

GENDER PORTRAYAL IN *EDUFA* AND IN *THE CHEST OF A WOMAN*

BY

EMMANUEL BRIGHTMOORE NUGAH

10086955



**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA,
LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE AWARD OF MPhil THEATRE ARTS DEGREE.**

DECEMBER, 2013.

DECLARATION

I declare that except for the references that are well acknowledged, the entire work is carried out by me and has not been submitted to any other institution for award.

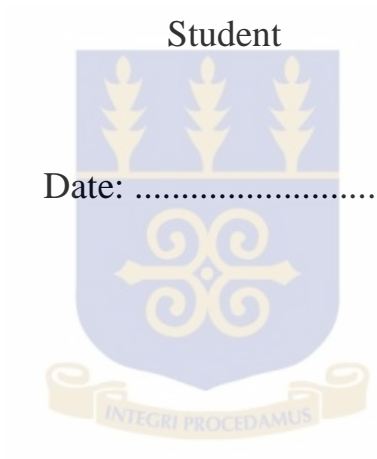
.....

Brightmoore E. Nugah

(10086955)

Student

Date:



.....

Dr. Awo M. Asiedu

Supervisor

Date:

.....

Dr. Regina Kwakye-Opong

Supervisor

Date:

DEDICATION

To God Almighty, for making things possible for me. Pastor Isaac T. Moly, for the fatherly counsel and prayer support. My wife: Susana Nugah (Mrs.), Children: Prince Brightmoore Nugah, Princess Faith Nugah and King James Kekeli Nugah, for the patience, understanding and encouragement. My parents: Mr. Michael Agbetsi Nugah and Theresa Addoh, for the endless support. All who have suffered Oppression, Suppression and Marginalisation of any sort, and all fighters for Freedom and Gender Equality, this work is humbly dedicated.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dr. Awo Mana Asiedu- You have been my guiding angel. Dr. Regina Kwakye-Opong- You have been my light. Professor Martin Owusu, Dr. Agyemang Ossei, Rev. Dr. Asiamah, Mr. Africanus Aveh, Mr. Francis Gbormita, Mr. Sandy Arkurst, Ms. Roberta Gardiner and Miss Cecilia Adjei- You taught me well. Dr. Samuel Benagr- Your support and encouragement is very much appreciated, so will never be forgotten. Mr. Alfred Kunutsor- Your love and friendship gave me hope and for this I am grateful. Mrs. Akua Abloso- You were a blessing. The entire staff of Abibigromma Theatre Group, especially Mr. Ken Kafui the Artistic Director, Mary Ameko and Mrs. Olivia Addy- You guys have been a blessing. Pastor Frank Cudjo and Pastor Nathaniel Atsu Mensah- Your spiritual care is beyond measure. Mr. Benjamin Asante, Mr. Ernest Kwesi Amponsah, Bright Tefe, Rashida Seidu, Dzidudu Darkey Mensah, Miss Matilda Sowah, Mr. Agyemang Wetey, John Paul Asiedu, Solomon Dartey, Abdul Karim, Mr. Ernest Addo- You were of a great support. My brothers and sisters as well as the entire membership of Ahenfie (Royal Home) Baptist Church International- You were always there when I needed any physical or spiritual help. To you all I say, May God's favour remain with you always and may your expectations never be cut off.

GOD BE WITH YOU ALL!

ABSTRACT

This work examines gender portrayal in *Edufa* by Efua Theodora Sutherland and *In the Chest of a Woman* by Efo Kodjo Mawugbe both of whom are of blessed memory. It considers Sutherland as the mother of modern Ghanaian Drama and Mawugbe as an icon of Ghanaian Drama; assessing their contributions and achievements as playwrights and dramatists in Ghana. An in-depth analysis of the plays was carried out to ascertain the conflicts and messages imbedded in them. The study was based mainly on library materials including journals, articles, play texts, book of tributes and other relevant information on the playwrights. The investigation arrived at the conclusion that both Sutherland and Mawugbe witnessed male domination and female marginalisation in Ghana from the 1960's. Both dramatists represented excellently the issue of gender imbalance in Ghana in their plays. They also encouraged female empowerment and the need for change in certain practices in society which tend to hinder progress. The on-going struggle against gender imbalance in society, especially in Ghana is undoubtedly reflected in the plays. The study also underscores some misconceptions and dangers that surround what gender represents.

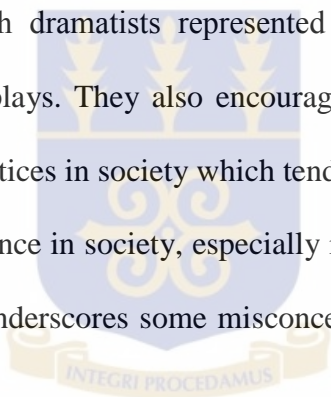


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	Page
DECLARATION	i
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background	1
1.3 Statement of the Problem.....	5
1.4 Objectives of the Study	6
1.5 Justification of the Study.....	6
1.6 Significance of the Study	7
1.7 Methodology	8
1.8 Organisation of the Thesis	8
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	10
2.1 Introduction.....	10
2.2 Gender- General.....	10
2.3 Gender as Performance	17
2.4 Gender and Feminism	19
2.5 Gender and Drama	19

2.6 Gender in Ghana	21
2.7 Gender and Violence in Ghana	29
2.8 Gender in Africa.....	33
2.9 Working Definition of Gender	44
2.10 Conclusion	45
CHAPTER THREE: EFUA THEODORA SUTHERLAND AND GENDER	
PORTRAYAL IN <i>EDUFA</i>	47
3.1 Introduction	47
3.2 Summarised Biography of E. T. Sutherland	47
3.3 Sutherland’s Achievements and Contributions to Drama and Theatre in Ghana	48
3.4 Synopsis of <i>Edufa</i>	53
3.5 Analysis of Gender Portrayal in Sutherland’s <i>Edufa</i>	54
3.6 Women as Subservient in <i>Edufa</i>	55
3.7 The Self-Centeredness of Some Men.....	62
3.8 Conflicts and Themes.....	70
3.9 Conclusion	77
CHAPTER FOUR: EFO KODJO MAWUGBE AND GENDER PORTRAYAL IN, <i>IN</i>	
<i>THE CHEST OF A WOMAN</i>	79
4.1 Introduction	79
4.2 Kodjo Mawugbe’s Biography	79
4.3 Mawugbe’s Philosophy	81
4.4 Synopsis of the Play	83

4.5 Analysis of Gender as Portrayed in Mawugbe’s <i>In The Chest of a Woman</i>	84
4.6 The Power of Women in the Play	84
4.7 Men as Custodians of Power.....	109
4.8 Conflicts and Themes.....	114
4.9 Conclusion	123
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	125
5.1 Introduction	125
5.2 Gender Issues	125
5.3 Working Definition of Gender Re-Captured	129
5.4 Recommendations	130
BIBLIOGRAPHY	132

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter includes the background of the study, the problem statement, objectives and justification. This is followed by the significance, methodology and the organization of the thesis.

1.2 Background

Gender imbalance has been a problem over the centuries globally but in recent times there seems to be much creation of awareness on the subject. The understanding that may be attached to gender may vary from one setting to another. Such variations may be due to belief systems, culture and ethnic backgrounds. Gender issues may not be peculiar to a particular group of people or setting. It is a situation that seems to affect all categories of people in spite of background in education, religion or belief as well as origin.

Over the years, society it appears has come to accept certain practices as part of their social environment. This is done most of the time without proper screening to unearth the dangers, advantages as well as the demerits that may come with or associated with them. In so doing, indigenes have also come to terms with these practices, some of which are gruesome, destructive, unproductive and even fatal. Again, in most of these cultural or traditional activities, men seem to have had more freedom while their female counterparts it looked as if were the disadvantaged for these acts. In Ghana for instance, practices like female genital mutilation which is practiced mostly in the Upper East region has met with some criticisms from the public. This may be due to the fact that such practices bring about infections and also make some of the victims bleed to death. In the southern part of

the Volta Region for example, wayward children (mostly the male) were normally sent to the sea shore. The culprits are then buried alive neck deep and are left for vultures to peck their eyes till they die. Though such measures have been referred to by some factions as primitive, others think they have maintained law and order in the days gone by. It was in this vain that F. Kwasi Fiawoo wrote the play he titled, *The Fifth Landing Stage*. In the lens of the play, he established the historical themes behind such practices in the Volta Region. He reiterated that:

Our forefathers detested crime and showed relentless severity in exacting the penalty from the guilty. In those days there were no police in our land nor public prisons. Each member of the community was concerned to guard against social disorder, aiding the unwritten laws of the country to operate severely on those who habitually infringed them. Some of these offenders were made by the state to pay fines, others were banished, some were reduced to serfdom, while others were buried alive according to the gravity of the offence. (Preface vii)

Generally, men seem to have the upper hand in most areas of life while women appear to be rather relegated to the background. While some think that men are better than women and therefore should be better placed in society; others are, however, of the opinion that women are equally human and so should be treated as such and given equal opportunities. Due to these divided understandings, certain movements have come up. Male Chauvinists believe that men are superior to women but Feminists think that women have equal rights to everything that pertains to life. According to Divya Singla, “the literal meaning of chauvinism is an attitude of superiority towards members of the opposite sex. Since males in our society have somehow decided that they are the superior ones that are often proud to be chauvinistic.” He defines male chauvinism as a “blind allegiance and simple minded devotion to one’s maleness that is mixed with open or disguised belligerence towards women.” (<http://usmemoirs.blogspot.co>: 2010)

Based on the above, men have over the ages taken advantage of women and treated them with condescension. Dolphyne agrees with this point of view and notes that:

in spite of the differences in culture, in levels of education and in economics and industrial development of their countries, women, the world over suffered similar types of injustice and discrimination within the family structure, in employment, in education, and in access to professional training and so on (1991: ix).

As a result of these varying views, there became the need to find a more authentic means through which both sexes would be treated equally in society. Anne Minas gives a background to this discourse that:

The basis for the academic field of Gender Studies was in many countries laid in the 1970's, when women in Academia protested against the ways in which academic knowledge production made women invisible and ignored gendered power relations in society (2000; xv).

After all the efforts to balance the conditions of male and female, there is the need to practically show what has been said and done about this gender discourse. This is necessary because people have suffered and are still suffering certain fates to which they have no idea of a way out of these predicaments. Such conditions need to be made real to them so that they can judge the conditions in which they have dwelt over the years. This will empower them in order that they may rise, fight these challenges and free themselves.

This is where Drama and Theatre come into the problem of gender imbalance in our society. The basic role of drama and theatre is to reflect society; it mirrors society to itself, thereby making it aware of philosophies, traditions as well as cultures that retard progress. This is intended to unveil to society, that which they have been ignorant about so as they could make amends accordingly, in the positive direction.

Drama and theatre practice in Ghana has over the last decade become lucrative, attractive and fascinating. This came as a form of relief to many who feel theatre is either 'dead' or non-existent. Dramatists like Efua Sutherland, Kobina Sekyi, Rev. Fiawoo, J. B. Danquah, Joe De Graft, Ama Ata Aidoo, to mention but a few, need to be congratulated for laying a foundation for theatre practice in Ghana. Their successors also did well for the zeal with which they have lifted theatre and drama to its current phase. One personality among those who contributed their quota to theatre and arts development in Ghana is the icon Efo Kodjo Mawugbe. From the colonial, pre-independence and independence period till now, the theatrical arena has seen noticeable changes. This is as a result of tireless efforts by groups and individuals, who had passion for theatre and therefore worked to see drama thrive in Ghana. President Kwame Nkrumah made the arts his concern while most of his successors till date seem to give the arts little or no attention.

Theorists and dramatists have tried to write on issues in society so as to mirror society to itself for change in all spheres of human life. Many playwrights have emerged over the years in Ghana. The country has experienced many problems from different angles from human life to infrastructure. Have these great playwrights been able to represent these challenges which confront their motherland in their works? How effective and accurate have they been in championing the course of shaping society through their art of writing? Among the many dramatists whose works touch on gender issues are Efua Theodora Sutherland and Efo Kodjo Mawugbe, both of whom have died.

These two writers grew up to witness male domination and female marginalisation in Ghana. To what extent have their works been able to reflect the gender situation in Ghana from the 60's to date? This work therefore seeks to analyse the play *Edufa* by Sutherland

and *In the Chest of a Woman* by Mawugbe. It looked at how Sutherland, being a woman treated her male and female characters. The treatment of characters by Mawugbe who is male is also looked at. Have there been any biases in their treatment due to their sex or have they shown the true practices as there were in Ghana at the time? This investigation indicates whether the dramatists have been able to use their plays to bring out existing problems in Ghana.

