sees Tajirika’s release as an obstacle to his wealth and resorts to some scatological phraseology to describe it. Since the source text (Ecclesiastes 10: 1) establishes that ‘*the dead fly*’ causes ‘*the perfumer’s ointment*’ to produce ‘*a fool odor*’, ‘*the dead fly*’ stands for Tajirika’s resumption of office, ‘*ointment*’ for Kaniürü’s ‘*coveted position/wealth*,’ and ‘*a fool odor*’ for the destruction of his plan. Not only do corrupt dealers partner with witchcraft but they also resort to sacred discourse to assume spiritual identities, not only to demand bribe but also to threaten rivals. As the ‘*king*’ or ‘*top-man*’ symbol(n^{0s}2-3) shows, bribe-hunters (n^{0s}69-78) take on such identities as ‘*a masked spirit*’, ‘*the masquerade*, ‘*god/deity*’ to threaten people not only into giving but also from demanding return when the mission fails:

(69) “When a *masked spirit* visits you, you have to appease his footprints with presents...The white man is *the masked spirit* of today” (AOG: 154)

(70) “As to that, what is brought out before a *masquerade* cannot be taken indoors again: Food goes one way –*downwards*” (AHS: .226)

(71) “But as for *the tribute* placed in front of *the masquerade*, that one is gone with *the masquerade* into *its ant-hole*” (AHS: 226).

- (72) “To home people, *leave* means the return of the village boy who had made good in town, and everyone *expected* to share in his **good fortune**: ‘*after all,*’ they argued, ‘*it was our prayers and libations that did it for him*” (NLE: 144)
- (73) “We approach **a great man** through **his servants**, but when his servants fail we go to the last source of hope” (TFA: 127)
- (74) “**“The gods that rule us**, they’ll only raise wrath against the hearts of **their worshippers**: It is the old saying come true: *Kamwene Kabagio ira*” (GOW: 149)
- (75) “In those days, *the D.O.* was like **the Supreme Deity** and *the Interpreter* **the principal minor god** who carried prayers and sacrifice to *Him*. **Every sensible supplicant** *knew that* **the lesser god** must first be wooed and put in a sweet frame of mind before he could undertake to intercede with **the Owner of the Sky**” (MOP: 32)
- (76) “My boy, it never does to try your elders: when **a cub** yields right of the way to **an antelope**, first look and see if **Father Leopard** himself is not a few trees behind... The job is there, but you **have to** secure it” (Int.: 85).
- (77) “The chairman has said it: a degree does not make a graduate.... just as **a tree** does not make **a forest**” (Int.: 79)
- (78: 7) *Agba n’ara*...it is no matter for rejoicing when **a child** sees **his father naked**, *l’ongoloto*. *Agba n’ara*. **The wise eunuch** keeps from women; **the hungry clerk** dons coat over his narrow belt and who will say **his belly** is *flat*? But when **elegungun** is unmasked in the market, can he then ask **egbe** to snatch him into the safety of **Igbale**? Won’t they tell him **the grove** is meant only for keepers of mystery? *Agba n’ara*. When **Bale** borrows a horse-tail, he sends **a menial**; so when the servant comes back **empty-handed** he can say, did I send you? **The adulterer** who makes **assignments** in a room with one exit, is he not asking to feed **his scrotum** to **the fishes of Ogun**?...(Int.: 91-22).
- (79) On the wall were murals of wild animals. **An elephant, a hyena, a buffalo, a snake, a leopard and a zebra** sat in a circle, all holding a bottle of beer in one hand. **King lion** sat in **the centre** of the circle, collecting money. On **the crown** he wore were the words ‘**King of the Jungle**’. On **his belly** was the word ‘**Tribute**’, and at his feet was a barrel with the words ‘*Drink it, Drink it, After All, It Costs So Little, Drink It!*’” (Mat.: 24-5)

While a messenger (n⁰69) hides behind the identity of a masquerade to demand bribe and an elder (n^{0s}70-71) assumes the same identity to object to the return of a commission he pre-receives for a job others have done before his arrival, villagers demand gifts from ‘*leave-takers*’ because they think it is their libations that help them prosper in town (n⁰72). While it is suggested that messengers should be bribed to facilitate a meeting with their bosses (n⁰73), a clean elder uses the two-

