

**Representations of "The New Woman" in Selected Works**

**by Ama Ata Aidoo**

**Barbra Nyamwiza**

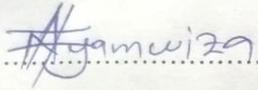
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**A Dissertation Submitted to the Directorate of Graduate Studies, Research  
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**DECLARATION**

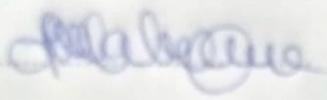
I, Nyamwiza Barbra, declare that this is my original work and it has never been submitted to any institution for an academic award.

.....

**NYAMWIZA BARBRA**

**APPROVAL**

This research dissertation was conducted under my supervision and was submitted for examination with my approval as the University supervisor.

Signature  Date 27 JANUARY 2023

Dr. Danson Kahyana

## **DEDICATION**

I am privileged to have this research work accomplished. I wholeheartedly dedicate this work to my father, the late Yokanna Katsigazi, to whom I owe so much, but mostly, my education. Heaven couldn't bear being without him and so he ascended to glory on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2021. *Taata*, I still hear your voice on the phone, countless times, asking me about the progress I am making on this work. You should have been here to see it come to fruition.

I also dedicate this work to my one and only sister, Posh Elizabeth Bagaya Mukazi, the best gift *Taata* left me with.

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores the representations of "the new woman" in selected works by Ama Ata Aidoo namely: *Changes* (1993), *Our Sister Killjoy* (1977), *Girl Who Can and Other Stories* (1997) and *Diplomatic Pounds* (2012). The study is basically a documentary type with a qualitative approach. It involves the critical and analytical reading of the selected texts of Ama Ata Aidoo in their representation of "the new woman". The investigation makes use of the feminist literary theory and African feminism in particular, where specifically Ama Ata Aidoo addresses the conditions and needs of continental African women (African women who reside on the African continent) and points out key issues relating to discrimination and exclusion on the basis of sex and gender objectification, structural and economic inequality, power and oppression and gender roles and stereotypes. It reviews several studies carried out on works by Ama Ata Aidoo thus providing this study the privilege of filling the gaps that were not addressed. It scrutinizes several literary elements that effectively depict the old and new woman characters in the selected works by Aidoo. Findings are presented in two chapters, chapter two and three. Chapter two observes that Ama Ata Aidoo writes about the lives of women engaged in quests of self-exploration in Ghana and in their migrations abroad. It is finally noted that Aidoo does not agree to the view that the success of a woman should be gauged by her ability to get married and have children as emphasised by African tradition. To her, the success of women does not lie in their ability to reproduce but rather to become productive in other aspects that benefit humanity and promote independence and progress of a nation. Chapter three discusses the diverse narrative techniques Ama Ata Aidoo uses to depict the differences between the old and the new woman characters. It is noted that Aidoo uses a multiplicity of narrative techniques that create various shades of meaning in the interpretation of her fiction. Such techniques include juxtaposition, setting, use of female friendships or collective female solidarity, use of dialogue, commentator and or participatory character, and use of frame stories among others. All the issues pertaining to the beliefs, attitude and practices of the old and new woman characters are discussed with in the prospects of the feminist theory particularly the African feminist theory. Aidoo clearly implies that for any nation to develop effectively the role of a woman must not be ignored. A woman has to join hands with the man in order to see a better nation, it should however be noted that the position of a woman in the contemporary world is still a hustle since it is proven through all the new woman characters that it is hard for women to live as single or divorced without enigma from the society.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 Introduction

This study seeks to explore the representations of women in selected works by Ama Ata Aidoo, positioning these women characters into strands of old and new. The study considers women characters who accept the roles their patriarchal society has assigned to them as the old type of women and the new women characters as those who have become conscious of their state and suffering in a male-dominated society, and struggle in different ways against this domination. The study investigated these two kinds of women in four of Ama Ata Aidoo's works; *Changes* (1993), *Our Sister Killjoy* (1977) *Girl who Can* and *Other Stories* (1997), and *Diplomatic Pounds* (2012).

The study paralleled the old woman characters alongside the new woman characters, spelling out all that is distinctive about each of these types of women in terms of the roles they are expected to play by society and what they do in response to these ascribed roles. The study also delved into the analysis of the apt dialogues of the characters, the point of view, juxtaposition and characterisation among other narrative techniques, and their effectiveness in the depiction of the two-women character types pertinent to the study. A conclusion was drawn to justify the consequence of the phenomenon of the new woman character in an African set up.

#### 1.1 Background to the Study.

Ama Ata Aidoo is a Ghanaian author, poet, playwright and academician considered an outspoken African writer with over 27 works to her credit among which include a play *The Dilemma of a Ghost* (1965), *Anowa* (1970), *Our Sister Killjoy* (1977), a poetry collection *Someone Talking to Sometime* (1986), *The Eagle and the Chickens and Other Stories* (1986), *Birds and Other Poems*, (1987), another poetry collection *An Angry Letter in January* (1992), a novel *Changes; a Love Story* (1993), a Collection of Short Stories, *No Sweetness Here* (1995), *The Girl Who Can and Other Stories* (1997), and, *Diplomatic Pounds & Other Stories* (2012).

Uzoamaka (1999), states that Ama Ata Aidoo was born on 23 March 1942 in Saltpond in the Central Region of Ghana. She was raised in a Fante royal household, the daughter of Nana Yaw Fama, chief of Abeamzi Kyiakor, and Maame Abasema. She grew up under the

oppression of resurgent neo-colonialism as a result of British aggression during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century that was taking place in her homeland. Her grandfather was murdered by neo-colonialists, and the tragedy, in turn, brought her father's attention to the importance of educating the children and families of the village on the history and events of the era. This led him to open up the first school in their village and influenced Aidoo to attend the Wesley Girls High school where she first decided she wanted to be a writer. After high school, she enrolled at the University of Ghana, Legon where she obtained a degree in Bachelor of Arts in English and also wrote her first play, *The Dilemma of a Ghost*, in 1964. The play was published by Longman the following year, making Aidoo the first published African woman dramatist.

Nawale (2013) also notes that until comparatively recently, the majority of published writers were men and the portrayal of women in literature was inevitably one-sided. Nawale continues and says that in the ancient world, literacy was severely limited, and the majority of those who could write were male. She goes on and says that women were acted by young men, which meant there were fewer parts written for them and they often had less to say – in the earlier plays, anyway. Nawale's study justifies the fact that women were alienated in the African male dominated societies and this therefore enables this research to deeply investigate whether it is the rise of women characters who want to liberate themselves is the true representation of the new woman in Aidoo's fiction.

Aidoo was appointed Minister of Education under the Provisional National Defence Council in 1982. She resigned after 18 months, realising that she would not be able to achieve her aim of making education in Ghana freely accessible to all. Aidoo tackles feminist issues in her fiction and respectfully creates the Akan tradition she comes from. She has portrayed the role of African women in contemporary society. She believes in a distinct African identity, which she views from a female perspective. Aidoo worked in the United States, where she held a fellowship in creative writing at Stanford University, California. She also served as a research fellow at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, and as a lecturer in the English department at the University of Cape Coast, eventually rising there to the position of professor. She has lived in the United States, Britain, Germany and Zimbabwe. She is currently a visiting professor in the Africana Studies Department at Brown University.

Aidoo has received many awards and recognition; her novel *Changes* won the 1992 Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best Book (Africa). She obtained a Fulbright Scholarship

in 1988 and Mbari press short story prize. Her collection of poems *Someone Talking to sometime* won the Nelson Mandela Prize for Poetry in 1987. She is a patron of the Etisalat Prize for Literature, currently called the 9mobile Prize for Literature, a platform for African writers of debut books of fiction created in 2013. She is the subject of a 2014 documentary film *The Art of Ama- Ata Aidoo*, made by Yaba Bado and in 2000 she founded the Mbaasem Foundation, a non-governmental organization based in Ghana with a mission to support the development and sustainability of African women writers. Her first novel, *Our Sister Killjoy*, was published in 1977 and remains one of her most popular works. Many of Aidoo's protagonists are women, who defy the stereotypical women's roles of their time.

Ada Uzoamaka Azodo in his introduction to an interview with Ama Ata Aidoo, admittedly states that the Ghanaian author stands out among today's many talented and prominent African women writers for her widely acclaimed novels depicting the role of African women in a changing world. In this paper, Uzoamaka noted that Aidoo's novel *Changes* has been praised by many literary critics for its thought-provoking portrayal of African women's redefined roles in their post-independence urban environment. The redefined roles are what this study is set out to explore.

Adichie Chimamanda (2018) observes that Aidoo makes her characters lie uneasily between old and new, live in rural and urban areas, and struggle to deal with the unpleasant surprises of independence as well as the portrayal of complex femaleness. She adds that in Aidoo's work, there is a keen but understated longing for the past. But Aidoo is too good a writer to paint with overly broad brush strokes. Adichie further states she occupies the space of a 'Black African Happy Feminist' because writers like Aidoo came before her.

Furthermore Adichie Chimamanda (2015) claims that "the problem with gender is that it prescribes how women should be rather than recognizing how they are. Imagine how much happier they would be, how much freer to be their true individual selves, if they didn't have the weight of gender expectations". Not only society but also television, magazines, and books prescribe how women should behave and what they should do to attract men. The underlying reason for this condition is the social pressure on women. The assumption that a woman should marry when she reaches a specific age is the most noxious societal pressure on women. If she does not marry in the age range deemed appropriate for her, the society regards her as a failure.

Ogunrotimi (2015) observes that the women in the real world may complain about the inhibitions and the individual discomfort they experience as subordinates in a patriarchy and they may also express their disdain because of being trapped in the debris of patriarchal societies, but short of making a drastic response, they settle down into the system and remain sour and bitter by their own inertia. Ogunrotimi further states that the women characters in Aidoo's fiction prefer, it seems, to rejoice in their 'motherhood' rather than in their femininity. But these female protagonists represent the old order of women advocates while women like Esi epitomise the spirit of the new women, who apparently rejoice more in celebrating feminine individualities.

June West (1955) says that 'among the most significant social changes between the two world wars was the gradual shift in roles, concerns and taste of women. This shift took many forms but one of the most interesting was the emergence of what was then so popularly known as new woman.' In this modern era, the 'New Woman' is aiming at self-realization. She hopes and dreams of being financially independent. This is well brought out in *Changes* where Esi is putting much effort to succeed at her careers.

The study above denotes that there are females that belong to both strands. This study sets out to explore the women that ascribe to the old order of a patriarchal society and the new women that ascribe to the order of modernity though still in the same patriarchy set up. This new woman is not masculine, she is not striving to become a second man, but is trying and proving those capabilities for strength and usefulness. The new woman is now employing her abilities that she has had all along in a realm outside of the home. In the same way, a writer for *The Independent* in 1898 sought to take the phrase "New Woman" away from its conventional definition and use it to praise the ways in which the New Woman was economically independent, Welter (1966). Therefore, this study explored more of these women characters in selected works by Ama Ata Aidoo in order to establish the realism of this new woman phenomenon.

Another key study on the works of Ama Ata Aidoo is Labo (2013). He acknowledges that through her characters, Aidoo succeeded in explaining the impact of patriarchy in traditional Africa on both male and female characters. This allowed her to point out an important aspect of the emancipated Ghanaian women's philosophy, which consists of fighting for equality and justice among sexes or between husband and wife, without parting with traditional family life. In short, Aidoo's main concern is women empowerment through the respect of certain

progressive African tradition and customs. This study is also key as regards my study because it provides the necessary background particularly in describing the social setting and depictions of these two kinds of women.

Tippabhotla (2017) states that it is widely acknowledged that literature is the reflection of society. Literature reflects the perceptions and attitudes of society. It portrays human life through characters, by their words and deeds, conveys message for the purpose of instruction, information and delight. Tippabhotla continues to note that the changing role of women in literature from the past to present indicates the evolution of women and women empowerment. Women were considered less worthy than men and are still objects used for the pleasure of men.

Ayesu et al, (2016) critically observe that African women's history, particularly during the pre-colonial and colonial periods, is scanty and often generalized. The available histories have tended to portray women only as princesses, queen mothers, concubines, and slaves, resulting from the fact that early travellers across Africa interacted with the ruling classes and scarcely looked at women. The writings stereotyped African women as a picture of African barbarity, with their high sexual drive and high fertility, and therefore ignored them as historical actors. This study therefore relates to this research in exploring the dimensions of the African society pertaining to the relegation of a woman character as either old or new, which is the central issue of this study.

Denzer (1994) and Van Allen (1972), observe that African women certainly held roles of political importance in pre-colonial and colonial Africa but it is generally regarded that colonial rule brought about an overall decline in the position of women, at least relative to that of men. Berger and White (1999) also denote that political independence largely failed to restore women's power and authority, and many women who participated in, and even mobilized the foundations for, nationalist movements were written out of the histories of those movements and nations. These studies are relevant to this research in mainly the analysis of the differences between the old and new women characters in a patriarchal dispensation and to harness the feminists' call upon all humanity to join hands and empower women for the better of the African society.

Allman (2009) and Geiger (1987) agree with Berger and White's assertion citing that within years of independence across the continent, single-party or military regimes took power in many countries, concentrating authority in the executive to the detriment of legislatures,

judiciaries, political parties, and civil society. With few or no elections, neither men nor women regularly stood for political office, and with women precluded from participating in the military, military regimes had no leadership positions for women either. Allman and Geiger's study informs this research on the prejudices that were prevalent then in society that led to the emergence of the diverse perceptions of the women that tried to exercise their personal freedoms as rebels and thus the new woman character phenomenon.

Jibrin (2004), purports that in many such centralized regimes, the most senior position for a woman was held by the leader's wife—what, in reference to Nigeria and Ghana, Jibrin calls the First Lady Syndrome. In addition, state-created national women's associations typically occupied all space allowed for organized political activity, as shown by Fallon (2008) with reference to the 31 December Movement in Ghana.

Berrian (1982) denotes that a subject treated by Flora Nwapa and Ama Ata Aidoo is the myths about the role of African women. The image that African women writers portray of themselves differs from the one created by the male writers. This is particularly true with Nwapa and Aidoo's portraiture of the wife, the mother, the traditional (rural) women, and the changing educated (urban) woman. Whether writing about the traditional woman or the changing educated woman, Nwapa and Aidoo place their women characters in situations where their values conflict with those of the men and their milieu. This study is therefore relevant to this research in as far as the evaluation of the effective depiction of the women characters in selected works by Aidoo.

Nawale (2013) indicates that initially, the fiction depicted women as viewed by men, and the typical heroines were either paragons of virtue or of vice. To broadly analyse the old and new woman characters in the fiction of Ama Ata Aidoo, this study is interested in the way these women are depicted in whatever roles they carry. Ginnette Curry (2011) posits that Ama Ata Aidoo's *Changes* has been praised by many literary critics for its thought-provoking portrayal of African women's redefined roles in their post-independence urban environment. This proposition by Ginette affirms that indeed the African woman's role has experienced change and the study is significant to this research in the assessment of the effectiveness of the depiction of women characters in selected works by Ama Ata Aidoo.

Bohmer (1991) claims that African patriarchy has relegated to African women the mythological role of mother, even the women who have fought in revolutions were cut out of the political arena or from full national participation after independence. She further acclaims

that despite the promises of national freedom, women were excluded from full national participation on an equal footing with men. She states that, "Mother Africa may have been declared free, but mothers of Africa remained manifestly oppressed" This study advances the argument that many African women are oppressed, the reason my study intends to explore how this new woman tries to redefine her role and position in a male dominated society.

The 'new woman' has come to stay. The woman is now appreciated and admired by society and the world. Therefore, the study "Representations of the New Woman in Works of Ama Ata Aidoo" seeks to investigate this "New Woman" with a close analysis of the lived experiences of women in the kind of society Aidoo portrays them.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Many scholars have carried out studies on Aidoo's works of fiction focusing on a variety of women's concerns. Labo Bouché Abdou (2019) carried out a study on women self-affirmation in *Changes a love story*, Olumide (2015) *Womanist Dilemma in Africa*, and Sampler (2019) looking at Female roles in Aidoo's *Changes* among many others. Aidoo is a woman writer who demonstrates that women can, irrespective of the unlevelled grounds laid for them in patriarchal societies. Aidoo does not agree to the view that the success of a woman should be gauged by her ability to get married and have children. To her, the success of women does not lie in their ability to reproduce but rather to become productive in other aspects that benefit humanity and promote independence and progress of a nation. She purposefully reiterates the struggles that each of the women are faced with, and the severity of these conflicts. The woman whose mission is not only to overcome the limitations imposed on her because she is a woman but goes ahead to actively fight for a new world where women have equal opportunities like men, is the one I call a new woman as opposed to the old woman who has accepted all the patriarchal society has assigned to her. In this study therefore, I investigate the key qualities of these new women characters and old woman characters showing how a new woman is in a better position compared to the old woman through her freedom and independence as depicted in four of Aidoo's proposed works and the narrative techniques she uses to portray these qualities.

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The study explored the representations of the new woman in four of Ama Ata Aidoo's works - analysing the way how the 'old' and the 'new' woman characters are juxtaposed against

each other and examining the ways in which the new woman is different from the old woman character in a male dominated society.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study were:

1. To investigate the differences between the old woman and the new woman characters as they are portrayed in Ama Ata Aidoo's works.
2. To assess the effectiveness of the narrative techniques that Ama Ata Aidoo uses to bring out the differences between the old and new woman characters.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

1. What the differences between the old and new woman are as portrayed in selected works of Ama Ata Aidoo?
2. How effective are the narrative techniques used to depict the differences between the old and new woman characters in selected works by Ama Ata Aidoo?

#### **1.6 The Scope of the Study**

Ama Ata Aidoo is an author of many works but four out of the numerous numbers of works have been selected for a closer analysis and these include; *Changes* (1993), *Our Sister Killjoy* (1977), *Girl Who Can and Other Stories* (1997) and *Diplomatic Pounds* (2012). These works were handled chronologically by the year of publication. The novels are looked at first and then followed by the short story collections. These prose fiction pieces which have been selected comprise two novels and two short story collections. The study used a mixed genre approach because both the novels and short stories have great contributions towards the representation of the old and new women characters. The new woman, who challenges the patriarchal system, pursues the agenda of women empowerment in varied aspects together with the old patriarchy woman. These works also sufficiently represent the craftsmanship of the author.

#### **1.7 Justification of the Study**

Myths, the media and the position of men in an African society continue to portray life for an African woman as sad in her own society. This is the reason why most women have had to put up with a lot of injustices and oppression towards them, just because they were born female. This study serves to use literary sources to present a picture of the life of an African woman in her own society by reflecting on how the new woman differs from the old woman

as depicted in Aidoo's works. The study therefore, will make a significant contribution to this contemporary debate about women prejudices and injustices and the representation of the new woman which is dominant in Ama Ata Aidoo's fiction

### **1.8 Significance of the Study**

The study will enrich the appreciation of Ama Ata Aidoo's fiction in regard to the representation of the women characters particularly the new woman and to serve as a reference or further research to be conducted by other scholars. It is a contribution to critical debates on these African texts that engage and stretch the characters' mental and physical abilities while trying to integrate themselves in the African society of the time. By analysing three different works of Ama Ata Aidoo, written at different times -1977, 1993 and 1997 respectively, the research will provide insights into female African experiences in both the past and present era reflecting on the success of the trends and successes of the African Woman's Plight. This provides the different representations and the much needed link between the setting and characters' experiences. This study also conceptualised the trend of illusion metamorphosing into disillusionment in the lives of several female Africans.

### **1.9 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of the study is feminist literary theory. Ashley Crossman (2019) examines feminist theory as a major branch within sociology that shifts its assumptions, analytic lens, and topical focus away from the male viewpoint and experience towards that of women. In doing so, feminist literary theory shines a light on social problems, trends, and issues that are otherwise overlooked or misidentified by the historically dominant male perspective within social theory. African feminism is a type of feminism innovated by African women that specifically addresses the conditions and needs of continental African women (African women who reside on the African continent). He states that feminist theorists point out key issues relating to discrimination and exclusion on the basis of sex and gender objectification, structural and economic inequality, power and oppression and gender roles and stereotypes. Ashley further indicates that since the experiences and perspectives of women and girls were historically excluded from social theory and social science, much feminist theory has focused on their interactions and experiences within society to ensure that half the world's population is not left out on how we see and understand social forces, relations, and problems.

Eller's (2000) *The Myth of Matriarchal Prehistory- Why an Invented Past Won't Give Women a Future in* further avers that the theory part of feminist theory is simply the way that any feminist individual or feminist movement understands how gender inequality is created and perpetuated, and the ideas they have about how to change the status quo. There are as many different kinds of feminist theory as there are ways of understanding how gender differentiations are created.

In literary theory, feminist theory usually refers to two strains of thought concerning the relations between gender and writing. The first strain is Anglo-American, emerging in the late 1960s and 1970s in correlation with what is called the "women's liberation movement." This strain of feminist literary theory argues that literary studies have always been male dominated, and that our notions of what constitutes good or great literature have always been shaped by male models and male authors. This line of feminist literary theory, best exemplified by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar (1980), in their work *The Madwoman in the Attic* searches for the works of forgotten female authors and calls for the re-evaluation of writing by women through the development of a female based or non-gendered standard of literary criticism.

The second strand of feminist literary theory is what Boyce Davies and Adam Graves, (1986:8-10) refer to as African feminism. They define this strand of theory as that which recognizes a common struggle with African men for the removal of the yokes of foreign domination and European and American exploitation. It is not antagonistic to African men but challenges them to be aware of certain salient aspects of women's subjugation which differ from the generalized oppression of all African peoples. This theory recognizes that certain inequities and limitations existed and still exist in traditional societies and that colonialism reinforced them and introduced others. It acknowledges its affinities with international feminism, but delineates a specific African feminism with certain specific needs and goals arising out of the concrete realities of women's lives in African societies. It examines African societies for institutions which are of value to women and rejects those which work to their detriment and does not simply import Western women's agendas.