The general perception in Ghana has been that, women are oppressed, suppressed and marginalised in most sectors. Has the audacious behaviour of men in our society, and the subservient nature of women been well captured in our drama for societal consumption and subsequent changes to be effected? Many playwrights, some of whom were mentioned on page three of this work have written about issues that have troubled the peace and total wellbeing of Ghanaians. These include: rape, conflicts, bribery, corruption, crime, religious practices and even gender imbalance and equality. But have these playwrights been able to deal decisively with this case of gender inequality in the Ghanaian community?

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Drama over the years has been used to address various challenges thereby becoming a tool for shaping different societies the world over. Drama from ancient Greece to modern day twenty first century has played the role of not only entertainment but to also inform, educate and to even improve upon the economic status of nations. It has over the years been consistent in its role as an art that seeks to reflect the finest in man. It is also to a large extent a vehicle for communicating the values of a traditional set up and thereby strengthening, shaping and uniting its people. Studies on one hand, like those of Divya,

Dolphyne and Minas as stated earlier in this work and pre-conceived perceptions on the other have it that women are marginalised in society. However, in recent times, it seems there is a gradual paradigm shift in the above trend, making men also fall victim to this menace of marginalisation.

In spite of its numerous contributions to social change, drama it seems has not considered the issue of gender discrimination in detail in Ghana. I will like to investigate how gender is portrayed in Efua Sutherland's *Edufa* and Kodjo Mawugbe's *In the Chest of a Woman*. Is the story the same in Drama when juxtaposed with the secular world? This research seeks to find out who actually is the marginalised, vulnerable, down-trodden, oppressed, suppressed, neglected or relegated to the background in the above plays? Is it men or women? Has the problem of gender, especially from the 60's been well represented in the above plays to effect the necessary changes in Ghana?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1. To find out how Sutherland and Mawugbe represent or treat men and women in their chosen plays.
2. To underscore the achievements of the playwrights and their contributions to the Dramatic Arts in Ghana.
3. To investigate the problems of gender imbalance and the corresponding lessons in the plays

1.5 Justification of the Study

The role of Drama from time immemorial has been to mirror society to itself. This mirroring tendency helps and empowers a people to realise the aspects of their being that

retard their progress; this enables them to make the necessary changes which will improve their living conditions.

This investigation will bring out whether the treatment of men and women in Ghana has been well reflected in the chosen plays by their respective dramatists. This is because the issue of gender imbalance and marginalisation of the female in Ghana has been a matter of concern to many of the citizenry. The lessons that may be embedded in the plays in study will create the awareness for the Ghanaian populace to make the best out of. In addition, throwing more light on the area will open it up for further research.

Though the playwrights of the plays under investigation have died, should their works prove to address this issue of gender, Ghanaians will pay particular attention to their works and further appreciate them the more on the Drama scene. The little or no attention that is paid to the Dramatic Arts in Ghana will begin to receive a renewed interest when the majority of people recognise Drama's ability to change society for the better.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This work adds to the fast growing interest in the academic discourse of gender studies. By way of character treatment, the study also underscores how gender is portrayed in the plays, *Edufa* and *In the Chest of a Woman* by Sutherland and Mawugbe respectively. Limited work has been done on Mawugbe's works and though a lot has been done on Sutherland, the area of character treatment gender wise is going to add up to works done on them. This study is to also stir up the interest in future scholars for further investigation into other works of the playwrights in the area of gender and how it relates to the Ghanaian society. The well-meaning intentions of the Dramatists for the Ghanaian

community are still not very real to the populace; this work lays plain those didactic intents which will make people immortalise them more than they did before.

1.7 Methodology

This work reviews literature on gender in general. It also reviews some literature on gender in Ghana and Africa respectively in specific respects. I analysed Sutherland's *Edufa* and Mawugbe's *In the Chest of a Woman* in terms of how gender is portrayed in them. I again analysed how Sutherland, being a woman treats her dramatis personae, both male and female. The treatment of characters by Mawugbe who is a man is also discussed. Conflicts in both plays are also discussed bringing out the thematic concerns imbedded in them which the playwrights may wish to communicate to society. I again looked briefly at the social, cultural, religious and political undertones of Sutherland's *Edufa*.

The study relied greatly on library materials like books, essays and some articles. Other texts that are relevant to the study were also referred to. A book of tributes was also accessed to gather more facts on Efo Kodjo Mawugbe. Basic information on both playwrights is also used to ascertain their major achievements and contributions to Drama and Theatre especially in the Ghanaian arena.

1.8 Organisation of the Thesis

The thesis comprise of five chapters. They include the General Introduction, followed by Literature Review which looked at Gender in general, Gender in Ghana and Africa respectively in specific areas. The next chapter is chapter three. It viewed the Dramatist, Efua T. Sutherland, her Achievements and Contributions to Drama and Theatre in Ghana. It also covered a Critical Analysis of Gender portrayal in her play, *Edufa*. The fourth

chapter considered Kodjo Mawugbe as: The Icon of Ghanaian Drama and Theatre. It also delved into detailed Analysis of Gender Portrayal in his play, *In the Chest of a Woman*. The final chapter embodied the General Conclusion of the entire study and then my Recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is categorised into nine main sections; it covers the term ‘Gender’ in general, Gender as Performance, Gender and Feminism, Gender and Drama, Gender in Ghana, Gender and Violence in Ghana, Gender in Africa. The various categories discuss literature on the various schools of thought on the subject gender, Working Definition of Gender and then conclusion on the major observations from the reviews.

2.2 Gender- General

The foundation for gender studies was laid in the nineteen seventies. In an attempt to figure out when and why the necessity to study and be critical about the subject ‘gender’ came to the fore, Anne Minas as quoted earlier on page three of this work foregrounds this idea. To her, this is due to the fact that women in academia have come to the realisation that women in general have been made invisible in society especially in the academic arena. Because women have become the gender that has been ignored, they decided to liberate themselves by protesting against such unproductive mentalities among men. This will make way for women to be given the chance on the academic front so that their presence could be felt and their efforts be appreciated. Maybe, because of the lukewarm attitude towards matters of gender, is what makes Anne Minas point to the fact that, “Gender issues are not like films (which we watch and once we leave the theatre, it is over for us).”(2000:2).

Agreeing with Minas, this goes to foreground the fact that, ‘gender matters’ should not on any account be taken for granted; in other words, special attention must be seriously

attached to issues that have become a worry to our sons and daughters who are automatically the world's future leaders. Again, it is clear from Minas' argument that women rather than being given equal rights as their male counterparts have been neglected; hence the need for female teachers to fight against how women are marginalised in society. Interpreting Minas' second analogy, it is probable that she thinks issues of theatre have been treated with condescension, just like gender matters have become. The academic field of gender studies is therefore important in order that proper findings may be done. This will enable the proper amends to be made so that both men and women are given the same opportunities and regards. This may portray the understanding that all people have a sovereign right to life and that no people is superior to another or more capable.

It is in the above light that Eileen Julien in C. Cole, et al (2007) supports the idea of researching into this gender arena, so that it will become a reference point for future academic investigations by stating that:

Gender analysis is one of several critical approaches that have challenged the notion of literature as pure, transcendent, and sacred. This matters because literary texts become our authorities on history, on the present, and on possibilities for the future. We need to see these texts as inquiries and experiments with all their contradictions: as long as social hierarchy informs and is normalized by creative processes, gender will remain a critical point of entry into complex social and aesthetic dynamics. (p.219).

Based on the above assertion, in order to make every man and woman count at all spheres of life, more research into gender matters will be great since it is directly linked to human wellbeing. It is possible that such enquiries are capable of finding out the causes of discrimination against the different sections of the gender divide. In so doing, a lasting solution could be found to this menace called marginalisation.

In order to find a permanent resolution to the problems associated with the gender discourse, there is the need to be critical on the subject for proper clarification. Anne Minas in *Gender Basics, Feminist Perspectives on Women and Men*, underlines the categorisations to which gender belongs and points out the fact that, gender may be viewed from two perspectives. She believes that some people use the term to discuss the differences that exist between men and women which may be as a result of changes in their social environment. Others on the other hand use the word in a manner that allows speculations as to what exactly causes the differences. Many people have over the years mistaken the term gender to mean matters relating to women or men alone. Life can never be complete if only one side of the gender category exists. From my perspective, Minas is right in clarifying the different usages of the term. I argue that the cause of the differences must in no way be mixed with what the term really represents; this will help users of the term use it more appropriately.

Again, if gender looks at situations as they pertain to male and female, then the term cannot be considered without scrutinizing the take of the society in which men and women dwell. This is why in solidifying the grounds on the subject ‘gender’ from the societal point of view, Anne Minas again argues that:

Society is, in a word, sexist. It systematically favors men over women, and it engineers and maintains structures to ensure that men receive better treatment and have more options available to them. (2000: 2).

The above is supported by Dorothy Smith as cited by Oyewumi who notes that, “gender categories are universal and timeless and have been present in every society at all times. This idea is often expressed in a biblical tone, as if to suggest that “*in the beginning there was gender.*” (1997: xi).

Considering the statements made by Anne Minas which was proved by Dorothy Smith, truth can be established in Judith Lorber's idea as noted by Oyewumi which I support that, "gender is a fundamental organizing principle in all societies and is therefore always salient. In any given society, gender is everywhere." (1997: xii).

Human beings can be found in every area that life exists. Men and Women at any given time have something doing either for themselves or otherwise for societal benefit. Since men and women could be seen as gendered beings, Walter Rodney as cited by Oyewumi analyses gender in terms of work. He parades his thoughts as follows:

Since men entered the money sector more easily and in greater numbers than women, women's work became greatly inferior to that of men within the new value system of colonialism: men's work was "modern" and women's work was "traditional" and "backward." Therefore, the deterioration in the status of African women was bound up with the consequent loss of the right to set indigenous standards of what work had merit and what did not. (1997: 150).

Rodney from the above is relating to gender even in terms of work, which confirms Judith Lorber's earlier assertion that "in any society, gender is everywhere" because men and women work wherever they exist. I add a voice to these by saying that gender inequality is not practiced in academia alone as stated earlier by Minas; rather, gender matters overwhelmingly cut across all sectors of human life and practice: thus academia, religion, culture, marriage, endurance ability, sports, leadership, trade, business or work, politics, drama and many other sectors.

Referring to how necessary issues bothering on human life are dealt with in Africa, with relation to the differences in rating men and women, Charmain Pereira also states that:

Orthodox ways of producing knowledge have left out not only women but also most groups of men, those who are not white, who do not belong to the dominant class, ethnic, religious groups and so on... gender studies

focuses on the socially constructed ways in which women, as well as men, are located and differentiated in a given context. (2004: 1).

At this point, it is clear that men have also been neglected in the academic front as far as knowledge production is concerned. This disproves Dolphyne's earlier assertion that seems to suggest that it is women who have suffered injustice and discrimination in most important sectors of human life. This proves this as a fact that gender can be speculated to be unbalanced across board when men are juxtaposed with women even though some literature notes clearly that women are to a higher degree side-lined than men.

One may guess that the seat of government and for that matter the height of political power would necessarily cater for both male and female equally. There have been many speculations on what seems to be that, political leaders make promises to the populace during the period of their campaigns but once they get the power, they forget their supporters. It is in this light that in analysing the general gender situation in Ghana, Mansah Prah posits that:

The women's front in Ghana, under the long political tenure of Rawlings, was characterized by a grand illusion of activity purported to be in the interests of the broad masses of women and spearheaded by the first lady and life president of the DWM. This illusion was the 'femocracy', coherently described and analysed by Mama (1995), as a postcolonial development in African gender politics. (2004:36).

This suggests that it was only the women's front that was disguised but most men if not more than the number of women involved suffered incredible abnormalities. The leader, President Rawlings himself at the time, I believe masterminded many plans which appeared favourable to the beholding eyes of men, which only turned out to be doom for many who were ignorantly attracted to such frivolities. Observing the political terrain in Ghana for instance, one can conjecture that, most of the political leaders that have come

and gone only projected their selfish ambitions. Their actions greatly seem as if they were much concerned about the welfare of their subordinates but the practical lives of the ordinary citizens prove the contrary.

In the political arena, it appears few or no women are given the opportunity to partake in nation building. According to Mansah Prah in *Gender Activism and Studies in Africa*, Mama (1995) defines African gender politics as:

an anti-democratic female power structure which claims to exist for the advancement of ordinary women, but is unable to do so because it is dominated by a small clique of women whose authority derives from their being married to powerful men, rather than any action or idea of their own. Femocracies exploit the commitments of the international movement for greater equality while actually advancing the interests of a small female elite, and in the long term undermining women's interests by upholding the patriarchal status quo. In short, femocracy is a feminine autocracy running in parallel to the patriarchal Oligarchy upon which it relies for its authority and which it supports completely. (2004:36).