proverb utterance (n⁰⁷⁴) to evoke a popular upheaval against former corrupt rulers and to predict the fate that awaits the current ones. As the Gikuyu-adage (n⁰⁷⁴) means ‘*Charity begins at home*’ (Hay, 2000: 201) and encodes individualism, the two sayings combine to say that, as the same causes produce the same effects, the corrupt leaders of today will be overthrown like their predecessors. From the upward tenor among ‘*the sensible supplicant*’, ‘*the lesser god*’ and ‘*the Supreme God*’ (n⁰⁷⁵), administrative corruption appears to function as an ascending ladder to be lubricated from the lower rung to the higher one. Just as these metaphors respectively stand for ‘*the public-service user*’, ‘*the local interpreter*’ and ‘*the colonial district officer,*’ a similar food chain is depicted through the metaphors of ‘*the cub*’, ‘*the antelope*’ and ‘*Father Leopard*’ (n⁰⁷⁶) or of ‘*the forest*’ and ‘*a tree*’ (n⁰⁷⁷). Indeed, as the job-seeker shows the bribe-hunter that he has already got a call that confirms his recruitment, the latter uses this adage (n⁰⁷⁷) to reveal that he is at the down-end of a network of bigger-hunters and that if he refuses to yield, then he will have to face ‘*the bosses*’. As the modulator ‘*have to*’ (n⁰⁷⁷) shows, bribe-offer is seen as a ‘*job-security-fee*’ and thus a moral duty/obligation. The man’s resort to code-switching (n⁰⁷⁸) to drink bribe by force is notable for his use of seven proverbs with local incantatory phrasemes: “*agba n’ t’ ara*” (= *respect to an elderly body*), *egbe* (=magic for vanishing); *elegungun* (=ancestral masquerade); *Igbale* (=shrine of an exclusive cult); *Bale* (=King); *Ogun* (=god of iron/war/exploration). As the images of the ‘*undressed father*’, ‘*hungry clerk*’, ‘*unmasked masquerade,*’ ‘*empty-handed menial,*’ ‘*unwise eunuch*’ and ‘*unwise adulterer*’ show, the proverbs reveal the degradation of a greedy bribe seeker into pitiable statuses. The mural (n⁰⁷⁹) shows how animals are used to express political power and corruption. As all these animals are biblically written to be unclean or demonic (Leviticus 11:27), the central position of the lion in bribe-collection from the other six animals tells much about the morality of the second Aburirian Ruler. As ‘*tribute*’ means a compulsory payment/gift intended to show gratitude, respect, admiration or dependence to a higher authority, its placement on ‘*the belly*’ reinforces its interpretation as a code-name for bribe. As the proverb (80) “*the-mouth-that-eats-itself: a person is eaten up by his ownmouth*” (DOC: 7, 8, 159) shows, those who depend on the belly

must not rebel against it. Indeed, this saying evokes a folkloric Mouth-headed rebellion of other body parts against Stomach, in which the mouth rots and stinks first. As it is, the other animals are bound to silent obedience by their dependence on King Lion (*n*^{0s} 79-80).

While most *bribees* would consider the fact that the carriers owned by ‘*the biggest-of-all*’ and other big shots cannot be inspected as part of their privilege of office (*n*^{0s} 1-4), this immunity (*n*⁰55) involves contraband and is viewed as corruption. As can be deduced from the Ruler’s carrot-bait strategy to capture and fidelize ‘*the hot critics*’ and to repress the recalcitrant, the symbols of ‘*sweetness*’, ‘*carrot*’ and ‘*stick/whip*’ (*n*^{0s} 81-82) help to identify three goals of political corruption:

(81) “The Ruler proved adept at stifling all other nascent opposition through *the carrot* and *the stick*. He gave *the carrot* to the elite of the various ethnic communities and *the stick* to all signs of defiance. But *sweetness* was reserved for the armed forces” (WOC: 234; DOC: 117).

(82) “A fisherman puts a worm at the end of the line; but if the fish ignores it, how is the fisherman to catch the fish?” (WOC: 235).

(83) “There was no defence contract... from which the Ruler did not expect a cut” (WOC: 712)

(84) “Don’t you have a proverb that says that if you throw peanuts to a monkey you will distract it long enough to be able to snatch its baby?” (WOC: 641)

(85) “They appear to imagine that we are children who can be bribed into silence with sweets” (DOC: 108)

The three goals are ‘*army officers*’, ‘*community leaders*’, and ‘*therecalcitrant*’. Here ‘*sweetness/honey*’ stands for ‘*a more generous favour*’ to the army to secure their loyalty, ‘*carrot*’ for anything enticing offered to opinion leaders to persuade them and ‘*stick/whip/bitters*’ for ‘*punishment/repression*,’ including detention and elimination. As this ‘*carrot-and-stick-policy/theory*’ (*n*⁰81) is derived from an old story according to which the best way to move a donkey is to place a carrot in its front and to jab it with a stick from behind, the carrot becomes the reward for moving and the stick, the punishment for not and hence making it move forcibly. The nation is thus viewed as *a mule/donkey* whose head/top is graced and the back/bottom/buttock is repressed. While this policy is backed up by an ethnic leader –“I personally believe.... detention or prison” (DOC: 117) –and its expert praised by a minister to be “*truly gifted with the carrot and the stick*” (WOC:

559), a proverb of ‘*the fisherman*’, ‘*the hooked/baited worm*’ and ‘*the line*’ (n⁰⁸²) is used to justify the use of ‘*bitters*’ for the hard-liners. The bait-trick is also encoded in the proverb of the ‘*monkey*,’ ‘*itsbaby*’ and ‘*peanut*’ (n⁰⁸³). Here, ‘*the monkey*’ stands for ‘*the nation*’, ‘*the baby*’ for ‘*national wealth/democracy*’ and ‘*peanut*’ for ‘*small enticement*’. Though this theory helps to turn a once ‘*fire-eating unionist*’ into an ‘*ice-cream eating permanent secretary*’ in a labour ministry (MOP: 122), two proletarians (n⁰⁸⁵) uncover the trick and reject the policy. While such phrasemes as ‘*ten percent commission*’ (MOP: 130) are used for bribe, firms use ‘*offers of directorship/partnership*’ (POB: 174), ‘*invitations to seat on corporate boards*’ (DOC: 116) or ‘*a small ceremony*’ (Mat.:107) to reward politicians with ‘*donation of personal shares*’ (Mat.:107), ‘*attendance bakshish*’/‘*seating allowance*’ (DOC: 116) to ease their operations. Such office practices as ‘*absence without leave*,’ ‘*fictitious leaves*’, ‘*frequent latrine/lavatory visits*’ (NLE: 72; TBO: 156) are also viewed as corruption.