Thus, it respects African women's status as Mother but questions obligatory motherhood and the traditional favouring of sons. It respects the African woman's self-reliance and the penchant for cooperative work and social organization. It understands the interconnectedness of race, class, and sex oppression. Uzoamaka (2019) calls African feminism, that which not

only raises the issues of sex and gender but also the questions of race and canon formation focusing on how African women writers are seen, read, and by who. Guy-Sheftall (2003) opines that despite the pervasiveness of western feminist theory in academic discourse, there is a growing body of creative (fiction, visual art, film-), scholarly, and political work by African women which can be placed under the rubric of 'African feminism'. These discursive, imaginative and activist projects are important sites of resistance among African women in various cultural contexts and they compel us to reimagine what is meant by 'feminism' in a global context. While a comprehensive examination of African feminisms would take into consideration this broad range of work throughout the continent.

Zainab (2019) asserts that African Feminist thoughts and theories occupy an important space to ensure that issues affecting African women, both within and outside the African continent, are adequately addressed and discussed. She puts the question of 'what does liberation for the African woman look like to the African woman'. According to this assertion, the liberation of the African woman vividly brings out the 'new woman.'

Crossman (2019) *ibid* posits further that African feminism includes many strains of its own, including Motherism, Femalism, Snail-sense Feminism, Womanism/women palavering, Nego-feminism, *stiwani* and African Womanism. Because Africa is not a monolith, these feminisms are not all reflective of the experiences African women have. Some of the feminisms are more specific to certain groups of African women. African feminism is sometimes aligned with, in dialogue, or in conflict with Black Feminism or African womanism (which is perceived as by and for African women in the diaspora, rather than African women on or recently from the continent) as well as other feminisms and feminist movements, including nationally based ones, such as feminism in Sweden, feminism in India, feminism in Mexico, feminism in Japan, feminism in Germany, feminism in South Africa, and so on.

Furthermore, Lalwani (2019) posits that feminist literature is identified by the characteristics of the feminist movement. Authors of feminist literature are known to understand and explain the difference between sex and gender. They believe that though a person's sex is predetermined and natural, it is the gender that has been created by society, along with a particular perception about gender roles. Gender roles, they believe, can be altered over time. The predominance of one gender over the other is a common concept across almost all

societies, and the fact that it is not in favour of women is an underlying yet blatant characteristic of feminist or women's literature.

Besides, Oloko (2008) argues that the advent of Feminism as an ideology aimed at fostering a "high valuation of women as human beings". Writers like Hunter (1983), began to draw attention to the condition of women and marked an epoch in the global development of sex relations. In an attempt to evolve a society based on best practices in sex relations, Feminists posited that, in relation to men, women had been treated in ways that fell short of standards usually adjudged to be equitable and just. Ama Ata Aidoo compels us to consider afresh the theoretical connections between Feminism and fiction and to re-examine the literary epistemology in the light of newer ways of thinking and looking at the world. In effect, those of us who look into literature for the 'shapes' of our world will be amazed at how much the condition of women is still a decisive issue in the production of literature and its associated discourses.

These studies observe that Aidoo develops very strong African women characters who are conscious of the state and suffering of women in a male-dominated society, and who struggle in different ways against this domination. Sampler for example posits that Aidoo is a feminist author that portrays an extremely exact representation of the female characters throughout her writing. For instance, in her novel, *Changes*, she focuses on the hardships that accompany the lives of the three female protagonist characters.

The study therefore utilised the feminist theory to critically interpret the presentations of these two new women- old and new, focusing on at least three of the key issue feminist theorists expound; discrimination and exclusion on the basis of sex and gender objectification, structural and economic inequality, Power and oppression and gender roles and stereotypes. These key points will interface with the prevalent challenges in both worlds of women characters and how the new brood redefines its status and plight in the selected works by Ama Ata Aidoo. This theory also guided the researcher to show the world that for man and woman to have a beautiful life together, to live in harmony they must understand each. It further rules out the biased judgement posed on women by society.

### **1.7 Review of Related Literature**

This section reviewed the available literature related to Ama Ata Aidoo's works in regard to the representation of the old and new woman. The section also focused on all the available remarks, criticisms and attributes to Ama Ata Aidoo's craftsmanship.

### **1.7.1 The representation of The Old and New woman**

The researcher specifically reviewed literature related to the selected works namely; *Changes a Love Story*, *Our Sister Killjoy*, *Girl Who Can and other stories*, and *Diplomatic Pounds & Other Stories*. Ama Ata Aidoo has made significant efforts towards helping other women in her society to rise in power by supporting the expression of their voices through writing. Sampler, (2019), notes that in her novel *Changes*, Ama Ata Aidoo carefully portrays Esi, Opokuya, and Fusena- as the prominent female roles and the different levels of oppression that they face in urban Ghanaian society. Given some of her accomplishments, it is apparent that Aidoo feels strongly about the roles of women in Ghanaian society and their ability to hold powerful positions and express their voices through writing. For example, in addition to becoming a well-known poet, playwright, and novelist, she was appointed as the Minister of Education in Ghana in the year of 1982. The above observation clearly shows that there is a problem with women in Ghana as well as Africa and the world over. Important to note is the fact that Aidoo comprehends the plight of women in the African setting and tries to bring out the struggles these women undergo in the different set up. This precisely presents women depicting the different roles they play which stratify them as old and new.

In the same essay, Sampler (2019) further states that Aidoo is a feminist author that portrays an extremely accurate representation of the female characters throughout her writing by purposefully reiterating the struggles that each of the women are faced with, and the severity of these conflicts. For example, in her novel, *Changes*, she focuses on the hardships that accompany the lives of the three female protagonist characters.

In her novel *Changes*, she not only writes about the world and how it is, but she writes about how certain characters should be. For instance, in an interview with Ada Uzoamaka Azodo in 1996, she admitted, “I called the book *Changes*, because I see primarily a character like Esi, the protagonist, as being a part of those who are trying to define, or even redefine women as lovers, wives, mothers, daughters, and even granddaughters.” This observation implies that Aidoo has crafted some of her characters showing a new perception of what a woman should be, thus the idea of “old” and “new” women phenomenon.

The traditional woman according to Sampler is viewed as predominantly being a wife and mother. It is looked down upon for a woman who is a mother to also become an active working woman. The men feel as though their homes and families will become neglected due to the woman’s devotion to her work, therefore they choose to only stifle the success of the

woman. This practice which causes a hiccup in the progression of a properly transforming society is what this research disagrees with and therefore premises at exploring how the new woman balances her job and family.

West (1955) says that ‘among the most significant social changes between the two world wars was the gradual shift in roles, concerns and taste of women. This shift took many forms but one of the most interesting was the emergence of what was then so popularly known as new woman.’ In this modern era, the ‘New Woman’ is aiming at self-realization. She hopes and dreams of being financially independence. This is well brought out in *Changes* where Esi is putting much effort to succeed at her careers.

Also, Clare Mendes in *The New Woman* says that this woman emerged during the time of great social change, when notions about sexuality and gender had become complicated. Women were finally making their voices heard. They were tired of spending their lives following the patriarchal rule. This woman is tired of being meek, quiet, and pious. Aidoo, throughout her works, makes us see the kind of woman that Clare defines. In *Changes* Esi is struggling to get her position in the male denominated society. She and many other women characters like her are a replica of the kind of new woman who several studies have ignored and thus the study intends to explore more on this theme in Ama Ata Aidoo’s fiction.

According to Barbara Welter (1966), “The attributes of True Womanhood, by which a woman judged herself and was judged by her husband, her neighbours and society, could be divided into four cardinal virtues—piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity.” This quotation clearly brings out the definition of the old woman that the new woman is running from. Esi and Sissie strongly break the chain of patriarchy by building their empire. Welter further states that these passive virtues were reinforced into the identities of women (old women) by scientific scholarship of the time that stated that women’s minds were best suited to the home and the church, where these qualities would shine through. The “True Woman” was almost a holy, inhuman-like character who existed as a source of comfort and refreshment for the men who bore the toils of the real world. Her worth was placed in her abundant virtue, manifested by the religious environment in which she surrounded herself. The most frequently asserted arguments were that women were intellectually incapable of the analytical skills on which the logic and development of argumentations and oratory depended and that women were delicate (or worse, beguiling) and lacked the emotional and moral forces to convince others of their ideas. Barbara uses the term “True Woman” which is

actually a perfect definition of Old Woman. The Old Woman aimed at being true by acknowledging the societal and patriarchal demands. The True Woman is represented by Oko's mother and sisters, the wives of the patriarchs of Nima, and Nana, Esi's mother, Marija.

Osaki (2002) acknowledges that there is a moral and intellectual responsibility to understand how and why women lose touch with reality and how this malady can be prevented. In their paper, Osaki and Temu identify patriarchy as a social institution which functions according to principal that "man shall dominate female" and migrations to new societies as the primary causes of madness of African women; women who otherwise would have been powerful figures in society. The above reflections indicate that women who choose to spend their lives differently are named mad. These so called 'mad' are the women this study addresses as new women, particularly because they have defied the "man shall dominate female" principal. This study will therefore situate the estimable qualities of the new woman which are not explicitly handled in the previous studies on Ama Ata Aidoo fiction.

Cherry (2002:9) in her analysis of Ama's female characters in *Our Sister Killjoy* denotes that somehow, going to Europe was altogether more like a dress rehearsal for a journey to paradise. But Sissie, the protagonist was totally different from those who are in living in comfort in Europe. There she was, in spite of her squint eye, able to see the European intentions behind the scholarship grants and studying abroad. This novel analyses a young girl's ability to withstand the intended whitewashing kind of education and post-colonial ideology. As urged above in *Changes*, also, Sissie and many other women characters like her are a replica of the kind of new woman who several studies have ignored and thus the study intends to explore more on this theme in Ama Ata Aidoo's fiction.

### **1.7.2. The narrative style employed by Ama Ata Aidoo**

Ekpong (2011) vividly acknowledges that Aidoo exploits stylistic reversals in her fiction where new shades of meanings are attached to old terms and the female characters change from the language of acquiescence to that of revolt and self-assertion, thus reflecting her growth from docility and conformity to liberation. The journey motif and structural divisions symbolize the landmarks in the stages of development of each female character towards liberation. The various forms of plots replete with flash-backs and interior monologues reveal the complexities introduced into the already culturally subjugated condition of the contemporary African woman's life through colonialism and urbanization. Ekpong however,

makes a general thematic and stylistic analysis of Aidoo's fiction the reason this research chooses to carry out an explicit investigation on selected fiction works by Aidoo to bring out the effectiveness of the techniques in developing the new woman theme.

Ekpong (2011) proceeds to note that the setting of Aidoo's fiction reveals that there is steady progression in the degree of self-assertion of female protagonists from the non-literate situated in the rural areas to the educated and well-sensitized in urban centres. The technique of female friendship or collective female solidarity serves as a therapeutic tool for women's survival and retention of sanity in the face of patriarchal subjugation. A woman is represented by Aidoo as a more rational, resilient and considerate individual than a man, thus revealing that Aidoo exploits the deflationary technique in depicting most of her male characters. Aidoo envisions a world of sisterhood among all women which could serve as a stepping-stone to world peace yet it is the woman character that has been disregarded by most of the writers. This notion however is attested on only *Changes* thus the need to investigate the new woman in a compendium of Ama Ata Aidoo's other fiction.

Brookman, Etal (2019) carried out a study on *Education and the assertive Woman in Aidoo's Changes* employing the feminist or womanist theory and the main findings of the study indicated that there have been positive changes in the roles of women over the years. This change has come about as a result of women's quest to assert them through education and contribute towards freeing their families from cultural and societal dogmas in which women were treated to subjugation and marginalization. A remarkable observation was the intentionality of ascribing to female characters more respectable roles in novels by various writers as the years go by. A conclusion drawn from the study was that education is still a major weapon of enhancing assertiveness in women but it is not the ultimate. The study above points to the gap that my study explored - education could be one way of redefining the stand of a woman in a patriarchy society, implying that there are other ways the cited study did not look at which was my interest in Ama Ata Aidoo's fiction.

Abo (2013: 23), in his study 'Women self-affirmation in Ama Ata Aidoo's *Changes*' deals with Ama Ata Aidoo's self-affirmation and struggle led by African women, Ghanaian women in particular, for the betterment of their life conditions. This Ghanaian female writer puts in context male and female characters to raise the gender issue in a milieu possessed by patriarchal thought and behaviour. Women self-affirmation in Aidoo's *Changes* was discussed heading the socio-political-economical side with an insistence on women's rights.

Through her characters, the novelist succeeded in explaining the impact of patriarchy in traditional Africa, and on both male and female characters.

All the studies looked at above and many more clearly state that there are critical issues pertaining to women position and perspectives in Ama Ata Aidoo's fiction that were not tackled which this study intends to explore the new woman who is independent and has a voice in the society by looking at two novels and two short story collections to critically find out the circumstance and experience of the new woman as aligned to the old woman in a patriarchy disposition.

## **1.8 Research Methodology**

### **1.8.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the researcher described the various aspects of the research task; from reading the texts to writing notes, preparing data collection and data analysis instruments, procedures, collection processing, interpretation until the end of the documentation of the report.

### **1.8.2 Research Design**

The study basically was descriptive, employing a qualitative approach and this was used with regard to data collection, interpretation and analysis. The qualitative approach was used to describe the ways in which the old woman is paralleled against the new woman and analyse the struggles women undergo in male dominant societies and techniques used to establish the different women in all the selected works of Ama Ata Aidoo. This made it possible to clearly describe the data. This helped the researcher to provide evidence against the concept of 'New Woman.' Also, through closing reading, the researcher managed to understand the society perception regarding the notion of 'New Woman.' It was attained by reading different journals about the subject.

### **1.8.3 Procedure for Data collection.**

After the approval of the research topic, the researcher moved ahead to look for the literary texts selected. After attaining the major selected texts, a close reading of the texts and other relevant material like journals, articles, magazines, newspapers and previous research reports was done alongside note taking of key events and ideas in each text.

### **1.8.4 Sources of Data**

The main source of information was all works of Ama Ata Aidoo but, particularly the selected works that is the novels *Changes* and *Our Sister Killjoy*, the short stories *Diplomatic*

*Pounds* and *The Girl Who Can and Other Stories*. Relevant journals, research reports, and the internet to compliment information lacking in the library. This eased the researcher to document what was intended for the topic.

#### **1.8.5 Data collection Methods, Instruments and Tools**

The key method used to obtain data was close reading of the texts. The texts included the primary texts of Ama Ata Aidoo on which the study was based and the secondary texts of other scholars. The data was collected under headings guided by the research objectives.

The study involved the examination of documents guided by a textual checklist as a major research instrument that was written in a note book. The checklist comprised of aspects that helped the researcher to internalise the key variable which is the Representations of the New Woman. The aspects included, women as lovers, women as mothers, women as wives and the literary aspects of language, characterisation and plot respectively.

The recording tool the researcher used for note taking were note books, pens and a computer. The researcher summarised the content from both the primary and secondary texts on note cards personally created. The information was quoted and properly transcribed with quotation marks and page numbers. Finally, the notes were made deriving from the various readings during the study.

#### **1.8.6 Data Processing**

The obtained information with the help of a checklist was recorded, studied and expounded into notes and due editing done. After all the required data had been attained, the editing was done to ensure accuracy, uniformity and, to minimise errors with the help of a textual checklist and the objectives of the study.

#### **1.8.7 Data Analysis**

The researcher used textual analysis to interpret and categorise collected data guided by a checklist which involved describing the ways in which women are presented as lovers, wives and mothers, with a keen analysis on the used literary techniques in the selected works of Ama Ata Aidoo to bring out the clear portrait of the old and the new woman.

#### **1.8.8 Data Interpretation and Discussion**

Data was categorized into themes and sub-themes derived from objectives of the study. The data was analysed and edited to suit the set objectives with the help of the textual checklist aspects. The information was attained, coded and grouped to give an overall overview of the

given data that entailed the textual checklist aspects with their frequency within different set objectives of the study. This information was interpreted, discussed and a conclusion was drawn to show whether the research study achieved the set objectives or not.

### **1.8.9 Report Writing and Documentation**

The structure of the research report followed the format prescribed by Bishop Stuart University Graduate School. The documenting of the sources and the arrangement of the entries in the bibliography was APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW WOMAN AS PORTRAYED IN SELECTED WORKS BY AMA ATA AIDOO.

#### 2.1. Introduction

This chapter explored the representations of women in the selected works by Ama Ata Aidoo, positioning these women characters into strands of old and new. The chapter considered women characters who accept the roles their patriarchal society has assigned to them, for example, women as subservient wives and women that embrace motherhood as the old type of women. The new women characters are those who have become conscious of their state and suffering in a male-dominated society, and struggle in different ways against this domination. This chapter bases all its argument on the feminist theory which sees the uneven power balance between the two sexes of man and woman in the family, work place, politics, religion and economy as being a consequence of the patriarchy ideology. Kristeva (2011) a feminist advocate states that feminism theory is not only concerned about gender in literature but rather how literature portrays and perpetuates the traditional biased attitude towards the female gender.

Therefore, this chapter looked critically at how these two kinds of women are portrayed in four of Ama Ata Aidoo's works; *Our Sister Killjoy* (1977), *Changes a Love Story* (1993), *Girl who Can and Other Stories* (1997), and *Diplomatic Pounds and Other Stories* (2012). *Our Sister Killjoy* is referred to as 1977(a) while *Girl who Can and Other Stories* is 1997(b). In her non-fictional writings, Aidoo also explicitly fights against the axis of oppressive social constructions of gender and their consequences for women. She blames colonialism for importing "a fully developed sexist system, which has been adapted, maintained and exacerbated as it has been integrated into different aspects of African culture"

#### 2.1.2 Representation of the old and new woman in Aidoo's *Changes a Love Story*

*Changes a Love story*, tells the story of Esi, a self-empowered, strong-willed statistician with a Master's degree, employed in a lucrative job at the Department of Urban Statistics. She is unhappily married to her husband, Oko, with whom she has a young daughter. Esi and Oko often dispute over their assumed gender roles within the relationship, such as Esi's refusal to cook for the family or bear any more children. During one argument, Oko rapes his wife in an

angry fit. The assault leaves Esi devastated and isolated from friends and family, as marital rape is not a widely accepted concept within her culture. Although marital rape does occur, the patriarchal culture does not recognize the act as violent, but rather as a husband's right. After divorcing Oko, Esi enters a polygamous marriage with a charismatic travel agent, Ali. Ali's first wife Fusena accepts Esi as second wife, but reveals her jealousy when she learns that Esi holds a university degree and a career. The two women characters clearly represent the two strands of 'Old' and 'New'. Esi who is portrayed as the 'New' aims at getting better. She is not masculine, she is not striving to become a second man but rather financially independent. We also get to learn that Fusena is not content and comfortable in her position, she is where she is because she accepts to be defined by tradition.

Araba (2010), postulates that in *Changes*, Aidoo's main concern is with the modern educated woman and how her situation has "improved" with her education. Aidoo portrays two main categories of women in her novel; the conventional woman (represented by Oko's mother and sisters, the wives of the patriarchs of Nima, and Nana, Esi's mother), and the modern educated woman (represented by Esi, Opokuya and Fusena). Her feminist attack is mainly against patriarchal conventions such as stereotypes regarding desire, control, education, and marriage; and the conventional woman who does not see the need for change but rather frustrates the efforts of other women who are ready for change. Examples of such women are Oko's sisters and mother. The Ghanaian woman is traditionally and conventionally expected to play the role of wife and mother. She is expected to be available to her husband and children at all times. She is responsible for her home, while her husband goes to work and provides for the family. With the introduction of formal education for girls and women, and the rise in women's rights advocacy, the role women play in the society continues to change.

Since Ghana attained her independence from the United Kingdom in 1957, her culture has undergone drastic changes as a result of the search for a post-colonial identity. Marital and familial traditions, in particular, have been eroded in favour of more modern or western customs. According to Ginnette Curry, "familial changes, especially in urban areas, have been triggered by several factors such as Ghanaian women's increased level of education resulting in more social and spatial mobility, the disintegration of the lineage systems because of migration, as well as a reduced family size" (182). By rejecting the traditional role of the female, familial structures have been adapted to allow for women's mobility. This cultural evolution has, in turn, triggered changes in the ways husbands, wives, and families interact

with one another and embody expected gender roles. Aidoo explains that she seeks to capture these social dynamics of Accra society in writing *Changes*.

The main female character, Esi Sekyi, is a strong and independent woman. She has a job and genuinely enjoys her career as a government statistician. In addition to having a job that pays more than her husband's, Esi's job comes with the home in which she lives with her husband and daughter. Esi's strong will and independent nature is unusual, given the traditional role that women were generally expected to play in the family. Esi comes to represent the emergence of a new feminine identity — one that can compete equally with men in terms of financial and personal security.

As a career woman, Esi encounters difficulties with the men in her field. *Changes* begin with Esi reproving herself for taking up a responsibility that is not part of her job. Esi is angry about the fact that anytime their secretary is sick, it is assumed that, since she (Esi) is a woman, she will be able to stand in for her. Esi should know better how to assert herself with her male colleagues and not fall into the trap of pre-determined gender roles/hierarchies that construct and position women at the bottom of power structures. Her struggle against these pre-determined structures reveals the complexities concerning the changing roles of women in Ghana (Araba). As indicated above, her aim is not getting militant; she only wants her position in society where her qualities and abilities can shine through.

Also, Esi Sekyi has to deal with antagonistic men, who try to “put her in her place”. For these men, “she was unwelcome, and a burden they did not know what to do with”. As far as they are concerned, it is hard enough to deal with over-qualified men; “but to have to cope with an over-qualified woman in any situation is a complete misfortune”. Aidoo encourages a rebellion against social conventions that define specific spaces for women in various professions. Jones (2013), remarks that one of the most pivotal issues in Ama Ata Aidoo's novel, *Changes* is its female characters' struggle with actualizing identity outside the cultural gender norms. Within the first pages of the novel, the right to self-identify and control of one's own body is brought into conflict and continues as a theme throughout the book.