In view of the above, it is obvious that people in authority think more of their own benefits and satisfaction than the needs of their subjects. To this end, I say, people who desire leadership positions should be properly scrutinized in order that they will serve the interests of the citizenry for a better life for all. I agree with Mansah Prah in saying that, gender issues are still on the margins in Africa and the gender equality perspective is yet to be achieved. This is why it is very important for gender matters especially its imbalances to be screened in the light of drama in order that society may see the essence of dealing with men and women equally.

In defining who a person is may greatly depend on what the individual does, says or even looks like. Unfortunately, however, most people do not know who they are unless they are reflected in a mirror, a role that drama plays perfectly. This is why this work seeks to find out whether the plays in this study have played their role of reflecting the gender situation

in Ghana to the full. I therefore support the idea of Money *et al* (1995a) in Money (1993), as cited in Kwabong (2009) who claims to be the first individual to have defined gender from the role perspective as; “all those things that a person says or does to disclose himself or herself as having the status of boy or man and girl or woman respectively. It includes, but is not restricted to sexuality in the sense of eroticism.” (p. 10).

As a build up from the above, gender cannot be viewed from the role angle alone; for which reason there is the need to embark on a journey to discovering what ‘gender’ actually stands for, an issue that has been on the table for many years. According to C.M. Cole et al, in the introduction to *Africa After Gender*, gender functions for countable reasons which may come from different angles. To them:

Gender allowed for the study of men as well as women and it placed greater emphasis on relational analysis between the sexes. In addition, gender emphasized the difference between biological sex, on the one hand, and performed identities of masculinity and femininity, on the other. Furthermore, gender studies highlighted issues of sexuality, which had always been a theme in women’s studies and feminism but were often subordinated to other concerns. Finally, gender was more palatable for the general public, who adopted it as a way to discuss women and equality that was more oblique than the politicized “feminism.” (2007:2).

It is obvious from the above that, gender needs not be mistaken for feminism, femininity, masculinity or male chauvinism; this is because it is quite clear that gender seeks to address, dig into, find solutions to matters bothering on human existence- be it, in relation to male or female. Being one sided or discriminative when it comes to gender issues must in no way be tolerated: since such acts are likely to bring divisions among people who hitherto lived in perpetual harmony. My thinking is that, showing particular interest in the affairs of one side of the gender divides unreasonably, shows bias which can lead to misunderstanding and conflict. Again, it is significant to scrutinize the inequalities that are

associated with gender dramatically so that matters that affect society are not left unattended to.

In order to give a clearer meaning to the term gender and to also relate it to everyday life for the right things to be done in society, Ebron A. Paulla in C. Cole et al (2007:175) discusses Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990a) and *Bodies That Matter* (1993). To her, Butler's views on gender performance interrupt the way in which gender is considered by the Westerners. This idea seemed to be motivated by Simone de Beauvoire's claim which indicates that women are not born but made. According to her, Butler in the two works noted above states that gender identity is based on certain regular acts. She continues to emphasise that Butler is in every respect linking the term gender to performance. This attachment of gender to activity agrees with my association of gender to drama performing the role of reflecting society. It also props up the definition of gender by Money et al, to be the things people say or do that end up portraying who exactly they are or what they represent.

Gender has so far not been given a conclusive definition because it is not a stable entity since it changes with time, ideas as well as occurrences. It is appropriate for a clear cut definition to be established, to prevent men and women from misusing the term, gender, when the need arises.

2.3 Gender as Performance

Continuing the earlier argument, gender is in detail performance biased. Ebron A. Paulla in Cole, Manuh and Miescher, in an attempt to analyse gender from the general point of understanding, made the following deduction:

Because gender is both self - consciously and unself-consciously performed, it can teach people about society more generally- just as table manners, both taught and inhabited ... Gender performance is a pedagogical tool that reminds both children and adults of the tensions and distinctions of social life. (2007: 177).

It is possible for one to deduce from the connection of gender to performance that; once an activity is carried out by a human being, thus male or female, boy or girl, man or woman, the action (activity) as well as the gendered being (performer) could both be referred to as 'gender'. This is partly due to the fact that, men may do it with special vigour while women may do it with calmness and carefulness. Whatever the case may be, life is a stage and gender is a subset of it. Therefore, the activities that are represented in plays are greatly necessary for consideration because minus performance, it would be difficult to identify gender.

Helen Nabasuta Mugambi in C.M Cole, T. Manuh and S.F Miescher refers to Teresa de Lauretis', *Technologies of Gender* as, rendering:

the construction of gender goes on as busily today as it did in the earlier times, say, the Victorian era. And it goes on not only where one might expect it to- in the media, the private and public schools, the courts, the family, nuclear or extended or single parented- in short, in what Louis Althusser has called the "ideological state apparatus." The construction of gender also goes on, if less obviously, in the academy, in the intellectual community, in avant-garde artistic practices and radical theories, even, and indeed especially in feminism. (2007:285).

The various categories of gender classification leave one to infer that gender cuts across almost all if not all aspects of life; therefore, gender is everything, at every place and at all times. This is why I suggest that a greater deal of seriousness be attached to the gender discourse by everybody especially those in leadership at all levels because it embodies everyone just as it affects everyone.

2.4 Gender and Feminism

Furthermore, it is necessary to look at the term feminism which is greatly confused with gender most of the time. In the introduction to *Gender Basics, Feminist Perspectives on Women and Men*, Anne Minas refers to Christine Overall's belief that feminism as a movement seeks to emancipate women from the imminent claws of discrimination. According to Minas, Overall examines feminism in two ways. Firstly, it is "a commitment to understanding women's own perceptions of their situations. Feminists insist that because women as a group have been neglected in the past, we should make special efforts to pay attention to, understand and respect women's reports of their experiences." (2000:5)

Secondly, Overall, maintains that, "Feminism is also called 'patriarchy' because feminist believe that this general organizational feature of society was initiated by men, continues to be maintained by men and has men as its principal beneficiaries."(2000: 6)

She again emphasizes that:

Feminists maintain that oppression of women is codified in legal, educational, and religious systems and ingrained in our less formal relations to one another, as well as in our psychology and physiology. (2000:6).

Generally, feminism has gone through a great deal of trials. A lot of practical avenues of escape are explored in order to find a lasting solution to the challenges confronting the feminine race. After the numerous efforts from various quarters, the understanding is that, Feminism gets to emancipate women from every marginalisation. So far, it is clear that the marginalisation of women is not in one area alone but in different sectors as well.

2.5 Gender and Drama

Drama over the years has been used consistently to address inevitable challenges thereby restoring sanity in different societies the world over. Drama from ancient Greece to modern day twenty first century has played the role of not only entertainment but to also

inform, educate and to even improve upon the economic status of nations. It has over the years been consistent in its role as an art that seeks to reflect the finest in man. It is also to a large extent a vehicle for communicating the values of a traditional set up and thereby strengthening, shaping and uniting its people. In spite of all these functions of drama, studies on one hand and pre-conceived perceptions on the other have it that women are marginalised in society. In *Beyond Beijing*, *Lysistrata* and *Agamemnon* by Mawugbe, Aristophanes and Aeschylus respectively, women appear to be seriously marginalised. From the general point of view as mentioned earlier, Dolphyne underlines the deprivation which the female side of the gender divide has encountered over the years.

I totally side with Dolphyne that women have been discriminated against globally. It is a known fact that women over the years even to this present day do not have equal chances as men. To some extent, it may be due to the traditional roles which are mapped out for women in most cultures. Even in some cultures, the women are completely subservient such that, they have been reduced to just home keeping, procreation and to accept whatever their men say; whether it be favourable or not.

In terms of benefits in the working force, Dolphyne again establishes that women are given the respect and the honour due them by claiming that:

Professional women- lawyers, doctors, engineers, bankers, administrators and so on-command a great deal of respect in their countries. And it is true to say that, in general, a woman with the requisite training and expertise earns the same salary, has the same conditions of service, is accorded the same respect, and, to some extent, the same promotional opportunities in employment as her male counterparts. Such women often hold very responsible senior positions, and due respect is accorded them because they are known to be competent and efficient officers (1991:42).

Once again, I see reason with Dolphyne that women have made and are still making impacts in the various disciplines especially in the working front and in academia; just that it is worth noting that in spite of that, women have still not been able to catch up with their male party yet. I, however, must add that women should be respected whether formerly trained or not because without them, life cannot exist.

Just as Overall separates gender from feminism, so also Dick Masterson speaks his chauvinistic mind. In his view, “Men Are Better Than Women”. He says in an interview with Phil that:

I don't hate women. I am just aware of the mountain of evidence throughout history and science which concludes that Men are better than Women. Who invented the V8 engine? A man. Who discovered the teachings of Jesus? A man. (Men Are Better Than Women.Com).

Divya Singla as already quoted on page two also registers the negative nature and one sidedness of male chauvinists in our society by the altitude of their superiority. This display of supremacy is shown even at national levels.

2.6 Gender in Ghana

The matters arising from the gender front have over the years attracted a lot of public criticism and attention from the Ghanaian populace. While some are of the view that men have the upper hand in everything, others complain that women are under empowered and marginalised. In line with the various concerns, I review an article featured in *The Ghanaian Times* on Thursday, February 16, 2012, with the caption: “A woman lives in a man's world”.

The article views the gender situation in Ghana. The writer, Yela Awunyo-Akaba establishes that:

Ghanaian women are making incredible strides. Of course, we have always done more than our share to nurture new life, create a home and generate resources with whatever our hands found. Our mothers did this while dreaming of being more than spouse's helper. They dreamt of going to school, becoming innovators and fulfilling their destinies. The main hurdle it seems is that we are trying to make our way in a world designed by men for men (p.8).

Women have no doubt made tremendous achievements which have contributed to societal development. They have indeed nurtured new life, supported their homes and a reasonable number of them have and are still influencing society. However, the inability of some women to fulfil their dreams and aspirations I argue must not be blamed on men entirely. If there is any blame at all, it should be traced to how society has carved out certain specific gender roles. Some cultures believe that the women must be subservient to their men and submit to their will. In other places, women are seen just as tools for procreation. In spite of all that women might go through, they still have their place in society for which I disagree with the writer for speculating that, women are struggling in a world planned by men for men.

Awunyo- Akaba argues that women are few in the public services while in Ghana's club 100 groups of companies, it is rare to see women. She claims that it is because women are few in the working force, which is why they still make day to day headlines. She says "our females' movers and shakers still make the headlines because of how few they are" (p.8). This statement to me is a bit over generalized. I emphasize the fact that, women do make the headlines not because of their small number but for their hard work. She appreciates the efforts being made to bridge the gap between men and women; she acknowledges that, it has yielded some fruits over the last decade. This according to Awunyo- Akaba is due to "the enrolment and graduation gap between boys and girls in schools" (p.8). Until recently she argues, roles of men and women were well defined. Thus, "the men brought home the

bacon and the women managed the home” (p.8). The women according to her also give a supporting hand to their men and they have a great influence in the affairs of the family. In most parts of Ghana, what most women earn only serve as a support for their husband’s ambitions; however, they have so much influence in their homes because of their managerial abilities.

She emphasizes that, “as the opportunities for women to earn good money in various endeavours have increased, the underlying structures have unfortunately stayed put” (p.8).

Again she stressed that:

Wives would send off their husbands with a good breakfast and have a hot dinner ready in the evening after work. The man could concentrate on his work all day and not have to worry about the home at all. A working wife however has to go to work and handle the home at the same time. While her male colleagues are concentrating fully on their work, she cannot help but wonder about the evening meal, and the other duties she will have to handle after work (p.8).

Even though this part of the argument by Awunyo- Akaba could be partly true, I must state that some of the issues have been very much exaggerated. This is because the work place should not be the grounds for employees to plan for their home. Her assessment of the Ghanaian situation is to a large extent flawed; it is not all women who prepare breakfast and dinner for their husbands. Most men also cook at home and at times support their wives in the kitchen. Is it not only fair that each spouse plays a particular role for the sustenance of the family? This is because I believe that a non-working woman does all these especially for the children because they are her children too. It is unfortunate that Awunyo- Akaba echoes this thing as if the women under the circumstance are doing their husbands a favour. Though I agree with the fact that some men over stress their wives, to the extent that some who don’t even work will wait for their wives to return from work and cook for them.

