

CHAPTER ONE

1.1

INTRODUCTION

Values

In ethics, value denotes something degree of importance, with the aim of determining what action or life is best to do or live, or at least attempt to describe the value of different actions. It may be described as treating actions themselves as abstract objects, putting value to them. It deals with right conduct and good life, in the sense that a highly, or at least relatively highly, valuable action may be regarded as ethically “good” (Adjective sense), and an action of low, or at least relatively low, value may be regarded as “bad”. (Wikipedia)

Values are important and lasting beliefs or ideals shared by the members of a culture about what are good and desirable. Values have major influences on people’s behaviours and attitudes and serve as broad guidelines in all situations. (BusinessDictionary.com)

Tradition

Tradition can be defined as pertinent, lasting beliefs, culture and rituals among a society, passed down from one generation to another imbued with the concrete or abstract qualities or injunctions that are regarded as supernatural from God, gods, goddesses, heroes, legends, humans, animals and plants. They include symbolic representations and activities in events, festivals and rituals comparable with the sacred activities of the – Asaa Traditional Festival of Nkpologue (Ezugu 6).

Traditional Values:

Traditional Values are those physical or abstract qualities possessed by particular elements, events, rituals or phenomena held in high-esteem, respect and obedience by individuals. Such values govern and regulate the physical and psychological behavior of individuals living in a particular culture or a geographical area.

Africans as we know are a resilient people, and over time they have developed value systems and ways of coping with life and maintain their communities and to survive great hardships either in the African continent or in the Diaspora. The traditional life of the clan in most tribes of Africa has, as its core value, protection of the family and perpetuation of the tribe. In his traditional life the African holds certain things to be of great value. It is these values which give him a distinct cultural personality and enable him to make some contributions to world knowledge, history, philosophy and civilization. It is not my task in this study to articulate all the cultural values of the African, but only the dominant ones.

Large Family:

One of the foremost traditional values of the African is having a large family. Children are of supreme value to the African. His primary purpose for marriage is children and to have as many of them as possible. This is the reason why polygamy or the union of one man with several women still holds great attraction for him, and also why the birth rate in Africa is among the highest in the world. The fact is that the African still counts his blessings by the number of children he has, whether they are educated or not, rich or poor, healthy or sick, well-fed or hungry. The African smiles at the sight of his numerous children and is unmoved at the turmoil at his gate as he has a lot of arrows in his quivers.(Seo Ogbonmwan, 2008).

Respect for elders:

Another great value in traditional Africa is respect for old people (“Senior Citizen”), particularly one’s parents, grandparents and relatives. The elders are revered by the young as the grey hair is associated with wisdom and God’s blessings. The respect and honour bestowed on the ancestors percolate through the old people—one’s parents, grandparents and other relatives—as living embodiments of wisdom and of the good moral life who are expected sooner or later to join other good ancestors in the land of the “living dead”. Old age therefore is an important value to the African. Even the children look forward to old age unlike now when hormones are being taken to remain forever young. (Seo Ogbonmwan, 2008)

Morning Salutation:

As part of the respect for elders, the Benin people of southern Nigeria have a unique way of respecting their elders and identifying their family of origin people say La tose (Edohen of Benin), La emore (Eni of Uzae(Ijare) , La Umogun (Royal blood from Eweka 1) La Ogiesan (Ezomo of Benin) of which there are 56 of them in total. These salutations are in electronic form at (www.edoglobalorganization.org).

Worship of Ancestor:

“Igba Evo”- A day when special homage is paid to all ancestors. “Igo Idi and Ihe Nshi”, that is, sacrificing to the dead priests and elders of the clan in commemoration of their past roles as keepers of the conscience of the clan when they were alive. “Ahor Nna”, on this day, Ahor, everyone whose father (Nna) is dead, sacrifices to him to enlist his help and protection. (Ezugu 12-13).

The worship of our ancestors is the basis for the honour and respect accorded to old people in the traditional Africa culture is their closeness to the ancestors, for in his, ontological conceptual scheme the African places his old relatives on his great hierarchy of beings.

It must be noted that in the African universe the living and the dead interact with one another. Life goes on beyond the grave for the African and is a continuous action and interaction with dead relatives.

These unseen ancestors called “the living dead” become part of one’s living family and often are invited to partake though spiritually in the family meals. The ancestors are not just ghosts, nor are they simply dead heroes, but are felt to be still present watching over the household, directly concerned in all the affairs of the family and property, giving abundant harvests and fertility and warding off enemies at the village gate.

Extended Family Unit:

Another important traditional value of the modern African is love for, and practice of, the extended family system.

This extended family system is widely practiced in Africa. Indeed it is one “in which everybody is linked with all the other members, living or dead, through a complex network of spiritual relationship into a kind of mystical body” consequently, it is not just “being” that the African values, “being-with-others” or “being rooted in kinship” is an equally important existential characteristic of the African. He is never isolated since several persons are assimilated into one parental role: his father’s brother are assimilated by extension into the role of father, his mother’s sisters into the role of mother, his patri-lateral uncle’s daughters into the role of sister. A person is an individual to the extent that he is a member of a family, a clan or community. (Seo Ogbonmwan, 2008).

Sacredness of Life:

The African does not like or nurture violence per se. this is because shedding of blood is sacrilegious. In Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*, Okonkwo goes into exile with his family, for seven

years to atone, for inadvertently killing a clansman- a crime against the earth goddess. In Africa, people are never killed unless it is an act of war. In the past were those whose continued existence as a threat to the life of others and to the peace of the community were usually sold into slavery.

Traditional African Religion

To the African, religion is of indispensable value. “To be” for him is to be religious” as religion truly permeates his total life, there is for him no “Secular” existence or naturalistic vision of world order. In this important way also, the African exhibits a cultural personality distinct from that of western man, for instance, who easily makes a radical distinction between the secular and the religious, natural and the supernatural, this world and the next. Apart from ancestral things that are awesome or humans that have been inspiring or transcendental like the sun, the moon, the river, the earth, etc.

Communal Work

Preparation for Onwa-Asaa festival (Ezugu 5). The African values communal work as an opportunity to share his skills and give his best to his age group and the community. In the preparation of the bush for farming, the age group members arrange a date to assist Mr. A and the following day assist Mr. B in bush clearing, bush burning, bush gathering, planting, pruning and harvesting without money changing hands. This practice will hardly disappear in tradition African communities.

Modernity

This refers to past-traditional, past-medieval historical period, one marked by the move from Feudalism (Or Agrarianism) toward Capitalism, Industrialization, Secularization,

Rationalization, the nation-state and its constituent institutions and forms of surveillance.(Barker 2005, 444).

