

In Solidarity With Home: Transculturation as a Reconciliation of African Ethnic Binarism in Ama Ata Aidoo's *The Dilemma of a Ghost*

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Abstract—This article examines African binarism in Ama Ata Aidoo's play, *The Dilemma of a Ghost*. The concept of binarism encompasses the nostalgic predilection for the homeland yet, the preconception of home depends on the way in which colonial hegemony appears. The purpose of this study is, therefore, to shed light on the latent circumstances which project onto this play, the inherent impetus of this binarism. The focus will be on Aidoo's conceptualization of the African diaspora and how it has affected the cultural aspects of the Africans' ways of life. To analyze these cultural issues, the methodology of this study utilizes the concept of transculturation. In essence, the concept of transculturation emphasizes a mix of two discrepant cultures. These cultures are different from each other yet similar in their sense of belonging to the homeland. This sense of belonging forges the reconciliation of two opposite ethnic races that belong to the same culture. As such, the study highlights the African diaspora depicted in *The Dilemma of a Ghost* as the primal cause of this transculturation. Consequently, it explores the African diaspora that resulted from forced migration imposed upon diverse national ethnicities that chose to live together in one place - They mingle with each other in the host country, which exemplifies an utterly different cultural facet. To cope with cultural differences, they co-exist with each other by dint of transculturation.

Index Terms—Africa, binarism, diaspora, ethnicity, post-colonialism, transculturation

I. INTRODUCTION

Africa has been the subject of many postcolonial studies. The foundational premise for African postcolonial studies comprises the African vernacular ethnicity and its relationships with other African or world ethnicities (Moyn, 2014, p. 19). For this reason, the African heritage, including literature, has provided the world with an integral panoramic impression of colonial consequences on African lands. Such consequences involve the primal changes in the identity, religion, language, culture, and ideology of the colonized countries in Africa. In this sense, post-colonialism – though it is not exclusively ascribed to Africa – is a viable critical approach that delves deeply into the cultural layers governing the essential meaning of ethnicity. It includes all world countries which have been affected by colonialism.

Specifically, this study approaches the cultural and ethnic attributes of Ghana depicted in Ama Ata Aidoo's play *The Dilemma of a Ghost*. The justification for selecting the play lies in the fact that Ghana has been a fertile premise for British colonialism. As a result, a number of drastic changes took place in Ghana during colonial times. Yet, one of the most significant changes is colonial migration that left its apparent impact upon its traditional ethnicity before the advent of colonialism (Parsons, 1993, p. 39). This is because the Ghanaians aspired to leave their homeland for a better quality of life in other countries. Their aim had been to settle peacefully without any colonial constraints. In this sense, their migration could be classified within the colonial implications of diaspora. However, the controversial classification of this kind of migration comprises both forced and voluntary movements of the Ghanaians outside the native demarcations of their homeland. However, the plights caused by these oppressive movements had been mitigated by March 6, 1957 especially when Ghana became the first African country to gain independence (Rash, 2017, p. 64).

The Ghanaians badly needed stability and prosperity in host countries as they seek to find new hope and opportunity ensuing unendurable daunting colonialism (Hobbs, 2017, p. 57). In this sense, the significance of this study relates to