The argument that when the woman rises above the man in status, “the man can no longer find a meaningful role in her life as a provider and protector” (p.8) is technically flawed. This is because there are men whose wives earn more than ten times what they receive but are still able to cater for their families without any problem. Awunyo- Akaba again states that, for most women to keep their marriages intact, they need to play down on their talents which of course I think is unnecessary. Everybody, female or male must have the freedom to live up to his or her own talents and abilities. Maybe some of these unfortunate instances occur due to the belief systems and traditional norms of a people. We cannot totally blame our men even though some of their actions may be ugly but they may only be adhering to societal norms that have been there since time immemorial. The argument that a woman always “has to put her husband’s career above her own” and “her husband may ask her to allow him to get to a particular level before she can pursue her dreams” (p.8) is a fallacy. A personal friend’s ordeal may matter here. He is called Kwame and she is Maame Yaa. He took care of her through training college and then through the University obtaining the Bachelors Degree. He continued to sponsor her to acquire a diploma in Human Resource Management from the same school. He later arranged and his wife joined him abroad. It is now that he is also pursuing his academics. This is even evident that some men rather push their wives through to the top before taking off for their own dreams in earnest.

Even though Awunyo- Akaba and I disagree at certain points, I agree totally with her recommendation stated below; this perhaps will help all families, as well as people on the opposite side of the gender divide to live in a safe and sound environment. She concludes:

I suggest that the superior position occupied by men in the family and professional sphere places them in the best position to make a change. As heads of the family, they can continue to encourage their wives to push

through the social and professional barriers she may face. They can also drive the debate to advocate work policies that acknowledge her unique characteristics as a working woman and mother (p.8).

In *The Athenian Sun in an African Sky*, Wetmore views the role of women who belong to the feminine side of the gender divide. He touches on the results that emanate from peoples' actions and inactions on society, as well as the vulnerable when disaster strikes. To him, this is a reality about men and women that Sutherland captures in her play *Edufa*. He underscores this when he says that:

...Sutherland in removing the supernatural from the beginning of the play, sites the play firmly in the contemporary real world, and in the realm of dramatic realism. The chorus of female citizens remind us of the people who will be affected by the tragedy about to unfold (2002:122).

This emphasizes the reality of drama's reflecting ability in society; in so doing, society through this medium can see itself and amend things that do not help progress. Sutherland looks at the precarious state of women in Ghana and presented it in drama. She showcased the true picture of what really happens in the nation at that time. I side with Wetmore that Sutherland does not use any supernatural powers to rescue Ampoma from death as seen in the case of Alcestis in *Alcestis*. The purpose is to sound a caution for men in society to come to terms with the fact that, people in both the immediate family and society at large stand to suffer when tragedy occurs.

I totally agree with Wetmore again when he emphasizes that:

Edufa has rejected all things traditional, including things he himself once did believe in. By rejecting traditional culture Edufa considers himself emancipated and superior to those who hold to the old ways, yet he has consulted a diviner. He has placed his modern personal beliefs in direct conflict with traditional culture which he cannot bring himself to dismiss entirely (2002:124).

It is unfortunate to note that, Edufa like many educated people on each side of the gender divide in the society have over the years rejected their belief systems. Emancipation needs not frown on culture, especially those aspects that reflect good morals. Amazingly, Edufa once trusted in the cultural ethics of his pedigree but now looks down on those who practice such. Though Edufa no longer regards those who consult diviners, he contacts such persons secretly. This underlines the truth that no matter how enlightened one may be, he or she cannot completely detach him/herself from his roots entirely.

Efo Kodjo Mawugbe, a prolific Ghanaian playwright has been perceived by many as a feminist or an advocate for women. This may be due to his numerous works which touch on thought provoking matters that relate mostly to women. In an article, 'Masculine Women Feminist Men, Assertions and Contradictions in Mawugbe's *In the Chest of a Woman*', Awo Asiedu established certain facts and opinions.

Asiedu who had a personal interview with Mawugbe was convinced to say that, "Although he does not see himself as a feminist per se, Mawugbe is against male chauvinism" (p.124). She further states that the author in an interview has everything pointing to feminism when he declares:

My position has always been that a man is not whole until he has discovered the feminine side of himself. The image of God is not male or female, it is both; Ataa Naa Nyomo. There should be a bit of both in each. The same should be true for women as well. Most men are not in touch with their female side. Arriving at that has made me respect women more. ...I don't take women for granted at all. They have their contributions to make to society" (p.124).

A man can only be whole when he discovers the feminine part of his being. Men must have a bit of female side in them while women should have aspects of maleness in them in

order to know themselves fully. Mawugbe does not take women for granted at all because they have their input to make to the social order. One may wonder why Mawugbe is reluctant to welcome the possibility that he is a feminist. It may probably be due to fear of accusing fingers pointed at him for betraying the dominant position of his fellow men. Due to this, Asiedu projects that, “Mawugbe may thus be categorized as a pro-feminist man who is on that journey of self-conscious struggle against male hegemony.” (p.125).

Mawugbe again confesses his purpose for writing plays about female issues. Asiedu, however, records him as emphasizing:

It is not just women I wanted to project. It's about some of our antiquated customs which do not aid our progress. We need to consider things which must change. Customs and traditions are made by men and they can decide to change them. We need people who can say 'times have changed and we must change with the times.' That is my message. (p. 125).

Efo Mawugbe's intention is not only to project women but to also point out some archaic practices in society which stand in the way of progress. Times have changed for which we as a people need to change accordingly, rather than frown on modernity especially when it has to do with gender equality. Asiedu again argues about the lead female character in the play that, “there is an indication, thus, that because of her bravery and courage and her determination to face and fight male domination Nana Yaa has become male in the eyes of her society” (Pp. 129-130). I beg to differ here that, the bravery and courage displayed by Nana Yaa could not have made her male in the eyes of her society. Efo Mawugbe is so clear on the issue, indicating that men and women must have a little of each other in order to discover themselves fully. Again, courage and bravery are character traits which cut across both sides of the gender divide. This is well represented in Nana Yaa's lines that, “courage is not the monopoly of men.”(p.24) Asiedu further indicates that, “the actions

and words of the lead female character reflects the kind of feminist rhetoric that seeks to present women as capable of doing whatever men are capable of, rejecting traditional gender stereotypes, and thus eliding the necessity of these so-called female gender roles” (p. 128). Of course, most women are capable of doing a great proportion of what their male counterparts do even though there are some roles that appear to be more suited for men or women alone. Nana Yaa’s agitation in this particular context is geared towards ruling the kingdom when her mother joins the ancestors; this and many leadership duties have over the years been diligently performed by few women.

Asiedu, however, expresses her misgivings on the glory singing for Nana Yaa by pointing out that, “the appellation read thus may be deemed to be tongue in cheek, rather than in genuine praise. Here is not a celebration of femininity but a ridiculing of feminine imitation of masculinity. There is no doubt that her characterization is negative” (p.130).

The appellation of Nana Yaa, I argue is in every respect genuine praise. The praise is simply based on her actions; we must also not lose sight of the fact that the playwright’s agenda is to effect change, which comes at the end anyway. Her ability to stand firm and fight for women’s right in a male dominated environment and succeeds, is worthy of celebration. For her characterization, it is just a true picture of who she really is and what she represents; the only negative aspect has to do with her killing of people who suspect her daughter, Owusu’s sex. Even that is somehow justified since that is the only option readily available under the circumstance. The nature and role of Nana Yaa would be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

2.7 Gender and Violence in Ghana

In accessing information on how men and women treat each other, some data is sought from the Ghana police service. According to an *Intelligence Report at the Domestic Violence Division of the Ghana Police Service*, 'Madina branch'; thus the last quarter of the year 2011 (October to December), I had the following statistics. Sixty three cases of assault were reported. Out of this, one female assaulted another female while one female assaulted one male. The remaining sixty one cases are all about assaults in which it is men who assaulted their female counterparts. These clearly represent the manner in which people treat one another; the representation of issues in society by playwrights is very necessary. Again, the police intelligence report has it that, two cases of rape were recorded and in both cases, it was males who raped females. My understanding of 'Rape' means 'having sex with a person without the persons consent' but the laws of Ghana have a different definition which a police officer (identity withheld) states that "Rape is forceful penetration." This means that no matter how many women may force men to bed, their actions cannot be termed as rape since a woman as it stands cannot penetrate a man. This to me places the men at a disadvantage; because if in case a man hurts a woman in his struggle to liberate himself from a forceful sexual affair from her, it would be unjustified to put such a man before court and charge him with violence or assault. The definition of rape must be re-visited and improved upon for a kind of balance for everybody so that no side of the gender divide would be disadvantaged in case the unexpected happens.

Again, there were seven cases of defilement noted and amazingly, all seven were male defiling their female counterparts. People who fall victim to such offences no matter the reason or status, should be made to face the full rigours of the law. Furthermore, it is shameful to know that seven cases of exposing child to harm were registered and again

females were the victims at the mercies of their male counterparts. On the events of causing harm, five cases were listed. This time around the tide turned such that, males caused harm to two female while females caused harm to three males. Though there were more male sufferers in this particular instance, I argue that women still form the greater proportion of victims in most situations in Ghana.

In addition, the need to understand gender issues and the controversies that surround them, it seems has deep roots in the happenings in society. According to Lewis, (2002: 1) as cited in Adomako, Beoku-Betts, Njambi and Osirim, (2004):

... in the 1950's and 1960's, women's activism was linked to nationalist struggles for independence. In addition, gender, race and class relations were already integral to struggles African women were engaged in when compared to their counterparts in the West, who only began to acknowledge the centrality of the issues in the 1980's. (p.686).

African women have been engaged in different conflicts like gender equality, race, and class related issues when compared to fellow women in other continents. In the 1950's and 1960's, the fight for freedom ensued globally but in Africa, women were used as tools to pave the way for independence in their nations. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the bondage in which African women and men find themselves is defined from the various ethnic backgrounds in relation to their culture.

The African society seems to be characterized with the ideology of women being domesticated for which much attention is not paid to their development as compared to that of men. This mentality in our society is seen in Mawugbe's play which will be discussed in chapter four.

Researches into issues affecting women have not seen much approval and financial assistance from governments. This presupposes that men have received most of the attention necessary; it is in view of this that studies on the subject is important so that focus on both men and women could be balanced. The notion that women are incapable in certain things may account for the reasons why they are not incorporated in development policies. Though I side with this thought, I believe that the trend in Ghana for instance has seen a dramatic improvement over the past decade. Women are now occupying sensitive positions in the country and are all over the fore front in our developmental agenda. Imam (1997) as cited in Adomako, Beoku-Betts, Njambi and Osirim adds his voice to the gender imbalance situation by saying:

Women's studies have always had a political gender consciousness in its recognition of gender subordination. Despite the lack of consensus among scholars and activists about these concepts and in various efforts to foster transformative relations between women and men in Africa, the concept of gender remains a crucial rhetorical tool for some. (2004:688).

Imam's estimation is that, when studies on women are assisted by politicians, it most at times has an agenda which in the end satisfies the politician's purpose than that of women. There is the need to foster unity among men and women in Africa for this reason, various attempts have been made on this gender problem but it still remains an illusion to a large number of people.

Again, in order to improve upon the lives of the people of Africa, especially the females; so much has been said by some people in hierarchy but it seems very little has been seen practically. Many a time, some partners of leaders as well as leaders in power make pronouncements just to win people onto their camps probably for their selfish interests. Women are used as baits to lure investors and donors onto their side; and after monies have been given for women's concerns, it is hurriedly diverted into other things which to

them are of more priority. I see reason with Abdullah (1993), Mama (1995, 1996) and Tsikata (2001a) as cited in Adomako, Beoku- Betts, Njambi and Osirim (2004), who note that:

Also problematized are high- profile national programs launched by first ladies in the 1980s, such as those launched by the wives of Rawlings of Ghana and Babangida of Nigeria, to improve the lives of rural and marginalized women. African feminist scholars view this as the governmental appropriation of feminism for agendas that have very little to do with the liberation of African women. (p.688).

Again, Adomako, Beoku- Betts, Njambi and Osirim: (2004) cited Tsikata (2001b) as emphasizing that:

The past two decades have seen remarkable increase in the number of women's non-governmental organizations. Even when some African regimes have attempted to silenced women in the political realm, women continue to respond to state policies and strive for their full human rights through civil society organizations. (p. 704).

Truly, there have been tremendous achievements chalked by women, in spite of the sinister attempts by certain governments to relegate them to the background. Many non-governmental organizations have sprung up to work for, support and defend women's rights so as they can contribute their quota to national development.

The learned in our society have a success mentality with which they work. They work tirelessly to bring drastic change in the situations concerning women, men and gender in general. The main agenda for researchers on the continent is to promote gender equity and social change, which will benefit both men and women. I agree with Adomako, Beoku-Betts, Njambi and Osirim: (2004) in their argument which touches on certain basic truths on works that may contribute to gender balance which they summarised in the following:

... For scholars on the continent, there is a close synergy between research and activism in their work, which differs from their Africanist colleagues

working mainly outside the continent... For scholars on the continent, the guiding principle in social science research on women and gender in sub-Saharan Africa is that it must remain sensitive to the social contexts and complexities of women's and men's lives and linked to action to promote gender equity and social change. (Pp. 704-705).