From the beginning of *Changes*, Aidoo brings the issue of embodied patriarchy to the forefront of the novel, a theme that is apparent throughout the story's entirety. Within the first pages of the novel, the author constructs this vivid scene of marital rape for readers:

Oko flung the bed cloth away from him, sat up, pulled her down, and moved on her. Esi started to protest. But he went on doing what he had determined to do all morning. He squeezed her breast repeatedly, thrust his tongue into her mouth, forced her unwilling legs apart, entered her, plunging in and out of her, thrashing to the left, to the right, pounding and just pounding away. Then it was all over. Breathing like a marathon runner at the end of a particularly gruelling race, he got off her, and fell heavily back on his side of the bed. (Aidoo 9)

The disturbing scene exemplifies the trauma of embodied patriarchy not only as a fictional event, but also as a reflection of real cultural issues. Oko's act of rape was performed out of the desire to re-establish himself as the dominant, male figure in his marriage. He perceives Esi's educational and professional success as a threat to his masculinity, and in response, turns to sexual violence to reassert himself as a male. Ironically, these are also the same traits for which he claims to love her. Jones (2013) discusses how the male-biased power structures govern how women exist to fulfil the acquiescent roles of wife and mother, but substantial resistance to this ideology of male domination is apparent not only within the text, but also in the actual Ghanaian culture says Anyidoho (2014). Aidoo's novel mirrors the women's movement in Ghana by exploring the various gender roles fulfilled by women and how they are inscribed onto the physical female body. Through issues of rape, marriage, and sex, the novel's central characters experience various forms of oppression in their pursuit of a female identity.

The role that Esi takes as a successful career woman and breadwinner can be categorized as Western and is thereby at odds with the traditional gender and social structures that are valued by many in post-colonial Accra society. Before the rape, Oko argues to his wife, "My friends are laughing at me... They think I am not behaving like a man" (Aidoo 8). This demonstrates that Oko is being subjected to ridicule for fulfilling a traditionally female or non-masculine role of caring for the couple's child and home, leaving him feeling ashamed and emasculated. The act of rape is both physical and psychological in nature and a means through which Oko intends to reclaim ownership of his wife and masculinity. In this way, the body becomes as much a tool of social oppression as the patriarchal ideology. According to the social standards that Oko adheres to, taking ownership of his wife's body, regardless of her consent, is his right and privilege as a man and husband. The act empowers him at the expense of his own wife.

Following the traumatic marital rape scene, Esi imagines how she would be ridiculed if she were to present the idea of the prevalence of marital rape to a group of her academic peers: “There are boos from the men, and uncomfortable titters from the women. At the end of it, there is predictable hostile outrage. ‘Yes, we told you, didn’t we? What is killing us now are all these imported feminist ideas’ by acknowledging that the violent act of her husband is wrong and taking subsequent action to emancipate herself from him, Esi is denying the social norms of her society and accepting those of the West. Accordingly, Sex is something a husband claims from his wife as his right any time and at his convenience” (Aidoo 12)

One of the ways that Esi’s marriage is affected by her career is that she earns more than her husband and this produces a level of independence in her, which draws criticism from Oko and his family, especially, his sisters. When Oko’s sisters find out that Esi earns more, they quickly conclude that “it served him (Oko) right, marrying a woman who had more money than him”. The accusation, however, leads to the issue of education, which is of great importance to the Ghanaian feminist discourse. Oko’s sisters as well as Esi’s mother and grandmother are of the view that the educated woman loses sight of her role as a “woman” in the view of the patriarchal society.

Esi is once more criticized for not making time for her husband, her only daughter and their home and also because she has refused to have any more children. Instead of playing the role of a good wife and mother, Esi has second thoughts about her marriage to Oko and she is focused on pursuing greater heights in her career. Oko’s sisters suggest that Oko gets himself “an unspoilt young woman properly brought up, whose eyes have not jumped over her like his eyebrows’ wife’s too much education and too much money of her own...”. Aidoo certainly believes that a woman should be more than just “properly brought up”. However, the perfect recipe for a combination of career, ambitions and marriage is yet to be discovered. (Araba *ibid*: 49)

In *Changes*, Aidoo does not pretend to represent all West African women, nor even all working women in Accra. Her main characters are clearly middle-class. She introduces us to three different characters within that stratum: the secular, divorced professional; the wife/mother/nurse/midwife, also secular; and the contemporary Muslim, veiled, running a successful business, and extremely bitter about polygamy. The three women are equally important for Aidoo's discussion of the various aspects of women's lives.

Opokuya cannot really comprehend a woman who complains of a husband being "too loving." Yet she also realizes that she has long envied Esi's "freedom of movement," her independence. A nurturing, maternal type, Opokuya struggles to combine successfully her duties as a wife and a mother of four with her job as nurse and midwife, a double shift that finds her still weary in the morning and breathless at the end of the day. Yet Opokuya in no way typifies the traditional submissive wife. Tired of depending on her husband's goodwill for rides, for example, she proposes to buy Esi's old car, thus asserting her physical and financial independence from Kubi, as well as her desire for greater freedom of movement.

Nevertheless, the conversations they have, as Esi sips a beer and Opokuya a cup of tea, shed light on the differences in their personal circumstances: Esi had a beer and Opokuya had tea. . . . She insisted that alcohol relaxed her so much that if she took a sip of anything alcoholic, the first thing she would want to do even that early in the evening would be to look for her bed. . . . How could she, Opokuya Dakwa, sleep any time she felt like it? With a fully-grown man, a young growing woman, and three growing boisterous boys to feed? (Aidoo 34)

*Opokuya is a nurse and midwife at the busy state hospital, working very long hours, yet, she says, the children and their father refuse to organize even their already-cooked supper when she is around. . . . You'd think that with me being away on duty at such odd hours they would have taught themselves some self-reliance. But no. When I'm home, they try to squeeze me dry to make up for all the times they have to do without me. (Aidoo 34)*

In Aidoo's novel, the physical body is as much victim to patriarchal ideals as the mind. Both are compromised by a social order that favours male masculinities and attempts to disempower women.

Esi informs her mother and grandmother of why she desires to divorce Oko, to which they respond with anger: "'What is the problem?' both her grandmother and her mother really screamed this time: the former with her walking stick raised as though to strike her, and the latter bursting into tears...'Are you mad?'" (Aidoo 38). Although Esi hopes for the support of her family in dealing with the assault, the mother and grandmother's reactions demonstrate that marital rape is not considered to be a violation of the wife's body and later on abuse.

Fusena and Esi represent two parts of the ideal woman: domestic and subservient, as Fusena, and educated and determined, as in Esi. This, in turn, creates a gendered hierarchy in which the men are allotted certain privileges that women are denied. While Esi is allowed physical

freedom to orient herself as she pleases, Fusena is limited both corporeally and intellectually in the role assigned to her by Ali. Fusena and Esi seem to be exact opposites in terms of assigned gender roles, as Fusena gives up her dreams of an education and career to appease her husband. Esi, on the other hand, is unrelenting in her pursuit of success in the professional realm, to the point that it destroys her initial marriage to Oko. It is clear in *Changes* that Fusena resents her restricted role in her polygamous marriage, but maintains an obedient demeanour that is mandated by patriarchal social conventions. Her discontent in the marriage brings irony to Esi's own situation that finds her unhappy, despite her freedom and ability to pursue her career. This communicates a resounding message: because the women are unable to make choices without the disdain of their husbands, families, and society, they cannot achieve true freedom and contentment in their social and familial roles- Esi's defiance does end the novel on a hopeful note, as it potentially foreshadows a discovery that she does not need a male presence in her life in order to be fulfilled and actualize her potential.

In all of her writing—drama, short stories, poetry, and fiction—Ghanaian author Ama Ata Aidoo writes about the lives of women engaged in quests of self-exploration in Ghana and in their migrations abroad. She uses the heteroglossia of the many voices of the community as observers and participants confronting the dilemmas of neo-colonial Ghana, or Ghana after Kwame Nkrumah, its first president after independence in 1957. Ama Ata Aidoo, product of the matrilineal Fanti people of Ghana, has always recognized the complexity of the woman's role in traditional African societies, as well as in colonialism and neo-colonialism.

### **2.1.3 Representation of the Old and New Woman in Aidoo's *Our Sister Killjoy*.**

In *Our Sister Killjoy*, Aidoo is concerned mostly with the estrangement of the African educated class. Sissy, the main character, is offered a grant to receive a European education. Her journey into the west chronicles different aspects of her resistance to the overriding ideological hostilities that bring down Africa and African people. The novel is divided into four parts. "Into a Bad Dream" relates Sissie's travel experience to Germany. She is secure in her racial background, and only progressively over the itineraries of her 'westbound mobility' does she become conscious of her colour complexion. In "The Plums," Sissie discovers Marija, a new German friend. Marija is entangled in boredom and immediately gets attracted to a black student. In the course of their friendship, Sissie finds out Marija's perverted behaviours, rejects her lesbianism and leaves her in frustration and total disillusionment. (Lhoussain Simour: 2010)

In “From Our Sister Killjoy,” Sissie moves to London, the colonial capital which brings back into her mind the whole tale about the British colonial experience in Ghana. She appears to be extremely disappointed at the tragic social reality and marginalization of black African immigrants. In the epistolary section on a “Love Letter”, Sissie is engaged in a mock-conversation with a lover, using an extremely sarcastic style to assert her identity through the experiences she went through.

This study set forth to identify the old and new woman characters in the selected texts by Ama Ata Aidoo by describing what makes them belong to that given brand. A careful study of *Our Sister Killjoy*, observes that Aidoo celebrates Sissie for making it in life irrespective of the fact that she is a woman. In the first place she challenges the traditional bias put against females for being unable to excel in anything when she wins herself a grant to travel to Europe. Right away from the start of the narrative, Aidoo presents Sissie as a very special girl- the kind who is not bound by any notions of patriarchy beliefs and thus the new woman as ascribed by this study. (Aidoo: 1997a:8)

Her journey must have had something to do with a people’s efforts to make a good gain, because right away from the beginning the embassy had shown a lot of interest. The minute her name had been submitted they had come to the campus looking for her in a black Mercedes-Benz, its flag furred. They pulled strings for her to obtain her passport in a week instead of three months.

Simour (2009) articulates that ‘*Our Sister killjoy*’ tries to demonstrate how Sissie assumes authority and voice in an act that destabilizes the traditionally established modes of western representation of educated African women acting as surrogates of the western culture attitude and beliefs. So, the author right away makes her heroine stand out, making it clear that a woman can be educated, travel to Europe and, stays uncorrupted by their way of life. Everything with her is uniquely done and in a special way. Later when she is almost ready to leave for Europe, the ambassador invites her for dinner and the same ambassador is present at the airport to ensure she has gone safely. This kind of attention is intended by Aidoo to tell the world that Sissie is not a simple girl to be deceived by such simple trivial gestures. She knows her stand in this and she will not be compromised by the conduct of the ambassador While on the journey she is presented as a polished black girl with no difficulty in associating with strangers and having the confidence of even trying to stroll around when they are given an hour before their train can leave in a land she has never been. She assures their guide that

she cannot wander away. (Aidoo: 11-12) *Therefore Sissie felt like strolling around instead of sitting on one spot. The official was worried. However, Sissie assured him that she would not wander away.* This demonstrates Sissie as a carefree girl with no traces of inferiority presumed by Europeans of an African girl. Even before this incident, she is encouraged by the air hostess to join two Nigerian young men going for the same programme which she accepts out of civility because she had not met them before but for courtesy's sake, she accepts. (Aidoo: 10)

“You want to join your friends at the back, yes?”

“My two friends?” wondered Sissie.

She raised her eyes and following the direction of the hostess's finger, saw two faces. She was about to say she had not met them before....

Something told her to cool it.

She went to join them.

This gesture of Sissie's complying to the hostess's suggestion does not only portray Sissie as a civilised girl but also carefree which is the kind of attitude the new woman should exhibit. She does not exhibit any blemishes that would make others point fingers at her gender and later on her background. It should not go unnoticed though that the hostess' action entails undertones of racism which possibly an old type of woman would sneer at and refuse to adhere to after all she was seating in her rightful place

Later at the Bavarian camps, Sissie quickly becomes a celebrity. (Aidoo: 43)

In lower Bavaria, Sissie was something of a crowd –getter. It seemed as if any open function that was organised for the volunteers became a success if she was present. Since for those natives, the mere fact of the presence of the African girl was phenomenal

The author has intended to raise Sissie higher above the historical notions of looking at a woman and particularly an African one as inferior and inarticulate. Aidoo explicitly makes Sissie display no deficiencies that would otherwise be blamed on her gender. *Everyone would come to see this phenomenal African girl; her charm is irresistible and considered to be the reason the functions succeed.* It is also noted that most of the African students that would always go to Germany were men. (Aidoo: 43)

African students always turned out to be men and fairly fluent speakers of German. Whereas Our Sister was not only female but also spoke no German. As for African Miss...h...h...h... look at her costume. How charming. And they gaped at her pointing at her smile. Her nose. Her lips, their own eyes shining. Not expecting her to feel embarrassed.

Aidoo idealises Sissie as the kind of woman she would wish to associate with. She spoke no German like the male students used to do but she receives the glorification of the moment more than any in her company. Her beauty is unquestionable, as reflected in the way the crowds are awed at her gait, her smile and even her African nose and lips. It is clear that Aidoo deliberately paints this picture because that is the kind of ideal woman she advocates for. She is completely against the notions of looking at African women as shy and without esteem in the way the traditional patriarchal strong holds. I therefore concur with Simour who postulates that Aidoo's works feature strong female protagonists who are faced with institutionalized and personal sexist attitudes on a daily basis. Like Essie in *Changes a Love Story* who her male counterparts at office expect her to stand in for the secretary just because she is a woman like the secretary irrespective of her status at the office.

Although Sissie never mails the letter, she is able to carry on her dialogue about the things that mean the most to her— “the importance of language . . . group survival and . . . reconstructing the future. . . The final part of the text, [the letter] celebrates Sissy's strength as a woman but mourns what she has lost as a result of her newly defined womanhood” (Chetin: 157). The image of the African woman that Sissie personifies is that of whose identification of her own voice leads to her acceptance of her African home and rejection of migration or “exile.” Her travels, in fact, reinforce her developing voice. She puts the restoration of home—nationhood—above romance.

Kissi Bamfo (2009) observes that an equally significant character in the novel is Marija, the German housewife of a factory worker. Through her, the narrator forces readers to consider the compelling similarities of women's struggle across racial lines in a patriarchal society. However, the narrator makes known the fact that, even though the two women might have similarities in their struggles, they have different paths towards liberation because they have different historical and personal experiences.

Marija and Sissie both had Mary, as their common names. Marija represents the embodiment of women's struggles in Europe, whereas Sissie embodies women from Africa. The narrator revealed that the similarities between women's struggle cross continentally thereby cutting across space. For instance, in a patriarchal society, women are engineered to believe that womanhood is equated with motherhood. Therefore a "true" woman must embrace motherhood in order to achieve happiness. After walking with Sissie from the hostel, Marija felt guilty for wanting to be alone from her child. "She finished uncertainly, looking up to Sissie who did not have a child, as if for conformation, a reassurance that she was not speaking blasphemy". The behaviour that Marija displays is exactly that of an old strong hold of the fact that motherhood is very central in the life of a woman and this makes her the old woman unlike Sissie who is the new woman character. According to the African feminism, it believes that motherhood plays a central role in the life of a woman but they dispel the ideal of treating motherhood as a kind of enslavement as in the case of Marija. Feminists call for shared responsibility instead.

The narrator goes on to reveal that, "It is Heresy, In Africa, and Europe, everywhere, that this is not a statement to come from a good mother's lips". The narrator used the words, Europe, Africa and everywhere to symbolize the similarities in the way women in patriarchal societies are inclined to believe that motherhood and womanhood are inseparable. Women in other terms are not good mothers unless they embrace motherhood. However, the narrator made known the different historical contexts of the two women's experiences. She goes on to ask, "Who is Marija Sommer? A daughter of mankind's self-appointed most royal line, the house of Aryan-an heiress to some legacy that would make you bow down your head in shame and cry".

The narrator contrasts the historical origins of Marija to that of the experiences of Sissie. Sissie, she claims, "is a little Black woman, who if things were not what they should have been...would not have been there [in Germany,] walking where the Fuhrer's feet had trod" (46). Marija serves as a metaphor for European women. By refusing to stay in Europe, Sissie rejects Euro centrism and its feministic mode of liberation.

The above analysis presents Sissie as the new woman with career and ideals of self-liberation far from the traditional labels of a woman. She is a woman carefree to do as she pleases, she acquires European education but ensures that this does not decolonise her mind with

Eurocentric ideals. This drastically contrasts her from Marija who even when she is European; these believed to be more civilised and possibly above the constructs of patriarchy, she is bound by patriarchy constructs of motherhood as a mark of a good woman. She is smitten by loneliness but contents herself in caring for her son young Adolf. The big Adolf is met anywhere. Marija tells Sissie that he works until midnight; this in a way justifies her longing for love. There is nothing much she can do about her situation; she in fact envies Sissie for her education- the only hope she has in the young Adolf. The disparity therefore makes Marija the old woman as prescribed by the study and Sissie the new woman in Aidoo's *Our Sister Killjoy*.

Kissi (2009) opines that Aidoo positions "Our Sister" as a radical to stand in strong opposition to those black people whose minds do not seem to be filled with thoughts of their own, such as Sammy, the first black person Our Sister is first introduced to at the ambassador's home. Araba (2010) sums it up when he remarks about the way the novel ends. He opines that the novel ends while Sissie is on the verge of re-entry into the Ghanaian society. She arrives with different perspectives and is ready to reintegrate into the Ghanaian society, thereby giving hope for positive change for the country through women. To be able to tackle patriarchal structures at home, Ghanaian women should examine and explore their roles in society before the "hushed-up Victorian notion" of women was adopted.

**2.1.4 The Representation of the Old and New Woman in Aidoo's *Girl Who Can***  
*The Girl who can and other stories* is a composition of eleven stories, these are; *She Who would be –King, The Girl Who Can, Heavy moments, Some global news, About the wedding, Choosing, Payments, lice, male-ing names in the sun, Newly opened Doors and Nowhere Cool*. In these stories especially where there are female characters, Aidoo clearly presents women with different attitudes about the position of women. As will be relayed below, Aidoo juxtaposes the young women against the old ones. In most of the cases, the elderly women ascribe to the patriarchal strongholds where man is treated as superior to woman; this kind of woman is described as the old woman in this study. The other kind of woman who is younger, educated and exercises some level of independence is the one the study addresses as the new woman.

Ekpong (2011) states that in the short stories in this collection, Aidoo breaks down complacencies and reveals that most of those myths which tend to inhibit women are all social constructs and can be reversed. Aidoo seems to input that if women could be so self-

effacing, others-oriented and generous as to produce such achievers and rivals to men in their, hitherto, exclusive domains of life's endeavour, then they should all be allowed to participate as collaborators in the development of Africa in alternative economic and political roles and in the enjoyment of the fruits of their labour and the natural resources of their African continent.

Heinemann (2002) almost reiterates in the same way that in this collection of short stories, Aidoo elevates the mundane in women's lives to an intellectual level in an attempt at challenging patriarchal structures and dominance in African society. Written from a child's perspective, in *Girl Who Can* Aidoo subverts the traditional beliefs and assumptions about the child's voice. Her first short story *She Who Would Be -king* is told in the prospect of what would be possible in future because the narrator states that Adjoa Moji, Professor and Dean of the law faculty is the "She" who would have been king but instead, her daughter has become the president of the united states of Africa in 2026. Like the narrator clearly states; *I do not think men of this country will ever let a woman be their president*. This statement implies that such a dream cannot be achieved anywhere in the seventies, no wonder a woman can possibly become president in 2026 which is so elusive. In this story, Aidoo presents three women – one very old (she is in fact 86 years of age), the other is one who missed being king and the other is the youngest who becomes president prospectively.

These women fall in the category the study expounds- the eighty-six-year-old woman is the old type who would not have such dreams as those of men in politics, she is only contented as a woman having a house to live in, a successful daughter taking care of her and nothing more.. The other two, Adjoa and the daughter, fall in the category of the new woman. They dream that it is possible for a woman to be king, there is no reason whatsoever, after all Adjoa has managed to be a professor and dean of law faculty, a title and position coveted by men. She has acquired money and has constructed herself a modern cottage. These two are the kinds of the new breed of women the study explores in the selected works of Ama Ata Aidoo.

The next story, "The Girl Who *Can*" presents three kinds of women- Nana the oldest and a grandmother, Kaya Nana's daughter, and, Adjoa Kaya's daughter. This is a multi-generational combination of women that hold different values about life and femininity at large. It is clear from the story that child bearing is given a central place in the existence of women. The women do not just have to bear children per se but that they must have a body

that proclaims that right from birth. Thus, the story recounts how a young girl is “unfortunate” to be born with legs that cannot enable her to bear children. According to her grandmother, a girl is identified and given recognition because of her ability to be productive. The grandmother Nana repeatedly comments about Adjoa’s legs, she at one time says (Aidoo: 13)

If any woman decides to come into this world with all her two legs, then she should select legs that have meat on them with good curves. Because you are sure such legs would support solid hips. And a woman must have solid hips to be able to have children.

According to Nana’s tradition, a woman’s productivity is enhanced by her physical body. Nana is an old woman who functions as an agent of patriarchy. She insists on adherence to cultural expectations that limit the woman’s identity only to her child-bearing abilities. This old woman is very knowledgeable in the cultural expectations of her community and her efforts are directed towards ensuring total fulfilment of those cultural expectations that limits the woman’s potential in other fields. Accordingly, the mother Kaya, and the grandmother, Nana, represent two diametrically opposed forces.

The narrator’s mother Kaya is a young woman closer to the category of the new woman the study explores but who is limited because of her failure to attain western education. She tries to console herself by the fact that at least her daughter Adjoa has legs; she states that there are those who are born completely without legs. Therefore, she is compelled to send her daughter to school so that possibly her education can rescue her in future. If she has a good job, possibly suitors would come to her because of her education if not her body. She is cognisant of the great impact education has on life, particularly women.