the notion that thriving stability and co-existence become more attainable elsewhere, because they did not find these conditions in their native homeland. The most conspicuous factor of co-existence within the new ethnic culture was the new challenges faced by them that were pivotal in shaping their identities in the host countries. As such, their new identities had been subject to critical analysis within the wide scope of post-colonialism. Accordingly, the importance of this study reflects on the examination of the diasporic movement and its influence upon the future of Ghanaian generations depicted in the course of the selected play. It tries to explore transculturation as a cultural rapprochement between the diasporic people and their host culture that embodies the cultural poles of ethnic binarism depicted in the play, and which has hardly been examined in previous studies. In this regard, the study scrutinizes Ata Aidoo's portrayal of diasporic binarism that is obliterated by harmonious transculturation embodying the inherent transformation of the Ghanaian indigenous identity, into genuine cultural conformity in the host country.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There are many studies that address Ata Aidoo's *The Dilemma of a Ghost* from different perspectives. The majority of these studies highlight African indigenous culture and how it came to be affected by the ideological dominance of those who conquered and colonized Africa... However, the most conspicuous literary token of the play is the identification of the African national impression shaped right after colonialism. In "Ama Ata Aidoo and the Akan Culture: A Critique of *The Dilemma of a Ghost* and *Anowa*", Sanka et al. (2013) study the relationship between literature and culture in the play. Culture plays an integral role in defining the inherited literary notions of colonialism and its relative insights regarding the pan-African issues, especially vernacular languages.

Sanka et al. (2013) claim that there is an intricate connection, or relationship, between literature and culture depicted in the play. This intricacy is sustained by Ata Aidoo's erudite style that twists the linguistic features of the play, indicating the reality of the African vernacular languages affected by colonialism (p. 89). Consequently, Ata Aidoo's literary style is the most vital aspect of the play since it unravels the authentic peculiarities of the aforementioned languages. Furthermore, the play celebrates literary structure at the expense of the subjective priorities, including the theme, subject matter and other technical elements, since the language used in the play is the primary target of the study. In so doing, Ata Aidoo approaches the most urgent themes that might change the negative aspects of colonialism in Ghana through exploring, for example, ethnic changes that will also be explored in this study. Moreover, Sanka et al. (2013) discuss the implications of vernacular languages by applying the concept of "Akan" which could be further investigated within profound cultural contexts portrayed in the play.

Sanka et al. (2013) have also been critical of Ata Aidoo's stylistic manner that neglects the cultural issue of "Akan". This is because literature is only fictional, creative, and imaginary, and the play, according to them, lack all these literary characteristics due to the excessive focus on the dramatic language rather than other rhetorical considerations (p. 90). Presumably, the structural features of the play are elevated, and underpinned by pertinent cultural issues such as norms, traditions, customs, gender, and ethnic identity, all of which will be given further analytical space in the current study. Such issues enrich the plot since Ata Aidoo employs literary forms for the benefit of cultural themes rather than literary structure.

In the same vein, this study looks into social issues encountered by Ghanaians after colonialism, which are meticulously depicted in the play. It studies Ata Aidoo's portrayal of Ghana's changing socio-cultural norms in the light of post-colonialism. As such, it focuses on the Ghanaian individuals who suffer the effects of diaspora after colonialism, which has hardly been tackled in the study by Sanka et al. (2013). It is for this reason that this study applies the concept of ethnic binarism to explore the congruent affinity between the native people and foreigners who interact with each other through transculturation. Here, the concept of ethnic binarism serves as a tool to differentiate the cultural reality of Ghanaian ethnicity before and after colonial diaspora.

In *Writing as a Cultural Negotiation: A Study of Mariam Ba, Marie Ndiaye and Ama Ata Aidoo*, Kapi (2006) analyzes both the technical and thematic features of Aidoo's *The Dilemma of a Ghost*. Kapi (2006) contends that Ata Aidoo perceives the African cultural negotiation as a central theme of the play. This is because the play embodies Ata Aidoo's writing ability to highlight that ethno-cultural negotiation could be discussed through implicit dramatic plots instead of overtly political discourse. Here, cultural negotiation is limited to Ata Aidoo's subjective style that connects her native ethnicity and culture to social traditions, like marriage, motherhood, witchcraft, polygamy and so forth (p. 1). In this manner, argues Kapi (2006), Aidoo provides binary opposition between society and native ethnicity in creative dramatic modes. This opposition exists between society and its inherited culture, simply because they cannot be separated.