2.8 Gender in Africa

As discussed earlier, the issue of domestic violence could be identified in other countries in Africa as well. The attention is most of the time focused on men as those whose hobby it seems is to batter their women counterparts. Even though many individuals, governments and Non-Governmental Organizations are taking strides to curb the menace, there seems to be an overwhelming increase in this very abnormality. Whatever account for this aggravating situation still remains a mystery.

The Kenyan Broadcasting Corporation (K.B.C) on the 19th of February 2012 published on their site; the news item with the caption *Kenyan Men To Go On Hunger Strike To Protest Domestic Violence*. The news article states that, "The Kenyan men can't take it anymore, they now threaten 'food' boycott". The article further indicated that, "The Maendeleo Ya Wanaume lobby group has threatened to mobilize men countrywide to boycott food in their houses... to protest the recent increase of man battering."

The news article records that, "At least 460,000 cases of men battering were reported last year in central Kenya and 300,000 in Nairobi, according to Maendeleo Ya Wanaume" (K B C). What makes this whole episode mind boggling which I question is that, if our women should end up battering their husbands to death, who will they point to as the fathers of their children? What legacy would they be leaving for the next generation? Must we fold our arms, sit and watch this dreaded disease of spouse battering to ravage our mothers and fathers beyond repair?

At least there appears to be hope for a better tomorrow in Kenya because some religious organizations are taking up the challenge to restore sanity to as many as possible homes. It states that, "... the African Independent Pentecostal Church of Africa Women Council has vowed to work with families to restore harmony between spouses in Nyeri county that has recently witnessed an upsurge in husband battering".

Some years back, all we heard was women battering by men but in this twenty first century, it seems the tide has turned drastically and dramatically. Could it be a repeat of the Grecian experience captured by Aristophanes in 411BCE in the play *Lysistrata*, where the women decided to go on sex strike to cajole their husbands to lay down their war tools? If as much as 460,000 cases of men battering were reported in 2011 in Central Kenya alone and 300,000 cases were also recorded in Nairobi, then I am tempted to establish that, there must be some peculiar cause of this alarming escapade. I do not think that all these women are insane to wish to sadden their own husbands. As it is popularly said, there is no smoke without fire; my fellow men in Kenya I suggest should look inward identify the very cause of these battering, so as to find a lasting solution to the menace in order that harmony and peace will assume their place again.

Utoh- Ezeajugh wrote the play, *Nneora: An African Doll's House*. In an article, *A Study of the Virtues of Womanhood*, Asiedu looks at the points of differences (that is in both the original and adapted play) and how they qualify *Nneora* as an African feminist play. She argues that, the title name Nneora which means "mother of all" is portrayed in character as a strong industrious woman; Nneora is not at all as helpless and naive as Nora may be read in the original text. This is why she reasons that, this stems from African conceptions of feminism and womanhood.

It is worth adding that, the mind sets of the African men (male chauvinists) towards their feminine counterparts may also be characterized by factors like: poverty, attempt to maintain supremacy, ignorance, pressures of life, alcoholism, use of drugs, frustrations and for most of them, it is just a desire and joy to molest others (thus sheer wickedness and selfishness).

Asiedu notes that the play *Nneora*:

... is in every way about the 'woman question', exploring as it does, the relationship between men and women in a marriage context and how women, despite their contributions, may often be regarded as subservient to men. Utoh- Ezeajugh's handling of *Nneora* and her friend Linda shows the strength and fortitude of African women in the face of the most dehumanising treatment (p.2).

I cannot agree any less with Asiedu and Alex Asigbo who after critically assessing Utoh- Ezeajugh's play arrived at this same fact that 'women are mothers of the world', a virtue of both pride and emulation. However, in some instances, women bully men by giving them dehumanising treatments as well; a thing that happens regularly on the continent as seen in the earlier police intelligence report of Ghana and the men battering menace in Kenya. Maybe some men who suffer such fates are silent because of fear that their male colleagues will see them to be womanish in being unable to call their women to order.

According to Asiedu:

This situation reveals a reversal of power. *Nneora* apparently has relinquished her position of power to her husband. Whereas she had to get him a job and get him started in his career, he is now the man of the house, the bread winner, the one who decides how the family's money should be spent. He is the one whose wishes must be paramount. If she is to get her way, she must carefully negotiate with him. His disdain for her shop is a strategy to remind her of her new position of subordination. His superiority by virtue of his education and his 'executive position in a merchant bank' must be asserted to remind *Nneora* of her new inferior status, least she forgets. His insecurity due to the memory of his earlier

position of powerlessness translates into his domineering and possessive attitude. (P.3).

This supports the idea that, drama is able to bring out what happens in society. When some women are of the upper hand in some conditions, they turn to dictate to their men, or so it seems. Some men on the other hand order their women around it appear when they get the chance. This might not help in growth of our societies because gender equality could only be achieved in Africa if men and women see each other as equals.

The issue of male or female dominance in relation to gender seems to have become a canker eating deep into the very fabric of African existence. It is pathetic to know that the idea of gender in our society has become a platform for a category of people to usurp the rights of others. In *Nneora*, Utoh- Ezeajugh succinctly refers to what the situation has become as far as male and female relations are concerned. She captures such archaic mentality and cautions her fellow women in this entangled web in the lines of Nneora and Linda:

Nneora: Well, what can I say? We have no right to complain and we have no options. We are women and once we marry, we must stay under our men.

Linda: Nneora wake up! We actually have rights! It is just that we have been brought up in a hypocritical society where men gang up to steal everything that belongs to us, including our God- given right of existence. And you know what bothers me most? For centuries, we women have silently endorsed this social gang up. (Pp. 70-71).

Again, Utoh- Ezeajugh used these women to echo what she believes the situation of women is like in Africa; I argue that it is not completely factual that our society is hypocritical. I also challenge the idea that African men have actually gang up to steal

everything that belong to the women folk as well as their God- given right to existence. Once more I beg to differ because God's original role for Eve who I believe represents the female race, was to be a helper to man, Genesis 2:18). Everything, went on smoothly until Eve and Adam disobeyed God for which reason He decreed otherwise. Under the new ordinance by God, man is to rule over woman; this means he would be in control of a woman and she shall be obedient to his orders. (Genesis 3:16b). Therefore a man ruling over a woman is biblical but then, a woman's right to existence remains intact and whoever violates such will invoke God's wrath because it is against God's order. I argue that it is rather that, what appears to be like men encroaching on women rights is to large extent, ignorance of what they have and their inability to take advantage of what is naturally available to them. Women are capable of contributing so much to societal growth; I suggest they are encouraged by feminists and women advocates to outdoor what God deposited in them and live up to expectation rather than peddling in the blame game.

According to Ardayfio- Schandorf (2009) "women have been identified as the gender that has closer proximity to the natural environment, and therefore, a dynamic agent of environmental change." (p.2). This fully supports my just ended establishment that women have everything it takes to change the mentality of men in our environment; but majority of them have failed to identify with what they have and so blame their misfortunes on their male counterparts. The issue of men having the upper hand over women in almost everything has been a worry to fighters for freedom and activists for gender equality on the continent. What actually brings about such occurrences has been expressed in the following regard. According to Leach and Mearns (1991) as cited by Ardayfio- Schandorf:

In Sub- Saharan Africa, state oriented policies have consciously or otherwise placed in men, greater powers over productive natural resources, to the marginalization of women. This is because the gender division of rights and responsibilities, work and knowledge is also changing rapidly.

Where men are preferentially drawn into cash crop production, local wage labour, and the urban work force, women are increasingly responsible for the use and maintenance of the complex rural landscapes and the plant and animal life that they support. (2009:2).

If in this time and age of democracy, women are still being side-lined on the continent of Africa, then it is rather unfortunate. I suggest that, for Africa as a continent to grow in productivity in order that we can also export more products to the Western world, then more women must be fully incorporated into our workforce for more increase in productivity.

My input above agrees with Kwabena Adjei (2009) which states that:

... it is the responsibility of all of us to ensure that the policies and plans that are designed for sustainable development help solve the dilemma facing women in their different environments in Africa, that the goal of sustainable development in our societies are consistent with the realities of women. (p.13)

The growth and sustainable development on the continent of Africa must be a collaborative one. All Africans have a responsibility of getting involved in building a productive continent. He goes on further to establish that women are not useless creatures after all. He emphasises that in the 1995 women's conference in Beijing, governments and civil societies accepted that women have an important responsibility in the development of sustainable natural resource management in the global world.

In the article, 'Understanding Environmental Changes from the Gender Perspective' Anoja Wickramasinghe (2009) states that:

The debate on "Gender and Environment" has emerged out of academic thesis and entered development policy circles and the international agenda. The connection between gender and environment has emerged throughout men's and women's engagement in manipulating their survival. So it is historical. (p.15).

The argument on gender and the changes in the environment is more international. The link between gender and the different surroundings comes as a result of efforts by both men and women in the struggle for livelihood. This is historical but some of those practices portray negative implications; they must therefore not be entertained but abolished from among the people of Africa.

Wickramasinghe is of the conviction that women are over-working themselves domestically. He establishes that:

... Their experiences have been accumulated over the years. The differences in men's and women's gender roles and responsibilities and also their lifestyles place women at greater difficulties than men. The adjustments that they had to make in their lifestyles to adapt to the changing environmental conditions are more burdensome... The environmental resources offer opportunities for both men and women to manipulate their survival. They act differently in some areas according to the pressure behind them. (p.41).

Gender specific roles for both men and women must be redefined. Men as well as women should know their place on the social ladder on who does what.

Greene (2007) in Kwapong (2009) believes that in order to get men to change their mind-sets about women, it should be an all-inclusive affair. He reasons that:

We can all think of a million examples where if we provide men with a little more information, a few skills, and a bit of encouragement, they themselves can be far more supportive, communicative and caring for their sexual partners and family members. It is not rocket science, and yet it isn't happening on a significant scale. (p.1).

The above in my opinion seems to suggest that the kind of treatment usually meted out to women and close relatives by men is due to the fact that men have not been properly

informed about the importance of their partners. This will enable men to appreciate their women, support them and care for them the more for a better society for all.

My suggestion above that education for men on the gender philosophy must be maximized agrees with Kwapong when she indicates that:

The gender agenda has been pursued since the 1960s. Various policy frameworks have been adopted at both international and national levels to achieve gender equality in society... In the gender equality intervention, especially following the Beijing Declaration of 1995, the agenda has been pursued in some societies as if it is 'only women's' business. Initially, some gender equality activities were undertaken as if it was a battle between women and men... Such misconceptions have made gender equality measures for empowerment of women face some resistance from both males and females who believe that governance of society and women must be under the control of men. (2009:1).

There have been many interpretations of the gender agenda at both national and international levels to decipher what gender means. After the Beijing declaration in 1995, it seemed as if the issues of gender concern only women. Due to this, there were some resistances from men as well as some women whose understanding is that the success of society depends on the leadership of men. It is arguable that such thoughts are mainly because of ignorance and misunderstanding of gender or misinterpretation of the discourse.

Once again Kwapong (2009) argues that, both men and women have been over and under pampered respectively by society by stating clearly that:

... Historically society has perceived males and females differently. In most societies males have more advantage over females' right from infancy to adulthood. Men and boys have been positioned by society to enjoy a gender privilege. For simply having been born a male, males earn a sense of entitlement in most societies. By virtue of being born male, men have access to power, position and resources on a preferential basis than women. (2009: 3).

The notion of one side of the gender circle being given priority over the other must be re-assessed so that both males and females in society are granted the same opportunities. This is because sometimes the downtrodden and marginalised may turn out to be the more beneficial, influential and focused in society when offered the same platform to showcase their individual talents. Kwapong (2009) further emphasizes the gender agenda in Ghana when compared to other nations in Africa. She notes that:

Women and girls in Ghana have historically been perceived as subordinates to men and boys. This made it necessary to put in interventions to promote gender equality in the country. Supported by non-governmental agencies, the Government of Ghana has pursued the gender agenda in the country. The country's commitment to the gender equality agenda is enshrined in the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution. The Constitution provides for equal access and equitable distribution in the property rights of spouses (article 22) and non-discrimination at work (article 24) and equal rights to training, advancement and promotion for women (article 27). (p.6).

The fight for gender equality is in Ghana's 1992 constitution which spells out what the rights of people are or should be. The constitution gives equal rights to every citizen to have access training and advancement whatever the case may be. The big question to pose is 'are these beautiful, promising and well-meaning laws existing, effective and functional? If they do exist, then citizens must be educated on their existence and be aware of their importance to us so that the general public can adhere to them appropriately.

In analysing the African woman from the context of how she is portrayed, Andrea Cornwall cites Quanta (1987:11) as arguing:

The African woman of the rural areas is portrayed as little more than a slave, who goes about her tasks with silent acceptance. She has no past and no future, given the inherent backwardness of her society... She never speaks for herself but is always spoken about. (2005: 1).