It should however be noted that Adjoa, the innocent seven-year-old girl, is not so much bothered about her physique, probably because she hardly comprehends the whole ideology behind thin or curvy legs. She is able to walk a long distance from home to school without complaint and, she is able to compete in a running race at school and emerges a winner. This does not only make the mother happy but the grandmother as well or even much more. She gets excited to the extent of carrying the trophy on her back. She pledges to wash and iron Adjoa’s school uniform and actually states that possibly thin legs can also be useful.

Aidoo clearly shows the dent in some of the traditional beliefs. Legs are biological and not traditional, there would be no way the legs would predetermine a girl's ability to bear children or even become of use in childbearing. Adjoa, though younger, is able to act in a way to show her grandmother that the female body is not only limited to child-bearing. Childbirth, which is central in the traditional way of life, should not be the only factor to make a woman valuable in that sense much as the thin legs were able to defeat the rest of the runners in the race; women have other constructive roles that add value to humanity. Aidoo shows that there are varied ways through which females can carve out dignified images for themselves apart from child-birth.

Therefore, Aidoo out rightly trashes the selfish and suppressive beliefs of society which limit the value of women to only child bearing. The old woman in this context is therefore Grandmother Nana because she is grounded unto the belief that only child bearing is paramount to the existence of a woman. Kaya and the daughter Adjoa are the replica of the new woman in this context. It should be clearly observed that much as Kaya is not fully grounded on the accomplishments of women in the changing world around her, she is certain that when her daughter gets education, she would gradually get a good job and possibly get a husband because of her money. That is why even Nana states towards the end that even though some legs don't have much meat on them to carry hips, they can run. Then who knows? Thin legs can be useful.

Kaya and her daughter represent the phenomenal new woman the study explores because, Kaya is aware that unlike in the traditional set up, education can greatly improve the life of a woman irrespective of her child bearing ability. She acknowledges that education in away breaks the tough restrictions put on and around a woman, therefore her view about a woman's life is quite different from that of her mother Nana. Relatedly, Adjoa who is oblivious of societal restrictions of women is used as a demonstration to testify that legs are not only used to support strong hips that will enable a woman to have children, but that they can as well run and win a trophy. The narrator's abilities when it comes to running free her from the traditional outlook that Nana has when it comes to the abilities of a woman to give birth. Nana is convinced that school is not only a waste of time but that it is only important for females whose physique makes them deficient for child-bearing and nurturing them.

Like Heinemann (2002) opines, Aidoo analyses African women's struggle to find their rightful place in society. Dermot 2018 posits that this might be important as Aidoo may be

suggesting that the narrator may not necessarily carry on the traditions that Nana has lived her life by. This makes Adjoa a representation of the new woman who is not bound by the traditional beliefs which might be inconsequential in her life.

In fact, Marfo (2016), points out that the importance of female education has assumed the position of a discourse in most of Aidoo's works. In *The Girl Who Can*, in particular, the fact that the girl-child is a narrator reveals Aidoo's interest in choosing a voice that differs from that of the old woman, Nana, who has tied her apron-strings to the traditional limitations imposed on women. Indeed, from this angle, we realize that Nana's view of female identity formation is restricted to motherhood; i.e. the ability to give birth.

The story "Heavy Moments" also presents the two kinds of women the study explores. These women are identified through many different ways; some are set aside by their beliefs, their talk, their behaviour, their attitude and what they do, among others. Mampa represents the old woman kind while Akuba and Sarah are the new woman type. Mampa believes that women are limited when it comes to doing some professions. She is made to believe that women have prescribed traditional duties which don not include air force. She confesses (Aidoo: 26)

If I told people that you are going to learn to drive a taxi or a bus, they would think it is strange, but a brave achievement for a woman. But how do you expect me to tell anybody that you are actually going to drive an aeroplane through the skies and be believed...

The above text is vivid about what the society is accustomed to in terms of occupations. Mampa states that it would be strange to tell people that women were going to learn to drive a taxi or a bus, this is because to them it is a man's and not a woman's occupation. Therefore, Akuba and Sarah the historical females at the air force academy are a marvel not only to Mampa but also the air force staff and the fellow cadets on training. Akuba relays the various ways in which they are ridiculed at the academy by their colleagues. When they enrolled at the academy, they were the very best. This caused a scene and people wondered what women were there for. (Aidoo 20). It is also refuted by Alice Hilton (1895) who spoke favourably for equal opportunity, disregarded the canonical characterization of the New Woman in the press to try to understand the origin and significance of the stereotype amid a world that was redefining gender: Taking off certain ornamental features from 'the new woman' of current

discussions, I make out that this delightful creature is essentially a woman who is the equal of man. It is proved that even women can be anything just like men. They can effectively fit in those positions that the tradition put for men and actually come out much better than men themselves.

Two of the best candidates that year were women and it was a scene- women?

What do they want here?

What do they want here?

What do they want here?

Everybody had asked the same questions from the group captains to the recruits.

The cadet trainees cannot comprehend why those two women had in the first place been enrolled. This idea seems to shock them the same way it shocked Mampa because it was a rare occasion for women to think of such. The men try to ignore the women and assume that they are all men to no avail. The women are severally embarrassed and too despised to the extent that they complain to the director who himself confesses that he had been one of the offenders.

Ata Aidoo demonstrates the qualities of the new woman through Akuba and Sarah. Just like Mooki & Nxumalo (2020) state that the purpose of creating such women in works of literature is to credit women as innovators, pioneers and history makers with agency, autonomy and determination. The traditional society had designated particular occupations to women, an ideology with which Aidoo strongly disagrees. The fact that Akuba and Sarah do what is extra-ordinary makes them a true replica of the new woman the study explores.

Another of Aidoo's stories is "Some Global News". This story, like many in this collection, makes a woman the central character. YaaYaa, for that is the name of the main character, is a woman in her late 40s who has just resigned from her university teaching job and started her own non-governmental organisation besides having freshly divorced in order to have enough time to venture into the world. Her attitude towards life reflects the great ambition embodied in the new woman prescriptions. She has a particular approach to the clothes she wears; clothes for winter, clothes for summer and autumn respectively. She puts particular attention on the colours of the clothes that march the seasons mentioned above. She is highly educated and very well-travelled. Her commitment to work is incomparable to any African native; she is a typical new woman kind that the study prescribes. (Aidoo: 32)

I am in my late 40s and if at this stage in my adult life I don't have the courage to venture out and do something which I have wanted to do all my adult life, when can I?

Kate Hagan and YaaYaa's mother ascribe to the old woman kind. Kate is a close friend to YaaYaa but the way they approach life is different. Kate for instance does not mind so much about the food, she can even eat it cold as opposed to YaaYaa. She would not mind the kind of clothes she has to wear as long as they are fitting. Similarly, YaaYaa's mother is old and holds unto the tradition. She is not physically met but Kate makes a comment that reflects her attitude towards ladies. She states that if Yaa-Yaa's mother were present to see them sit down around a coffee table with a huge un-lady-like pot and drinking beer it would have been embarrassing to her. Therefore, the old woman type here is not only Yaa-Yaa's mother but also Kate because of what beliefs they ascribe to. It is clear that unlike the old mother, who belongs to the earlier generation and tradition, Kate is young and educated but she ascribes to the attitude of the old.

Kate cannot comprehend the things Yaa-Yaa does. Like the rest of the characters in the story, she wonders why Yaa-Yaa divorces, resigns from a university teaching job, does frequent flights abroad, mind the kinds of dresses she should wear and wear herself out among many. She still believes like the old woman that Yaa-Yaa would have still done better with what she had been. The diversity between these two types of women is what makes them different. Yaa-Yaa is that kind of woman the study sets out to examine, in fact the study critically was intended to explore more on the new woman by investigating what societal virtues she ascribes to and how she differs from the old traditional African woman and critically point out what struggles she encounters in trying to be recognised by the patriarchal society. It should be noted that among the many factors that lead the new woman to defy the old traditions, education plays a central role. Education liberates the mind, empowers the women to know more about their abilities and to discover the different ways to express their freedom amidst the repulsing male dominated society.

The next story "The Wedding Feast" presents a multi-generational stratum of grandmother, daughter and granddaughter. This arrangement of characters with varying ages and belonging to different generations enables the writer to vividly represent women characters that perceive society and feminine issues differently, across time. In this story the old woman is grandmother. She is not only physically old but also divergent on how particular issues like

marriage are handled. She insists that a daughter does not announce to her parents about her impending marriage. She states that (Aidoo: 46)

In the old days when things were done properly, a girl did not just announce that sort of thing in that sort of way. But later when I pointed that out to the child's mother, my daughter Mary, she said that things have changed.

The grandmother expresses her shock on how her daughter Mary, and later on her granddaughter were handling the marriage issues. She later narrates how the process should have been handled in a traditional way but, finally she reminds herself that things have changed. Another issue the grandmother complains about is how her grand-daughter just accepts to marry a young man whose background is not investigated. According to tradition, it would have been her duty to find out about the young man and approve him. She actually comments that education takes away some very important parts of understanding from the educated. Finally, grandmother contends about the wedding meeting that was held jointly. The grandmother argues that in the old days no self-respecting family would ask for help from their prospective in-laws in whatever way. Therefore, her perception of the whole affair is completely different from the young educated women.

Mary, grandmother's daughter and Mary's daughter belong to the category of the new woman type. In the first place they are both well educated, they are living abroad; they are rich and leading a very modern life. Mary does not mind how her daughter announces her impending marriage. She just accepts that things have changed and cautions her mother to leave everything to her. They both embrace the idea of holding a joint wedding meeting because it is what people do in the modern world. It is surprising to note that the women are central in this whole process, the male parents of either side do not appear anywhere and neither do they play any active role in the marriage preparations. Like many scholars have stated, Aidoo deliberately makes her female characters heroines and very central in her work. They are women who have put inferiority complexes behind them and are empowered to stand on their own and get things moving and as old grandmother says, things have changed. So, Mary and her daughter replicate the new woman while grandmother is the old woman. They hold different and diverse beliefs and attitudes that demonstrate that women have attained a level of liberation no matter what.

In the next story, “Choosing a moral from the World of Work”, Aidoo presents two women from different generations but the story largely represents the old woman as a repository of wisdom and her daughter who is confused about what she should do. Her confusion is demonstrated by the many different occupations she attempts doing and always fails to get happy and successful. She changes from a writer to a teacher, from a teacher to a trader, from a trader to possibly back into writing.

Aidoo compares this young woman full of confusion to her mother, a very sober, calm and patient mother. The mother has seen the world and clearly understands that unless her daughter tries out at different fields and fails she would not accept her advice. So, she lets her experience it herself in order to get the right decisions about life. In this story the old mother is a replica of knowledge while the new woman her daughter is full of confusion, inexperience and naivety but who has the instinct of daring quality and self-identity to try out what she thinks can work for her as a young lady of the modern world.

“*Lice*” is yet another of Aidoo’s stories in this collection. This story also presents two categories of the sought-after women. In the story, Sissie is a professional secondary school teacher, married and with two children, although lately abandoned by her presumably adulterous husband. Her marriage is not working out but she is held down by some traditional insights and because of her mother’s advice. Aidoo: 81;

My child, don’t complain so much. Always remember that it does not matter how bad your situation is, someone nearby is wishing they were you.

The above advice is from a strong traditional mother, who must have been grounded on the virtues of perseverance and gratitude. She knows that as long as one has been lucky to get married and officially at that, it would not be a thing to take lightly. The mother knows that marriage is as such; all women have kept in marriage not because they were happy or respected, but just because they would be ridiculed by society if they failed in marriage and they have accepted marriage challenges as their portion of life. They are not expected to complain.

Besides Sissie’s mother are the nuns who run the rural school where she teaches. The nuns, just like her mother, told her to always count her blessings. Sissie satirically recounts her blessings; blessing number one was that she had a husband, blessing number two was that she

had children- a boy and girl at that, blessing number three was that she had a job, and possibly blessing number four was that they had a car. These nuns were like her mother, they encouraged her to endure because marriage was like that elsewhere. Therefore, whenever she thought of abandoning this marriage, she would be held by such facts about the life of a married woman. At the end of the story, Sissie tries to set herself and her daughter. She fails and possibly continues to suffer, a situation which does not give women a breakthrough.

The Mother and the nuns voice the old woman in a patriarchal society, while Sissie is the new woman kind. While the old women know the challenges of marriage can only be handled by perseverance and thankfulness of what one had, Sissie the new woman finds the challenges unbecoming and thinks that since she cannot divorce then she can summarily finish her life – an attempt which is futile. This new woman is bogged down by the challenges of marriage and she feels that her marriage is as torturous as the lice in their hair. Possibly the lice here are symbolically used to reflect her life, otherwise no one would expect a young educated woman to have lice.

The eighth story in this collection is *Payments*. This story unlike the other stories analysed above is a revenge story like its name suggests. Therefore, much as there is a thread of the women categories, the story seeks the larger context based on revenge. This revenge is between women of different types; a fish seller and a medical nurse. The fish seller has too much anger for the nurse and possibly her kind but particularly because this nurse treated her badly when she had had her sick child admitted at the hospital. According to the fish seller, all the educated women are whores. She thinks that they get all their providence from seduction of men. Therefore, in the view of the study the fish seller is the old woman type, while the nurse is the new woman.

“Male-ing Names in the Sun” is also a story in this collection. The story is a narration of how the naming system would be male based. The relevant part of the story to the study is about the last part of the story named Toli Number 3. This part of the story brings out the kinds of women the study explores. A young lady Achniba who is getting married to Dr. Kwesi Shillingson is invited by her mother –in –law to have a woman talk together just before her wedding. Mrs Bessie Shillingson addresses her daughter- in- law to be as Mrs Shillingson because to her it is the convention that a married woman takes on her husband’s name but to her surprise the young lady out rightly tells her that she will not call herself such. (Aidoo:119)

“Maa, I shall not call myself Mrs Shillingson, Achniba declared.”

“Ei,” Mrs Bessie thought she had not heard right. “You mean you are not going to marry my son?” “I am,” Achniba giggled and then continued: “I am marrying Kwesi. ...I like my name. Besides, you know that as a professional woman, an architect, everybody knows me as Achniba.

In the short interaction between mother –in-law and daughter-in-law, the two women-the old and new are explicitly brought out. Mrs Bessie is the old type who ascribes to the traditional conventions; she does not expect any woman to fuss about it the way Achniba does. She is greatly shocked to hear a young woman refute that and, blatantly responding to her like that. The shock is practically expressed by her artistic fainting. She does not need to hear more of this professional woman.

Comparatively, Achniba the architect is accomplished enough. She does not need a man’s name for recognition. Everyone knows her as Achniba the architect and after all she does not love a name, she loves a person. To her there is not so much in a name. It should also be noted that if Achniba had been brought up properly in the traditional way, she would not plainly respond to her mother-in-law to be. Therefore, the beliefs, the attitude, the behaviour and all clearly put the two women in different kinds.

According to Cameron (1990), women are often explicitly prevented from speaking either by social taboos and restrictions or by the more genteel tyrannies of custom and practice. So, when Achniba speaks to her mother-in-law to be in that way, it is clear that the two women belong to different generations with different beliefs, thus Mrs Bessie is the old woman and Achniba represents the new woman.

Aidoo’s second last story in this collection is *Newly opened doors*. This story, unlike most of the previous stories, recounts the absurdity of post- colonial Ghana. They had been promised lots of opportunities in the new era, all in vain. Therefore, the phenomenon of old and new woman does not apply. Finally, the last story “Nowhere Cool” also recounts the numerous perplexities of life generally in the world which make challenges of life similar globally, thus nowhere cool. The part of the story relevant to the study is Sissie’s life. Sissie, a married African, wins a fellowship award to go and study in the USA for three years. Her friends tell her lots of bad things that happen when women go for studies, particularly finding their husbands snatched. Aidoo: 132

*“My dear sister, there have been cases where the Misses came back with her degrees and diplomas to find a brand-new wife installed by the husband’s family.”*

*“Nowhere cool, sister ain’t nowhere cool.”*

Sissie becomes a new woman because, irrespective of all the fears embodied in this move, she still goes. She is cognisant of all these challenges but she takes up the challenge and goes—many women attest her bravery. The old woman is represented through Sissie’s friends at home, Mrs Allen the lady with children in the aeroplane, and the Sisters that Sissie finds at the dinner in New York. The friends at home cannot imagine a woman taking such a huge risk as leaving a handsome husband to go away and study for three years, they would not risk that much. The lady on the plane flies regularly in order to keep in touch with her man irrespective of the risks involved in the taking of such flights. The sisters Sissie meets at the Dinner in New York confess that they would not do the same in her shoes.

The fears of all these women are entrenched in the traditional roles of a woman as a wife and as a mother. Sissie acknowledges the central role of her husband and family but as a new woman she is able to see beyond three years. The benefits of her education are very vital to her family. A woman who takes such a risk is a true new woman the artist advocates for and the study explores.

### **2.1.5 Representation of the Old and New Woman in Aidoo’s *Diplomatic Pounds***

*Diplomatic Pounds and Other Stories* (Ayebia Clarke 2012; 170) by Ama Ata Aidoo is a collection of twelve beautifully written short stories, which confirms the author’s position as a foremost writer in Africa and beyond. Treating everyday subjects with unique perspectives and a delicate style that she alone possesses, Aidoo opens up old traditions and questions long-held views with fresh views. Whether it is about the story of a woman who leaves the country of her birth swearing never to return or the story of a group of girls trapped in an alien culture where issues of feminine proportions are at variance with what they had grown up with, Aidoo shows that her sense of observation is as sharp as ever and that there is tradition in every situation that could be questioned. Ayebia still contends that this collection of 12 short stories by Ama Ata Aidoo reflects concerns with the displacement of people, particularly women, who move between two cultures: their African homeland and that of the developed world.

It should be noted that unlike in the previous three discussed texts, this collection has a diversity of concerns and therefore has very few stories which bring out the two categories of women explored by the study- it is actually only in two stories of “New Lessons” (p:1) and in “outfoxed” (45). In the story *New Lessons*, the narrator and the young women; residents of the building where the narrator takes her observation, comply with the stance of the new woman while the auntie to the narrator ascribes to the old order of the old woman. The narrator feeds the reader with the viewpoints of the other characters; the reader does not interact with any of these other young women. The reader only takes in what the narrator says. The narrator is considered to belong to the new order of women because she calls herself a rigid academic and a fierce critic supports the independence of the woman spied on. (Aidoo: 7)

As for me, old or not I am still a woman, and despite years as a notoriously rigid academic and a fierce critic, I want an old fashioned and romantically happy ending to this story.

These words from the narrator reflect that she in the first instance is very proud of her gender, and she is possibly aware of the many afflictions the women experience. Therefore, she is hysterical about the freedom of doing what she wants without ties and restrictions against women in patriarchy societies. She is not only an academic but a rigid one. She has spent her most active life abroad and this demonstrates the source of her confidence.

The woman who is pursued by the spy is considered to belong to the new woman category because; she too much as the reader does not interact with her, she seems to have some liberty because she drives a fancy maroon car, and she seems oblivious of the man following her. The reaction of the spy also suggests that the woman is not a simple one and that is why the man is very cautious of his actions. The narrator does not witness the pursuit and so does the reader.

Finally, the narrator’s auntie is considered to belong to the old kind, not only because she is old but because she is content in her African setup, in fact she is ridiculing her daughter because she had promised never to return to her homeland because it was possibly rustic and messy. Therefore, that auntie laughs at it because she still comes to work. The implication is that home is best whatsoever, she actually challenges her niece to have rather stayed home and cleared the mess other than wondering abroad to come back in the same mess after dodging it for long. So, the auntie is the one who should just accept her society and if there is

any change one can implement, then she can enforce it in her presence, in fact to her, going abroad is self-denial which does not pay out in the end.

The second and last story which relates to the study is “Out Foxed”. This story, like the previous one has a little thread in regard to the study. In the story, Esaaba is a girl who has lived a life of discord with her mother owing to her dark colour which her mother abhors because of the man who made her pregnant but did not marry her. Therefore, Esaaba, with all the displaced hostility, is the new woman. However, what is more striking about this is the fact that she is the kind who has been fortunate to study well and get two degrees from abroad. She is employed and has her own money and she is later married to a white man and actually produces light skinned children.

When Esaaba completes her first degree, her mother is unsettled because she thinks that her daughter is taking way too long to get herself a husband. (Aidoo: 51)

You know I don’t want to sound like these women who harass their daughters into marriage, but you also know that a woman is nothing unless she gets married; no matter what else she achieves in life.

It is clearly stated from Esaaba’s mother that a woman’s valued end is marriage and later motherhood. This is a belief entrenched in most of the minds of the people in patriarchal societies the kinds of societies feminist writers like Aidoo try to deconstruct by creating women characters whose views are perverse. She precisely tells her daughter that education will not lead her anywhere if she cannot get a man for herself. In response to her mother’s query Esaaba says: (Aidoo:53)

The dialogue between these women distinctively sets them apart. While Esaaba’s mother worries so much about her daughter’s failure to get married, the daughter expresses her disgust in the tone of response, she makes the reader interpret that marriage is not her priority because accordingly, Esaaba knows the benefit of education is much more than marriage and if anything, it creates a woman more avenues of getting a better spouse. Esaaba after two years meets Paul. They marry and have children who are lighter in skin than their aunties and

uncles. In fact, when she finally agrees to marry Paul, she informs her mother who is overjoyed thinking that her daughter had finally become reasonable. (Aidoo: 54),

Esaaba, my own Esaaba, you've been reasonable for once and acted on my advice... and you say he is a white man?

The whole excitement in the above text together with the other instances in the story reflects that Esaaba's mother is the old woman while her daughter ascribes to the views of the new woman.

Awo is another woman who belongs to the new woman type. She, like Esaaba is educated and employed. She has also left her motherland Africa to come to study and find a good job for herself. Her financial independence is portrayed when she just pays the bill at a café for both of them without any fretting; she is above the level of an African woman whose livelihood is largely dependent upon the husband. (Aidoo: 56)

By some unspoken agreement from the earliest days of their friendship, the two young women never split the bill whenever they met and had anything to drink or eat.

Guillory (2006) postulates that the heroines often migrate from rural to urban areas, from Africa to Europe or America, and back again—attempting to reconstitute themselves and to renegotiate space that will accommodate their hybridized identities. The space that Aidoo illumines is one in which multiple, competing identities collide as they experience the ever-changing, fluctuating dynamics.