In this study, the concept of binarism will be applied to discuss the relationship between the whites and blacks in postcolonial milieus. Unlike Kapi's (2006) study, the social aspect of the play will be less emphasized in favor of empowering the discussion of the cultural encounter between the whites and blacks on the premise of transculturation, which is deemphasized in Kapi's (2006) interpretation of the role of society in shaping diasporic people's identity. Furthermore, this study will not be restricted to binary opposition. Instead, it is going to apply the concept of ethnic binarism that exists between the whites and blacks who represent the ethnical contradictory races reflecting the colonial stereotypes of the "colonizer" and the "colonized" respectively. The study elaborates these races by examining the

notions of ethnicity to identify the racial presumption of colonial discrepancies between the blacks and whites within colonial contexts.

Furthermore, Axiotou (2008) examines the history of slavery in Ata Aidoo's *The Dilemma of a Ghost* in *Breaking the Silence: West African Authors and the Transatlantic Slave Trade*. Axiotou (2008) contends that Ata Aidoo is mostly concerned with the slave trade that damaged the stability of the Africans before the advent of colonialism. As a result, Ata Aidoo, according to Axiotou (2008), offers fictional responses to emphasize the need "to revisit and rethink the historical presence of slave" trade in transatlantic routes (p. vii). In so doing, Ata Aidoo portrays the problematic writing about silence, which means non-resistance, or passive resistance to eradicate the source of slavery negatively affecting the identity and dignity of slaves. This resistance is symptomatic in narrating the history of slave trade, and it is the rhetorical feature of the play. In this sense, the primary objective of this dramatic depiction is ascribed to Ata Aidoo who puts forth a live documentation of slave trade in a historical archive that "could be easily retrieved" (Axiotou, 2008, p. vii). Aidoo, in this respect, is interested in dealing with the colonized 'other', as oppressed victims of the colonizers driving the slave trade for purposes of empowering their hegemony.

Nonetheless, this study will apply the concepts of ethnic binarism to identify the influence of diaspora on the Ghanaian culture after colonialism. Moreover, it will also apply the concept of transculturation to examine the concomitant liaison between the original people of Ghana and the whites who attempted to deform the inherited cultural identity of the Ghanaian natives. On the one hand, there will be a focus on the whites' rejection of the original people's family traditions i.e., having big families which is an indication of the natives' ability to have many children and extended families, who are equally committed to raising children. This poses a cultural challenge to the white colonizers. On the other hand, the study will scrutinize the original people's efforts - including the protagonist's family - to maintain their native traditions of having many children. In this respect, the concept of transculturation will be applied to analyze this relationship, which enhances the natives' ability to emulate the colonial hegemonic power.

The relative features of diaspora are tackled in Chabwera's (2004) *Writing Black Womanhood: Feminist Writing by Four Contemporary African and Black Diaspora Women Writers*. Chabwera (2004) accentuates the gender facets of the colonized people by treating women's issues related to diaspora. She (2004) discusses the female identity and black womanhood in the African diaspora through the self-perceptions of women in harsh diasporic conditions. Women play a marginal role in their communities since they are not influential in their societies. Furthermore, they are also marginalized and oppressed by the hegemonic culture of the colonizers. They are deprived of women's rights and are perceived as inferior entities in their homeland. Chabwera (2004) reinforces this argument by analyzing the diasporic peculiarities in the play whereby diaspora is conceived as the main cause of women's marginalization. Here, Chabwera (2004) finds that the marginalization of women lies at the core of the panoramic traditional sense of womanhood in Africa in the historical and social temperament of diasporic experience.