In these usages, “Modernity” denotes the renunciation of the recent past, favouring a new beginning, and a reinterpretation of historical origin. The distinction between “Modernity” and “Modern” did not arise until the 19th century (Delanty 2007).

As the African passes from folk to urban society, life with its complicated money economy, high technology and international trade, his traditional values are bound to be affected. Old values disappear; some are refined in other cases some traditional values suffer disruption, at times to the point of extinction; in yet other cases the African suffers a reversal of his traditional values; lastly he creates altogether new values with consequent tensions.

Some of these values are:

Education:

Increase in population, in the face of the world wide economic crisis, makes some parents neglect the traditional education of their children and the latter, have no opportunity to appreciate traditional ways in life. Therefore, Western education forms the bedrock of knowledge and skills to equip such persons in their pursuit of a better world.

Communication:

In our days, we notice that, the world is becoming a kind of village in which there is a wide interaction between people and other different cultures. This phenomenon happens thanks to the new technologies. People have today the possibility to be aware of what is happening all around the world. They also have the opportunity to discover other cultures, other ways of life and behaviours thanks to the radio, television and other various means of communication like the internet.

Technology

Old people (Grandfathers and Mothers) are no longer those persons, who educate Children by means of stories, tales and so on; they are most the time seen as boring and talkative. Children spend most of their time playing video games, browsing with their mobile phones, watching television; they are fond of films through which they discover some actors that they admire a lot, and at times enjoy bad influences and pornography.

Marriage

The institution of Marriage was highly valued by all the traditional cultures in Africa. To a large extent, especially in the rural areas, it is highly valued even today. The reason for this is that marriage is the foundation on which families are built. On its part, the family constitutes the basic social group that operates most widely and most intensely in the activities of everyday life.

Human Life

Human life is highly valued in the modern world, as well as it was in the traditional African communities. In all other cases, no one is allowed to take away another person's life. In fact, no distinction is made between murder and manslaughter; both are considered murder.

Morality

Morality is a quality highly valued by all traditional communities. Indeed, moral values formed the bedrock of the education that was given to children as they grow up. Moral values were also impressed on people who were about to Wed or who were going through one rite of passage to another. Leaders were also expected to be people of upright character. All these are cherished even today.

1.2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The word “Tradition” itself derives from the Latin “tradere” or “traderer” literally meaning to transmit, to hand over, to give for safekeeping.

A tradition is a belief, principle or way of behaviour of a particular people, passed down within a group or society with symbolic meaning or important significance that originated in the past. Common examples include holidays or impractical but socially meaningful clothes (Like Lawyer wigs or Military officer spurs) but the idea has also been applied to social norms such as anthropology and biology, have adapted the term “Tradition”, defining it more precisely than its conventional use in order to facilitate scholarly discourse.

The concept of tradition, as the notion of holding on to a previous time, is also found in political and philosophical discourse. For example, the political concept of traditionalism is based around it, as are strands of many world religions including traditional Catholicism. (Wikipedia)

Modernity typically refers to a post-traditional, post-medieval historical period, one marked by the move from Feudalism (Or Agrarianism) toward Capitalism, Industrialization, Secularization, Nationalization, the nation-state and its constituent institutions and forms of surveillance (Barker 2005,444).

Charles Pierre Baudelaire is credited with coining the term “Modernity” (Modernite) to designate the fleeting, ephemeral experience of life in an urban metropolis, and the responsibility art has to capture that experience.

Conceptually, modernity relates to the modern era and to modernism, but forms a distinct concept.

Whereas the Enlightenment (ca. 1650-1800) invokes a specific movement in Western philosophy, modernity tends to refer only to the social relations associated with the rise of Capitalism. Modernity may also refer to tendencies in intellectual culture, particularly the movements intertwined with Secularization and post-Industrial life, such as Marxism, existentialism and the formal establishment of social science.

1.3 THE AIM AND OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The aim of this research is to rejuvenate or rekindle interest in African traditional and modern values in the works of Asare Konadu and Ama Ata Aidoo, namely: *A Woman In Her Prime* and *Changes*, in a bid to entrench core African values that appear to be waning.

1.4 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF STUDY

This study is as well as limited to the novels of Asare Konadu and Ama Ata Aidoo, namely:

- *A Woman in Her Prime* and
- *Changes*

Other sources used include: textbooks, journals, essays, internet facilities, and personal contributions based on observations, studies, and private interviews.

1.5 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This work is salient in the sense that it explores African values in traditional and modern sense, which are still the foundation of existence till today.

This work, will in addition, serve as a means of enlightenment to the present generation and the future.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted in this research is purely literary, analytical, comparative, as well as contrastive as a means of highlighting typical African traditional values in comparison with what present day modern values appear to be - - some of which are acceptable, since society is

dynamic. Occasionally one comes across the so called modern values that are aberrations, copied from foreign sources that run counter to African values.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

KONADU'S *A Woman In Her Prime*

Samuel Asare Konadu (18 January 1932, Asamang, Ashanti Region-1994) was a Ghanaian Journalist, novelist and publisher, who also wrote under the Pseudonym Kwabena Asare Bediako.

Asare Konadu attended local primary and middle schools before studying at Abuakwa state college. He entered the Ghana information service in 1951, and also worked as a reporter for the Gold Coast broadcasting service. In 1956 he was sent abroad by the government to study in London and at Strasbourg University, joining the Ghana News Agency on his return to Ghana in 1957. Asare Konadu's *A Woman In Her Prime* was reviewed by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in 1969 and was a guest to the United states state Department in 1972 where he was interviewed by the VOA.

How also published popular literature from his own imprint, Anowuo Educational publications, under the name Kwabena Asare Bediako.

African writers are branded of peculiar writing styles which enthuse many people to make their tale first choice. Asare Konadu is a novelist from Ghana. He has premeditated "*A Woman In Her Prime*" not for fun but for an exclusive description of African culture without ignoring the value and practices of the people of Ghana more than ever those in the Ashanti land.

A Woman In Her Prime is a critical novel of village life with a progressive message that is modern but not reactionary (Anderson Brown, 2009).

Compared to the brilliance and brashness of so much Nigeria literature, the quieter literature of Ghana may seem in danger of being overlooked. *A woman in her prime* is a good example of what a mistake that would be.

Like its heroine, *A Woman In Her Prime* is modest, balanced, calm, and understated, but with a charm and quiet beauty that prove captivating. It centers on a domestic drama that can be stated simply: Pokuwaa would like a child, but her prayers have not been answered (Geoff Wisner, 2013).