The African woman in spite of her hard work is seen as just inches better than a slave. As a slave would normally do, she undertakes her duties without complaints, no matter how demanding those tasks may be. The African woman therefore has nothing to call her own or boast of; she never decides for herself but is always remote controlled.

According to Cornwall (2005), in the introduction to *Readings in Gender in Africa*, “Feminist interest in ‘the status of women’ in the 1970s and 1980s came with a public/private distinction superimposed from home-grown concerns, telling a similarly sorry story.” (p.3) Cornwall cites Niara Sudarkasa (1986:91) as reflecting:

Women were depicted as ‘saddled’ with home and domesticity; men were portrayed as enjoying the exhilaration of life in the ‘outside’ world. For me, the pieces of the portrait did not ring true. Not only was there an obvious distortion of the ethnographic reality- women were ‘outside the home’ as well as in it- but there was also something inappropriate about the notion that women and men were everywhere related to each other in a hierarchical fashion. (p. 3).

As much as I agree that women are to a high rate relegated to the background over the years, there are differences in duty, position and in certain responsibilities. It is a fact that there are certain duties which women generally may not be able to discharge as their male counterparts would naturally do. This also goes to support Asiedu’s earlier assertion that, the display of bravery and courage by a woman to fight male domination must not necessarily make her male, in the eyes of society.

It appears from the study point of view that ‘gender’ which was intended to focus on both men and women issues has become women sided. Cornwall points out that:

Issues of power, empowerment and agency in studies of religion converge with themes in writing on gender, politics and governance in Africa. Perhaps more than in any area of interest, the focus of the literature on politics and governance has been emphatically on the category women; men’s gendered experiences are as rare as analysis that do more than substitute ‘gender’ for an interest in women. (2005:11).

From my perspective, the focus of political policies and governance is being shifted too much on women rather than on both sides of the gender divide. It is becoming rare to hear of men's challenges because the spotlight of gender is mostly put on women. This need to be consciously checked so that the future is not saddled with the task of fighting for men's rights; because by then men would have been marginalised and women over-empowered.

Again, the story of marginalizing women on the African continent cannot be exempted from this gender discourse. The case of the Republic of Nigeria is no better when compared with other African nations. The little or no importance attached to the work women do is gravely appalling. According to Lisa A. Lindsay in C. Cole et al:

Government policy on employment of women, which was formalized in 1948, forced all women to resign from permanent government posts when they married or become pregnant unless they were personally exempted. As the notion of a male breadwinner became increasingly normative among steady earners and major employers, the assumption that women's wages were not necessary to support families entered government pronouncements. A 1954 colonial office report asserted that African women's employment "impedes educational advance and diverts maternal attention from the home and family needs." In addition, such work was regarded as insignificant: "While wives and families in West Africa do work, their earnings are thought to be less a necessity than useful supplement to the income of the man." (2007:246).

The growth of society, nations and continents does not rest with men entirely. The work of women according to Awunyo- Akaba as discussed under 'Gender in Ghana' brings earnings which serve as an extra cushion for their husbands. African women's employment I argue, does not in any way affect their domestic functions; the proper running of a home only needs good planning. The conditions that exist in the continent differ from place to place and therefore the happenings in West Africa could not be generalised as applying to all. I suggest that, the standards of the African's lifestyle can only measure to that of the world at large in this age if we re-assert our minds and re-

define our attitudes to all that pertains to existence. In order to balance gender on our continent, there is the urgent need to undertake a general overhauling of the mentality of African people in total especially the men.

Catherine M. Cole in Cole, Manuh and Miescher (2007) points out a sensitive line of Kofi Nyame Bekyere in a concert party showcase titled “Onipa Hia Moa” (People Need Help), performed in 1994 at Teacher Mante in Accra- Ghana. She states that Kofi addressed the audience “in a conspiratorial tone” as:

My dear married men here, listen to this piece of advice. If you marry a woman and you find that in the morning or afternoon she is feeling dull, you call her to come. Ask why she is feeling dull like that and before she answers, you give her a slap to warm her up. She will only laugh it off, and there will be happiness in the house. (p. 271).

My understanding in a summary is that, married women are supposed to heed to advice at every time possible. If a married woman looks dull, her husband must ask her why and before she responds, she should be given a slap to ginger her up. In no time, she will laugh to liven up the home again. The question I pose is, why slap a woman to warm her up and not also slap a man to warm him up? Thus if it turns out that the man is on a daily bases getting dull? To me, slapping our partners on the other side of the gender divide is not the ultimate solution to our daily domestic challenges. Rather, tolerating one another and accepting each other in spite of our differences would be best in stabilizing our world.

2.9 Working Definition of Gender

Having looked at the various schools of thoughts on gender, I wish to say that; from my perspective- Gender, like culture is the way of life of a people with particular focus on how men and women, ladies and gentlemen as well as boys and girls are viewed in their

societies and as such their treatment. Again, it deals with matters of concern to both men and women and the effort to balance life, erase negative mentalities that have been created about men and women so that both sides will be treated equally with respect and dignity. Furthermore, it views how men and women are portrayed in society, prompting dramatists to create concepts which are represented in their drama; with the intention to playback to society, actions that retard progress in order to effect change.

2.10 Conclusion

To conclude, gender balance on the continent of Africa, needs to be accepted by everybody bearing in mind that, men and women alike are capable of contributing to the advancement of our existence; balancing both sides of the gender divide would be the ethical thing to cultivate. This is because, being one sided will impede progress and unity in our societies, countries, continents and the world at large.

Gender issues need not be looked down upon or politicized by any well informed group or individual because it is the foundation on which a nation's growth depends. This supports Fortes projection which seems to counsel society on the importance of working together as a people for a common goal. He establishes that:

'it must not be forgotten that there is no known society in which the interdependence and complementarity of the sexes is not embodied in custom and sanctioned by law and morality. To consider the status of either sex without reference to the other is to distort the reality we are trying to understand.' (1980:363).

Again, it is evident from all the facts gathered so far that, 'gender' which was intended to formerly focus on both men and women's issues by its originators, has drifted into becoming women sided. Cornwall's earlier establishment is still relevant here that matters

concerning empowerment and writings on gender are emphatically being substituted for women.

Again, as much as it is paramount that women are in a greater proportion marginalized in Africa; it is also necessary not to underestimate the truth that some men in Africa have equally suffered, battling with and are still facing high levels of violence from their female counterparts. Men get emotionally depressed and traumatised by women in our society even though women also endure physical torments from men on a large scale. Women are doing extremely well to support and enhance the developmental schemata of their communities; in terms of education, hard work, home making, nurturing new life and many more. Though men still remain the major breadwinners for their families in Africa, the fact cannot be underestimated that some women equally play roles in providing for their families; others also supplement what their men give with their earnings.

Women of today are making the headlines because they are found in almost all developmental sectors, where their contributions to national growth and achievements are enormous. In Ghana for instance, there are women in academia, governance, managerial and directorial positions, manning Non-Governmental Organizations, financial institutions, the judiciary, ministerial positions as well as members of parliament, to name but a few. The ideology that one party of the gender divide could be better off in matters concerning nation building to me is archaic and must be discarded. The betterment of our world can become a reality, only when we recognize and complement the efforts of one another- that's men and women together.

CHAPTER THREE

EFUA THEODORA SUTHERLAND AND GENDER PORTRAYAL IN *EDUFA*

3.1 Introduction

This chapter contains a summary of Efua Theodora Sutherland's biography, her contributions to drama and theatre in Ghana, as well as her achievements. It also gives a synopsis of her play, *Edufa*. It examines gender portrayal in the play, by way of character treatment. It further investigates the various degrees of conflicts in the play; their contributions to particular thematic concerns, which the author intends to communicate to society. It also looks briefly at the Social, Cultural, Religious and Political perspectives of the play.

3.2 Summarised Biography of E. T. Sutherland

Efua Theodora Sutherland hails from Cape Coast in the Central Region of Ghana. She was born on 27th June, 1924, to Mr. Harry Peter Morgue and Madam Harriet Efua Maria Parker. She had her basic schooling at the Government Girls School in Cape Coast, Secondary education at the St. Monica's secondary school and training college both in the Ashanti region of Ghana. She had her Bachelor of Arts degree in Homerton College, Cambridge University in England; she also studied for a year at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London where she specialised in English linguistics, African Languages and Drama. Efua Sutherland impacted her generation through teaching in schools like St. Monica's Training College, Fijai, St. Monica's and Achimota Secondary Schools respectively and at the University of Ghana as well.

She founded performance groups, created performance spaces, wrote plays, served on boards and committees and was a Research Associate at the Institute of African Studies in the 1960's. She died on 21st January, 1996.

3.3 Sutherland's Achievements and Contributions to Drama and Theatre in Ghana

The genesis of Efua Sutherland's hopes and plans of creating a beautiful and authentic theatre in Ghana started in the 1950's and early 1960's. Her contributions to drama and theatre in Ghana are enormous and indisputable. According to R. July in *The Legacy of Efua Sutherland*, "she...did so much to liberate her own people from a cultural colonialism to parallel the political independence of the day." (2007:160).

Sutherland formed the Ghana society of writers in 1957 with which she sets the pace of writing on matters that impede national development. In order to reinforce the drama and theatre foundation in Ghana, she started an experimental theatre which she called 'The Ghana Experimental Theatre'. To support theatre practice in Ghana, she started building the drama studio from 1959 to 1960, which she designed in the form of a Ghanaian courtyard. According to her, the design was important because the Ghanaian will be able to identify with it more easily. The studio opened in October, 1961; this encouraged people to enter into creative writing, resulting in regular productions all year through.

In order to win the Ghanaian populace onto the theatrical front, Sutherland decided to take advantage of the existing story-telling tradition that most people were familiar with and reworked it into a more authentic dramatic form. She again spearheaded the *Kodzidan* (House of stories) at Ekwumfi Atwia in the Central Region. According to Sandy Arkhurst in *The Legacy of Efua Sutherland*, the house of stories was intended "to provide the right

model for a national indigenous theatre” (p.168). She called it the Atwia Experimental Community Theatre Project. Throwing more light on what the *Kodzidan* is all about; Sandy Arkhurst explains that:

The brain behind the *Kodzidan*, Mrs. Efua Sutherland... realised that in the face of poverty, environmental degradation, lack of sanitation and resources and the fading influence of indigenous cultural values, developing countries needed a means for motivating the people to help themselves. After several years of colonial rule and a long period of relatively unsuccessful development plans that had neglected average citizens and had only served to benefit the urban few, she believed it was natural that development at the community level would be most beneficial and would guarantee more returns than development on the larger scale. Community development was to rely upon the extent to which the people could work to better themselves and to help their own community. (2007:168).

Undoubtedly, the above is a typical attitude of a progressive minded individual who meant well for man and country. No wonder Sutherland took such giant strides both as foundation member and builder of drama and theatre in Ghana. The education aspect of drama and theatre is made real in Sutherland’s ideology; it is set to inform people at the grassroots through theatre on how they can change their situations for the better.

Sutherland grew up at a time when male hegemony was at its peak and in her quest to transform the negative notions created about women, decided to make use of drama by projecting her ideas through plays. In this desire to give proper understanding to people on matters of concern in society especially those about women, so as to effect a positive change, the idea of drama came up. In “an interpretative analysis of Sutherlands *Edufa*”, Martin Owusu and Benjamin Asante underscore the fact that:

...because of her training in the folk and traditional theatre of the Akans, specifically the Fantes, Efua Sutherland makes effective use of local myths, folk stories, and traditions as a commentary issue in Ghana in particular and Africa as a whole.(2002:4).

Efua Sutherland did not relent in investing her energies into the vision of a better society. She initiated model programmes and institutions and very much so the key pillar behind the National Theatre Movement of Ghana.

According to Kofi Anyidoho's biographical sketch in *The Legacy of Efua Sutherland*, Sutherland was the prime figure in founding of *Okyeame* Literary Magazine in 1961. Having worked with the story telling dramatic form for years, Efua Sutherland theorized the *Anansegoro* concept, to form the basis for the traditional story telling drama in Ghana. She also founded the Kusum Agoromba Drama Group which performed basically Akan plays with which they toured many towns and villages in the country. She was the sole supervisor and the brain behind the successes of the Workers Brigade Drama Group as well as the Drama Studio Players.

Sutherland pursued further goals and in 1963, she rose to the rank of a Research Associate at the University of Ghana. She then gave out the Drama Studio to be part of the School of Music, Dance and Drama, now known as the School of Performing Arts. In addition, Efua Sutherland wished to capture children who she believed were the future leaders. By getting children to understand good morals, virtues and norms of society through drama, Sutherland is sure of a society devoid of vices. She believes that the understanding of relevant issues in society can be best projected through drama. She therefore researched into the cultural life of children in society; she wrote plays which she produced and published for children. That step also resulted in the Children's Drama Development Project. She organised workshops and conferences on children's plays which encouraged many to come out with great children plays.