In her pursuit of these gender matters, Chabwera (2004) applies feminism to analyze the marginalization of women and its relative influence upon Ghanaian women during diasporic circumstances. She (2004) interprets the main female characters like Eulalie in Ata Aidoo's *The Dilemma of a Ghost* to discover the motivations that led to women's marginalization and she specifically scrutinizes the conditions of these destitute women when they are oppressed and exploited by men. These conditions compel the African black African women to perceive themselves in "communal gender" roles and "class-specific conflicts" made by their "socio-historical" authenticity (p. i). Chabwera (2004) uses feminism and gender to identify the dominant theories and patriarchal beliefs regarding the issues of womanhood in the African diaspora delineated in the play. In contrast, my study will apply post-colonialism to interpret ethnic binarism through the concept of transculturation to examine the transformation of Ghanaian national identity conceptualized in the selected play.

III. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Ata Aidoo's *The Dilemma of a Ghost* recounts the story of a Ghanaian character, Ato Yawson, who completes his studies in America and returns home to Ghana, with his African American bride Eulalie. The play's initial scenes are about the conflicts between Ato and Eulalie because the latter cannot accustom herself to the new cultural life in Ghana. Yet, they both feel that their love will conquer all and help them to overcome all possible conflicts that arise. Their situation however gets complicated because Eulalie is expected to immediately fall pregnant and have children whereas she is not eager to bear children. Ato now faces a family dilemma since he is obliged by the African cultural lifestyle to establish a family. Ato, who becomes a well-known scholar, is highly regarded and respected by his people. He is however, unable to decide on whether to satisfy his people's expectations, or respect Eulalie's desires and needs since she refuses to bear children. As a result of not being accustomed to the African lifestyle, Eulalie fails to understand or value their traditional customs, and refuses to cope with the Ghanaian family responsibilities. She does not fit in, turns to alcohol and willfully continues to do as she pleases. Ata Aidoo perceives this complicated scenario through a dramatic dialogue between two village women who express their own perspectives on the deteriorating relationship between Ato and Eulalie, and the Ghanaian inherited traditions regarding family and children.

However, as time passes, the ethnic affinity between the diasporic people and the host country is seemingly sustained by the reciprocal relationship created by migration. As a result, the diasporic life gets influenced by this migration since it has historical roots which resulted in new experiences. As such, their diverse experiences propelled the migratory

people towards drastic cultural and ethnic change. This is due to the fact that the diasporic experiences “scholarship” is conducted “to unravel their histories and lived experiences” (Cipolla & Hayes, 2015, p. 14). This African diasporic reality is found in Ata Aidoo’s *The Dilemma of a Ghost*. In the prologue, the scholar, who is a flat character in the play, describes the radical changes that the Ghanaian people undergo. He refers to his existence as a stranger being restricted the exercise of traditions of the host country. One of these traditions is the use of the horn in tribal celebrations, which is not entirely used in the Ghanaian native culture. The diasporic people here, must only listen to the blowing of this music without interacting with it because they are strangers: “You stranger do not know. Just you listen to their horn-blower: We are running forward, forward, forward ...” (pp. 7-8). The Scholar’s last words exemplify the Ghanaian people’s assimilation with the host country. That is, they move forward i.e., towards new cultures and social milieus dominated by ethnic binarism.

In the first place, the play depicts diaspora as a voluntary movement selected by African nations to improve their lives through academic means. Ata Aidoo highlights the stereotypical image of an African seeking stability and settlement in the host country. In essence, diaspora exposes the objectives of the migratory people in the new land to find better opportunity (Mentan, 2015, p. 95). In this respect, Ata Aidoo emphasizes the African reflections projected in the course of the play, and this is obvious through Ato and Eulalie’s relationship. This relationship is analogous to that of the African people who tend to leave their native homeland, yet, still maintain their inherited social traditions, such as the oppression of their women who are often denied freedom of speech. This is apparent in the following excerpt from the play when Ato interrupts Eulalie:

ATO: Do keep your mouth shut, if you please.

EU: I suppose African women don’t talk.

ATO: How often do you want to drag in about African women? Leave them alone, will you ... Ah yes they talk. But Christ, they don’t run on in this way. This running –tap drawl gets on my nerves (p. 8).