State corruption develops into some ‘*ethnic or tribal or relational corruption*’. This refers to the granting of undeserved favor by someone to another on the basis of community or family or vested-interest affiliations. In these proverbs, *ethnicity, fraternity, social relations, money and sex* determine who should be assisted, voted in, recruited or promoted:

- (86) “Our people have a saying that when there is **a big tree**, **small ones** climb on its back to reach **the sun**” (NLE: 88).
- (87) “It never happens that we have in charge of **the orange tree** a man from our own clan and yet be doomed to have **oranges that are not ripe**,’ Gregory quoted the famous proverb” (CHM: 49)
- (88) “Shall we kill **a snake** and carry it in our hand when we have **a bag** for putting long things in?” (NLE: 72)
- (89) “For, *as you know*, a homestead with **a whetstone** at the gate never has **a blunt knife**” (DOC: 87)
- (90) “A common saying in our country after independence was that it didn’t matter **what you knew** but **who you knew**” (MOP: 19).
- (91) “I have been on the waiting list for a telephone for two months: I have **not** given *anyone* **bribe** and I don’t know **any big gun**” (MOP: 83)
- (92) “*Our people say*: if you **fail** to take away **a strong man’s sword** when he is on the ground, will you do it when he gets up?” (MOP: 103)

- (93) “We know what **one dog** said to **another**: ‘*If I fall for you this time and you fall for me next time then I know it is a play not fight*.Now it is our turn...: **a goat** does not eat into **a hen’s stomach** no matter how friendly the two may be...**Ours** is **ours** but **mine** is **mine**” (MOP: 140; NLE: 29)
- (94) “*Our people have a saying, ‘ours is ours, but mine is mine: every town and village struggles at this momentous epoch of our political evolution to possess that of which it can say: ‘this is mine’*” (NLE: 29)
- (95) “If **the very herb** we go to seek in **the forest** now grows at **our very backyard**, are we not saved the journey?” (MOP: 141).
- (96) “We have come because we know you are **our son**: there is no house with **a male child** where the **head of a he-goat** shall not be eaten” (POB:180)
- (97) “A man who has just come in from **the rain** and dried his body and put on dry clothes is more reluctant to go out again than another who has been **indoors** all the time” (MOP: 42)
- (98) “If anybody thinks that I will start a fight because somebody has done the work I should do that person does not know me: *I only fight when somebody else eats what I should eat*” (AHS: 227)

As the metaphors of the ‘*big tree–small trees–the sun*’, of the ‘*orange-tree –unripe fruits*’, of the ‘*snake–bag*’ and of ‘*the whetstone –blunt knife*’ ($n^{0s}86-89$) show, corruption is presented to function as a means of redistribution of the national wealth, which is emphasized in many other proverbs ($n^{0s}90-96$). Indeed, like three earlier sayings ($n^{0s}30-32$), these ones ($n^{0s}90-96$) show that recruitment is so much politicized, ethnicized, sexualized and commercialized that those who cannot drop a big name or offer sex or money are denied one. As is entailed in the utterance “*a degree does not make a graduate*” (Int.: 79), corrupt language so degrades academic achievement that a university degree, once ‘*a philosopher’s stone*’ (NLE: 84,) is now seen as ‘*a worthless dog-shit*’ (WOC: 62) and ceases to be, in favour of ‘*kola*’, the criterion for job-obtention.

While ‘*dog-to-dog*’ saying ($n^0 93$) suggests some ‘*consensual turn-taking*’ in the eating of the national cake, the ‘*dog-and-hen*’ one ($n^0 93$) stresses that each region have a son of its elected to get its share for it. The restriction from ‘*Ours*’ to ‘*mine*’ ($n^{0s} 93-94$) and the use of such kinship terms as ‘*our valuable possession*’ (NLE: 29), ‘*our own son –our share*’ (MOP: 141) and ‘*our prodigal son–our share*’ (POB 181) help not only to prioritize kinship but also to use this son as a ladder to their share

of the national wealth, as is solaced by two other adages (*n*⁰95-96). However, the consensus is questioned in the ‘*rain/outside*’ and ‘*inside/indoors*’ proverb (*n*⁰ 97). As the ‘*wet outside*’ stands for ‘*poverty/misery*’ and the ‘*dryindoors*’ for ‘*opulence/prosperity*’, this consent can be hard to reach when the wisdom (*n*⁰ 98) of the corrupt elder (*n*⁰70-71) is adopted. It must also be noted that the ‘*rain-metaphor*’(*n*⁰ 97) contradicts the ‘*sun-one*’ (*n*⁰ 86), as the former is often used in a more negative sense and the latter in a more positive one.