Furthermore, Sutherland aimed at bringing Africans together through Culture and the Arts by engineering the Panafest Movement (Pan-African Historical Theatre Festival). In furtherance of this idea of unity, she identified the need to connect Africa to the diaspora; for this reason she was instrumental in the formation and building of the W.E.B Dubois Memorial Centre for Pan-African Culture. This step drew people from all walks of life into Ghana in order to get educated on the beautiful and moral aspects of the culture of Ghana and Africa at large.

Efua Sutherland wrote plays, poems, articles, short stories and essays, a medium in which she communicated her ideologies and ideals. Her published works include: *Playtime in Africa*, *The Roadmakers*, *Edufa*, *Foriwa*, *Odasani*, *Anansegoro* (thus Story-Telling Drama in Ghana), *The Marriage of Anansewa*, *You Swore an Oath*, *Vulture! Vulture!* , *Tahinta*, *The voice in the Forest* and *Biography of Bob Johnson* (the father of the Concert Party Tradition). Some of her unpublished children's plays include: *The Pineapple Child*, *Nyamekye*, *Tweedledom and Tweedledee*, *Ananse and the Dwarf Brigade*, *Wohyee Me Bo* and *Children of the Man-Made Lake*.

Sutherland assisted in establishing the Ghana National Commission on Children, and later became the chairperson from 1983-1990. The commission ensured that many children's park-library complexes have been built and the true conditions of the Ghanaian children have also been documented. Efua had children's welfare at heart and so influenced the establishment of a state policy on child life in Ghana. She also served on boards like the Education Commission, the Valco Fund Board of Trustees and the Ghana National Commission for UNESCO.

Again, Sutherland's contribution to the fashioning of an authentic drama cannot be forgotten. She made adequate use of traditional values in her works; this is why Adams and Sutherland summarised her contributions to drama and theatre in general that:

All told, in the evolution of modern African drama, Efua Sutherland will be remembered prominently on two fronts. The first is her contribution to the fashioning of modern African drama through the use of appropriate traditional image, expressive idioms, and structural devices. Second is her abiding commitment to the practice of theatre. In the capacity of director, she has been able to test out the viability of her dramatic experiments, thereby helping to trim the outlines of modern African's dramatic form. As is the case with some of her literary contemporaries, the fulfilment of her striving has come with the attainment of discovery. Articulating this vision in her earlier years, she had said: 'I am on a journey of discovery. I'm discovering my own people... there are certain hidden areas of Ghanaian life... that I just wasn't in touch with; in the past years, I've made a very concentrated effort to make that untrue.' In retrospect, she can now assert more confidently: 'I know my people now.' (2007:23).

The University of Ghana recognised Efua Sutherland as a distinguished individual whose contributions impacted both the University and society as a whole. For her immeasurable contributions to societal development, the University of Ghana on the occasion of the 30th Anniversary of the Achievement of 'ull' university status honoured her. According to Anyidoho in *Fontomfrom*, the citation reads thus:

Efua Theodora Sutherland, for the inspiration provided to the development of the Dramatic Art, and in recognition of your efforts on behalf of children for whose benefit you have canvassed children's libraries and amusement parks, the University of Ghana is privileged to honour you with the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa. (2000:81).

Efua Sutherland was indeed one of the hardworking individuals who ensured the survival of the dramatic arts in Ghana. These tremendous achievements by Sutherland have been a motivation and inspiration that attracted many to the theatre. Her works, contributions and achievements will forever remain fresh on the minds of the Ghanaian people and Africans

in general. Efua Theodora Sutherland was an indefatigable pacesetter of drama and theatre practice in Ghana.

3.4 Synopsis of *Edufa*

Edufa, an affluent man, who in the quest to sustain his wealth consults a diviner for spiritual fortification. The diviner tells him that death knocks on his door and that he would die four years from the day of consultation. Frightened by the news, Edufa seeks help from the diviner to avert his fate; but he can only do so if he can get a loved relative who will be willing to die in his stead, by saying so to Edufa while the latter concealed a charm on his body. He attempts to attract his father to the charm but his father readily declines. He tries the charm on his wife, Ampoma, who readily agrees and says the words, 'I love you enough to die for you', ignorant of the charm on Edufa.

Four years later, Ampoma's condition worsens towards death. She is very sick, weak and helpless. Edufa tries various spiritual and traditional means in order to salvage his wife's situation but to no avail. This futility is because, Ampoma was killed four years ago due to the declaration she made. Again, Edufa vehemently denies to people who could assist him revert his wife's fate that his wife is alright and that all is well; he surreptitiously finds help but unfortunately, all assistance that he seeks for, comes at a time that things are already out of hand.

Kankam, Edufa's father, who has also consulted another diviner, comes fuming about what his son has used his wife's life for. He does everything within his power to get Edufa to confess his actions, so that they can unite their forces together to combat Ampoma's predicament but Edufa is headstrong. Edufa confesses his cowardice and panic in a

soliloquy after his father's exit. A chorus of women come to perform a ritual cleansing in Edufa's house, which they believe is capable of driving evil away from his home. This is a ceremony which they carry out occasionally in the community.

Surprising enough, when Senchi, Edufa's friend enters the latter's home, he resolves to treat his friend to a party. Ampoma joins in the celebration and Edufa carried away by events, heed not to the diviner's hopeful instructions as reported by Sam, the idiot servant of Edufa. However, before those present, Ampoma slips a string of waist beads around Edufa's neck, cursing him for taking her life. Edufa promises his dying wife never to marry again. Ampoma falls when retiring to the bedroom; she is rushed into her room but she finally dies. Edufa rages to fight death to bring back his wife by indicating with the confidence that: "Death, I will lie closely at the grave again, and when you come gloating with your spoil, I'll grab you, unlock her from your grip and bring her safely home to my bed. And until then, no woman's hand shall touch me" (p.60). The chorus of women in sorrow exit with a solemn dirge.

3.5 Analysis of Gender Portrayal in Sutherland's *Edufa*

In the 60's women seemed to be second rated in Ghana and when men are talking, women do shut up in submission or say just a little, that is if they speak at all. It was a period in which males dominated and unfortunately, the women seem to accept the trend of things. Since women were not very much regarded within the era, if a man wants to protect or preserve himself, he could choose to use a woman anyhow he liked to satisfy his interests. Having observed this trend, Sutherland wants to use the play to help women emancipate themselves. It is possible the playwright is only being subtle so as not to incur unnecessary negative reactions from the men in her level- the educated at that time. In order to change

a person, let the person know who he is; that is what Sutherland is doing for women through *Edufa*. She wants women to observe how men consider and treat them so as to liberate themselves from the hegemonic tendencies of their male counterparts. Again, Martin Owusu and Benjamin Asante in “an interpretative analysis of Efua T. Sutherland’s *Edufa*” state that:

As a product of a male-dominated society, Efua Sutherland uses her plays to create an awareness among women to change their situations in a dynamic society. She portrays the nature of human power as used against African women. She, therefore, creates a conducive environment for the necessary changes. (2002:4-5).

3.6 Women as Subservient in *Edufa*

The way and manner in which Ampoma is viewed goes for all the women in the play, who in turn represent the entire female faction in Ghana. The level of disrespect for women at the time is nothing to write home about. Though not meant to denigrate the line of Kankam, Edufa’s father goes a long way to confirm the notion formed about women around the sixties. Kankam refers to her as “...poor, doting woman” (p.16). A doting person is somebody who is foolish or weak minded; it could also mean a person who is excessively fond of someone. The playwright uses Ampoma’s helpless condition to warn women to realise their status in order to rise up for their right. Ampoma is a wife to Edufa and the mother of his children; it is her health that gets everybody busy in the household in order to restore back to her, good health. The efforts to me are vain because it is obvious that this rich husband does nothing extraordinary to show the urgency of his wife’s situation. In the prologue of the play, Abena laments on why more potent help is not being sought. She highlights the fact that:

...True that Ampoma ... is unwell; but

If she is unwell, should we not open our

gate? She is not mortally ill; but even so,
just let it be known, and sympathy and
comforting gifts will flow in from every
home. So much does the whole town hold
her dear. (p.3)

Ampoma is a wife who shares everything with her husband but could not look him in the face to refute Edufa's request of dying in his place but swore her life away for her husband, (p.17). The relationship between Edufa and Kankam his father is of blood tie; therefore the love between them cannot be said to be less than that of Edufa and his wife. However, Kankam is able to look into Edufa's demand and rejects his request outright but Ampoma fails in doing same. Sutherland might have kept her silent in order to show the voiceless and subservient condition of most of the women in those days which made the men walked over them as if they were nobodies. It is not as though they knew not what is right or wrong but accepted everything with the intention to avoid any castigation from their men and spouses respectively. Sutherland made Ampoma show regret at the end when it was too late; this I believe is to send a wake-up call to women on how badly men treat them in society. Edufa might have loved Ampoma but when it mattered most, he secures his life over that of his wife's. When it becomes obvious that Ampoma could die at any time, Edufa hypocritically tells his wife, "... Oh, wife of my soul. You should never have made that fatal promise." (p.10) Instead of Ampoma putting it across to him that after all, he wanted someone to die for him and since she has already done that, he ought to shut up, she followed the old order by bowing in with the words; "that I loved you? My love has killed me"... (p.10). Once again, the playwright establishes through the character of Ampoma that in the sixties, women had not much voice, a situation they accepted as their fate. The circumstances in which the women found themselves warrant them to accept

anything that came their way without scrutinizing it. For instance, because Edufa is her husband, she just accepted to die for him without first examining the consequences of her actions. This even confirms that women at the time could accept whatever the condition without questioning it. It is apparent that once a thing comes from a man, that is all; they agree to it with confidence and this is an attitude the dramatist abhors for which she preaches change. Ampoma under the circumstance was presented with repeated opportunities to forswear that fatal oath but she ignorantly increased the tally in doing so. This scenario can be likened to what I discussed in chapter four on the queen mother who failed to cease the chance for her daughter to rule after her; this also goes to support my earlier saying that, in spite of the seeming marginalisation, women remain their own enemies in most situations. They mostly fail to be themselves or think aright; so the men take advantage of their weakness and order them about indiscriminately.

Once more, the dramatist captures through the role of the chorus of women to establish how women are treated with disrespect by men. Sutherland does this to portray exactly what was happening at that time. For instance, Senchi's language towards the women is bad and Sutherland is asking women through the play to look at how men treat them. The interaction between Senchi and the Chorus of Women is a typical example. It is an insult to refer to Ghanaian women the way Senchi does by slapping their buttocks and the words he uses on them. He says to Edufa and the chorus of women, "... comes in the nick of time when everything he loves is together in one place. Friends, women, bottles... I love women and always find myself right in the middle of them. Welcome me... Now, embrace me, and be done with sorrow." (Pp. 27 & 29) It is quite amazing that Senchi could talk to women in such a manner, especially meeting them for the first time. Due to how women are categorised at the time, the author of the play deepens how 'cheap' women were perceived

to be; this perception pricked Sutherland so much that she is determined to make women aware of their predicaments. Again, Senchi tells a chorus “is there a road block there? Come on, I never allow women to keep me waiting” (p. 44). Based on what the men take women to be, Senchi also sees women to be gullible and so could believe anything, so far as it comes from a man. When a member of the chorus wished to know who he was, he tells Edufa quickly to give her a story she will believe: “tell her I’m a neo-millionaire in search of underdeveloped territories” (p.45). Since it is possible that the women could accept anything that comes from a man, Senchi with this ideology is convinced that, portraying himself as a rich man will easily make them fall for him. This will enable him satisfy his sexual desire with them. This mentality also confirms my analysis in chapter four that, women were previously seen to be stooges for men’s welfare: thus cooking, washing, taking care of their homes and above all taken as sex objects that must satisfy men’s pleasure. Surprisingly enough, all the questions which Senchi posed to the chorus on page 46, they say yes to all for which Senchi asks them, “Yes. Yes. Do you never say no?” (p.46). The acceptance by the chorus to attend a party where they liberally mingle with a stranger is not encouraging. Ordinarily, many would take such things to be mere entertainment but Sutherland is serious about this and wants women to see what they have been relegated to by men.