In fact, the relationship between Ato and Eulalie exemplifies ethnic binarism since they belong to two different racial backgrounds; their initial relationship is complex as they lack compromising transculturation. In fact, transculturation indicates the position of the diasporic people who struggle in the new host land as they lack complete liberty (Cowans, 2015, p. 147). For this reason, Ato voluntarily chooses to leave his homeland for the sake of personal prosperity. In furtherance of his ambition, he tries to find new meaning and value in his diasporic life. Such meaning and value were not provided to him by colonial administrators in Ghana. This is due to the fact that the postcolonial period did not support the natives’ aspirations to be equal to their host country’s ethnicity. There is a great impetus for Ato to find new and promising opportunities in diasporic life outside the demarcations of his native land. In this sense, Ato and Eulalie leave for America which is their diasporic destination. Such migratory issues are tackled through Ato’s journey to study in America:

EU: Look here, I don’t think that I’ll stand by and have you say I am not as good as your folks.

ATO: But what I have said, for goodness sake?

EU: Well, what did you mean by running-tap drawl? I only speak like I was born to speak – like an American!

ATO: [*contrite*] Nonsense, darling ... But Sweetie Pie, can’t we ever talk, but we must drag in the differences between your people and mine? Darling, we’ll be happy, won’t we? (pp. 8-9).

In this context, the lives of Ato and Eulalie in America are satisfactory in terms of the ethnic relationships between them and other American people. As such, the diasporic life represents the core conceptual meaning of the cultural differences between the natives and the host land people (Johnson, 2015, p. 65). This holds true in Ato’s African origins in Ata Aidoo’s *The Dilemma of a Ghost*. Ato says that there is a great ethnic and cultural gap between his people, who are of Ghanaian descent, and the other people who are respected by Eulalie. Strikingly, Ata Aidoo depicts Eulalie as the connection between Ato and the American society where they were settled. This is apparent when Ato says, “We’ll be happy, won’t we?” This is an implicit indication of his gradual acceptance of the American people whom he begins to love through Eulalie and this acceptance is the core of transculturation which will be highlighted after discussing the sense of binarism and its colonial insights in the play.

IV. BINARISM

The colonial implication of binarism is the dual relationship between two discrepant ethnicities. Consequently, these ethnicities are the poles of ethnic binarism that entails the presence of one racial ethnicity together with another one from a different culture (Kwan, 2014, p. 43). In Ata Aidoo’s *The Dilemma of a Ghost*, the binary symbolism is the relationship between Ato and Eulalie who live in America as foreigners. In a striking way, Ata Aidoo alludes to the sense of binarism via Ato who criticizes the way Eulalie collects coconuts. To clarify, Eulalie follows a new method of collecting coconuts that differs from the original African method. Ato insists on saying that there are no real palm trees in America as it differs from the African atmosphere and geographical terrains. Yet, Eulalie rejects Ato’s claim by following a new method of collecting coconuts:

ATO: Steady, woman. Where did you get hold of a tourist brochure? There are no palms where we will live. There are coconuts trees ... coconut palms, though. Unless of course if I take you to see my folks at home. There are real palm trees there.

EU: Ah well, I don't know the difference, and I don't care neither. Coconut palms, palm-palms, aren't they all the same? And anyway, why should I not go and see your folks? (p. 9).

In fact, Eulalie's insistence on collecting coconuts her way serves as a metaphor for change - seeking new life and new cultural methods in America. In doing so, she attempts to empower her new living conditions by coping with the common way of life in America for the sake of transcultural symbiosis. Binarism, here, emerges out of the intricate relationship between the American way of life and African diasporic cultural norms represented by Ato and Eulalie keeping their inherited traditions, as well as coping with the new life because ethnic binarism requires a suitable social equilibrium between two cultures (Wolfe, 2016, p. 107). In Ata Aidoo's *The Dilemma of a Ghost*, the binary ideology is conspicuous in Eulalie's response to Ato's feeling that he will not be impressed the American people. He however, changes his mind and accepts Eulalie's description of them as nice good folks. Consequently, he agrees that all his diasporic compatriots and the American people are one nation:

ATO: You may not be impressed.