There are proverbs and tales that, though they identify corruption with unclean animals and religious taboos, criticize small or clumsy bribe takers and celebrate the big or clever ones. In these sayings, most of such symbols as ‘*toad*’, ‘*pork*’, ‘*dog-meat*’, ‘*delicacy/idol food*’, ‘*kite*’, ‘*duck*’ and ‘*aged guinea fowl*’ etymologically refer to unclean or taboo animals (Deut. 14: 11-18; Lev. 11:13) but contextually to bribe:

(99) “I am against people reaping where they have not sown, *but we have a saying that if you want to eat a toad you should look for a fat and juicy one*” (NLE: 5)

(100) “You will never be anything more than a *clumsy collector of bribes*: the Waswahili say that if a *Muslim* must eat *pork*, then he might as well choose *the juiciest*. The same with the English: better be hanged for a *sheep* than for a *lamb*. If you *must* accept bribes, at least have the imagination to ask for more than just a *few symbolic coins*, or else keep *your nose clean, like John Kaniürũ*” (WOC: 352-53)

(101) “There is a saying that he who eats alone dies alone, but there are *some delicacies* that a person should eat alone, even at the risk of dying alone” (WOC: 356).

(102) “Defend them, Couple; are you not one of them when it comes to eating *aged guinea-fowls*?” (MOP: 139)

(103) “As the saying goes, it is only when you are close to a man that you *can begin to feel his breath*” (MOP: 94).

(104) “He told them the proverb of *the house rat* that went swimming with *his friend the lizard* and died from cold, for while *the lizard’s scales* kept him dry *the rat’s hairy body* remained wet”(NLE:5)

(105) “He feels like *the inexperienced kite* that carried away a *duckling* and was ordered by its mother to return it because *the duck* said nothing... just walked away” (NLE: 80).

While the ‘*fat and juicy toad*’ and ‘*the juiciest pork,*’ as opposed to ‘*thin and bony ones,*’ and ‘*sheep*’–‘*lamb*’ symbolshelp to reflect the worth differential between a ‘*real bribe*’ and ‘*a symbolic one*’, there is an impression that though corruption is discouraged at a small scale, it is strongly advised at a grand stand (*n*^{0s}99-100). As ‘*delicacies*’ also stands for ‘*foods sacrificed to idols*’, ‘*aged guinea-fowls*’ disgusting and ‘*ducks/ducklings*’, like the swans, ‘*pigs*’, ‘*toads*’, ‘*mice/rats*’, ‘*lizards*’ and ‘*kites*’ are viewed to be unclean (Leviticus 11:3-13, 29-31; Deuteronomy 14:4-6), it can be deduced that most signs for bribe and bribe-eaters (*n*^{0s}99-105) represent taboos or detestable entities. As a young lawyer keeps connected to a minister to get inside-information on State corruption, Odili uses a proverb (*n*⁰ 103) to point to the indexical link between a person’s breath and his integrity or corruption. While Obi’s failure to take bribe uncaught gets him mocked as ‘*a hairy rat*’ and ‘*an inexperienced kite*’ (*n*^{0s}104-05) and Tajirika’s inability to pick big ones gets his scolded as ‘*a clumsy collector*’ (*n*⁰100), clever takers like ‘*the scaly lizard*’ and *Kaniürũ*, ‘*the smelling one*’(*n*^{0s}100; 104) are praised.

Indeed, there are sayings and tales that present corruption as a competitive field where success is determined by one’s ability to out-con others. The story of ‘*the bull*’, ‘*the tick*’ and ‘*the cattle egret*’ (*n*⁰ 106) helps not only to illustrate the tenor among ‘*Nanga*’ ‘*Odili*’ and ‘*Edna’s father*’ but also how one is adulated for his ill-gotten wealth and the other ridiculed for his poverty:

(106) My in-law is like *a bull* and your challenge is like the challenge of *a tick* to a bull. *The tick* fills its belly with blood from the back of the bull and *the bull* doesn’t even know *it’s* there. *He* carries *it* wherever *he* goes –to eat, drink or pass ordure. Then one day *the cattle egret* perches on the bull’s back and picks out *the tick* (*MOP*:119)

(107)“*The bug* that bites one’s back is carried in *what one wears*” (*DOC*: 197; *WOC*: 521; 190)

(108) “Wangari made the mistake of going to look for *her lost sheep* with *the henchmen* of *the thief* who had stolen it” (*DOC*: 195)

(109)“You know ...the whole police force is in *the hands* of these two – *the Williams and the Boys*– and so are all the law courts” (*Mat.*: 65, 81)

(110) “In any case, in Aburiria *justice* ends up in *the pockets* of *the highest bidder*” (WOC: 430)

(111) “As long as men are swayed by *their hearts and their stomachs* and not by their minds *the Chief Nangas* of this world would continue to get away with anything they said or did” (MOP: 73)

(112) “Kaniürü, so it is true what the Waswahili say, that *a donkey shows gratitude through its kicks*?” (WOC: 535).