Konadu clearly exposes the beliefs and practices of the people of Ghana with regard to marriage, funeral celebration and traditional festivals. He designates Pokuwaa the leading character and her role played has really given a vivid picture and beauty of the story. We learned that Pokuwaa could not sustain her marriage in view of her childlessness and children are the foremost issues in any African marriage. She experiences two different unsuccessful marriages because of her unproductive problem. She meets Kadwo who could be a real husband. He understands her situations and always feels with her.

“There may be a time for every situation. Nevertheless no situation is permanent”

Pokuwaa demonstrates a habit of hard work and she is known as an industrious house wife who always goes to the nearest stream to fetch water to the feed family.

Pokuwaa is an ambitious lady. Her excessive ambition is exhibited during the Friday sacrifice for the great god Tano. She is nothing but animated all day long waiting patiently for the ceremony to come on. Brenhoma is the setting of the story, a farming community where traditional religion is mostly prevalent. We recognize her lack of formal education among the people of this community. They guess their time by associating it with the position of the sun. though, there are tons of items people donate during the great Tano sacrifice, depending on one's riches or heart's desire and took, pokuwaa visualizes a dark hen for her contribution. Meanwhile, the problems she confronts among many others which involve a snake to gulp down the black hen, and her tactics skill to pin down the snake are some of the adventures she experiences.

Pokuwaa goes through a broad range of sacrifices with the view to overcoming her barrenness but all these efforts are always in vain. Some of the medicine man deliberately misleads her by providing unsuccessful solutions based on irregular and an improper measure of traditional medicine.

Her mother is highly worried about her childlessness, so she advises from time to time. She has a compassionate friend, Koramoa whose companionship is significant to Pokuwaa in diverse social ways.

Konadu describes Pokuwaa as one of the industrious female farmers in Brenhoma. This really portrays African culture where women undertake energy-sapping work (Jean, 2011). No sooner had she discovered a dead body near her farm and failed to reveal the news to the people of the town, except her trusted Mother than she felt discomfort and nostalgia till the burial of the deceased Yaw Boakye. Her husband is amazed and suspects her of having a compassionate relationship with the deceased.

Konadu depicts the character of Pokuwaa as one of the women with high esteem in Brenhoma community. She is optimistic that God is the only giver of a child and not great god Tano. She rejects all the suggestions and encouragements received from the mother and the husband in connection with spiritual sacrifices. She demonstrates outmost interest in praising the supreme almighty God than lesser gods in Brenhoma.

Pokuwaa fears dead bodies awfully. She prefers sitting beside her mother when that benevolent chief who reigned to fifty years dies. The chief has been nice to Koramoa, her best friend in many stand points. She describes him as the only chief who shares food as well as so many other things with their families. We understood that the chiefs in Ghana are great celebrities and that they frequently receive gifts from their subjects.

No one dare blame the supreme God. Pokuwaa shows sign of pregnancy within a few months after she boycotts the sacrifices of the great god Tano. She has even forgotten about her barrenness. Her husband Kwadwo doesn't bother much about the sudden change of her mind and they live happier than before. He is great hunter and he brings bush meat home to impress his wife. Her mother, the old lady becomes happy with the sign that her daughter has finally become pregnant. Her best friend Koramoa is full of joy while the husband, Kwadwo keeps his ears to the ground and waits anxiously.

Good wishers, mature compliments and advice pour in continuously. We were inspired by Maame Fosua's information, that when a woman is pregnant she needs to eat more of palm nut soup and chew sugarcane which in turn provide breast milk in abundance.

There are many African novels that tell of violence, betrayal and cruel disillusionment. There are few that express the sweetness of village life. With its living description of the rituals, routines, and gossip of a small community, *A Woman in Her Prime* expresses how disappointment may be balanced by tenderness and peace—and how we sometimes get the thing we want only after we have stopped striving for it (Geoff Wisner, 2013).

AIDOO'S Changes

Professor Ama Ata Aidoo, nee Christina Ama Aidoo (born 23 March 1940, Saltpond) is a Ghanaian author, playwright and academic.

Life: Born in Saltpond in Ghana's central Region, she grew up in a Fante royal household, the daughter of Nana Yaw Fama, Chief of Aboadzi Kyiakor, and Maame Abasema.

Aidoo was sent by her father to Wesley Girls' High school in Cape Coast from 1961 to 1964: the headmistress of Wesley Girls bought her first typewriter. After leaving high school, she enrolled at the University of Ghana in Legon and received her Bachelor of Arts in English as well as writing her first play, *The Dilemma of a Ghost*, in 1964.

One of the African feminist writers who have succeeded in attaining these objectives of African women not only taking active and shared roles with men, but also taking responsibility for their own destinies is the Ghanaian author Ama Ata Aidoo. In addition to addressing a wide range of issues of concern to Feminist/Womanist thought like the ways female children become women, the meaning of marriage for women, where women's work fits into their lives, or women's sexuality, she remarkably "give(s) a sense of structural and linguistic irony which is functional... signify(ing) a couple of things: the need for, and a very process of, revamping" (Verba 5).

These accomplishments are extended in Aidoo's 1999 novel, *Changes*. This work dramatizes and subverts the male power mechanics which disempower women. As Alice Walker states (in praise appearing on the novel's front cover), "Aidoo has reaffirmed my faith in the power of the written word to reach, to teach, to empower and encourage".

As suggested by its title, *Changes* consists of a critique and of the states of woman in the shifting socio-political landscapes of contemporary Ghana. Post-independence Ghana now boasts significant political, infrastructural, social and economic improvements, improvements that have fostered increasingly independence, mobile, educated upper- and- middle-class women in control of crucial matters such as their reproductive lives. Such changes, however, should not overshadow the fact that majority of Ghanaians have not benefited from the said improvements and that most emancipated women's freedom and rights keep being seriously constrained by their gender. In this part of Africa, like anywhere else on the continent, Aidoo's sisters still live in a man's world where tradition are undermined by materialism because, despite the appearances, their underlying principles constantly get subverted under the effect of widespread hypocrisy. Almost three decades after N'krumah years, during which educational programmes aimed at achieving the balance of power between the sexes were initiated, the Ghanaian woman is left wondering why she has been made to pay so high a price for a situation of dangerous confusion (Ibrahima Ndiaye, 2002).