EU: Silly darling. Who wants to be impressed? Fine folks Eulalie Rush has herself, eh? Could I even point to you a beggar in the streets as my father or mother? Ato, can't your Ma be sort of my Ma too? ...

ATO: Sure.

[Following lines solemn, like a prayer]

And all my people your people ... (p. 9).

Ato's gradual acceptance of his presence in the American diasporic life exemplifies his interest in the new land which might offer him opportunity and a promising future. He could fulfill his dreams by accepting the American ethnicity. The diasporic appropriation of binarism comprises the essential co-existence between the migratory ethnicity and its host land (Macqueen, 2016, p. 38). In the same way, Ato's ideology in Ata Aidoo's *The Dilemma of a Ghost* is deeply influenced by the ethnic traditions of his homeland. His nostalgia is evident when he says that he likes to go to his native homeland, a native "boy" who longs for his country. He tells Eulalie of his desire to die there, and she shares his feeling:

EU: Shall I die where you will die?

ATO: Yes ... And if you want to, you shall be buried there also.

[Pause]

EU: [Anxiously] But darling, I really hope it won't matter at all?

ATO: What?

EU: You know what, Native boy (pp. 9-10).

Although Ato and Eulalie are happily settled within American society, they suffer bouts of homesickness and nostalgia. They yearn to return to their native homeland once again, yet at the same time, they like living in America and interacting with the American people. . . In essence, they aspire to spend quality time in America before they leave it. The good relationship between them and the American people is sustained by their predilection to get rid of ethnic binarism by means of transculturation that enables them to live peacefully and perfectly in a foreign land. Transculturation, consequently, bridges the gap between these Ghanaian diasporic people and their American counterparts in an ideal living atmosphere.

V. TRANSCULTURATION

The concept of transculturation encompasses the reciprocal relation between two different ethnic backgrounds (Chasteen, 2016, p. 165). In its broad sense, it means that certain ethnic groups perceive others through mutual respect and acceptance of each other's culture and social norms. In this way, it enhances social ties and strengthens their shared views of life. This kind of reciprocation is the exemplification of Ato's African origins in Ata Aidoo's *The Dilemma of a Ghost*. Ato reveals to Eulalie, the practical outlook of the American people towards birth control. He describes the social connection between America and Africa as the epitome of transculturation since they believe in their potential to create their paradise in the American diasporic life:

ATO: Aren't you the sweetest and loveliest things in Africa and America rolled together? My darling, we are going to create a paradise, with or without children (p. 10).

Ato and Eulalie are besotted with the American socio-cultural norms. They live by virtue of the transcultural relationship that unites them with the American host country. The conditions of the diasporic people could be improved by transculturation and its amiable ethnic insights (Helmick, 2016, p. 4). In like manner, Ata Aidoo's *The Dilemma of a Ghost* depicts this colonial aspect, especially when Ato and Eulalie observe their African traditions in the host country. They love their American experience yet are still dedicated to their African norms. Eulalie keeps her sense of belonging to Africa, and Ato informs her that they will lead a good life in America, irrespective of whether they follow their African social norms or the American ones. In this sense, they get rid of the ethnic differences by means of adopting both the African inherited traditions and the new American life style:

EU: But still, I understand in Africa ...

ATO: ... Eulalie Rush and Ato Yawson shall be free to love each other, eh? This is all that you understand or should understand about Africa (p. 10).