(113) “There is nobody quicker to anger than *a thief* who has been *robbed*: this adage was no less true in the case of Silver Sikiokuu,... for though over the years he had extorted bribes in millions and did not see anything wrong with that, he now felt hurt and grieved that the Ruler had ordered him to repay money of which he had not seen a cent” (WOC: 566).

(114) “*A cunning robber may well meet his match in a stealthy thief*” (WOC: 607)

On the one hand the food-chain relationship between these three elements (*n*⁰ 106) means that though Odili is integer, he is defiled by feeding on rotten blood just as the father-in-law is by eating the blood-sucking tick. On the other, the old man entails that Odili is so tiny a threat to Nanga that neither his presence nor removal by a Nanga-fuelled power would go unnoticed. The use of the pronoun ‘*he*’ for ‘*the bull*’ and ‘*it*’ for ‘*the tick*’ thus helps to raise Nanga but to lower Odili, which makes ‘*the bull*’ a honorific symbol and ‘*the tick*’, a humiliating one (Brown & Levinson, 1987:185). A similar link exists not only in the ‘*bug-host*’, ‘*thief-henchmen*’ and ‘*donkey-master*’ proverbs but also in the metaphors of the ‘*hands/pockets*’ and ‘*highest-bidder*’ used to describe the business-folk’s relationship with the police and the justice (*n*^{0s} 107-110). When a ‘*beggar-benefactor*’ or ‘*bug-host*’ or ‘*auctioneer-highest bidder*’ or ‘*master-slave*’ tenor exists between a lawyer or policeman and a client or law-breaker, the latter, not the former, becomes the one who dictates the law. Indeed, these metaphors help to portray the police and the justice as parasitic characters (Kennedy, 1987: 205; Amoussou, 2016: 214), which is solaced by the metaphors of the ‘*hands/pockets*’ and ‘*the highest-bidder*.’ As Odili puts it (*n*⁰ 111), ‘*stomach-worship*’ is to be held responsible for the spread of corruption. The ‘*donkey-master*’ proverb (*n*⁰ 112) evokes the parable of ‘*Balaam’s donkey*’ (Numbers 22: 21-34); so Sikiokuu’s resort to it to complain about Kaniürü’s use of his identity to collect bribe and to rob him of all betrays this context

of ‘a robber-robbed’, as is put in another adage (*n*⁰ 113). Just as the ‘thief-robber’ symbolic duo portrays Kaniūrū to be more cunning and corrupt than Sikiokuu (*n*⁰ 113), the proverb of the ‘cunning robber’ and ‘stealthy thief’ (*n*⁰ 114) means the Ruler prides himself to be crookier than Marcus. Interestingly, all the animals – ‘the bull’, ‘the cattle egret’, ‘the tick’, ‘the bug’, ‘the donkey’ used to represent bribe-eaters (*n*⁰ 106, 107, 112) are biblically viewed to be unclean or demonic (Leviticus 11: 4-8; 13-19; 20-23; 29-31; Psalm 22:21)

There are proverbs that depict characters with the chichidodo or Dimaragana mentality (Lindfors, 1993: 343) about corruption: those who claim to detest bribery but actually consume it, as in these examples:

(115) “‘You are *the chichidodo* itself...., you know, *the chichidodo* is a bird. *The chichidodo* hates *excrement* with all its soul. But *the chichidodo* only feeds on *maggots*, and you know the *maggots* grow best inside the *lavatory*. This is *the chichidodo*” (TBO: 44-5.)

(116) “It is like *Dimaragana*, who would not lend his knife for cutting up *dog-meat* because the dog was *taboo* to him, but offered to use *his teeth*” (TFA: 48)

(117) “I am *the tortoise* who was trapped in *apit of excrement* for two whole markets, but when helpers came to haul him out on the eighth day he cried ‘*Quick! Quick!*I cannot stand *the stench!*” (AOG: 184)

(118) “He denounced Mugo as an impostor and challenged him to a fight: ‘Look at him! Look at the man who thought he would be our Chief: a liar–*a hyena in sheep’s clothing*” (AGW: 193)

(119) “*Don’t you know* that *a good shepherd* knows *a hyena* when he sees one, even if it is in *sheep’s clothing?*” (WOC: 540).

(120) “Should *the shepherd* and *the shepherdess* let *the wolves* and *hyenas* herd *their sheep* for them?” (Mat.: 137-8).