In all the texts explored by the study, from *Our Sister Killjoy* to *Diplomatic Pounds*, the main characters are very educated women. Most of them have travelled abroad or live there, specifically the new woman type and live in the urban areas as opposed to the old type of women who have embraced motherhood, being wives as central in their livelihood and most of these live in the rural setting where tradition is worshipped. The heroines are Sissie in our *Sister Killjoy*, Essie in *Changes a Love Story*.

In the short stories in *The Girl Who Can* and *Diplomatic Pounds* are heroines an indication that Ama Ata Aidoo is a woman writer who demonstrates that women can, irrespective of the unlevelled grounds laid for them in patriarchy societies. Aidoo does not contend to the view that the success of a woman should be gauged by her ability to get married and have children.

To her, the success of women does not lie in their ability to reproduce but rather to become productive in other aspects that benefit humanity and promote independence and progress of a nation.

### **2.3 Conclusion**

This chapter presents the difference between the old and new woman characters in selected fiction by Ama Ata Aidoo. In *changes a love story*, Esi Sekyi and Opokuya are the new women characters because of what they believe their education and occupations compels them to exercise an elevated level of freedom and analysis of life like the feminist theory which embraces motherhood but call for shared responsibility in the raising of the children. These women are both married but, one is struggling to balance marriage and personal career, the other finds it too hard to bear her husband and so she divorces her husband Oko but sadly marries a man with another woman. This implies that women hardly find life easy outside marriage and possibly women empowerment should be a joint responsibility for both men and women. While Fusena, Esi's mother and grandmother as well as Oko', sisters and mother are the old woman kind because they ascribe to patriarchy tendencies of celebrating men and cordially accepting their duties of being wives and mothers. Thiam (1978:118) recognises that male domination is one of the tragedies the African woman suffers. Therefore, the narrator being a female joins the voice of feminists for women to join hands and support one another in the struggle to liberate themselves from the strong holds of such enervating traditions of patriarchies. What happens in the story "New lessons" exemplifies what goes on in the lives of the new woman, domination, subjugation and denial of freedom among others. A woman who stands up against these challenges is named an outcast and is alienated all through her society. The new woman however does not give up her quest; she braves them against every odd which is pertinent in all meaningful struggles and Esi does this right.

In *Our Sister Killjoy*, Sissie is the new woman because she ascribes to the belief that women must be liberated from traditional as well as colonial prejudices. She too is well educated and refuses to be compromised by euro-centrism. She dispels the tendency of mimicking the whites in order to get favours, and does not find it necessary to stay abroad. She strongly believes that she can liberate herself and Africa as well while at home. She is not like Marija who thinks that her contribution to her country is to be a good wife and later on be a good mother. She takes motherhood as an obligatory female responsibility and therefore carries her son Adolf everywhere she goes but feels guilty for leaving him a lone at home and for desiring to be alone.

In the short-story *The Girl Who Can and Other Stories* all the women with education, who live in the urban centres and who have Government jobs are new women characters. They do what is an exclusion of men like Akuba and Sarah and YaaYaa among others. These women have traits that resemble those in *Changes* and *Our Sister Killjoy*. The old women characters here also look at a woman in terms of her ability to prove a good wife who submits to her husband no-matter what, embrace motherhood and worship male superiority. This is exactly what happens in the short story, *Diplomatic Pounds*; the traits displayed are similar except that on some occasions, the old women are portrayed as repositories of wisdom. Therefore, it is observed that women empowerment and liberation in patriarchal societies world over remains a nightmare until men are part of the struggle.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES THAT AMA ATA AIDOO USES TO DEPICT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW WOMAN CHARACTERS IN THE SELECTED TEXTS**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter investigates the diverse narrative techniques Ama Ata Aidoo uses to depict the differences between the old and the new woman characters. Aidoo uses a multiplicity of narrative techniques that create various shades of meaning in the interpretation of her fiction. Such techniques include juxtaposition, setting, use of female friendships or collective female solidarity, use of dialogue, commentator and or participatory character, and use of frame stories among others. Feminists believe that language is not only a tool for communicating meaning but also an instrument of ideology. To all the feminists, language is constructed by a society and therefore it cannot be free from the prevalent socio-ideologies. The author uses these characters to paint her perceptions of feminism amidst the African patriarchal set up. The contexts created by the use of technique define the circumstance of Aidoo's fiction, and reflect character perception and intention. The following section looks at these various levels of perception created by use of the narrative techniques in the selected works of Ama Ata Aidoo

#### **3.2. Use of Juxtaposition**

Glen Warren (2011) defines juxtaposition as a literary device wherein the author places a person, concept, place, idea or theme parallel to another. The purpose of juxtaposing two directly or indirectly related entities close together in literature is to highlight the contrast between the two and compare them. This literary device is usually used for etching out a character in detail, creating suspense or lending a rhetorical effect. Typically, the two elements being juxtaposed have differences and the juxtaposition is meant to highlight contrasting effects. Juxtaposition is a literary language that compares settings, statements, or just about anything else and shows how two concepts differ. Aidoo uses this technique in almost every text where the old and new woman characters are presented. She juxtaposes characters, settings and concerns among others. It should be noted that the previous chapter

used contrast of the new and old woman severally but in this chapter, juxtaposition is exhaustively explored.

In *Changes a love story*, juxtaposition is diverse; different women characters are aligned side by side as well as the men characters, settings and opinions. It should be made clear that this groupings of old and new accrue from the feminist theory which portends that women who are conscious of the social plight have tried to live and behave differently from the old traditional strong holds of patriarchal dispensations. Esi Sekyi the protagonist, Fusena and Okopuya are paralleled against Oko's mother and sisters, the wives of the patriarchs of Nima, and Nana, Esi's mother. It is important to note that much as Esi, Opokuya and Fusena are educated; their level of freedom varies. While Esi enjoys the pleasures of a highly paying job at the urban department as a statistician-a job even coveted by men, Opokuya works as a mid-wife and struggles to balance both career and family. The narrator says that even Opokuya would envy the freedom and free expression by Esi, while Esi would sip a beer, Opokuya would do with a cup of tea. Esi does not want to run her family the traditional way of having many children and practising motherhood. She expresses independence even in Bed, she would only have sex if she chose too and this prompts her husband to rape her in order to reassert himself as a man in a patriarchal community. Esi owns a car even when it is old; it is her car while Opokuya quite often fights over the family car with the husband.

Opokuya is overworked, she in fact complains of her children who only wait for their mother to return from work to do all the laundry and cooking. This in a way points to the fact that being a liberated woman is achieved at a cost, Esi cannot stay with a man who feels that his manhood is marginalised or else she will risk being raped and embarrassed every now and again. Putting Esi and Opokuya side by side, Aidoo wants to evaluate the efficacy of woman freedom and the cost at which it is gained in a patriarchal society. Opokuya demonstrates what it takes to balance marriage and career but all she reaps is exhaustion. She notices that her attempts are geared at making others happy at her expense.

Fusena Ali's wife is another modern woman character whose dreams of ever becoming a professional are brought to end by marriage. Araba (2011), states that she experiences the derogatory effects of culture and religion; but she is unable to do anything about them. She is convinced by Ali her husband to stay home and become a true woman in patriarchal prescriptions. She is confined at home having children and taking care of her husband. She is ideally a true mother and wife. What is disappointing to her however is that Ali her husband

who prevented her from ever achieving her dreams while at the university is the same Ali that falls for Esi a woman of career. This is very frustrating to her. It is also fascinating to note that Ali has to seek Fusena's approval before he has to marry Esi. Even when she permits her husband to marry Esi she cannot hide her envy about Esi's status as a woman of career.

Therefore, through the juxtaposition of the women against each other, Aidoo communicates that to be a woman of career in a patriarchal set up has its diverse challenges. It is true Esi stands out as a woman of status, but she soon realises that this is a nightmare as she has to endure the fangs of called nights alone. It is apparent that the joys of a woman are complete when she is happily living with her man. This in a way depicts how the empowerment of women in the world is constrained and needs broad and subtle ways of influencing the men partners to embrace this movement otherwise it is hitting a dead end and continued alienation of the new woman.

Another set of juxtaposition that represents the new woman effectively is through Esi and her husband Oko. While Esi is highly educated; two degrees at that, employed as a statistician at the urban department, has a car and a house, Oko her husband is only a school teacher with a meagre income. Much as he enjoys the pleasure of leading an income pressure free life and or marriage, he is mocked by his fellow men that push him beyond his wits to rape his own wife in an attempt to re assert himself as a man. Oko's gesture in raping Esi is to make her aware that no matter what status she has acquired, Oko is still a man and can whatsoever have her.

The new woman phenomenon here is clearly brought out through the fact that a woman can also have an elevated status than her man. Esi is better educated, better employed and therefore earns more than her husband Oko. This in a patriarchal society is just not practical no wonder this marriage between Esi and Oko cannot hold. The analyst denotes that freedom, Education, and high income among others in women are completely incompatible with marriage. When Esi marries Ali because of the presupposed freedom and liberty, she forgets that this comes with a cost and still makes her celebrated freedom void of love, joy and happiness. This kind of analysis concurs with that of Araba (2011) the main characters in the novel are usually educated women, who encounter conflicts that stem from the problem of reconciling the changing roles and responsibilities of Ghanaian women with that of the traditionally accepted ones. The difficulties encountered are marital, political, professional, social and sexual in nature.

Another aspect of juxtaposition is brought out through Oko's mother, sisters and Esi's mother. These characters belong to the category of the old woman. They wholesomely ascribe to the patriarchy tendencies. They celebrate male supremacy and see nothing wrong with Oko's acts such as forcefully having his woman. The introduction of marital rape raises the issue of male sexual dominance, as it expresses and actualizes the distinctive power of men over women. The concept of marital rape is quite new to the Ghanaian society. It names a probable situation women face in their various marriages but are unable to name or afraid to speak about since sexual intercourse is the prerogative of the man. Having stated in an argument that "you cannot go around claiming an idea or item was imported into a given society unless you could also conclude that to the best of your knowledge, there is not, and never was any word or phrase in that society's indigenous language which describes that idea or item"

Esi's mother and grandmother cannot comprehend the aspect of marital rape; this is because they believe that a woman entirely belongs to her man while Esi knows that she owns her body and should be responsible with whatever happens to it. This idea about marriage and all its concerns is perceived differently by these categories of women. Oko's sisters believe that it is improper for a woman to have only one child, they actually call it insecure and at different occasions propose to their brother to have children outside the wedlock an idea which Oko brushes off. Vital to note also in that regard, Oko's sisters complain about the status of their in-law when they find out that Oko's wife earns more income than their brother. These are women that belong to old kind of women and think it is false for a woman to earn more than the husband. This is the reason why according to the feminist theory particularly in Africa, the struggle must be jointly fought. The men have to appreciate the positive attitude the school of thought advocates for. The women and men have to come to the same table and agree to work it out together, ironing out all the causes of affliction, the women need to know that a family is a strong unit of a society which influences holistic development. They should appreciate the fact that child bearing is pertinent in the continuity of mankind and that the education of a woman should empower the man rather than threatening him.

The other aspect of juxtaposition that exists between the women characters is for example about Esi's cousins, her mother in-law says that there are no such things as cousins, she in fact tells Esi out rightly that all children are related are brothers and sisters, she orders her not again to say such things as cousins. Therefore, the beliefs, perceptions and attitudes of Esi

and her in-laws completely differ because of the changes that have been imposed on her life by education.

Finally, setting is yet another aspect that brings out juxtaposition of the characters which gradually represents the old and new. It should be noted that most of the new women characters reside in urban areas, live in bungalows and apartments as opposed to the old women who mostly dwell in the rural set up. The new women type resides in the towns and cities because they are employed in government establishments and or are running big businesses like Esi, Opokuya and Fusena respectively. These kinds of women are juxtaposed by the old kinds who stay in their rural homes playing their major roles of being wives and mothers at that. They do not restrict their child bearing role and they obediently look after their husbands and family at large. The level of resilience that the old women exhibit is what keeps them holding their marriages as opposed to the likes of Esi who are over conscious of their bodies and rights at that. All in all, Aidoo deliberately puts all the characters side by side to fully make the readers aware of the differences which effectively develop the two women categories the study explores.

In the novel *Our Sister Killjoy*, Sissie the protagonist is presented side by side with several characters in the novel. In the first instance she is put in the limelight as a first female to acquire such a grant to study in Europe in fact Sammy the black man at the ambassador's home says that she is lucky to have that chance. The implication here is that there are many females who would wish to have such a coveted chance but they cannot get it. Therefore, in making Sissie get this golden chance, Aidoo juxtaposes her with the other females who are not as lucky and stresses the importance of Sissie as a character in a novel but specifically as a woman. This strength of character in Sissie is progressively built until the end of the novel.

Another instance where Sissie is put side by side with another character is at the ambassador's home where she is invited for dinner. Sissie is contrasted with Sammy who in every way has been indoctrinated in the glorification of the imperialists and is a concrete euro centrist; in fact the narrator says that Sammy tried hard to impress the ambassador and his wife by trying to speak fluent German and to laugh even when there was nothing to laugh at throughout the dinner. (Aidoo: 9) Sissie on the contrast portrays an attitude that expresses her mental wonder; in fact to her all this attention is overdone and she does not even enjoy the meal per se. she does not see why Sammy should be over excited about anything; she actually thinks that Sammy had specifically been invited to make Sissie acknowledge the weight of

her luck. Therefore, the character of Sammy is juxtaposed against Sissie's to satirise him- he is a man and is made to play a ridiculous role to make the character of Sissie shine brightly like that of a woman who has outgrown the taunts of petty things like worshipping of the white supremacy.

While in Europe Sissie stands out among all black students and in fact, she would always draw crowds to herself. It is mentioned that most of the black students were always males and who would be fluent speakers of German. (Aidoo:49) Sissie does not speak German at all but all the same she is there and she is able to influence crowds. She acknowledges the fact that she is African and that there is nothing wrong being one. Finally, when she meets Marija the author does it deliberately to juxtapose the historical origins of Marija to that of the experiences of Sissie. Sissie, she claims, "is a little Black woman, who if things were not what they should have been...would not have been there [in Germany,] walking where the Fuhrer's feet had trod" (Aidoo: 46). Marija serves as a metaphor for European women. By refusing to stay in Europe, Sissie rejects Euro centrism and its feministic mode of liberation.

The narrator further juxtaposes varied ideas between these women like motherhood as a strong hold for all patriarchal societies. Marija is a mother and wife to big Adolf a mine worker. She says that as a mine worker, he would work up to midnight. This implies that Marija is most of the time too lonely to the extent of getting perverted and getting attracted to Sissie an attitude which disgusts Sissie. Aidoo is making a strong comment here that marriage and motherhood do not alone make a true woman that is why Marija in most of the cases coveted Sissie for her education and career. She regrets the fact that she was never lucky to get better education and only hopes that young Adolf would be educated to enjoy the privileges of the highly learned. Marija is a mother and is bound by the responsibility to care and keep young Adolf besides being in a marriage that is boring.

In all these instances like previously noted, the author effectively brings out Sissie as the new woman not bound by any body's beliefs. She is an educated woman the reason why she has travelled to Europe besides being a woman of career and having ideals of self-liberation far from the traditional labels of a woman. Marija is the old woman character because unlike Sissie, she does not have any career; she is tied into a boring marriage and is bound by motherhood to keep with young Adolf wherever she goes even when she would have loved to be alone. In fact, when she is tempted to feel like leaving young Adolf alone, she calls it

blasphemy for a mother to even think like that. So Marija is the old woman and this comes out clearly and effectively through the use of juxtaposition.

In *The Girl Who Can and other stories* is a collection of eleven short stories in which where the main concern of the study; the new and old woman characters are effectively represented through Juxtaposition. Juxtaposition here is intended to emphasise the power and breakthrough the new woman has achieved. Therefore, Aidoo juxtaposes these women against their fellow women who ascribe to different views of womanhood and also against men who criticise ability of the new woman.

In the first story *She Who Would Be King*, Aidoo presents three kinds of women Adjoa Moji, her daughter and her eighty-six-year-old mother. It should be noted that Adjoa Moji and her daughter belong to the new brand of women. Adjoa is a professor and a law faculty dean at the university where she teaches and, her daughter is the one who prospectively becomes the president of the united states of Africa. In the story, Adjoa is said to have been one to be the president, but does not become one because of the male dominated society which could not let a woman be. In factor the narrator clearly states that *I do not think men of this country will ever let a woman be their president*, this is why even when her daughter becomes the president and it is presented prospectively.

The juxtaposition here however is brought out through a male commentator who is also said to have interacted with girl's mother at her young age. This implies the ideals of new women who would not see patriarchy tendencies limiting them what so ever. The eighty-six-year-old woman is presented as someone who has seen it all and does not complain as long as she has her daily cares. She is spent and no longer has any complaints about the place of a woman in society that is why she is just presented to simply contrast the age of the women and their dreams. The young have the zeal and energy to fight for their rights and place in society through accomplishments enhanced by their education and power.

The next story whose title is a title to the collection of the stories, *A Girl Who Can*, presents women characters of different ages; Nana the oldest and a grandmother, Kaya Nana's daughter, and, Adjoa Kaya's daughter. The juxtaposition in this story emphasises the position and role of a woman in society dominated by men. The narrator presents the stronger views of what an ideal woman is and should be whatsoever. She makes her point by criticising the body of her granddaughter; she insists that if one has to be born a woman, she should be

come along with proper legs which would have strong calves to hold strong hips which would eventually enable her to carry her baby.

To Nana the physical body of a woman is central in child bearing and she is convinced that a woman with thin legs is as good as nothing. It should be noted however that the narrator deliberately challenges Nana's view by making Adjoa run and win a trophy for the school. The juxtaposition comes out strongly through the even thin legs can views held by the grandmother and the view held by the narrator. At the end of the story, Adjoa has proven that even thin legs can be useful, thus ridiculing the fact that woman can be only judged by their physical appearance. To Nana there is no use of a woman who is not created to bear children because women are only meant to be wives and later on become mothers. The fact that the girl-child is a narrator reveals Aidoo's interest in choosing a voice that differs from that of the old woman tied to the stronghold of patriarchal beliefs. Marfo (2016)

The next story, "Heavy Moments" also presents the two kinds of women the study explores. The narrator juxtaposes the old and new women characters by setting them side by side through their beliefs, their talk, their behaviour, their attitude and what they do, among others. Mampa represents the old woman kind while Akuba and Sarah are the new woman type. Mampa believes that women are limited when it comes to doing some professions. She is made to believe that women have prescribed traditional duties which do not come anywhere to things of air force as she confesses (Aidoo: 26)

Mampa states that it would be strange to tell people that women were going to learn to drive a taxi or a bus, this is because to them it is a man's and not a woman's occupation. Therefore, Akuba and Sarah the historical females at the air force academy are a marvel not only to Mampa but also the air force staffs and the fellow cadets on training. Akuba relays the various ways in which they are ridiculed at the academy by their colleagues. When they enrolled at the academy, they were the very best. This caused a scene and people wondered what women were there for. Ata Aidoo demonstrates the qualities of the new woman through Akuba and Sarah. The complaints of the old woman and the men cadets and staff at the air force make Sarah and Akuba the kinds of new woman Aidoo advocates for. Mampa is unquestionably the old kind woman. This is expressed effectively through the juxtaposition of the characters beliefs, attitude and actions among others. Sarah and Akuba think about what it takes to be flight pilots; they do not think about their gender and what the other

characters comment about them, they have a dream to achieve and nothing can prevent them not even the harassment and ridicule from the men at the air force.

“Some Global News” is another story in this collection; in this story YaaYaa a forty-year-old woman. This woman is extraordinary in her way of doing things; her actions are what juxtapose her against women of her generation and her actions leave every one awed. She is well educated and a university lecturer, a job which places her above any common or traditional woman. She surprises everyone when she radically resigns from her university job. She does not only do this but she also divorces so that she can have ample time to run her personal non- governmental organisation. Her attitude towards life, her beliefs and the way she does her things is juxtaposed to those of her friend Kate and her mother. Kate and Yaa’s mother cannot comprehend her, they sometimes even fear to approach her. Her behaviour is completely alien to her friend Kate, her mother and even the people in her society her husband and children inclusive.

Aidoo does not make her new woman hard to identify because she juxtaposes her effectively. The new woman here is highly educated; she is well paid and enjoys privileges of a high status as opposed to her friend and her mother. It should be noted that her friend Kate, irrespective of her education, approaches life traditionally like Yaa’s mother. Therefore, like previously observed, juxtaposition effectively brings out the two women.

The next story “The Wedding Feast” presents a multi-generational stratum of grandmother, daughter and granddaughter. These women belong to different age groups and therefore different approaches to life. It should right away be noted that the mother and daughter ascribe to modernity and hold feminine tendencies which are opposed to those held by the grandmother. Their conflict largely originates on marriage and how it is handled. The mother Mary and her daughter are juxtaposed against the grandmother in all aspects of life, In the story, the grandmother rises issues about how marriage is announced, according to her there is a traditional procedure which must strictly be followed but to her awe Marys daughter just announces her impending marriage to her parents and nothing is said or done to challenge it. What is more shocking to the grandmother is when the family of the bride decide to hold a joint meeting with the groom’s family, her reaction to this is very strange especially when the two sides disagree on how to prepare a spinach stew. The mothers of the groom and bride get into an unnecessarily hot exchanged that almost leads them to clutching at each other’s throat

a very shameful gesture. These differences of the old and new woman clearly come out because of the use of Juxtaposition.

“Choosing – a Moral from the World of Work” is a story that right away juxtaposes a mother against her daughter. These two differ in almost every aspect, but what is unique in this set is that Aidoo casts the old kind of woman as calm, patient, reserved and very wise as opposed to her daughter who could not settle down until she has changed occupations without attaining success in any. As much as she is fond of writing she cannot settle for writing because it can sustain her financially. Therefore, she takes to teaching which she soon quits because of the same reason and finally goes trading where she makes the gravest mistakes and losses.