Changes by Ama Ata Aidoo, is about a Ghanaian woman searching for her place in a modern world that is steeped in traditional culture. Esi has an advanced degree and she loves her job, but cannot find satisfaction in her marriage, due to her demanding and overly pushy husband. While she loves her young daughter, she resents the fact that she is expected to care for her as well as working and taking care of the house and being there for her husband. She resents her husband and her expected roles. Although Accra is a modern city, the cultural expectations of her society provide only frustration for Esi. Sadly, she is not the only woman frustrated by her situation.

But when Esi decides to leave her husband, no one else she knows, not her best friend from childhood or her mother or grandmother, can understand why. Their expectations from a modern woman and balance everything, are unsatisfying. The life of a woman is, by their **interpretation** of the cultural traditions, meant to be unsatisfying. A woman is to marry, work for her husband, have a career, take care of her home and family, and be a loving mother. Although Esi wants to follow tradition, she cannot accept that her unhappy relationship is how her life must remain. She seeks change.

As the title indicates, Esi's story follows her as her life goes through a series of changes through the coming years. With each new change, she struggles to find her place as a woman, her place as a modern woman, and her place within both family and cultural traditions.

One is struck by contrasts between the different women; how Ama Ata Aidoo's narration lets the readers understand the opinions of the various different women and men in the developing drama. For example, Esi's best friend, Opokuya, is also a well-educated working woman who finds satisfaction in her work. However, although Opokuya likewise is unhappy in her marriage (and frustrated with her pushy husband) she doesn't accept change as an option: that is just not what a woman does.

The novel has a lot of discussion on polygamy. It is quite strange to read of Esi's decision to enter into such a confusing relationship with Ali, especially since she has been raised a Christian. But this is just one example of how confusing life maybe in a society with a complex history, multiple religious backgrounds, multiple traditions, and different approaches to education. For example: Christianity and Muslim in the novel.

All of them seem to be in conflict. To try to embrace every expectation leads to disappointment. It is quite interesting that Esi, while rejecting her Christian upbringing and entering into a Muslim polygamous relationship, would still seek the families approval before entering into this second marriage.

Despite the fact that no one seems to satisfy societal conventions, she is caught between many cultural traditions, and none of them seems to provide satisfaction to her as a modern woman.

Changes, is not a happy text, despite its subtitle of "A love story". It is a novel, about smart, accomplished, attracted woman searching for peace and happiness in her life still not finding answers. It is a tragic novel, really, but it is strikingly realistic and that is what makes it all the more powerful to read.

Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood*

Buchi Emecheta (born 21 July 1944, in Lagos) is a Nigerian novelist who has published over 20 books, including *Second-Class Citizen* (1974), *The Bride Price* (1976), *The Slave Girl* (1977) And *The Joys of motherhood* (1979). Her themes of child slavery, motherhood, female independence and freedom through education have won her considerable critical acclaim and honours, including an order of the British Empire in 2005. Emecheta once described her stories as “Stories of the world... [where]... women face the universal problem of poverty and oppression, and the longer they stay, no matter where they have come from originally, the more the problems become identical” (wikipedia)

The Joys of Motherhood bears out the fact that this transitional period was particularly disadvantageous for African women. As the plight of the novel's key character reveals, colonialism was a costly reality for those who were forced to walk a fine line between that which was demanded of them by their village communities and that which was demanded of them by the rules of a European political regime. Ibo women of Emecheta's novel find themselves in this very predicament: Specifically, they are subjected to new forms of exploitation as they are asked to assume traditional duties and responsibilities under a newly imported economic system that—unlike their native system—fails to validate or reward them for such work (Teresa Derrickson, 2002).

Set in the British colony of Nigeria in the 1930s and 1940s, *The Joys of Motherhood* detail the life story of an Ibo woman named Nun-Ego who escapes the ignominy of a childless first marriage by fleeing to the distant city of Lagos to start anew with a second husband.

In *The Joys of Motherhood* – Nnu-Ego, the protagonist of the novel is a symbol of all the joys, woes, despair and ultimately disappointment of universal motherhood. Emecheta spares no effort in portraying her as a woman whose sacrificial love and duty towards her seven children see her wallowing in abject poverty, want, misfortune and ridicule from her husband and neighbours. The traditional and cultural expectations that a woman's ultimate joy and worth are measured by her motherhood places so much pressure on Nnu-Ego and when she is spurned and ill-treated in her first marriage to Amatokwu for being barren, her despair is palpable. Helen Chukwuma

affirms that in marriage, women attain status worthy of womanhood and come to be respected by the society, but childlessness in that marriage becomes the bane of their happiness. She is sent from her hometown of Ibuza in the southern-eastern part of Nigeria, to Lagos the capital, to marry her second husband Nnaife a rotund wash-man for the white master Dr. Meers and his wife. Her disappointment at the sight of her new husband is almost comical.

To his credit, Nnaife fathers in rapid succession all Nnu-Ego's children thus fulfilling her greatest desire of becoming a mother.

Her toils, amid extreme deprivations only serve to highlight her joy in a glorious future that her children, particularly her sons, will make possible.

Throughout the novel, Buchi Emecheta makes good use of dramatic irony and episodic narrative style, to point out the disappointment of Nnu-Ego in every aspect of her sojourn in life, including the betrayal of her old age. All her best laid plans come to naught, as Oshia and his brother Adim leave for the USA and Canada respectively for further studies and never write or send home the much needed money to relieve the family of poverty. At the end of the novel, lonely and forsaken, her senses start to give way.

There is never any thought given to educating her two sets of twin daughters. Daughters are looked at as investments. Hopefully, they would marry well and bring in good bride price (which would most likely go towards their brother's education). Nnu-Ego assumes that her sons will come home to live and will care for her as she ages.

Again, ironically, Adaku, Nnaife's dead brother's widow, whom he inherits as a wife, makes more money trading. Her lavish lifestyle only serves to highlight Nnu-Ego's poverty.

But then even Adaku eventually leaves the marriage with her two daughters after she comes to realize that she is not regarded at all in the scheme of things because she has no sons to be counted among women. Seeing the advent and benefits of the girl child's education on the horizon, Adaku is able to make a clean break with tradition, while Nnu-Ego still clings to it. She is caught between two warring worlds; and when resolution comes it is at the expense of her happiness and illusions.

The Joys of Motherhood is also about repressive attitude of the traditional culture which calls for strict regulation of women's role as wives in the society. Wives obey their husbands in all matters and are subservient to them.

However, this may not be a presumed right that everyman holds, especially when the husband is unable to cater adequately for his wife and children as well as additional family members.

Thus Nnu-Ego is unable to accord Nnaife the full respect he deserves. Nnu-Ego also comes across in the novel as a woman who knows her right in the traditional setting and would not compromise on that.