(121) “You do not belong to *this age*, old man: *men of worth* nowadays simply forget what they said yesterday” (MOP: 152)

Indeed, the chichidodo and the Dimaragana legends (*n*^{0s} 115-16) are metaphors for those who publicly claim to be clean but in private prove to be more rotten (Lindfors, 1993: 343). In his article ‘*Ethics and Aesthetics of the Chichidodo*’ (Soyinka, 1985: 9), Soyinka refers to one of his critics as ‘*a human reincarnation of the bird chichidodo*’ and goes ahead to write really nasty things about them (Lindfors, 1993: 344). Though the tortoise (*n*⁰ 117) behaves like ‘*the chichidodo*’, ‘*the pit of excrement*’ and ‘*the stench*’ stand for the ‘*corrupt administration*’ and ‘*its messengers*’. The identification of Mugo, the Ruler and Sikiokuu as

‘*hyenas in sheep’s clothing*’ (Mark 14: 17; John 10: 11, 14) and of the political elite with ‘*wolves*’ and ‘*hyenas*’ (*n*^{0s}118-20) helps to broaden the chichidodo-ethics to them all. It must be noted that Mugo, the Ruler and Sikiokuu (*n*^{0s}118-20) are fictional replicas of Jomo Kenyatta, Daniel Arap Moi and Nicholas Biwott, respectively (Amoussou 2016: 220; 2017: 188; Thiong’o, 1981: 90) and that both ‘*the wolf*’ and ‘*the hyena*’ are nocturnal predators, gluttons, scavengers and unclean animals (Leviticus 11:27). As Odili (*n*⁰ 121) mentally reacts to his corrupt father’s integrity (*n*⁰ 45), such phrasemes as ‘*a man of worth*’ and ‘*a gentleman*’ seem to have acquired rather negative connotations (*n*^{0s}44, 120).

Not only does corruption-hostile discourse resorts to scatological or forbidden animals to represent bribery as an unpleasant practice, but it also uses unclean birds to stand for corrupt characters. Just as the cases of ‘*the lizard*’, ‘*the kite*,’ and ‘*the duck*’ (*n*^{0s}79-80), such birds as ‘*the vulture*,’ ‘*the eagle*,’ ‘*the kite*,’ and ‘*the hawk*’; reptiles like ‘*the crocodile*,’ ‘*the alligator*’ and ‘*the forked-tongue*’ and animals like ‘*the scapegoat*’ are used in these examples to stand for corrupt individuals, politicians and parties:

- (122) “You will have what is good for you and I will have what is good for me: let *the kite* perch and let *the eagle* perch too: if one says no to the other, let its wing break” (*TFA*: 14)
- (1231) “What has my being in *POP* got to do with it? I believe that *the hawk* should perch and *the eagle* perch, whichever says to the other: *don’t*, may its own wing break” (*MOP*: 138).
- (124) “Do you blame *a vulture* for perching over *a carcass*?” (*AOG*: 9).
- (125) “Everyday *some vulture* would descend on us from nowhere with the story of *a prophet or prophetess*... and my father would drag my poor mother there...” (*AHS*: 231).
- (126) “Once upon a time a hunter killed *some big game* at night.... Hewas angry and he wanted to wipe out *the dirty thieves* fighting over *another man’s inheritance*”. *That hunter is yourselves – yes, you and you and you. And the two vultures, POP and PAP*” (*MOP*: 140)
- (127) “Now you tell me how you propose to fight such *a dirty war* without *soiling your hands a little*” (*MOP*: 142)
- (128) “If *Alligator* comes out of the water one morning and tells you that *Crocodile* is sick, can you doubt *his story*?” (*MOP*: 136)

- (129) “Every *lizard* lies on its *belly*, so we cannot tell which one has a *bellyache*” (AOG: 171)
- (130) “Whenever he ate *too muchpounded yam* he felt like *a boa* that had swallowed *a goat*” (p.81)
- (131) “Yet some also noticed that when the Ruler was not talking he would sometimes *flick his tongue* in and out involuntarily...AG further insisted that *his tongue was forked*” (WOC: 696)
- (132) “The second theory was that the illness was caused by a wronged he-goat... *the evil-carrying goat*, standing for *the Ruler*, would then become *an outcast* in the land” (WOC: .4)
- (133) “That is why Ilmorog must now go there and see *this Ndamathia* that only takes but never gives back” (POB: 116)
- (134) “*Our saying is true: the young of the goat* steals like *its mother*: I returned to *my father’s origins*.” (DOC: 101)

While the first case (*n*⁰ 122) refers to the prayer of an elder after receiving ‘*a little kola*’ from a favor-seeker (*n*⁰ 1), where ‘*the kite*’ stands for the kola-receiver and ‘*the eagle*’ for the kola-giver, second (*n*⁰ 123) is used by a corrupt elder, ‘*a minor god*’ (*n*⁰75,) to mean that his membership to one party does not prevent him from eating from a rival one. Here ‘*the hawk*’ stands for *Nanga’s Party* and ‘*the eagle*’ for Odili’s. While a boy who takes to *licking* food-leftovers from his mother’s rival wife’s dish is identified with ‘*a vulture*’ (*n*⁰ 124,) opportunistic church-agents who exploit a dead-alive terminal cancer-sufferer’s despair to defraud him are equated to ‘*vultures*’ (*n*⁰ 125). In the clipped folktale (*n*⁰ 126), the ‘*two vultures*’ or ‘*the two dirty uneatable birds*’ or ‘*the two dirty thieves*,’ stand for two corrupt parties and their leaders while ‘*the hunter*’ for the new party and its leaders and ‘*the big game*’ for the national wealth. When a younger politician takes bribe from an older one to step down but uses it to denounce the latter as ‘*a vulture*’ and celebrates himself as ‘*the hunter*’ and ‘*heir to national wealth*’, he must be held not only to breach the bribery covenant (*n*^{0s} 44-45) but also to embrace the chichidodo mindset (*n*^{0s} 115-16). The inclusion of the new party in the list of vultures –‘*three vultures*’ (MOP: 140)—means that Max is put on equal footing with those he denounces. Interestingly, his vision of politics as ‘*a dirty game*’ that cannot leave a player unsoiled (*n*⁰ 127) shows his awareness of ambiguity. Indeed, Odili’s unbelief that Max takes bribe ‘*to step*’ for a rotten politician is reacted to with an ‘*alligator-crocodile*’ proverb (*n*⁰ 128), with the first item standing for ‘*Nanga*’ and the second for ‘*Max*’: While an elder uses a lizard proverb (*n*⁰ 128) to