Consequently, they are pleased with the African and American life styles by virtue of transculturation. Ato is insistent on keeping his African traditions, and refers to himself as “a native boy” living in a foreign land. In fact, transculturation allows the natives to adopt any cultural tradition regardless the ethnic customs and traditions of the new diasporic land (Orellana, 2016, p. 145). Similarly, the ethnic representations of transculturation are evident in Ato and Eulalie’s discussion of birth-control. According to their native African traditions, birth-control is socially and traditionally unacceptable. However, it is totally acceptable in diasporic lands like America. When the American people ask Ato about the possibility of birth-control, he tells them it is almost impossible and unacceptable in his homeland. To Eulalie’s astonishment, even Ato rejects the practice of birth-control, justifying his claim that he might be haunted by the curse of his ancestors:

EU: Native boy, what did they say? [*Silence*] Ato what’s the matter?

ATO: They came to ask why we haven’t started a family.

EU: And what did you tell them?

ATO: Nothing.

EU: What do you mean by nothing? I should have thought the answer to that question is very simple.

ATO: They would say we are displeasing the spirits of our ancestors and the Almighty God for controlling birth (p. 45).

The issue of birth-control is a cultural matter, and transculturation allows large space for discussing the cultural differences and similarities among various ethnicities (Ueda, 2016, p. 113). In Ata Aidoo’s *The Dilemma of a Ghost*, Ato and Eulalie are the authentic embodiment of African ethnicity that rejects birth-control in favor of having children, as decreed by their ancestors. Nevertheless, they could cope with the American view of birth-control in the light of transculturation and yet respect their ancestral traditions and their diasporic-affected social norms. Transculturation, in this sense, mixes the inherited tradition and the diasporic life to eradicate the cultural differences between them (Rosenthal, 2016, p. 73). These transcultural insights are evident in Ato and Esi’s dialogues concerning traditional marriage and the number of children that the native family should have. Esi, who is Ato’s mother, warns her son against the dangers of violating their marriage traditions and birth norms. Ato accepts the idea of having children albeit a few only while Esi rejects it by reminding him of their ancestral traditions. She predicts that Ato and Eulalie will suffer the wrath of their ancestors if they do not comply with their native traditions regarding birth and marriage:

ATO: If we wanted children, she would have given birth to some.

ESI: Ei, everyone should come and listen to this. [*She walks round in all attitudes indicating surprise.*] I have not heard anything like this before ... Human beings deciding when they must have children? [*To ATO*] Meanwhile, where is God? [*ATO is confused since he does not know how to reply to this*] ... yet only a woman who is barren will tell her neighbours such a tale.

ATO: But it can be done.

ESI: *Yoo*, if it can be done, do it. But I am sure any woman who does it will die by the anger of the ghosts of her fathers – or at least, she will never get the children when she wants them.

ATO: But, Maami, in these days of civilisation ...

ESI: In these days of civilisation what? Now I know you have been teaching your wife to insult us ...

ATO: Oh, Maami! (p. 51).

In a striking way, Ato refers to the traditional marriage norms as a far cry from civilization. That is, he follows the norms and tradition of marriage that he learned while living in America. Esi vehemently opposes it as she follows the traditional mentality of marriage. Ato detaches himself from his native traditions and gets influenced by foreign ethnic culture. In colonial contexts, ethnic culture and tradition hold a close affinity to diaspora since both of them exert social influence upon each other (Arthur, 2008, p. 84). Ashcroft et al. (2013) argue that the relationship between the original culture and the diasporic culture is contiguous because they influence each other in different ways, and transculturation comprises “distinctive cultures which both preserve and often extend and develop their originary cultures” (pp. 68-70). In Ata Aidoo’s *The Dilemma of a Ghost*, Esi summarizes the whole ethnic diasporic implications of transculturation:

ESI: Is this not the truth. Why did you not tell us that you and your wife are gods and you can create your own children when you want them? [*ATO is shamefaced and in spite of wide speculations and several attempts to speak, no words came out. There is a long pause.*] You do not even tell us about anything and we assemble our medicines together. While all the time your wife laughs at us because we do not understand such things... [*Her, mother and son face each other for a long time and it is ATO who is forced to look down at last.*] ... and we are angry because we think you are both not doing what is good for yourselves. [*She is almost addressing herself now.*] ... and yet who can blame her? No stranger ever breaks the law... [*another long pause.*] Hmm ... my son. You have not dealt with us well. And you have not dealt with your wife well in this. [*ATO make more futile attempts to speak.*] Tomorrow, I will tell your grandmother, and your uncles and your aunts about all this, and I know they will tell you that... [*At this point EULALIE enters from the path on the right. She is weak and looks very unhappy. She nearly crumples in front of the courtyard while ATO stares dazedly at her. It is ESI KOM who, following ATO’s gaze and seeing her, rushes forward to support her on. After a few paces into the courtyard, EULALIE turns as if to speak to ATO. But ESI KOM makes a sign to her not to say anything while she herself continues to address ATO...*] ... (pp. 51-52).

Esi, in this regard, recapitulates the entire cultural gap between the African native culture and her son's cultural transformation. She blames them for considering their native traditions as outworn, and which should be replaced with modern and civilized life. Ato and Eulalie taunt their native compatriots because they might not understand the meaning of civilization and modernity which they have lived and experienced in diasporic life. In fact, they accept their native traditions with moderation as they have lived a transculturation experience that truly links the African Ghanaian ethnicity with its American equivalent. . This discussion has thus explored the transcultural factor as a unification of cultural binarism between African ethnicity and American social norms which is almost an alien idea to the African people, like Esi. Consequently, transculturation has been examined as the embodiment of merging ethnic binarism from African and American backgrounds into one socio-cultural norm.

VI. CONCLUSION

This article has examined the colonial peculiarities in Ata Aidoo's *The Dilemma of a Ghost*. The discussion of colonial aspects in the play has focused on the depiction of Africa as the home of colonialism. However, this analysis concentrates on Africa because it offers the broadest scope of colonialism in Ghana, where the play is set. . The presentation of African qualities provided the analysis of how colonialism could affect the individuality of the colonized. Accordingly, the interpretation of the Ghanaian individuality serves as a vehicle for discerning the sufferings of the Africans under colonialist rule... Yet, the essay's analysis has examined the consequences of colonialism in Ghana as an African country.

Of the various concepts explored, one of these is binarism. This concept has been used to explore the relationship between the African individuality as portrayed by Ato and his wife Eulalie. Both of them have binary perceptions of each other. On the one hand, Ato is determined to maintain his African cultural traditions and customs in both, his marital and social life. He socially interacts with his native people while also maintaining a good relationship with his American born wife, Eulalie. On the other hand, Eulalie does not perceive the African people in a similar manner. She is radically different from them, and holds contradictory opinions of their African cultural norms, especially marriage. She does not want to have many children because she herself hails from a small family, as opposed to the Ghanaians who have large families. As such, it can be said that Eulalie and Ato have binary perceptions of life.

This concept of binarism has branched out to incorporate the concept of transculturation. The study has found that transculturation is the interconnectedness between the indigenous people of Ghana and Eulalie. The Ghanaian culture sharply contradicts Eulalie's cultural background. The study of this contradiction has succeeded in identifying a new relationship between the whites and the colonized Africans. In this respect, Ato's characterization has been analyzed to discover Ata Aidoo's depiction of the interrelations among the whites and the Africans. Ata Aidoo's portrayal of Ato helps to convey to the reader the common relation between African people and the whites. That is, the whites – portrayed via Eulalie's personality – are not satisfied with the African culture, but they accept it in order to live peacefully and be treated equally. For this reason, the concept of ethnicity has also been used to study the original ethnicity of the Africans and the whites' perception of each other in the play. Thus, *The Dilemma of a Ghost* has been argued to be the exemplification of Ata Aidoo's concern with regaining ethnic binarism.

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