The title of novel itself, *The Joys of Motherhood*, is ironic, when viewed in the light of the story. But perhaps, Emecheta seems to suggest that Nnu-Ego's joy is in her giving birth to sons, thus clinching her motherhood, respect and place in society.

CHAPTER THREE

Traditional and Modern values in Asare Konadu's *A Woman In Her Prime*

3.1 TRADITIONAL VALUES

Gods

Every African society has beliefs, ideas and teachings that emphasize the existence of a Supreme Being. We have many gods and goddesses in Africa, depicted by authors of different backgrounds and society, for example “Ulu- the god of Umuaro” (Achebe, *Arrow of God*), other gods are Akuj in Kenya, Adroa in Uganda, Anajaroli in Temme, Asase yaa in Ashanti of west Africa etc.

These gods and goddesses are the ultimate/supreme Beings in the traditional settings. They rule and control what is happening in the spiritual and physical world. Some of them are gods of earth, The Rains, Water, the Wind and Fire. These deities are capable of answering human prayers by use of their own power and can intercede on man's behalf with the creator himself.

In *A Woman In Her Prime*, Konadu makes this belief obvious to the readers.

“TODAY was Friday and the day of sacrifice for the great god Tano” (Konadu 5).

Sacrifices

Sacrifices are offerings of some sort to a deity with the idea of procuring favour or avoiding disaster- to please the deity and secure his favour. (PictorialBibleDictionary)

Sacrifices can not be separated from the heart of a native, whether in sorrow, woes, joy and happiness. These gods and goddesses have to be praised or appeased for life, protection,

reproduction, fertility, bountiful planting/ harvest, lost battle, won battle, taboos, broken vows and homage with the use of living thing, that bleeds or has blood flowing in its veins.

In Brenhoma, Konadu tells us that –

Very soon the house of Tano would begin to be filled with people,
And she had to hurry to get there in time for her turn at consultation
And sacrifice. She could feel inside her the drums that would sound
For the gathering for sacrifice in all the neighbourhood.
People would bring yams, sheep, goats, eggs, cowries. What a person
Had to sacrifice depended on her requirements in some case people
Were asked to bring cows (Konadu 6).

Festivals

Africa is the festival continent. Throughout the whole continent, colourful and vibrant festivals range through musical, religious, cultural and occasional events. For example: Onwa-Asaa Traditional Festival (Amadihe 4). Ahajioku festival, Ofala, Iwajie and others. African community don't joke with their festival days.

The importance of this fofie, this festive Friday which came once
Every six weeks had crowded her mind. This day, gods and goddesses
Moved among men to feast and grant people's request. And they were
Powerful. They could answer her need for a child (Konadu 9).

In Africa, festivals bring goodness and peace to the atmosphere and take away quarrels, taboos and evil deeds. For, greatest enemies can sit together, drink and eat from the same plate.

A drumming group approaches them, their dancers vigorously throwing
Themselves in the air, and then rolling in the very centre of the music.
In another street Kwadwo and Pokuwaa came upon wrestlers
Displaying their skills and showing off the powers of new juju they
Had acquired (Konadu 63).

Children

We were being told that Pokuwaa cannot sustain a marriage because of her childless status. Any marriage in Africa without an issue has a lot of setback that can lead to termination of the relationship. Africans value children so much, unlike their Western counterparts. A normal African with a lot of money and material things without a child is not yet complete as a human being. The joys Africans derive, looking at their children (grand and great-grand) do soothe their hearts till grave. That is why Pokuwaa's mother, does everything she could to help her daughter conceive. Even, when Pokuwaa feels less concerned in the pursuit of child. The essence of children can be seen as the major theme in Konadu's *A Woman in Her Prime*.

Fertility

Pestilence, drought and famine bring much concern to Africans, because the gods' vexation might be the cause.

THE priests said the heavy rains were a sign of a plentiful harvest,
And everybody looked forward to the time of the new yams.
Pokuwaa's mother was one of the women at Brenhoma who
Supported the forecast of the priests with emphasis (Konadu 59).

But, if people's seeds and plants were destroyed by pests and heavy sunlight, they will sort for cleansing of the land from taboos and abomination done knowingly and unknowingly. Traditional Africans value fertility because it's their primary means of survival on earth.

Brotherhood

The thorough search of Yaw Boakye in the novel really depicts the value of brothers by Africans. The population of a particular community is not counted and no record or data of individuals of the community is been kept.

African people know when someone is missing in the community, because of brotherly meetings and sharing's. And in the case of missing, the elders arrange for a search party made up of the youths.

The search was much more exciting the following day. At the first
Cock-crow the men were already in the forest. The day before, one
Group had found the track of a Boar. This was the reason for the
Early start (Konadu 91).

Gifts of the Gods

Gifts from gods are highly valued in traditional African communities, because they are always the aftermaths of serious prayers and sacrifices to the gods. In A WOMAN IN HER PRIME, Konadu tells us of a child that throws stone to Pokuwaa's black cock.

He looked younger than his seven years, and had bushy hair
With cowries and shells tied in it. Pokuwaa looked at this boy and felt immediate sympathy for him. She know that such children should not be harshly treated, let alone beaten. For it was feared that if they were beaten the fetish would take them away. And so they were pampered and especially cared for (Konadu 11).

Shrines/Sacred Places:

Shrines and sacred places installed/dedicated by native doctor/medicine men, oracles, gods and goddesses are valued in traditional African communities, for, the spirit of the ancestors, gods and goddesses are present in the shrines and sacred places. Folks are warned not to desecrate such sacred places. Some of the sacred places like bushes, mountains, forests, and stream are restricted on certain days for special reasons. Some mountains and forests have sacred plants, seeds, animals and precious stones that are sacred and belong to gods alone.

In the text, Konadu depicts this clearly in the following dialogue between Pokuwaa and her mother.

“Look, mother’, she said, ‘I came upon an eagle killing a hornbill.

“Where? Her mother asked with fear

“At the Ananse stream

“Her mother’s mouth fell upon

“But Pokuwaa’, she screamed, ‘you know that today is Akwasidae,

On which nobody has any right to go to the Ananse stream. And now, you have not only gone there, but taken the food of the gods as well” (Konadu 107).

Astronomical Components:

Traditional Africans can never over-emphasize the importance of astronomical components like stars, moon, and sun. They read meaning in their positions, sizes and postures. For example – the moon's size may determine the season, the sun may determines the time (rising and falling)

Time at Brenhoma was counted by the sun and now although the sun was still behind the clouds, very soon it would break out and the shadow could lengthen (Konadu 5).