express his inability to detect whether a young man from a clan of evil men is also corrupt, Obi is likened to ‘*a goat-ingurgitated boa*’ after eating too much pounded yam with his first bribe (**n^o 129**). In addition, the portrayal of Ruler as having ‘*a flicking forked tongue*’ (**n^o 130**) helps to identify him with a snake, as this creature is endowed with ‘*a forked/split tongue*’ to detect, collect and deliver odor-causing particles to a sensory organ in its mouth. Indeed, the ‘*forked tongue*’ symbol indicates hypocrisy, corruption, deception, doublespeak and the antichrist, etc. (Psalm 52: 2-4; Psalm 58: 3-4; Psalm 62:4; John 8:44; Matthew 21:43). The same corrupt ruler is identified as a scapegoat/Azazel-demon (Leviticus 16: 16: 1-34) (**n^o 132**) and two of his associates are as ‘*Ndamathia/Leviathan*’ (**n^o 133**) and ‘*a stealing goat*’ (**n^o 134**).

In the ‘*kid-goat-stealing-like a mother-goat*’ proverb (**n^o 133**) and these others, corrupt behaviour is viewed to be transmutable, regenerative, hereditary and so contagious that, once an individual contracts it, it can spread to others. For instance, the song of the five fingers (**n^o 135**), the proverbs of the five fingers (**n^o 136**), the onlooker sayings (**n^{os} 137-38**), the leper-adage (**n^o 139**), the wilderness-birth saying and the metaphor of reincarnation are based on the principle of ‘*one-man-sins-and-it spreads to all*’:

(135) “Do you remember the children’s story about *the five fingers* who set out to rob someone?That’s why *the fat finger* remains apart from the other four to this day; one thief standing apart from the others and pointing at them” (WOC: 380; 321; Mat. : 83)

(136: 5) “I say that in the spirit of collective responsibility which makes everyone of us guilty when one of us is guilty: *one finger* gets soiled with *grease* and spreads it to *the other four*” (AHS: 19; TFA:22, 87; NLE: 67-68; AOG: 187)

(137) “There is no difference between *a thief* and *him who observes the act*, *Gikuyu once said*” (DOC: 158)

(138) “He who keeps the company of *the corrupt* becomes *corrupt*. Is there a difference between *a thief* and *a man who looks on*?” (DOC: 185)

(139) “You know the saying that he who keeps *the company of lepers* becomes *a leper*?” (WOC: 146)

(140) “If you do *bestly deeds* in this life, then in your next life you will be born *a greedy hyena* or *an ugly warthog* or simply *a beast*” (WOC: 211)

(141) “You will have to do with what you have: *what gives birth in the wilderness suckles in the wilderness*’ (WOC: 528)

The song (*n*⁰ 135) is used to denounce the hypocrisy of the fat finger/the thumb who incites the other four to rob but still proclaims its innocence by standing apart and denouncing them. As the fat finger stands for Tajirika, the third Ruler of Aburiria, a fictional representation of Mwai Kibaki (Amoussou, 2016: 220), he is painted as ‘*the pot that calls the kettle black*,’ a hypocrite who, though more corrupt, assigns himself the role to denounce those less corrupt than him. Likewise, the adage (*n*⁰ 136) is used by a corrupt university professor-minister to denounce a more honourable colleague in order to befriend the President and save his own skin. As is implied (*n*^{0s} 137-39), a passive witness of bribery is liable to the same penalty as real actor and is thus urged to denounce them. As the symbols of the ‘*greedy hyena*,’ ‘*ugly warthog*’ and ‘*beast*’ and the proverb on wilderness birth and suckling (*n*^{0s} 140-41) show, corruption is presented as a transmutable scourge. Yet, when the proverb (*n*⁰ 141) is used to blame the ministers’ doublespeak and corruption on Ruler as their father, the latter rejects every liability for that on the basis not only that he is not a woman but also that their mothers must be held to account for it. Indeed, just like the cases of Odili (*n*^{0s} 4, 10), Joe (*n*^{0s} 7-8), George (*n*⁰ 9), Ezeulu (*n*⁰ 11), and Makinde (*n*^{0s} 12), it is those who reject corruption that the corrupt consider to be corrupt or wicked or satanic or foolish or mad. For instance, it is Satan, the father of corruption, and Kaniürũ, the crookedest minister of the Ruler, who respectively advise Warĩnga and Nyawĩra to quit the company of Gatuĩria and Kamĩti, the cleanest young men in Thiong’o’s fiction, to join the corrupt (*n*^{0s} 137-38). As a character bitterly observes:

(142)“This world is upside-down, but it must be set right again; for *I have seen in our land today lies are decreed to be the truth and the truth is decreed as a lie; theft and corruption have become the order of the day: that is what people ride themselves on*” (Mat.: 137-38).