The narrator all the while presents the mother as accommodative to her daughter as possible, she allows to be her confidant who does not decide for her, she only lets her daughter wander from occupation to occupation until she is able to internalise her problem and come to terms with her mother that “if we are looking something, then it might better to start from where we know best.” The old woman in this story stands out because of her character. She is calm and very wise as opposed to her daughter the new woman who is full of ambition and is finally run by emotion rather than logic.

The next story “Lice” juxtaposes the old and new woman majorly by their perspectives about life and marriage in particular. The new woman is Sissie because she is educated employed as a secondary school teacher and particularly because she finds the huddles of married life disheartening. The old woman here is presented through the voices of Sissie’s mother and the nuns who run the secondary school where Sissie teaches. While the mother and nuns believe that life is about perseverance and gratitude for what one has achieved in life, Sissie always complains of the few dissatisfactions she has encountered in life. To the old woman life means the will to move on when the going is tough while Sissie goes to an extent of attempting suicide. The old women know that possibly there is no sweetness anywhere and that one is better when she learns to live with the deficiency at hand. Therefore, the juxtaposition here is used to expose the deficiencies in the new woman and the strength of age and wisdom amongst the old kinds of women which is brought very effectively.

“Payments” is a story that latently presents the old and new woman. In this story the juxtaposition comes through the attitude that the fish seller who in this case is the old woman.

She implies that all educated women are mean, arrogant and whores because of how they relate with the rest of community particularly the working type like fish seller. She is so spiteful because of how easy their life is, she actually says *I hate bitterly all the women whose lives are so easy that they can never need anything* (Aidoo: 1997:96) on page 104 this woman Ekuwa goes on to say *Who are these ladies? How were they born? What did God especially bless them with? What did he put between their legs?* As much as the reader does not even meet the other woman, he is able to denote the level of hate and disgust Ekuwa holds for her. She almost implies that it is because of such women that Ekuwa and her likes have had it rough in life. Therefore, the juxtaposition here is represented through the words of Ekuwa; they express the magnitude of the hate that exists within the old woman for the new one.

“Male-ing Names in the Sun” is the story which juxtaposes a young girl about to get married with her mother-in-law. The mother -in-law like the bride to be is educated but she subscribes to the old patriarchal tendencies; she believes and expects that when a woman gets married she assumes her husband’s sir name which is not the case with the bride to be, she out rightly tells her mother-in-law that she cannot call herself Mrs Shillingson because she is a professional woman, an architect for that and everybody knows her as Achniba. She does not need a man’s name for recognition. Everyone knows her as Achniba the architect and after all she does not love a name, she loves a person. Therefore, the difference in attitude, the bravery and expression put these women in a different realm of life which is as a result of effective use of juxtaposition.

The very last story in *The Girl Who Can* collection is “No Where Cool”. In this story, Sissie the new woman is juxtaposed to several other women in the story whose perspectives about life ascribe to the old woman as defined in the study. In the first place, when Sissie is set to go to the US after she has won herself a fellowship award that would take her for three years, her friends at home tell her discouraging stories of women who have gone for studies but only came to find their husbands with a new woman and such related scares. While on the flight to America she encounters a woman with her two children on her way to meet her husband because it is not safe for her marriage to keep away from each other. Then finally when she has arrived and is invited for dinner, the young women she meets their attest to her strong character, they actually say that they would not do the same in her shoes; leaving her husband and children in a distance like that.

The diverse juxtaposition by Aidoo is intended to put Sissie the new woman in the lime light, the risks she takes and the vision she has is what makes her a new woman. Her friends at Mrs Allen in the plane and, the young ladies at the Dinner in New York all have fears entrenched in the traditional roles of a woman as a wife and as a mother. Sissie acknowledges the central role of her husband and family but as a new woman she is able to see beyond three years. This was effectively brought out through Juxtaposition.

Aidoo's *Diplomatic Pounds*, is a collection of twelve short stories treating everyday subjects with unique perspectives and a delicate style Ayebia (2012; 170) It should be noted that out of the twelve stories only two stories; "New Lessons" (p:1) and in "outfoxed" (45) have threads of the explored new and old women in the study. Therefore, the evidence of juxtaposition is as minimally used just like the latent representation of the major aspect of the study. In the story "New Lessons" the juxtaposition is largely between the narrator and her aunt. The narrator treats her homeland with disgust; since she flies abroad with intentions of never returning because it does not suit her class and taste. She is a highly educated woman who has ample finances to grant her ample lifestyle. This is as opposed to her aunt who is content with her village life, customs and beliefs without any complaints in fact she challenges her daughter that she should make her homeland the kind of place she fancies it to be. "You never wanted to live here anyway so who should have organised this society for you along more healthy lines." Aidoo (2012:3)

It is clear to note that the two women hold different views about life, the narrator thinks that by running away from reality would change anything; the country she leaves behind is the same country she finds when she returns the idea challenged by her old aunt. This brings out the idea that the elderly are usually repositories of wisdom as opposed to the new woman who much as she is getting conscious of herself and the injustice against her gender, she seems to lose touch with reality. She actually accepts her aunt's challenge when she later comments that; "I never managed to my country seem like an attractive for either of my two daughters or my son to visit." Aidoo 2012:3. The variation in the way these women look at things in general puts the aunt to the category of the new woman and her niece to that of the new woman kind. This is as a result of juxtaposition.

The final story analysed in this collection is "Out Foxed. This story like the previous one "New Lessons" has few instances of the sought-after aspect of the New and Old woman but juxtaposition as a narrative technique holds. In this story the main juxtaposition is based on

the values, attitudes and belief of two main characters; Esaaba and her mother. The mother and daughter aspect is used by Ama in her fiction to bring out the views and notions they hold. Esaaba's mother is the old woman type who is juxtaposed against her daughter in various ways. In the first instance Esaaba's mother attaches a lot of importance on ulterior appearances like skin colour, she uses this excuse to disparage her daughter from her other light skinned siblings, she also worries so much when her daughter takes long to get married. She believes that marriage and later on motherhood play a central role in the life of every woman. This explains why she overtly gets excited when her daughter announces her intention to marry and marry a white man at that and she is extremely overjoyed to learn that her daughter produces children who are even more light skinned than their aunts and uncles.

The juxtaposition here is majorly brought out clearly through the values each of the women characters attach to these different aspects of life. Esaaba, who is lucky to be well educated knows better than her mother that getting married is a factor that can always be attended too whenever one gets an opportunity that education would instead create more opportunities of not only getting married but also getting better spouses. Finally, Esaaba knows better than the mother that skin colour has nothing to do with the success of humanity, that is why when she produces her light skinned children, she is eager to show them to her mother to challenge her naivety about such prejudices in life. It is unfortunate that her mother passes on before she could see her white grandchildren.

The hysterical tendency Esaaba's mother expresses is yet another aspect to explore as a distinction between the ideologies these women hold about life. While Esaaba approaches her life with utmost sobriety, she does not hurry to get married and she tries as much as possible to hold her anger whenever her mother gets anxious about such life aspects. Aidoo (2012: 53) "But Mama, women getting Master's is so common these days ... and even Doctorates," Esaaba said this packing as much fatigue and boredom as possible into her voice. Observing the nagging questions Esaaba's mother puts before her, it is clear that she labours to harbour all her mother's un-called for worries. They are uncalled for in Esaaba's perspective because she knows that her education more than anything enables her to rise in life generally. All this comes out through juxtaposition. The reader delves into all it requires to analyse the difference between the New and Old woman presented in Aidoo's fiction.

### **3.3 The use of setting to represent Old and New Woman Characters in Aidoo's Selected Texts**

Setting is a literary element that has been defined by many scholars but, it should be noted that they all come to what is included in a few of the scholars' views below selected. The Encyclopædia Britannica (2010) defines setting as the time, place, physical details and circumstances in which a situation occurs. Settings include the background atmosphere, or environment in which characters live and move, usually physical characteristics of the surroundings. It states that setting enables the reader to see how an author captures the attention of the reader by painting a mental picture using words.

Watson (1991) stipulates that Setting can reflect or emphasize characterization. The design of a character's room—furniture arrangement, wall decorations, even closet contents—can all suggest something about their preferences, values, and personality. Social, economic, and political context also affect characterization. Well-developed characters are products of their circumstances, so they have traits, values, and beliefs that were shaped by their environment.

Roberts (1982), remarks that setting is one of the major forces governing the circumstances of characters that experience life and try to resolve their conflict. He also states that setting may be a kind of pictorial language, a means by which the author makes statements much as a painter uses certain images as ideas in a painting. He further posits that setting may intersect with characters as one of the means by which authors underscore the importance of place, circumstances and time upon human growth and change. Ryken (1992) relates that the setting of the story is much more complex, more interesting and more important to the meaning of a story than is often realised. He stipulates that the most customary function of setting is to serve as an appropriate container for the action and characters that are placed into it. Ryken concurs with Burke (1962) who states that it is a principle of drama that the nature of acts and agents should be consistent with the nature of the scene. He further opines that a scene is a fit container for the act.

The setting of a story gives readers a sense of place. Including various different elements of setting can help create a clear, vivid picture in readers' minds and can help provide a rich background to develop plot and characters. A good setting builds a framework that brings other narrative elements into play. It can create a mood and establish the context (like time period or universe) where your story is unfolding. It can also supply important elements to

your story, like landmarks or historical sites. A good setting can even provide plot devices, turning your geographical location into its own entity or antagonist that has an effect on your main characters' actions.

Therefore, looking at Aidoo's fiction selected for the study, it is clear that setting plays a big role in exposing the milieu characters are involved in which results in the presence of the Old and new woman. Watson (1991) explains milieu as that which encompasses the immediate physical and social environment that an event occurs or develops in. Such contexts are jobs, neighbourhood, and family, as well as broader social contexts, including social groups, community, cultural and social institutions, and public sentiments, beliefs, and crises.

In "Changes a Love Story" the major characters are defined and affected by their setting. In the first place, the setting is in a post-colonial Ghana a particularly patriarchal society still struggling with the effects of colonialism and a fresh encounter with the feminist movement at play. It should be noted that Aidoo as well as the characters she creates are grappling with the social injustices perpetuated by the traditional set up against her gender. The nation has acquired an education system which has reasonably empowered some women to attain higher levels of education and skills that are employable in various government establishments. Therefore, while exploring setting the study handles entirety

Essie the protagonist of the novel is a statistician at the Government Urban development Department, she is well paid, and she has a car and with her job comes an apartment where she lives with her husband. Essie would love to have freedom and liberty to do as she pleases for instance, she does not want to have many children, and she wants to engage in her conjugal rights when she chooses. She is a new woman. The environment which is created encourages the nuances of femininity at least in that personal accord even when the majority of characters surrounding her right from her husband, in laws, mother and grandmother are completely opposed to her perspective of life.

Regardless of her social status, Essie lives in an urban setting. She is always travelling in and out of Ghana representing the government, she arranges and or is involved in various conferences just as any well accomplished woman. Therefore, the setting in which Essie is created enhances the idea of a woman very much liberated and conscious of the several injustices geared towards her gender. When she decides to divorce her husband Oko, she is trying to free herself from such brutalities of marital rape and from other prejudices from her

fellow women like Oko's sisters and Mother. She endeavours to take such a move because she is majorly aware that she can sustain her well-being even if she sooner discovers that single life does not give her the kind of happiness she craves for.

It should be noted that all women in the category of the new woman have been given an atmosphere and a life that allows them a little more freedom than that of the old type. Fusena a professional medic tries to blend the traditional roles of a woman and that of the new breed but she later finds out that it is exhausting but the exterior set up is empowering just as is opined by Watson that characters are products of their circumstances, so they have traits, values, and beliefs that were shaped by their environment.

The old woman considerably is placed mainly in the rural set up. Most of the characters of this category with the exception of Okopuya exist in a rural set up- Oko's sisters and mother live in the country side and this has an impact on their beliefs and values. They for example believe that a man should not marry a woman who earns more than her husband, they believe that a word cousin does not exist in an extended family- when Essie mentions that her daughter would do well with her cousins, her mother-in-law rebuffs her saying all the other children are brothers and sisters to Ogyaanowa. Essie's mother and grandmother fail to comprehend marital rape; they are shocked when their daughter talks about it, they say that the word does not even exist in their mother tongue. All these attitudes, beliefs and values which set the woman characters apart are influenced by the circumstances in which they live. It should be noted that Aidoo is deliberately aware of the women characters she is creating; she ensures that their views resonate with their surrounding and thus an effective way of depicting both the new and old woman characters.

In the novel *our Sister Killjoy*, Sissie who is the protagonist and the new woman, is created in a setting that supports the views, values and attitudes of the new woman. Sissie is of course well educated and it is because of her education that she is selected to go to Europe on a student exchange program. Aidoo accords Sissie a status that befits a new woman. Her experience in the new environment does not challenge her, she quickly adapts to her surroundings. While in Europe she encounters Marija a German woman who has some underlying tendencies of lesbianism but Sissie quickly shuns Marija's attitude and she is not corrupted by her temptation. As already noted, social groups, community, cultural and social institutions, and public sentiments, beliefs, and crises constitute to setting. Therefore, the fact that Sissie does not stoop to the new challenges is enough to identify her as a new woman.

She right away resists the likely traps from the start of the novel to the end. The Ambassador's treatment does not seem to be strong signal to pull her towards their side. Some scholars of Aidoo's *Our Sister Killjoy* have looked at Sissie as a character created to repulse imperialism and its likely traps into mental slavery in fact Lazarus (2012) states that she was able to see the European intentions behind those scholarship grants and study abroad. This is so because she scoffs at their intentions from the start to the end.

Marija is the old woman who is set in the western environment. She is stuck in a marriage with a miner Adolf who spends most of her time at the mines, this makes her very lonely. She has a son- young Adolf and is bound to take care of this child whatsoever. Her views about marriage and motherhood resonate with those of the African women that embrace motherhood and marriage and respect male superiority. If Adolf was in the shoes of Marija, he probably would have stopped his wife from working or he would have looked for another spouse, but Marija has nothing to do change the schedule of the husband that is why she possibly gets pervasive behaviours. Therefore, the setting in which Marija is created, is what defines her as the old woman.

In the short story collection of *The Girl Who can and other Stories*, setting also plays a vital role in the depiction of the new and old woman. In the first story, *She Who Would Be –king* the new women live in an urban setting and in fact a unique bungalow near the university the mother of she would be king is a professor and the dean of the law faculty. This exposition gives the said characters an elevated and sophisticated lifestyle. The professional title she has and the kind of faculty she heads is enough motivation to her daughter who would be king. She has a woman figure to emulate, so if narrator says that she can make it to that level, there is no doubt about because she is sired and raised by an achiever. The kind of setting given to the protagonists depicts them as the new woman. The old kind of woman is a mother to the professor, much as she lives with the daughter at her bungalow, she is too old to make a comment she just watches life move on. What she needs is just appropriate care and the rest is not her concern she has spent her life and is only waiting her time to return to her creator. Analytically, since the story is told in prospective voice, the narrator intends to show that at the time she would be king becomes one, all trifles of patriarchal tendencies would be as good as done with. Therefore, the way the old woman is circumstantially presented is enough to tell the reader that she is the old woman.

The setting in the Story *The Girl Who Can* is in the country side, in fact the narrator Adjoa who is seven years old states that they say that she was born in Hasodzi, a very big village in the central region of Ghana. Aidoo (1977:10). This is the setting in which Nana has grown and her daughter Adjoa's mother named Kaya, their beliefs, values and attitudes are shaped by this village set up. When Nana insists that her grand- daughter was unfortunate to be born with thin legs. She says with all her heart because she has never seen a woman with legs as thin as those of Adjoa. A woman must have firm legs that will hold solid hips and solid hips which would enable her to have children. The belief that a woman is only meant to be married and later have children is grounded by the setting in which Nana was raised to her current age. She can envisage what will befall her grandchild. Nana is the old woman the study explores.

Adjoa a seven-year-old girl replicates the new woman; Aidoo implies that not much of the change has taken place in this central region so she rather uses education as a medium of change but beginning with the young. The thin legs, which Nana has all along mocked have won the school a trophy and, with this winning Nana gets glimpses of hope that possibly thin legs can be of use. Therefore, Education is a sure way to make changes on the position of a woman. Adjoa, young as she is, is a typical replica of the new woman. She has thin legs but the thin legs can run and win, this gives Nana a diversity of knowledge about what education can do in the life of a woman; it also implies that education unlike culture is open to diversity, it does not limit women to selected roles; it gives them an opportunity to explore their heights.

Watson (1991) comments that a good setting can supply important elements to your story, like landmarks or historical sites. A good setting can even provide plot devices, turning your geographical location into its own entity or antagonist that has an effect on your main characters' actions. In the story "Heavy Moments" the presence of female cadets at the air force training ground is a scene that enhances the depiction of the new woman. Akuba and Sarah are historically the very first female cadets and surprisingly they become the best of the cadets that year. When they arrive at the air force base for training everyone wonders what these ladies are here for! It has never been seen. The men here and the society as Mampa opines had never imagined that such a thing as woman pilot would happen especially if they had never seen a woman drive a taxi or lorry.

Therefore, the setting here enhances the new woman. It is clear that education which is non-segregationist, empowers humans alike that is why the two females here are the best otherwise they would have adulterated their results. Irrespective of the harassment they receive throughout their training they still excel. Aidoo communicates that education which gives equal opportunity to humanity, gives skills and confidence equitably. It does not look at gender per se but rather at ability.

In the same manner, Mampa Akuba's aunt has grown in a setting which has designated roles to females. When her niece tells her, she is joining the air force she refers to what the people would say. The people here are her society the society in which she has been raised and where she lives. She is aware that a woman can never fly an aeroplane. Her setting informs her of what she has to do, how she should behave and, the aspirations she should dream of. She is a typical old woman; her beliefs, attitude and dreams are designed within the patriarchal spheres.

The next story, "Some Global News" has Yaa Yaa the main character and the new woman is given a sophisticated setting. She is flying in and out of Ghana on matters of great importance to the youths of Ghana. Her lifestyle has greatly digressed from the Ghanaian friends like Kate. The setting has affected her eating habits, her choice of clothes and how she spends her time. She is a new woman. Her mother on the other hand is in a rural set up she is all the time wondering why her daughter behaves as she does. She cannot comprehend why she divorces her husband and her general attitude; she sometimes sends her friend to find out why. She is perplexed by her decisions. The fact that her mother views her life and acts as out of place indicates that the two women prescribe to different life guidelines. Kate who would equally be like her cannot understand her. Therefore, the settings in which the characters exist contribute a lot towards their depiction.

"The Wedding Feast" is yet another story in this collection which unlike the other stories in this category is set abroad. The setting here majorly enhances the representation of the new woman- it is as if Aidoo deliberately creates the story in an alien environment to excuse Mary and her daughter who replicate the new woman from the traditional marriage procedures; they handle her daughter's marriage right from announcing to the wedding in their way. They do not involve Mary's mother in the process like it should have been, the meetings and the wedding itself keeps the old woman shocked wondering at what the world has come to. What is interesting to note here is that, the old woman; Mary's mother even when she has travelled

to Europe, she still has not changed from her beliefs she still clings on what should have been ideal in the traditional way. Anyways, she is just a visitor here not a permanent resident a temporally stay abroad does not make her European- she still remains African with all the traditional strongholds. We noted that it is not only the physical that defines setting; the circumstances around an incident equally affect it. Therefore, Mary's mother the old woman defies the prescriptions of space and remains unchanged; the only thing she can do is watch in silence.

“Choosing a moral from the World of Work” creates the two women in the story in the same society setting but the mother stays in the countryside while the daughter stays in an urban area. The mother to the major character a writer who turned a teacher and trader is an old woman, she is content with life possibly because she has seen it all and is regularly giving her young daughter an audience every time she comes home burdened. The country set up is always serene, tranquil and therefore enables the residents to have ample time to reflect on life and possibly make better decisions. The setting in the urban is always noisy and rushes, this is reflected in the character of the daughter who cannot settle for one job and bear with its challenges. She is always turning from one job to the other. Here Aidoo in away reflects the new woman as ambitious but confused. That is why the mother who lives in a sorted hush environment does not make mistakes, she has observed her daughter and she knows that as long as she goes and fails, she will finally come to her senses. Therefore, the settings of the country and the city highlight the characters effectively.

“Lice” is a story whose setting is in a home. Bessie a young mother is grappling with her marriage and she seems to have been pondering over the same for some time as reflected by different pieces of advice from different groups of people. The atmosphere at Bessie's home is sordid; Sissie has lots of complaints about her husband, about her general wellbeing, the son who has an injury and many others. The setting here therefore is intended to expose the expectations of the new woman kind. Bessie according to the nuns and her mother is better off than many women, to them, the challenges Bessie is expressing are just trivial.

What should be noted is that the majority of Aidoo's new women cannot settle in marriage. All the women right from “Changes a Love Story” Essie divorces, Fusena is cognisant of the unfairness's in her marriage and Okopuya is betrayed by her husband Ali when he marries Essie a woman of career. In the story Some Global News YaaYaa divorces because she requires ample personal time to handle her dreams, in this story, “Lice” Bessie attempts

murder because of marriage issues. What it possibly shows is that the educated and liberated women are too conscious of the injustices in marriage and the only possible solution is to get out of these marriages and may be lead single lives but get ready to handle the mockery of such lives in a patriarchal society. Therefore, the social setting here exposes the position of the new woman in marriage.

The social setting in which the nuns and Bessie's mother who are the old woman type, compels them to be grateful for who they are and thus encourage Bessie to be a little more resilient and build her family. The social constructs these women ascribe to does not have a place for divorce or single motherhood. They are grounded on the principles of patriarchy and they are bent not to complain. The difference here therefore between the old and new is that while the old are compliant with the challenges of patriarchal establishments the new women feel it too hard to withstand the unfair treatment they receive from their men.

The setting in *Payments* is also brought out by the social status of the women involved. The narrator who is the main character is a poor fish seller existing with meagre earnings while the new women talked about are women of high class as displayed by the way they dress up, and the cars they drive or are driven in. The woman who seems to be in battle with the fish seller is a medical nurse while the fish seller carries a basket of fish to sell the whole day, the medic is able to buy this whole heap of fish at once. Therefore, the social setting of the two different women effectively brings out the new and old woman.