3.2 MODERN VALUES

God

Not that, African communities never know God, they knew that God is the highest of all of gods and the creator of all human beings. In fact, God is the father of all the fathers, hierarchically on top of all other gods and goddesses in Africa. But they prefer the smaller gods like great Tano because they are nearer to the folks and always communicate through the ancestral leaders like – Ezeulu (Achebe 4).

But, the fact that Pokuwaa has no faith in the smaller gods in Brenhoma any more changes the scene entirely. This new development on the character of Pokuwaa brings a kind of change known as modernity. Modern Africans place all their allegiance to God the creator, not smaller gods.

It was Friday. Her mother was ready to attend the weekly drumming session in the house of the fetish Kuku. She noticed that Pokuwaa was without the purification clay marks.

“Why, Adwua? She asked. Have you forgotten? How can you forget the very thing you live for?”

“Sit down, mother, and let us talk, she asked.

They sat down.

“What is it? Asked the old lady

“I have stopped the sacrifices. Never again will I perform them. I am taking my mind off, the fruitless efforts for child” (Konadu 115).

Though the old woman clings on, continues offering eggs to the great Tano, for, it is of great value to her own generation to obey the gods.

Love

Love exhibited by Pokuwaa and Kwadwo is pure; to the extent they never allow earth struggles to taint it. After God, the second thing modern African and the rest of the world place value is love. Love is the prevalent issue in modern communities. A man will never associate with a woman who is not fruitful. In the normal traditional setting, Kwadwo should have gone for another wife for more children, but sticks to Pokuwaa like a modern man would have it, because of love.

Love, In *A Woman In Her Prime* is depicted powerfully and accurately, to the extent that Kwadwo spends much of his time with Pokuwaa rather than his first life.

A modern Africa woman cannot go into marriage with a man who does not love her, and so also man.

Hardwork

Unlike the traditional setting, where men are associated with hard work, Konadu depicts a courageous woman who can fetch water, firewood and go to farm with her pregnancy. Women in

the modern communities can work very hard more than some men and the society values a hardworking woman so much. For, the society no longer sees such women as the normal weaker sex, we use to know, but as a powerful figure and a dual human being.

CHAPTER FOUR

Traditional and Modern values in Ama Ata Aidoo's *Changes*

4.1 TRADITIONAL VALUES

Child/Children: (A Blessing)

Major African value is the deep and universal conviction that children are a blessing. Lack of children is considered a misfortune or even sign of a curse. As we see in *A Woman In Her Prime*, how Pokuwaa struggles to get one. In *Joys of Motherhood*, Nnu-Ego's marriage ends with Agbadi, after she fails to conceive.

The desire for children has always been the main motive inspiring the African to marry. Children have always been regarded as a prolongation of self and therefore in some way a fulfillment of immortality. That's why in *Changes*, Oko forces himself on Esi, because the persuasion from his mother and sisters over his wife's decision to have only one child disturbs them. Though, Oko tries to defend his wife in some cases, yet his mother and sister's assertion rules.

“He wanted other children, at least one more... a boy if possible. But even one more girl would have been welcome” (11).

On the other hand Opokuya, Esi's best friend has four children for Kubi, her husband. And the matter of children is not their problem. Of course, when Ogyaanowa, Esi's only daughter goes over to Opokuya's house, she enjoys playing with her fellow children, and even forgets about her mother's absence.

Ali Kondey, Esi's second husband, is able to bear me out. Because Ali's mother dies immediately she gives birth to Ali. Assuming his mother dies with her pregnancy, that would have been the end of Ali kondey's story.

Polygamy

Polygamy in Africa the overriding desire as it were is the necessity of having children. This can be seen, for instance, in the fact the taking of a second wife is so often the simple consequence of the barrenness of the first wife. Konadu's Pokuwaa is a good example.

In traditional African society, men guard the home and the cattle, or go to war. The woman works, caring for the house, the crops, the children. So used are the women to work that a polygamous situation would at times be provoked by the first wife's asking her husband to take a second wife who could be a help to her in her work.

Polygamy also goes along with this Igbo popular saying:

Igwe bu Ike (Mass is strength)

Polygamy could be that an African is rich and wealthy, in *Changes*, a man as powerful as Musa Kondey needs sons to control his cattle and sheep etc.

Extended Family

For Africans, the extended family system- with its guarantee that people will always find support because their relations are always prepared to accept burdens- is a precious inheritance. For the African, it is basically uncivilized to neglect older people or to fail to help relatives who are in difficulties or not to welcome them into one's home. In *Changes*, Ogyanowa goes to stay with her grandmother at the beginning of the long vacation.

“The bungalow gets too lonely for her. Her, there would be other children for her to play with. Nearly all her cousins...”

“Please, don't call them her cousins”, her mother-in-law had reprimanded

“But... but maa? Esi had virtually stammered, “aren't they her cousins?”

“You know that in our custom, there is nothing like that. Oko’s sisters’ children are Ogyaanowa’s sister and brothers. Are we Europeans that we would want to show divisions among kin?” (82).

By the use of “brother” and “sister” for relations that are not of the same parents in Africa, Africans by implication, emphasize kinship, blood relationship and oneness. Africans always refer to themselves as brothers and sisters and behave as such.

In Achebe’s *Things fall Apart*, Okonkwo goes to exile with his family. Okonkwo’s uncle, Uchendu, and the rest of his kinsmen receive him warmly. They help him build a new compound of huts and lend him yam seeds to start a farm (Chapter 14).

Uchendu gathers together his entire family, including Okonkwo. He points out that one of the most common names they give is Nneka, meaning “Mother is Supreme” – a man belongs to his fatherland and stays there when life is good, but he seeks refuge in his motherland when life is bitter and harsh.

During the second year of Okonkwo’s exile, Oberika brings several bags of cowries to Okonkwo (Chapter 15).

Community Dimension:

The community dimension of marriage is another main feature of African society. In Africa, a marriage is never just an affair between two individuals. It is also an alliance between two families, two villages, or even two towns. And in a certain sense whole clans are involved.

The clan has always had an important say- frequently too important a say- in the acceptance into the clan. Africans at times will even say that it is not two individuals but two clans or two nations that marry.

After all, in the world they knew, a marriage involves two families. Each group thoroughly investigates the other, to the extent that sometimes either or both sides employ the services of paid spies or investigators who go through everything as if with fine-toothed combs to accord their histories, their social reputations, their known enterprises, and so on. Each family takes pains to examine main branches of family trees for any unfortunate signs of criminal records, trace of physical and other deformities. And if found anything that could bring out the slightest frown on any face stops discussion immediately (126).