(143)“*This world is upside down: the robber calls the robbed robber; the murderer calls the murdered murderer and the wicked calls the righteous evil. The one uprooting evil is accused of planting evil...Those who sow good seeds are accused of sowing weeds*” (Mat.: 150)

The discourse of corruption thus dominantly functions to doublespeak. The next section sums up the major findings and concludes

3. Recapitulation and Conclusion

As the highlighted items in each saying show, this paper has identified and analyzed 143 instances of folklore with as many as about 240 symbols and phrasemes to designate bribe, bribe-enthusiasts and critics. It is noted that though 'money' and such other items as 'food, palm-wine, cocks, goats, sex' and 'silence' are bartered for favors, bribe-enthusiasts use positive symbols and euphemistic phrasemes to designate bribery and its participants: 'this little kola/kolanut', 'respect pay/homage pay/greatness pay'; 'reward', 'good fortune/fortune'; 'juicy morsel', 'customary entertainment'; 'a cup of tea,' 'a glass of whisky'; 'fruit of freedom', 'honey', 'the sweet juice, ugali'; 'lick-able hand/full hand', 'a whole meal'; 'a whole number', 'the fat'; 'share of the national cake', 'full bag'; 'smoothing oil'; 'palm-grease', 'best-wishes envelope', 'self-introduction envelope', 'chick/goat'; 'ointment oil'; 'tribute'; 'carrot'; 'sweetness', 'worm'; 'a cut'; 'peanuts'; 'sweets'; 'ripe orange', 'snake', 'a great man's sword'; 'a herb', 'a he-goat head', 'indoors'; 'a fat and juicy toad', 'the juiciest pork'; 'a sheep/lamb', 'delicacies', 'aged guinea fowls'; 'duckling'; 'blood', 'a big game,' 'carcass', 'a goat'. Explicitly negative symbols are also used to refer to bribe: 'flatulence'; 'carcass', 'putrefaction', 'shit', 'underway', 'back-hander', 'lavatory', 'maggots', 'dog-meat/taboo', 'excrement, etc.

Participants in the bribery process can be grouped into three categories. The receivers are generally given positive or spiritual identities: 'the great', 'a man on top,' 'kings', 'a warrior,' 'altar-worker,' 'beekeeper', 'elder brother'; 'a gentleman,' 'the messenger', 'god', 'oracle'; 'a great man'; 'servants,' 'masked spirit,' 'masquerade'; 'gods', 'deity', 'cub/FatherLeopard'; 'King Lion'; 'the sun', 'the wind'; 'a goat', 'a dog', 'a hen', 'a scaly lizard', 'a bug', 'a big tree'; 'who you know'; 'a bag'; 'a man on the orange-tree', 'a big gun', 'a strong man', 'backyard-tree', 'a male-child', 'a bull', etc. Explicitly negative symbols are also used by critics to point at bribe-eaters: 'a chichidodo,' 'Dimaragana,' 'tortoise,' 'a hyena in sheep's clothing'; 'a hyena', 'wolves,' 'hyenas', 'the kite', 'the eagle', 'the hawk', 'the vulture'; 'the alligator', 'the crocodile', 'a boa', 'a forked tongue', 'a scapegoat', 'Ndamathia', etc. Most of the animals are scripturally viewed to be unclean and demonic.

As for bribe-reluctant characters and unskillful takers, they are generally ridiculed and portrayed with negative signifiers: ‘*a fool/foolish man*’, ‘*insensible man*’, ‘*a satanic civil servant*’, ‘*a wicked man*’, ‘*a stinking tooth*’, ‘*a decadent stooge*,’ ‘*a madman*’ ‘*a clumsy collector*’; ‘*a hairy rat*’, ‘*the inexperienced kite*’.

On the whole, bribery can be experientially described as a transitive material process with two actor-participants –the giver and the receiver – and one goal participant –the bribe. As ‘*bribery*’ is perceived as a covenant and bribe is designated with such spiritual products like ‘*the kolanut*’ and most collectors are assigned spiritual identities and described with unclean animals, there is good reason to claim that the spiritual aspect of bribery is foregrounded over the physical one. Indeed, the transmutability corruption (Jeremiah 31: 29) solaces its spiritual and detrimental aspect: “*Corruption is like a heavy pollution that weighs on people’s spirits*” (Arnaud Montebourg, a French Lawyer). Though those who reject and denounce bribery are seen as evil, narrators and characters praise them and point out that it is rather foolish to view the righteous as foolish: “*the fool*, he thought that all government employees were *the same!*” (*Obi*: 88). As a result, characters like Ezeulu, Odili, Joe, George and Makinde should be viewed and emulated as models of integrity as they have let “their ‘*no*’ be ‘*no*’ and their ‘*yes*’ be ‘*yes*’” no matter the cost.

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