The next story "Male-ing Names in the Sun" is structured in three parts but the last part is majorly the one that has the aspect of the new and old woman. In this section, the setting is in Oguana town where a mother-in-law meets her future daughter-in-law. Like Burke (1962) relates that the nature of acts and agents should be consistent with the nature of the scene. He further opines that a scene is a fit container for the act. In this part of the story, the young Girl who is the new woman clearly expresses her feelings because the setting in which she has been raised allows her to do so. As an educated girl she views that taking on a man's surname is another means of woman subjugation which does not conform to. The setting relevant is the propagation that Achniba is familiar with, she does not consider it indisciplined to address her concerns in the manner she does to old people even if they are her in-laws.

The mother-in-law Mrs Bessie Shillington also because of background cannot expect a young woman and a daughter-in-law at that, to respond to her like that. That is why she acts

out fainting as later observed by her son 'a medical doctor' that it was the kind orchestrated by white women in London. Her training cannot allow her to give audience to such a girl who according to her is very insolent and disrespectful. Setting is here looked at the backdrops that shape characters. In fact Watson 1991 notes that characters are products of their environment. Therefore setting in this regard effectively depicts Mrs Bessie Shillington as the old woman and Engineer Achniba as the new woman character in the story.

"Nowhere Cool" is the final story in this collection where the old and new women characters are depicted. The setting here is dynamic, the protagonist's story starts in Africa, and then in the United States of America. In all this diverse setting, there are aspects of the old and new woman depicted. The setting in Africa reflects Sissie as an academician; she has won herself a fellowship grant to go and study for three years leaving behind her husband and children particularly one who is under one year. This expresses the conflict between self and others, however the fact that Sissie is courageous enough to go for the study declares rare traits that would hardly be obtained in an old woman who takes marriage and motherhood as central aspects to her as a woman; in fact it is what defines her and therefore the old woman would not take a choice Sissie has made in this circumstance.

In the plane which Sissie boards, the author deliberately makes her sit next to another mother who is a white. This mother unlike Sissie has two children with her, this setting in a particular manner emphasises the different depiction of these two women. Sissie has left a child under one year to pursue her career but Mrs Allen has to constantly take a risk of flights every fortnight in order to have family together. This depicts the value Mrs Allen attaches to her family. This is intended to heighten the strength of the new woman and the fears of the old woman. When finally Sissie is New York, the young African women she encounters appraise her bravery and strength of character. Aidoo intends to show that patriarchy tendencies are not only executed in Ghana or Africa Per se, but that the world is a universal village. It is not about colour age or religion. Humanity is the same through and through the old and anew tendencies happen everywhere in the world- and all this is effectively brought out by setting.

In *Diplomatic Pounds* like previously observed, only two of the twelve stories relate to the old and new woman character. These stories are "New Lessons" and "Outfoxed". In the story "New Lessons", the setting of the new woman is urban the narrator who is a new woman tells her story in a serene part of the town. The concerns she talks about can only prevail in the city- the women who drive fancy cars, the men who spy on the women in oblivion are

incidents that are relevant to the new woman environment and thus effectively depicted. The old woman is here remotely presented the reader only judges that through the voice of the narrator who reports what her aunt says. The reader notes that the old woman is content with native African life style and encourages her niece to work towards changing her homeland to she imagines it to be. The views and arguments of the two women reflect their background which is their social setup. This social setup is what affects their way of life and how they perceive particular life aspects.

The final story here is “out Foxed”. The story presents two kinds of settings- the first in Africa when the protagonist is young and the other in Europe when she has grown. The setting in Africa is filled with trifles of childhood tortures of the narrator and the diverse views her mother holds in her life. The European setting is intended to highlight the importance of education and how it empowers humanity especially the woman kind. Esaaba with her dark skin which her mother scorns can gain vitality after getting educated. Education is a big push towards woman empowerment, which is why Esaaba is able to get married to white man who is worshipped in Africa by the likes of Esaaba’s mother.

Conclusively like the Britannica Encyclopaedia states, setting enables the reader to see how an author captures the attention of the reader by painting a mental picture using words. The settings of all the characters explored in this section enable the reader to have diverse perspectives on the old and new characters. The analysis has clarified that setting is significant in the crafting of the characters, their values, attitudes, behaviours and their presentation. The environment in which a character exists overly affects his way of life. Oshame (2011) states that, setting reveals that there is steady progression in the degree of self- assertion of female protagonists from the non-literate situated in the rural areas to the educated and well sensitised in the urban centres. It should be agreed that Aidoo effectively uses setting to depict her old and new woman characters in the selected texts.

### **3.4 The Use of Female Friendships or Collective Female Solidarity**

Aidoo depicts the female power and female challenges through their friends. The female friends reveal the inner feelings tensions and fears of these protagonists. In fact, Ekpong (2011) opines that female friendships or collective female solidarity serves a therapeutical tool for women’s survival and retention of sanity in the face of patriarchal subjugation. It should be noted that these female friendships and solidarities are particular to the new woman

kind the study explores. *Changes the Love Story*, focuses on the friendship of two working women, Esi and Opokuya. These childhood friends constantly meet to share their challenges in marriage. Most of the time Esi opens her heart to her friend and she confesses that only Opokuya discusses with her, her personal life openly and patiently. They talk about several things regarding their personal life and thus purging their emotions, at the Twentieth Century hotel, Esi contemplates whether she should reveal to her friend Opokuya that she has left Oko majorly because she feared getting a reproach from her friend which she did not want to happen. Aidoo: 1991:38

One reason why Esi was tongue tied tongue- tied was that she was too aware that Opokuya was her last hope of getting understanding or at least some sympathy for her point of view.

Apparently Esi had been extremely rebuked by her mother and grandmother for taking a foolish move in leaving Oko and she only hopes that her friend could understand her better. It should be noted that Opokuya does not support her friend to leave her marriage but she agrees that life for any African woman and later on a professional African woman is too hard. In fact, Opokuya observes that a marriage can only work out if one of the partners plays the fool and which is always unfortunate. Aidoo in this context expresses the difficult time the new woman finds in reconciling work and marriage. Therefore, the friendship talks are a means of exploring the lives of the female characters, their views about their lifestyle and how they cope with other people who are deeply entrenched in the patriarchal traditional beliefs. It is clear that Good education which comes with good jobs and high incomes cannot make marriages successful; there are too many expectations from the relatives and society for these women to satisfy. Through this talk the reader is made aware of the position of the old woman because for example Esi narrates her encounter with her mother and grandmother and gives an overview about the animosity of her female in-laws; marriage is a hot seat for the new woman.

In *Our Sister Killjoy* the friendship talk is not so much developed but it comes out in Germany with her friend Marija. These spend most of the evenings together not only sharing Marija's meals and apples but also talking about their lives. Marija shares quite a significant portion of her life and it is through her talk with Sissie that the readers discover that she too is afflicted in marriage like the African old woman. Marija talks about her cold marriage among other things and implies that as long as she has had young Adolf more over a boy child, she

believes the baby boy carries her future hope. Marija like the African old woman is held in marriage because it makes her a mother no matter what adverse challenges that come with it. Therefor through this friendship talk, Aidoo is sending a signal that patriarchal is a universal phenomenon and that if there has to be any positive changes about the lives of women, all of them must unite and fight for their position without segments of educated and non- educated; life is tough for both strands of women.

In *The Girl Who can and other stories* the use of collective friendship support is not prominently deployed but they are significant where they appear. The technique is only apparent in five stories: “Heavy moments”, “Some Global News”, “Choosing a Moral from the World of Work”, “Lice” and, “Nowhere Cool”. In the story *Heavy Moments*, the device is latent especially because the experience of Akuba and Yaa Sarah is only reported. The story is itself a flashback of what happens to the two female air force cadets because at the moment they are at the end of the training. The friendship support is implied through Akuba reminiscently when she admits that it would have been unbearable if she had been alone. Aidoo 1991:21

When they compared notes during the time and later, each of them made an admission that if she had been alone she would have given up and left. But luckily they were two. So sticking it out had been a little easier.

Akuba here acknowledges the fact that her friend Sarah had played a big role in her success just as she did. The harassment at the academy had been immense and unbearable to the two women. This technique depicts that the women who have gained awareness that they too could what men did, are new women but that they could not go without such hitches in life just like the African feminism recognizes that certain inequities and limitations existed/exist in traditional societies. But Akuba and Yaa Sarah being the new woman breed that conscious of all the inequities of their gender shield through their training. This reflects the feminist attitude of supporting one other in the struggle for equitable opportunities to redeem the female gender. At the end of her flight Akuba cannot be excited until she has seen her friend Sarah, Aidoo: 1991: 27:

And by the way, where was Cadet Sarah Larbi... where was Yaa Sarah? Akuba wanted to burst into tears with both joy and disappointment. God, where was Sarah?

The ecstasy Akuba expresses is intended to stress the bond that has been established between these two young women; she does not mind about the cheering of men because they have after all been an enigma to the two. She is cognisant of the fact that Sarah has contributed quite a lot to this accomplishment. Therefore, Aidoo is communicating that no one can win alone –women and later on men need to join hands in fighting the colonial aspects that disparages African men from men According to African feminism, this is a common struggle with African men for the removal of the yokes of foreign domination and European/American exploitation. So, they need one another in the midst of challenges the coming of Mampa and Yaa Sarah together to congratulate Akuba is very symbolic that once the battle is over, both new and old will celebrate the success.

In the story “Some Global News” The kind of friendship displayed her possibly plays the therapeutic role mention by Ekpong. YaaYaa almost throughout the story shares her experience with her friend Kate Hogan. They together share her plans and dreams that she aspires to accomplish even when Kate cannot comprehend them and later on support them. Kate has developed strange attitudes and way of doing things irrespective of what the society comments or expects her to do. Therefore, in a society where Yaa is treated like an alien, she needs a friend to pour her inner feelings to for just purgation because at least Yaa has not heeded to any of Kate’s advice in fact sometimes Kate confesses she cannot say out her true feelings about her friend YaaYaa. Kate Hogan in some other instances acts as YaaYaa’s mirror to the society sometimes even YaaYaa’s mothers sends her friend Kate to find out about her daughter. Therefore, the female friendships are an effective way of expressing the values, beliefs and attitudes of the new woman and the reaction received from the other females in the story mirror the old woman’s belief, values and attitudes towards life. The New woman accordingly seems odd among her natives, she does not engage with them most of the time therefore Aidoo invents the female friendship to bridge the information gap that does exist.

The next story “Lice”, unlike the previous story presents Sissie with no friends seen in interaction but rather implied. The friends are perceived to be the nuns and her mother. These women are the voices that keep echoing in her mind whenever she is at verge of breaking. She reports that the nuns would always encourage her to bear her circumstances by counting all the blessings she has. She an educated woman and a secondary school teacher at that, she is officially married, she is blessed with both boy and girl children, and they have a family

car among other blessings. These voices reflect the goodwill of friends, they like feminists value motherhood and marriage. Feminism does not advocate for a broken family; it calls for reconciliation and agreed sharing of responsibilities in a home or marriage at that. Therefore, the friendships Aidoo creates in her fictions play a multiplicity of important roles in the depiction of both the new and old woman.

The final story in this collection where female friendships are executed is “Nowhere Cool”. Sissie who is the protagonist of the story has been given a study grant in the United States of America. One of such female friends Marriama is here intended to reflect on the impending risk Sissie is under-taking to go abroad for studies. Through a discussion Marriama mentions that Sissie is likely to lose her husband to even decently married friends besides ones sisters who would snatch a husband because their sister has gone to change the baby’ diaper. So, after all this talk Sissie resolves that no woman can hold a man who really wants to go away from her after all many things can take away a man-not only being away for a while from him. This talk enables the reader to acknowledge that Sissie a sensibly courageous woman, not because she is running away from her principal role as wife and mother but that she is able to realise that it is a matter of time. One’s education is personal so it cannot part from her but a man can. Therefore, when she decides to go and leave her husband and children behind, it demonstrates how strong a woman she is as a new woman.

Another instance of female acquaintance is noted in the plane where Aidoo deliberately seats her next to Mrs Allen. Mrs Allen has two young children who make her travel a bit inconveniencing and it is because of this that Sissie gets an opportunity to discourse with her. She shockingly finds out that Mrs Allen’s children are tagged. Mrs Allen explains that the tags are meant to help in identifying the children in case of a catastrophe. Sissie also learns that Mrs Allen frequently travels to be with her husbands who works and lives away from their family, this female talk therefore is intended to show that the new woman braves much more not because she minds her education more than her marriage but because her education benefits not only her family but her society as well. Therefore, Mrs Allen ascribes to the tradition of holding marriage and motherhood as central to her life while Sissie is the new woman; she reasons beyond marriage and motherhood as principal roles of a woman.

While in the USA, Sissie encounters young girls from Africa at a dinner arranged to welcome her these girls are quickly drawn to her not only because she African but because of her character. Aidoo 1991:137

Her new friends had looked a little tired and quite sleepy but, they couldn't get over the fact that she had left her children out there on the other side of the Atlantic to come to study for two years or more.

The girls attest that if they have been in her place, they would not have found the nerve. Aidoo in this sense communicates that being a wife and a mother are primary roles of women but they are not fundamental alone and also that child rearing should be a shared responsibility for the better of the family. It is apparent that Aidoo uphold Kobla because as expected of feminists the support of a woman should be a responsibility for both men and women to achieve the desired liberation. Right from home, Sissie's friend Marriama, Mrs Allen and the young girls in New York, demonstrate that the primary role of a woman is marriage and motherhood so whoever deviates from this ascription is a new woman while the former category are the old woman.

In the *Diplomatic Pounds* collection as already noted, there are only two stories where the old and new woman concern is raised. The stories are "New Lessons" and "Out Foxed". In the story "New Lessons" the female friendship is not practically seen although narrator implies sympathy to the woman who is pursued. The narrator actually says Aidoo: 2012:7

As for me, old or not, I am still a woman and despite years as a notoriously rigid academic and fierce critic, I want an old fashioned and romantically happy ending to this story. At least for her.

The above quotation does not come from a female friend from the woman spied on, but it comes from a woman who sympathises

In the story "Out Foxed" the female friendship is depicted through the two young women Esaaba and Awo, it is denoted that these two had been friends for some time and that they usually met to talk about their lives share a drink or eat and return to their homes. Aidoo: 2012:56, "from the earliest days of their friendship, the two young women never split the bill whenever they met and had anything to drink or eat." This friendship denotes two aspects

regarding the new woman concerns. One is that women need each other for companionship; they would share their lives besides their meals. This in a way becomes the therapeutic role Ekpong denotes, and that women need each other for the struggle to liberate their gender and to hold onto one another in challenging situations. Awo is echoed saying that she always tells her friend should not feel like that. Awo plays the role of comforting her friend no matter what.

The second aspect is the realisation that the new woman exercises some financial independence and freedom. They would always find time in the evening after a day's hard work or after shopping on a Saturday and meet at London's greasy Spoons to share a meal and relieve their emotions. It is clear the new woman does not have as many friends like the Old one possibly because of their consciousness of class and other life values. This therefore is definitive majorly of the new woman.

Conclusively it was noted that female friendships exist in most of the texts explored, it is a significant and unique technique of analysing and depicting the lives of especially the new woman regarding their private lives worries, values and attitudes. This could be possibly be due to the fact that the women liberation requires the support of each other especially those who appreciate the predicament of the new woman. Therefore, female friendships play a significant role in the effective depiction of women especially the new woman.

### **3.4 Use of Dialogue as an Effective Depiction of The Old and New Woman**

Dialogue is defined diversely by many scholars but they all agree that it is the spoken lines by characters in a story that serve many functions. Purves et al. (1997) states that dialogue is the chief means of moving the plot, Brockett and Ball (2004) view dialogue as a writer's principal means of expression and Brander (1910) explains that dramatic dialogue is the chief means a writer has for realising his idea of the action. Writers utilize dialogue as a means to demonstrate communication between two characters. Most dialogue is spoken aloud in a narrative, though there are exceptions in terms of inner dialogue. Dialogue is used to convey the thoughts and actions of characters in addition to creating dramatic conflict that moves the plot along and when used effectively in a literary work, it is an important literary device. Dialogue reveals conflict in a story it moves story forward it presents different points of view it provides exposition, background, or contextual information it is an efficient means of

conveying aspects and traits of characters it conveys inner feelings and intentions of a character beyond their surface words of communication, it establishes deeper meaning and understanding of a story for the reader, it sets character's voice, point of view and patterns of expression, it allows characters to engage in conflict and it creates authenticity for reader

In *Changes a Love Story*, Aidoo permeates the fiction with specific dialogues that are intended to express both the views of the old and new woman. The first of such dialogues is the dialogue between Oko and his wife Esi just before he rapes her. Aidoo: 1991:8

“My friends are laughing at me”, he said.

Silence.

“They think I am not a man”,

Esi was trying to pretend she had not heard the declaration.

Aren't you saying anything? Oko's voice was full of pleading.

What would you like me to say? She spoke at last, trying very hard to keep the irritation out of her voice.

“You don't care what my friends think of me?” He pressed

When she spoke again, the irritation was out, strong and breathing...

The above dialogue is a demonstration of the kind of relationship that exists between Oko and his wife. It gives a view of how the new woman relates with her husband – the narrator states that Oko pleads While Esi expresses her irritation and somewhat contempt. Esi does not want to be about the feelings of her husband she is aware that her husband would like them to have another baby and is said that Oko would mind the sex of the child-he tries to be civil until the soul of a true patriarchal sire burns in him and he rapes his wife shortly after this dialogue. This dialogue is a little of many more aspects regarding the new woman, Esi is cognisant of the fact the house where they are currently staying is hers, she is aware of her financial superiority a point which does not auger well with the kind of tradition. So, it is clear that Esi disrespects her husband otherwise she would not have responded the way she does. Later when she chooses to separate with Oko because of the marital rape it is a last blow that breaks the camel's back- there are several other factors other than rape that bring their relationship to the end. Therefore, the dialogue here is a manifestation of the already breaking relationship and the eventual break up proves that it is difficult for the new woman

to stay in her marriage especially when surrounded by characters who do not view life the way she does.

The second dialogue in this novel is selected to demonstrate the traits of a true old woman and how she treats life differently from the new woman. Aidoo: 1991:38

When Nana's patience had been stretched beyond endurance, she had asked Esi to tell her truthfully whether the problem was that her husband beat her.

'No Nana'

'So, does your husband smell? His body? His mouth?'

Esi couldn't help laughing

'No, Nana.'

In fact, for a man, he is very clean, very orderly.

'So then... Listen, does he deny you money, expecting you to use your earnings to keep the house, feed him and clothe him too?'

'Nana, we are not rich but money is not a big problem.'

'What is the problem then?' both her mother and grandmother screamed this time.

In the text above the voice of the old woman is very clear, to her a bad husband is one who beats his wife, a man who does not take care of his body thus smelling in the mouth or his whole body, or a man who disturbs the freedom of his wife by leaving the family expenditure to his woman. So, when Esi confirms that her husband does not do any of such, they cannot understand her, her mother first cries then calls her mad and finally concludes that she is a fool. According to the old women characters, they are sure that Esi can never get another man like Oko; to them it was hard to comprehend that a woman would complain because her husband wanted her more. This dialogue clearly unfolds the novel's main conflict and significantly moves the plot. Another dialogue that demonstrates the old and new woman effectively is on page 41

'...These days, young people don't seem to know why they marry or should marry.'

'What are some of those reasons, Nana?'

'Ah so you want to know? Esi we know that we all marry to have children...'

'But Nana, that is such an old and worn-out idea! Children can be born to people whom are not married.'

Sure sure, but to help them grow well, children need a homes with walls a roof, fire pots.’

....

‘Nana, how about love?’

Love... love... love is not safe, my lady silk, love is dangerous...the last man any woman should think of marrying is the man she loves.’

In the above text, the representation of the old and new woman comes out precisely through the way the two women in the dialogue perceive the purpose of marriage. The old woman; Nana states that of the many reason’s women marry, love is not a point to consider, she actually says that one would rather marry for just gratitude if all were not forth coming. Nana’s reasons of getting married completely contrast those of her granddaughter Esi because Esi thinks that her marriage is possibly failing because it was founded on gratitude rather than love no wonder, she is divorcing her man because he demands to have more of her life and time. This is an effective way of depicting the old and new woman in Aidoo’s *Changes a love Story*. There are many of such dialogues that help to represent the new and old woman as the central concern of the study in the novel.

In Aidoo’s *Our Sister killjoy*, the protagonist Sissie stands for many concerns and therefore there are few instances where the new woman and old woman would up, but as a new woman the particular dialogue that stands out is with Marija Sommer. Aidoo (a): 1997:49

‘Where is little Adolf, Marija?’

‘He is in the house sleeping ...’

‘Of course,’ said Sissie to herself. She had forgotten that it was much later than any safe hour to take a baby out. Marija was still talking.

I wanted to be alone. To talk with you... you know, Sissie sometimes one wants to be alone. Even from the child one loves so much. Just for a very little time...may be.

She finished uncertainly looking up to Sissie who did not have a child ... A reassurance that she was not speaking blasphemy.

It is blasphemy in Africa, Europe, Everywhere. This is not a statement to come from a good mother's lips.

Marija, who is the replica of the old woman, expresses remorse after implying that she sometimes would find young Adolf burdensome to her; talking negative about a child is almost blasphemous, she acknowledges that a mother should at all times be grateful for the blessing of a child. A child is a blessing that a mother should never complain about her duty as a mother. She obtains that it is a statement that a good mother should never utter. Sissie, who represents the new woman, thinks it is a heresy in Africa, Europe and everywhere. Marija believes that Sissie does not know such taboos because she does not have a child and she possibly thinks that it is a reason she does not reprimand her when she simply brushes it off as a heresy. Accordingly, Aidoo implies that motherhood is a kind of slavery which denies a mother a little freedom. The Feminists therefore advocate that motherhood is good but that it should not read mothers of their personal freedoms and joy. It should not make one feel like she is serving punishment. This text therefore presents Marija as the old woman character because of her commitment to motherhood while Essie represents the new woman character who feels that it is okay for a mother to take a break off the duty of motherhood which in a sense brings about the shared responsibility advocated for by feminists.