The first time Ali goes with his manager to Esi village, Esi's father resents –

“How much can any man's employees know about him” someone asked.

“And even more important, you don't just take anybody to be a witness at your marriage negotiation! A second added.

“No”, a third answered him, “You take someone who by age, kinship, social standing or wealth as in a well-being of the marriage. Above all he or she must be one who in a crisis must be respected and deferred to by all parties concerned” (125).

Dowries

The payment of dowries in Africa society is rooted in centuries of customs and traditions. But like all traditions, the content and nature of dowries has shifted as the surrounding environment has changed.

Traditionally, marriage in Africa would be marked by the presentation of a dowry in the form of cows or agricultural tools by the groom's family to the brides'. This exchange serves to recognize the bride's family's efforts in raising its daughter and preparing her to marriage. But

with the rise of the money economy, and given the inappropriateness of some exchanges (such as the presentation of cows to families not used to keeping cattle), dowries increasingly come to be made up of money.

The second time that Ali went to Esi's village was the Sunday that began the last quarter of the year. This time he took his elders with him and Esi's father did not ask him how he had managed to produce such solid people after all. Everybody just saw it that everything went smoothly. When the necessary questions were asked, they received appropriate replies. So, kola was broken and gin was poured in libation and a little of it drunk by Esi's people. Esi's father ritualistically asked for, and were given by Ali's people, the very small sum that symbolized dowry (139).

4.2 MODERN VALUES

Education/ Formal Education

Education in its general sense is a form of learning in which the knowledge, skills and habits of a group of people are transferred from one generation to the next through teaching, training, or research. Formal education is a system of schooling involving institutionalized teaching and learning in relation to a curriculum, which itself is established according to a predetermined purpose of the schools in the system.(Wikipedia)

“Functionalists” argue that schools socialize children into the norms and values of wider society. This enables children to play a useful role within society when they leave school.

“Marxists” believe that schools merely reinforce class distinctions, which enables the bourgeoisie to exploit the proletariat in a capitalist society.

Investing in education is the single most effective means of reducing poverty. Girls and boys who learn to read/write and count will provide a better future for their families and countries.

With improved education, so many other areas are positively affected. In short, education has the power to make the world a better place for all.

Oko is a teacher; Esi, a secretary in the department of Urban statistics; Kubi, a civil servant and Opokuya, a nurse. These major characters in *Changes* represent the products of education/formal education, which provides better living for families and communities.

Female Education

Remarkable progress has been made toward achieving gender equality in education. Over the three decades the ratio of girls to boys enrolled in school has rises at all levels.

In Buchi Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood*, Nnu-Ego does not have any thought of educating her two sets of twin daughters. Daughters are looked at as investments in traditional African communities. Only boys are educated to look after their families, but Buchi Emecheta points out the disappointments of Nnu-Ego in every aspect of her sojourns on earth, like the betrayal of her children, particularly the sons, her children's at her old age. All her best laid plans come to naught, as her loved son, Oshia and his brother Adim leave for the U.S.A and Canada for further studies and never write or send home the much needed money to relieve the family of poverty. But Adaku, seeing the advent and benefits of the girl-child education on the horizon, breaks with tradition.

Female education empowers girls and women the benefits of educating girls and women, whether in terms of employability, income, health, or their own children's development depends on what they learn while in school. In *Changes*, Esi works hard and even earns more than Oko. Fusena on her own side has salary. Even with Ali out of the country, Fusena does not find it too difficult to look after herself and her child. Opokuya is a state registered nurse. She shares the house bill with her husband, Kubi. These educated female characters become useful persons in their families and society.

Monogamy

The prevalent type of marriage in traditional African communities is polygamy, and the folks handle it very well and reasonably. But the coming of Westerns into Africa introduces their belief system and culture. One of the beliefs they bring in is Monogamy according to the followers of Holy Bible (Christians/Christianity). Throughout Esi's marriage with Ali, she experiences loneliness, as Ali on the other hand visits his other wives to be with them and his children. Esi suffers it more because she is from a Christian family. But Opokuya in a monogamous relationship has no other woman to share her husband Kubi all the time.

Civilization

In spite of the false image of Africa as the “dark” and isolated continent, and the exploitation of our strength and manpower by Europeans, civilization is one of the most valuable phenomena to modern African. By the end of the second millennium B.C, civilizations based on livestock domestication and sedentary agriculture had emerged in Asia, Europe, and Africa. Despite the accomplishments of civilized cultures, Europeans actually occupy only a small portion of the earth. Most of the inhabited earth is populated by small groups of people who practice pastoral nomadism, shifting cultivation, or hunting and gathering. Classical civilizations had widespread influences over such cultures. Before civilization we see the life of Musa Musa.

Ali's father had lived, travelled and traded through them all: Ghana when it was the Gold Coast, Burkina when it was Upper Volta, and even earlier, from the days of “French West Africa”. He had gone on horseback; Camels; deathtraps that called themselves taxis; the back of ancient lorries and all other things that moved and could carry a fully grown man- including his own two feet (29).

But, after civilization Esi travels to Geneva, Addis, Dakar, one half of year, Rome, Luseka, and Lagos. To the other half, she travels by air. That is modernity or civilization.

Civilization stirs development. Opokuya and Kubi live on sweet Breezes Hill. It has been the most prestigious of the colonial residential areas. They occupy the same old colonial surveyor's bungalow built in the 1930s.

It is civilization that brings urbanization-

Driving towards the Hotel Twentieth century. Esi was completely overwhelmed by the vision of so much gold, golden red and red filtering through the branches of the coconut palms (38).

Wealth and Riches

Adam Smith, in his seminal work *The Wealth Of Nations*, describes wealth as “The annual produce of the land and labour of the society” This “Produce” is, at its simplest, that which satisfies human needs and wants of utility. In popular usage, wealth can be described as an abundance of items of economic value, or the state of controlling or possessing such items, usually in the form of money, real estate and personal property. An individual who is considered wealthy, affluent, or rich is someone who has accumulated substantial wealth relative to others in their society or reference group.

In *Changes*, Ali kondey possesses properties from his father Musa Musa. He is as rich that his business associates come down to Africa for transactions. Secondly, his riches are one of **the** qualities that attract Esi to him, as he showers her with gifts and goodies, for, modern people value wealth and riches.

Contraception

Contraception is the use of various devices, drugs, agents, sexual practices, or surgical procedures to prevent conceptions or pregnancies. Contraception helps women plan if and when they want to have babies. Oko's action against Esi, is because of the persuasion from his

archetypal traditional mother, her attitude towards children. Because of Esi's arrogance towards Oko's request, they have to divorce.

The value in contraception is its ability to control the natuion's population, birth rate and unwanted pregnancies instead of abortions in nations that encourage zero or low population growth.

Opokuya had decided she wanted four children. She had had them, and then brought the matter out in the open to discuss them, with her husband, Kubi. After they had agreed that, indeed, four were enough, she had gone to one of the gynaecologists she respected, sorted things out with him, booked herself on to his surgery schedule, and for a bed in the gynae ward. She had then gone in to have the ends of her fallopian tubes tied or singed whatever. Finish! (19).

Esi does this same thing, but she does not plan with Oko, before doing it.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.1 COMPARATIVE AND CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF KONADU'S *A Woman in Her Prime* AND AIDOO'S *Changes*

Marriage is sacred in Africa and beyond, because it solidifies relationships that enrich communities and nations by bringing forth new lives and new hopes. African culture celebrates the coming of the rains, the first harvest and the birth of a child (AHS Society).

If we stand tall it is because we stand on the shoulders of many ancestors (African proverb). African weddings are spiritual and social family affairs. They involve the combining of two lives, two families, and even two communities.

There is no great civilization that has ever existed that abstained from marriage as one of its core fundamentals of nation building. Marriage is that cultural process which ushers in new lives. It is a cherished and most celebrated rite of passage since the dawn of African civilization. But marriage is not a human right: Human rights don't need licenses or certificates; marriage is instead a privilege afforded by communities, between man and woman for those who meet the criteria.

Marriage is the only known incubator for the raising of balanced society of functional children. It is a civilized union of man and woman. The ideal set up for a child/ children to be raised in to full functionality in the African context as a contributor to civilization. It is the institutionalization of complementary relationship between male and female energies, enshrining in the child sentiments and values from both sexes.

Helen Chukwuma affirms that in marriage, women attain status worthy of womanhood and come to be respected by the society, but childlessness in that marriage becomes the bane of their happiness. (Wikipedia)

Any woman who fails to bear children almost has the blame and is labeled "useless". The misfortune of the protagonist of the novel, Aduwa Pokuwaa is a true revelation that child bearing

is very important for females, as a woman found to be as barren as desert cannot be reckoned with in the society.

A Woman in Her Prime successively depicts the struggle of a woman, who strives to become a mother in the society, where much value is placed on motherhood. Konadu in the novel clearly and emotionally shows the hustle and bustle of his protagonist Pokuwaa, who never misses any day for sacrifice. She buys a black hen and fastens it beside her hut. Later, she discovers that the hen for that Friday's sacrifice is nowhere to be found. Pokuwaa runs helter-scamter searching for the hen; she comes across a group of boys playing, and asks them if they have seen "a black hen". One of them admits.

Pokuwaa receives insult from her fellow women, who call her "a witch" and restrain their children from going near her, because they believe that barrenness is as a result of a witch eating up her unborn children. Analytically, the novel is filled with emotional imageries.

Ama Ata Aidoo's Changes

In *Changes*, the protagonist Esi, who has only one child, Ogyanowaa (a daughter), refuses to give birth to another child and goes contrary to tradition by removing her fallopian tube, to stop herself from getting pregnant and producing another child. Using modernity and education to rubbish the value of children in African society – a rebellious act to African values, and an act that smacks of extreme Western feminism – the society recoils at such reprehensible taboo. Her husband forces himself on her and she sees it as marital rape.

Esi, receives all the love a man has to offer because everybody knows Oko, as a good man. But, Esi leaves Oko to join Ali, a polygamist. At the initial time, Ali gives her the whole world from Europe to Asia, but when he marries her, all the good times end. And Esi starts feeling lonely and growing pale.

In an age where anything practiced by our forebears is described as evil or antiquated, where people (educated) would gladly accept homosexuals and condemn polygamists, only because the former are accepted by the West and latter are not, we wonder why educated and independent, but married woman, Esi would find love in an already married man, Ali. Esi is married to Oko

but feels suffocated by the presence of her husband; she feels psychologically oppressed and so would not even offer him sex on the pretense of tiredness and work, so that when he ‘jumps on’ her one early morning, she treats it as marital rape and would later sue for divorce. But having met and fallen in love with Ali, she becomes the second wife of Ali.

Radically, Aidoo’s explores through Esi – the subversion of the traditional African society’s norms and values, by the so-called educated African modern woman. It is a celebration of sheer idiocy and irrationality of women. With her protagonist, Ama Ata Aidoo shows the empowerment of women through education could sometimes be anti-traditional and counterproductive, and that feminism and all it represents should be handled common sensually by married women.

Konadu and Aidoo have in different ways treated issues concerning marriages, child-bearing, extended family system, polygamy and communities, tradition and values in African society.

Konadu’s *A Woman In Her Prime* is traditionally African and explores beautifully, relationships among the entire society: husband and wife, the couples and members of their family near and extended, the couples and their friends and well wishers; individuals and the traditional gods and goddesses, as well as the supreme benevolence of the Almighty God—great Odomankoma, Nyankopon Twedeampong. It is a novel of great charm and admiration for traditional living and all that is interesting in African culture, tradition, and mythology.

As its title affirms, Ama Ata Aidoo’s *Changes* dwells more on the changes between what used to be traditional African societies and the aberrations being now introduced into African living due to the so called “modernism”, which actually means abuse or bastardization of what Africans hold as sacred. Do we call it “feminism” or what? It cannot be. How does a house wife singlehandedly, without the consent of the husband, decide not to have any child, just after the birth of her first baby—a girl—when no medical problem is involved? Much as Aidoo is a woman, she is not a “feminist” in the sense of not knowing what is legitimate or what is normal in husband and wife relationship.

5.2 CONCLUSION

This study pointed out the traditional and modern values crucial in the lore of Africa as a continent and his citizens.

It touches the area of marriage, festivals, rituals, polygamy, extended family, child bearing in the works of Asare Konadu's *A Woman in Her Prime* and Ama Ata Aidoo's *Changes* with reference in the text.

Finally, the study summaries that Africa has recognizable and substantive values which govern the lives of his citizens.

5.3 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

This research emphasizes the salient and crucial norms, which Africa as a nation lives on. It is a stepping stone for more researchers to delve into the life and lore of Africa. It is a great material for anthropological, sociological, psychological and archaeological students and professionals. It serves also as a good material to enlighten the masses more on the traditional and modern African values, as they heedlessly import items of Western culture, which are outlandish in Africa and even bizarre to common sense.

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