The discussion in *The Girl Who Can* focuses on only the stories with relevant dialogues in the effective depiction of the old and new woman characters. In the Story "The Girl Who Can" there are several dialogues that effectively bring out both the old and new woman. Aidoo: 1997(b):12 There is a talk between Nana and Kaaya over Adjoa's legs.

'Maami: "mother, why are you always complaining about Adjoa's legs?" if you ask me..."

Nana: "They are too thin. And I am not asking you" Some people have no legs at all, but Adjoa has legs "

Nana: except that they are too thin and also too long for a woman... if any female child decides to come into this world with legs, then they might as well be legs.

"What kind of legs...."

Nana: as I keep saying, she should select legs that have meat on them with good calves. Because you are sure such legs would support solid hips. And a woman must have solid hips to be able to have children.

The above dialogue points out effectively what a woman should look like in the traditional prescription. Nana insists that all women must have legs that have good calves because she understands that the physical structure should support motherhood. A woman whose features are not womanly this is a misfortune. This is curly the belief which feminists' disgrace because a woman is human before she is a wife or mother; Shaftal (2012) postulates that feminism respects African woman's status as mother but questions obligatory motherhood. When Nana insists on the legs of the girl child it reflects on what Thiam calls a scathing oppressive patriarchal African tradition. No amount of explanation can convince Nana that human legs have several other biological functions among which child birth is not included until the narrator does something to prove it later in the story. When Adjoa wins the cup for the best all-round junior athlete, nana remorsefully says "thin legs can also be useful... That even though some legs don't have meat on them to carry hips, they can run. The thin legs can run... then who knows?"

Aidoo does let the reader encounter a dialogue that defends a new woman but she instead demonstrates by having this presumably unlucky child to excel in her running- she is telling the likes of Nana that they have always had a limited point of view and that is high time they started giving another look at most of their traditions, beliefs and customs. After all is dynamic and those who keep doing things the traditional way are meant to miss a lot or depress themselves for no reason. When Nana discovers that thin legs can run, she becomes remorseful and seems rather to learn to look at and do things differently.

"Heavy Moments" is mostly told in a flash back and has only has a snippet of a dialogue or a discourse at that because this is not between two characters but a general concern. Aidoo:1997(b):20

Two of the best candidates that year were two women.

"women?"

"Women"

"but... But... But..."

"what do they want here?"

"what do they want here?"

"what do they want here?"

Everybody had asked the same questions, from retired group captains to the recruits.

The discourse above echoes a lot of unsaid words, beliefs and culture among many. The girls had done something that was unheard of. The sound of the many men community at the academy cannot believe it. It is beyond their imagination and that is why they simply repeat the same questions it is just incomprehensible. The failure to have words heightens the perception men have on the new woman. Akuba and Sarah are effectively brought as new women because of daring to encroach on what has traditionally been a niche for men and a no go for females. Aidoo here questions the African man who does not want to be part of the liberation of women. To her, women are equally a resource for developing Africa that has for long lain in waste, therefore when Sarah and Akuba finish their training successfully even the men have to cheer them up a gesture that African men should embrace women empowerment.

The story “Some Global News” is permeated with a number of dialogues the study focuses on only a few of these. Aidoo: 1997(b); 42

“You see, all the clothes I got made were from dark prints,” she starts again her eyes glistening with unshed tears. And Kate wonders whether they are from the coughing or from the frustration of it all... “Yes, they are from dark prints: black, navy blue, deep red, purple, metallic brown”  
“But Yaa-Yaa, those are funeral colours!” Kate exclaimed  
Confidently with the full weight of tradition behind her. Then there she is, in the next instant, covering her wide-open mouth, in a horrified recognition of just what she too has just said.

The brief dialogue between Kate and Yaa-Yaa is a glimpse on how different the old and new woman characters differ. Yaa-Yaa fusses a lot about mere clothes, their colours and their occasion. What is laughable is that the colours she labours to make so vital are what her friend Kate calls funeral colours. As prior discussed, the difference of these women is broad, their beliefs, the values, the attitude and many other aspects. Yaa-Yaa and Kate are friends but they look at life differently that is why when Kate notices tears in her friend’s eyes she is not sure whether they are because of the coughing or frustration of the clothes. This brief dialogue effectively depicts the difference between the old and new woman.

Diyanni (2004) observes that their types of speeches and this is also supported by Leslie (1993) confers that some dialogues are internal and these are always inner thoughts. The

dialogues in the story “About the Wedding Feast” are grandmother’s d. These are intended to inform the reader of the old woman point of view which differs from the new woman’s view and thus effective in the depiction of the women characters. Aidoo (1997b: 46)

Yes from that early, that was something not right already. In the old days when things were done properly a girl did not just announce that sort of thing in that sort of way. But later when I pointed that out to the child’s mother who is my daughter Mary, she said that things have changed.

Grandmother is the old woman and the views she holds relate to those of the old woman character. In her internal dialogues she just critiques what the new generation does. The new generation is represented by Mary and her daughter. The way Mary and her daughter conduct the wedding announcement and later on the marriage arrangement is bizarre to the old woman but she is not always given an opportunity to express her feelings that is why the author deliberately airs them through her internal dialogues. Mary and her daughter acknowledge that things have long changed and that is why they do not pay particular attention to some of the procedures and like the old woman implies Mary after words comes to ask the old one on what should have been appropriate even when she does not heed it.

In another related incident of the wedding arrangement Aidoo: 1997b:48 grandmother notes that education is responsible the lack of understanding of the new woman.

Mary doesn’t know how to do a lot of things. In that she is not alone. It’s the education. It takes away some very important part of understanding from them. It is very clear that the biggest influence on the new woman is education. Most of Aidoo’s protagonists are very educated women with mostly two degrees, very good jobs and they travel so much the reason possibly why they lose touch with their cultural practices or it is because they have become conscious of what is important and what is just conservative and backward. Therefore, as much as there is not much direct dialogue between mother and daughter, the internal dialogues carry along her daughter’s views and opinions thus effectively depicting both the old and new woman characters.

“Choosing a Moral from the World of Work” is a story that has very many dialogues between the mother and her ambitious daughter. They all are significant in depicting the new and old woman but this specific dialogue is great. Aidoo:1997b:78

Since you have lost the little money you had, as well as what you borrowed from the bank! so one way you have gone backwards, and another way you are forward. But neither way are you where you were”

“Mother, what can I do?”

“It seems to me that the only way out would be to do best what you do well,” her mother said.

The above text is one of the discussions between mother and daughter. In this particular one, the daughter has tried about three different trades without success and the mother finally tells her in the text above that one, her trials on the different fields of trade was not a waste of her time; it was all learning. That is why her mother says that her daughter is not where she was. It is true she has lost money and time but she has gained knowledge and wisdom which is pertinent in the life of any human being man or woman. Aidoo clearly makes a strong statement; she says that the young might be flexible, agile and all but, they need one aspect which is wisdom. This therefore implies that the old woman is not all lost; she is a repository of wisdom, whenever her daughter would get disturbed and confused about what to do, she would run to her mother for guidance. Her mother would not choose for her what to do; she would spread the different alternatives for her to make a choice. She kept doing that until she realised her mother’s words; that one had to do what she knew well and do it best. Therefore, the old woman is depicted as superior to the new woman in wisdom. She is old and backward but she is not without wisdom.

The story “Lice” is largely a recount of a jilted wife talking and thinking about her sour relationship and general life at large. The new and woman are latently implied and so no distinct dialogue can effectively depict the new and old woman aspect. This is the same case with “Payments” Newly opened Doors” and most of “Male-ing Names in the Sun” except the last segment where Mrs Bessie Shillingson encounters the young Mrs Shillingson to be. Their meeting is very brief but it clearly shows the two worlds these women belong to. Aidoo: 1997b:118f

“My lady, as a future Mrs Shillingson....”

“Maa, I shall not call myself Mrs Shillingson,” Achniba declared.

“Ei” Mrs Bessie thought she had not heard right.

“You mean you are not going to marry my Son?”

“I am,” Achniba giggled and then continued: “I am marrying Kwesi. But I want to keep my own name... I like my name. Besides, you know that as a professional woman, an architect, everybody knows me as Achniba....”

The dialogue above explicitly and effectively depicts Mrs Bessie Shillingson as the old woman character, she is also educated but she ascribes to the tradition of assuming husband names at marriage. She does not expect the shocking response she receives from Achniba her daughter- in- law to be. Mrs Bessie Shillingson’s fainting is intended to show that she cannot manage to listen to an obstinate girl’s rabble- it is incomprehensible to her. Similarly, Achniba out rightly expresses the behaviour of her trade; very open-minded without any pretences, she tells her mother in-law to be her mind. The verbal exchange between the two ladies indicates that they belong to far different realms of belief thus justifying Mrs Bessie Shillingson as the old woman and Achniba the new woman character.

The last story “Nowhere Cool” in this collection does not have many of the direct dialogues to depict the old and new woman character but this particular one attempts to categorise them. Aidoo:1997b:142

“.. May I ask you a rather personal question?”

“sure,” the mother said, her voice cautious all the same.

“Why have you pinned the labels on the children?”

“You mean the tags?”

“Yes ... well I was wondering... because this is the first time I’ve seen anything like it, and...”

....

“Well, see, one just never knows what can happen. I’ve always done it. Since my little girl was a baby. i figured it will make identification easier in case of trouble.

“Oh... oh... h ... yes, of course.

....

“Allen and I have to live apart most of the time we’ve been married. Commuter couple is what they call our type.

The above dialogue has undertones of other aspects that Aidoo addresses in her fiction but regarding the old and new woman aspect in Aidoo intends to show that marriage and motherhood are a universal phenomenon. These responsibilities are not only entrenched in

Africa but all over in the world where patriarchal traditions exist. That is why Mrs Allen travels regularly to ensure that her family is together. Many people believe that a true family is one that stays together lest it is tempted to break. So, this Mrs Allen represented as the old woman ascribing to the traditional role of being a wife and a mother. Besides this depiction, Sissie is also presented as the new woman who unlike Mrs Allen has left her children in Africa to go to Europe for over two-three years of absence from her family, what she does is what feminists call shared responsibility; she leaves the children under the care of the further for the time she will be off. Sissie is therefore effectively depicted as a new woman- she is the only woman of the others encountered in the text to brave leaving her family for such a long period.

In the short story *Diplomatic Pounds and other short stories* only “Out Foxed” has dialogues that effectively depict the old and new woman characters. In this story Esaaba and her mother engage severally in dialogues that depict them as old and new woman characters because of having divergent views about life. Aidoo: 2012:51

“Esaaba, you know that I don’t want to sound like one of these women who harass their daughters into marriage. But you also know that a woman is nothing unless she gets married: No matter what else she achieves in life. You know that...” Esaaba had groaned audibly.

....

“But Mamaa, women getting masters is common these days... and even doctorates” Esaaba said.

Oh, degrees are fine, but go out there and also look for a husband yourself. I beg you.

It is explicit in the above dialogue that the two women are different in respect to the role of a woman in society. Esaaba’s mother who is depicted as the old strongly holds that a woman is nobody as long as she does not marry and later on have children. This contradicts to her daughter Esaaba’s views. Esaaba much as she will later marry takes marriage as a secondary role; as an educated woman she can always have a husband but she does not see the hurry as necessary, that is why she takes two complete years dating Paul an aspect that alien to the old woman. What the old woman needed was a husband irrespective of the procedure; the old

woman cannot stand being a taboo to people. Therefore, through dialogue the women are effectively depicted in their respective category.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

This chapter analysed the effectiveness of the narrative techniques that Ama Ata Aidoo uses to depict the differences between the old and new woman characters in the selected texts. The narrative techniques analysed are Juxtaposition, setting, use of female friendships or collective solidarity and dialogue. It was observed that the new and old woman characters stood out in the selected texts much as the selected texts depicted other literary concerns. The majority of the new woman characters were the protagonists of the fiction, they were all very well educated, they resided in urban areas or in Europe, they all had good jobs with financial independence but that most of these married women had complications with their husbands which resulted in most of them separating and divorcing their spouses over what would be mere madness according to their old woman counterparts. The old women in most of the selected texts were old women, with minimal and or without any education, they displayed tolerance to the set patriarchal standards, they had no financial independence with the majority of them residing in rural set up. Aidoo uses a lot of craftsmanship in executing her concerns in her fiction but Juxtaposition, setting, use of female friendships or collective solidarity and dialogue effectively depicted the main concern of the study; the old and new woman characters.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 4.1. Introduction

This research set out to explore the representations of women in the selected works by Ama Ata positioning these women characters into strands of old and new. The study considered women characters who accept the roles their patriarchal society has assigned to them as the old type of women and the new women characters as those who have become conscious of their state and suffering in a male-dominated society, and struggle in different ways against this domination. The study investigated these two kinds of women in four of Ama Ata Aidoo's works; *Changes* (1993), *Our Sister Killjoy* (1977) *Girl who Can* and *Other Stories* (1997), and *Diplomatic Pounds* (2012).

The study paralleled the old woman characters alongside the new woman characters, spelling out all that is distinctive about each of these types of the women in terms of the roles they are expected to play by society and what they do in response to these ascribed roles. The study also delved into the analysis of the apt dialogues of the characters, the point of view, juxtaposition and characterisation among others on their effectiveness in the depiction of the two women characters pertinent to the study. A conclusion was drawn to justify whether the phenomenon of the new woman character is consequential in an African set up. The study was based on the feminist theory which points out key issues relating to discrimination and exclusion on the basis of sex and gender objectification, structural and economic inequality, power and oppression and gender roles and stereotypes.

The study was guided by two objectives; the first was to investigate the differences between the old woman and the new woman characters as they are portrayed in Ama Ata Aidoo's works, and the second was to assess the effectiveness of the narrative techniques that Ama Ata Aidoo uses to depict the differences between the old and new woman characters. These objectives were guided by key questions of what the differences between the old and new woman are as portrayed in selected works of Ama Ata Aidoo and to show how effective the narrative techniques used to depict the differences between the old and new woman characters are in selected works by Ama Ata Aidoo. The study reviews several critical studies

on works of Ama Ata Aidoo. These critics agree that Aidoo is a feminist author that portrays an extremely accurate representation of the female characters throughout her writing by purposefully reiterating the struggles that each of the women are faced with, and the severity of these conflicts. The studies also identify patriarchy as a social institution which functions according to principal that "man shall dominate female" and migrations to new societies as the primary causes of madness of African women; women who otherwise would have been powerful figures in society. These and several others agree that Aidoo's new woman is completely out of place.

## **4.2 Summary of Findings**

Findings were presented in two chapters, chapter two and three. Chapter one gave the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, scope, justification and significance of the study. It also reviewed literature in terms of the representations of the old and new woman characters and the narrative techniques that artist employs to effectively depict the old and new woman characters. It further discussed the theoretical framework that guided the analysis of the four texts. Lastly, it presented the research methods that were used to obtain data.

Chapter two observes that Ama Ata Aidoo writes about the lives of women engaged in quests of self-exploration in Ghana and in their migrations abroad. In *Changes A Love story*, Esi, a self-empowered, strong-willed statistician with a Master's degree, employed in a lucrative job at the Department of Urban Statistics is unhappily married to her husband, Oko, with whom she has a young daughter. Esi and Oko often dispute over their assumed gender roles within the relationship, such as Esi's refusal to cook for the family or bear any more children. During one argument, Oko rapes his wife in an angry fit. The assault leaves Esi devastated and isolated from friends and family and is eventually the reason she breaks up with Oko her husband. When she later marries Ali a polygamist because Ali respects her freedom and gives her expensive gifts, she acknowledges painfully that she does not need the presence of a man in her life in order to be fulfilled and actualize her potential. None the less Aidoo recognizes the complexity of the woman's role in traditional African societies, as well as in colonialism and neo-colonialism.

In *Our Sister Killjoy*, Aidoo is concerned mostly with the estrangement of the African educated class. Sissy, the main character, is offered a grant to receive a European education. Her journey into the west chronicles different aspects of her resistance to the overriding ideological hostilities that bring down Africa and African people. The fact that the novel ends while Sissy is on the verge of re-entry into the Ghanaian society gives the novel different perspectives which implies that Sissy is ready to reintegrate into the Ghanaian society, thereby giving hope for positive change for the country through women. Therefore, Aidoo opines that to be able to tackle patriarchal structures at home, Ghanaian women should examine and explore their roles in society before the “hushed-up Victorian notion” of women is adopted.

*The Girl who can and other stories* is a composition of eleven stories. In these stories especially where there are female characters, Aidoo clearly presents women with different attitudes about the position of women. Aidoo juxtaposes the young women against the old ones. In most of the cases, the elderly women ascribe to the patriarchal strongholds where man is treated as superior to woman. The other kind of woman is younger, educated and exercises some level of independence.

*Diplomatic Pounds and Other Stories* is a collection of twelve beautifully written short stories, which confirms the author’s position as a foremost writer in Africa and beyond. Treating everyday subjects with unique perspectives and a delicate style that she alone possesses, Aidoo opens up old traditions and questions long-held views with fresh views. (Ayebia Clarke 2012; 170) Aidoo reflects concerns with the displacement of people, particularly women, who move between two cultures: their African homeland and that of the developed world.

In all the texts explored by the study, from *Our Sister Killjoy* to *Diplomatic Pounds*, the main characters are very educated women. Most of them have travelled abroad or live there, specifically the new woman type and live in the urban areas as opposed to the old type of women who have embraced motherhood, being wives as central in their livelihood and most of these live in the rural setting where tradition is worshipped. Aidoo is a woman writer who demonstrates that women can, irrespective of the unlevelled grounds laid for them in patriarchal societies. Aidoo does not agree to the view that the success of a woman should be gauged by her ability to get married and have children. To her, the success of women does

not lie in their ability to reproduce but rather to become productive in other aspects that benefit humanity and promote independence and progress of a nation.

Chapter three discussed the diverse narrative techniques Ama Ata Aidoo uses to depict the differences between the old and the new woman characters. It was noted that Aidoo uses a multiplicity of narrative techniques that create various shades of meaning in the interpretation of her fiction. Such techniques include juxtaposition, setting, use of female friendships or collective female solidarity, use of dialogue, commentator and or participatory character, and use of frame stories among others.

It was observed that the new and old woman characters stood out in the selected texts much as the selected texts depicted other literary concerns. The majority of the new woman characters were the protagonists of the fiction, they were all very well educated, they resided in urban areas or in Europe, they all had good jobs with financial independence but that most of these married women had complications with their husbands which resulted in most of them separating and divorcing their spouses over what would be mere madness according to their old woman counterparts.

The old women in most of the selected texts were old women, with minimal and or without any education, they displayed tolerance to the set patriarchal standards, they had no financial independence with the majority of them residing in rural set up but most of these old women were presented as repositories of African wisdom, quite often the new women would interface with these old woman to share their knowledge or they would aligned alongside the new women to emphasise the disparity between these women. In *Changes* the love story, Esi goes back home to consult her mother and grandmother, much as she does not heed their advice it is explicit that the old women were better home and marriage makers. In many of the short stories the old women clearly stand out as women of great wisdom, Mary's mother in 'The Wedding Feast' Mampa in 'Heavy Moments' is always Akuba's solace, the mother of the Writer who turned teacher and trader demonstrates extreme wisdom and some more other old women.

It was noted that Aidoo uses a lot of craftsmanship in executing her concerns in her fiction but that Juxtaposition, setting, use of female friendships or collective solidarity and dialogue effectively depicted the main concern of the study; the old and new woman characters. Through the use of these narrative techniques, the old and new women characters came out thoroughly with the attitudes, beliefs and roles among others standing out. All these issues

were discussed with in the prospects of the feminist theory particularly the African feminist theory in the handling of women concerns. Aidoo clearly implies that for any nation to develop effectively the role of a woman must not be ignored. A woman has to join hands with the man in order to see a better nation, it should however be noted that the position of a woman in the contemporary world is still a hustle since it is proven through all the new woman characters that it is hard for women to live as single or divorced without enigma from the society.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

To sum it up, the new woman as portrayed in the selected work is more at peace because she has her freedom and is independent. She does not accept to be defined by the patriarchal society. She does not give in to be enslaved by marriage, motherhood and society. The new woman seeks for harmony and wants to use her ability to change the world. Whereas we see the old woman engraved in agony because she is sliced, and defined by society. The old woman thinks that she needs to be submissive. This has left her sad, tortured and oppressed.

According to how the two women (new and old) are presented in the research, it clearly shows that the new woman is at peace and relaxed than the old woman because she is economically independent and not a slave to anything, hence self-confidence and self-realization. The new woman can afford to balance all roles as an independent working woman, mother and still be a submissive wife who runs her home other than being put in the kitchen.

### **4.3 Recommendations**

The study analysed the representations of the old and new woman particularly looking at the differences between these two breeds of women and how Aidoo effectively depicts these women characters, but it is true that there are several other literary concerns that can be explored. Therefore, I make the following three recommendations.

I recommend that the National Curriculum Development Centre should include women artists on the set books at both O and A-level to make the learners appreciate the works accomplished by women; this may slowly but steadily reduce on the biases of looking at women as humans with lesser abilities socially economically and in the world of academia.

I recommend that the Ministers of Gender and Justice should come up with workshops that are meant to teach young girls and mothers how to be independent economically and socially.

I also recommend that the responsible ministries like that of Gender and Social Development together with the Ministry of Education and Sports should design workshops in the country sensitising men about the need to treat females in the right way and to demonstrate to the nation in different subtle ways that development of a nation requires the contribution of all humanity irrespective of gender.

#### **4.4 Areas of Further Study**

I suggest that further research on the study of the new and old woman be carried out in all works of Aidoo and possibly in other African female writers to establish its prevalence, which would gradually inspire the responsible agencies to work on harmonising this challenge, particularly in patriarchal societies.

Ama Ata Aidoo has a unique narratology in all her works, therefore an intensive study of all her fiction would be a great addition to the world of academia. This would break the concentration on the traditional narrative techniques and broaden the scope of scholars on how better to write or internalise literary works.

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