Another important character is Seguwa, the matronly member of Edufa’s household, through whom Sutherland channels her observations. The issue of gender inequality that is talked about in chapter two is very much present in this play, *Edufa*. Society has made women see themselves as inferior; Seguwa is a normal human being who is capable of thinking and doing things on her own but her master has put a lock on her lips, enslaving her from expressing herself freely. Edufa has silenced her, making her keep the painful secret of Ampoma’s sufferings to herself. She sorrowfully states her desire, “I wish I could

break this lock on my lips.” (p.11) Edufa virtually orders Seguwa about like a nonentity but she could do nothing but obey in silence. She goes on to establish how troubled she is about the entire condition of her madam:

... my tongue is silenced... I am not saying I doubt anything. You have chosen me to share this present burden with you, and I'm letting my mouth speak so that my mind can have some ease. It is I myself who say I'm hardy, but how can I help having a woman's bowels? (p.5)

It is very denigrating and dehumanising for Edufa to use her to serve his selfish interest. He turned a deaf ear to Seguwa's appeal that they needed a better help. It is obvious that, Edufa is against the coming of another help for fear that when that happens, the tide may turn to reduce him to his wife's present position. Edufa's fear is registered in his reactions when Seguwa pressed home her request:

Seguwa: You can trust my secrecy; that I have sworn; though

What I have sworn to keep secret, now frets against the closed walls of my skull. I haven't sworn to have faith against all reason. No, not in the face of your wife's condition in that bedroom there. Let's call for help.

Edufa: [with indications of despair] From whom? We are doing

Everything we can. Also, it is Ampoma's wish that no One should be allowed to see her.

Seguwa: And is she dead that we should be bound to honour her

Wishes?... Let me call for help.

It is most unnatural that even the mother who bore her should be kept ignorant of her sickness, serious as it now is...

Edufa; Don't fret so much. Calm yourself, will you? (Pp.5-6)

Edufa uses his status to usurp the rights of others in his society especially, an observation the playwright made and wishes to correct. Edufa is rich, educated, emancipated and many people depend on him for survival: he is therefore using these to suppress others. In our society today, just as the time the play is set, those in power, the rich and the educated most of the time look down upon the less privileged in society. This is exactly the tendencies that Seguwa, who even though meant well for Edufa's household, suffers from because Edufa ruled her. The suggestions and concerns of Seguwa were readily rejected; much so because the opinions of women at the time seemed not to be necessary especially when men were in charge. They are just instructed about like slaves; even though Seguwa is more of a servant, Edufa for once should have listened to her.

In another instance, Abena, Edufa's sister has no say in the circumstances that take place in her brother's house. All that she is reduced to is to obey without asking questions. Her duty is to carry out specific assignments without any complaints. Even though she is tired and sleepy, she has no other choice but to do her brothers bidding. Sutherland tries to make women understand the web in which they have been entangled by men over the centuries. She portrays such things which women had to endure no matter the dangers associated with them. The only thing that matters most it seems is what the men stand to gain and not the challenges which women may encounter in the course of discharging their subservient duties. Abena shares her experiences in the prologue of the play by saying that:

...Night is long when our eyes are unsleeping.
Three nights long my eyes have been unsleeping,
Keeping wakeful watch on the dew falling,
Falling from the eaves...
... I heard tonight,

A voice stretched thin through the mist, calling.
Heard in that calling, the quiver of Ampoma's voice.
Though I saw suddenly in the restless white waters,
The laterite red of an ant-hill – jutting
And rocking.
A misty figure on its topmost tip,
Flicking her fingers like one despairing.
I panicked, and came to this door, listening,
But all was silenced-... (Pp.1-2)

Abena has been having sleepless nights that are full of frightening sights. What is confusing is that, she does all these without even knowing the main purpose surrounding such sacrifices. It is true that Abena is Edufa's sister but to some extent on humanitarian grounds, it would have been proper for her to be aware of what goes on in the house. This scenario that Sutherland represents in the play is a kind of fate many women are battling with; however, most men if not all see nothing wrong with it and either unfortunately or ignorantly, most of the women have also accepted it as normal and part of life.

The mindsets formed about women in the sixties were very pathetic. Like Sutherland rightly portrays, women were seen to be of no much value. Ampoma comfortably passed to die in place of her husband because of her unconditional love which she has for him. The Chorus of women are treated with disrespect, touched anyhow and are perceived as tools for pleasure and entertainment. They are not regarded for any meaningful undertaking. Again, Seguwa's lips have been sealed psychologically, making her suffer and endure the painful moments without a say. Abena has also been technically reduced to a 'do before complain' situation; amidst the horrifying and ravaging nights, she has no right to say anything but to just obey despite how dreadful the times have been.

The treatment of women in the play by Sutherland in the manner in which she did is to playback to society so that women would come to terms with the deplorable state in which they are; the intention for this is for them to fight for their right and assume their rightful place; and to regain their long lost position, respect and dignity in society. This is to emancipate them totally in order that they can also be seen among their fellow women on the global scale.

3.7 The Self-Centeredness of Some Men

The title character for the play, Edufa represents for me the male attitude towards women in the 60's even though such behavioural patterns still exist today. He is so selfish that when he needs protection, he goes to see the diviner himself; but when it concerns Ampoma his wife, he sends Sam the idiot servant of his. His life is so important to him that he could not play into the hands of an idiot but because the life of his wife is so unimportant that any useless person qualifies to attend to it. This characteristic indicates how hypocritical people, especially men could be when they want to pursue a selfish ambition.

In order to exchange his ill fate with someone's, he bought a charm from the very diviner who predicted his fate; he hid the charm on his body and jokingly tries to transfer his death to a willing soul. The age and wisdom of his father saved him from imminent death. However, Ampoma an innocent and loving wife knowing not what is in lieu for her ignited the danger on Edufa's body when she made that fatal confession, "I will die for you, Edufa" (p.16).

Again, in the blindness of his modern ideas, Edufa argues that even if his charm was responsible for Ampoma's illness, modern medicine will cure her at a dose. Why then could Edufa not consult such doctors, modern as he calls them when the death penalty was announced to him but rather buying a traditional charm? This simply explains the extent to which men can go to sustain that which they cherish most in life. Edufa displays his ignorance in the choices he makes in his need to be modern. Death is inevitable and it is plain that when we mourn others, "we mourn for ourselves" also as highlighted by the chorus:

Crying the death day of another
Is crying your own death day.
While we mourn another,
We mourn for ourselves,
One's death is the death of all mankind (p.25).

Truly, Edufa represents the proverb; *the household suffers, as society suffers* just as Wetmore titles his article. Thus, whatever affects an individual tends to affect both close relatives as well as other lives within the ecosystem, since one's survival is directly linked to that of another. Wetmore further makes reference to what John S. Mbiti writes on the philosophy of death which explains that, "death is a monster before whom man is utterly helpless. Relatives watch a person die, and they cannot help him escape death. It is an individual affair [in] which nobody else can interfere or intervene." (p.121). It is not surprising therefore that neither Edufa nor all the onlookers could help save the dying Ampoma but she dying the death originally intended for Edufa.

Though Edufa appears to be working hard by buying medicine for his wife to take, I believe he had another motive. This is because Edufa knows full well that his wife is under a spiritual spell. Such medication I argue could have had and I believe did have adverse effects on Ampoma since she actually is not suffering from the ailment the medicines are meant for. How cruel on Edufa's part and pathetic on Ampoma's side? The duty of a true husband they say is to protect his wife from danger. Edufa failed in carrying out this task from the very start by overlooking his wife's condition. This I argue may be due to the wrongful understanding of modernity characterized with pride. He misunderstood modernity to be, ignoring traditional ideals. When his wife finally dies, he cowardly brags, "I will bring Ampoma back" (p.61), an incident to which he is the greatest contributor. Sutherland captures Edufa's heartlessness so that women would be critical and careful when they make such promises in the name of love; for the sincerity of most men cannot be judged from the whiteness of their teeth when they smile to their female counterparts. The quest to make quick money is fast becoming the order of the day in our Ghanaian society. This is evident in the numerous armed robbery, murder and fraud cases which have taken centre stage in our electronic and print media. Men, especially the young ones are prepared to do anything to get rich; they are ready to kill, sacrifice a loved one who could lose her life, womb, be struck with a disease like stroke or even madness. They call it *sakawa* or *sika eduro* which means- sacrificing blood relations, loved ones or close friends in order to protect one from all forms of danger and particularly for money making and wealth acquisition. This practice is been represented through a number of movies especially those of Ghana and Nigeria. This is a pure signal to society on the happenings within their set ups.

Edufa thinks money is everything so can afford to disrespect his father as well as the chorus both of whom could have possibly saved the situation. His belief in wealth is proved wrong when after everything his wife dies. This is evident in the spending of so much money to buy both exotic as well as local medicines for his wife. It is undisputable that Edufa's tragedy is not because he frowns on traditional beliefs but rather he gave way to fear which misplaces the actual positions of modernity and what he believes in. With the death of a caring mother, the possibility of the house becoming an empty shell is very high. The vision of Sutherland in this regard, however, is not to castigate and condemn modernity but to counsel her fellow countrymen and women to strike the right balance between traditional as well as modern values.

It is worth establishing that Edufa's action of trading with his wife's life is oppressive so must not be encouraged. This underscores the fact that Sutherland truly placed in context, the occurrences in the Ghanaian society at the time in the world of the play. However, it is arguable that, the detrimental state in which Ampoma entangled herself is as a result of her own choices. Edufa, it is clear made an effort to make Ampoma renounce the oath to die for him but the more he tries, the more she swears her life away. By revelation from his personal diviner, Kankam, Edufa's father lay bare what transpired that night. He makes clear that:

...I have learned that in your chamber that night, you tried to make her forswear the oath she had innocently sworn. But the more you pleaded, the more she swore away her life for love of you; until, driven by your secret fear, you had to make plain to her the danger in which she stood. You showed her the charm. You confessed to her its power to kill whoever swore to die for you. Don't you remember how she wept? She had spoken and made herself the victim. Ampoma has lived with that danger ever since, in spite of all your extravagant efforts to counter the potency of the charm by washings and rites of purification. (p.17).

Who is to blame under the circumstance, Edufa or Ampoma? Assuming that Ampoma takes Edufa's earlier utterances for a joke, what of when she sees the charm in earnest? I argue that the death of Ampoma should not be blamed entirely on her husband. This is because both husband and wife played a part in the repercussions that Ampoma suffered; because, both of them had a way of escape but failed to be sensitive to it. This is what I refer to as self-suppression and subsequent committing of wilful suicide. Though Ampoma dies in the end, Edufa on the other hand suffers a psychological oppression. This trauma comes as a result of Ampoma taking hold of her husband for good by slipping waist beads round his neck. She explains her actions to the chorus:

[Inscrutable] Women, you understand, don't you, that with this, I mean to claim him mine. And you are witnesses. My husband, wear this with honour. [*She surprises EDUFA by slipping the beads round his neck. His first reaction is of shock.*] With it, I declare to earth and sky and water, and all things with which we shall soon be one, that I am slave to your flesh and happy so to be. Wear it proudly, this symbol of the union of our flesh. (p.54).

This act by Ampoma who hitherto is referred to as loving and caring is very confusing. She promised to die for her husband even when she got to know the danger involved in making that pronouncement. One may consider that as an unconditional love but the height of revenge from Ampoma to Edufa is perilous. It means, by sending me to my grave earlier than expected, you must come along with me. This is to say that, if dying for you means I can't have you in love then nobody else can; and the only way out is to take you along by cursing you so as to suffer the same fate that you have brought upon me. Owusu in his book *Drama of the Gods: A Study of Seven African Plays* explains in detail the consequences of Ampoma's actions:

Ampoma's act of slipping waist beads round her husband's neck, in the context of Akan society, is like that of one who, in dying, pulls the person who is the cause of her fate with him, or destroys. It is a deliberate act and

therefore shows that she possesses the wickedness which Edufa exhibits. (1983:45).

This reaction by Ampoma I argue nullifies the quality of being hailed as a heroin who even though having full knowledge of the danger that lies ahead of her, gathers as much courage as possible to embark on this deadly voyage. This Ghanaian love, spells out a sharp contradiction to the true love that was displayed in Euripides' *Alcestis*; in this scenario, even though Alcestis is informed by Admetus her husband of his plight, she selflessly continue to make a vow to die in his stead. Since Sutherland is representing issues in society as a playback to the populace, it would have given us the true nature of Ghanaian women in love, if Ampoma was made aware of the charm on Edufa from the very start. After all, just as in the original play from where this play was adapted, the story is based on security and love. This I believe may be the worst form of revenge a woman who claims to be in love could inflict upon a man she professes to love; if not for anything at all, she could have considered her children and pardon her husband from this sting of death that she imposes on him. This goes to affirm my earlier assumption that the issues of gender must at all times be objectively balanced without any biases; this is because people on each side of the gender divide are tantamount to marginalization and oppression. Edufa killed Ampoma spiritually first and then the physical manifestation of real taste of death followed. Ampoma on the other hand kills Edufa both spiritually and psychologically; leaving him with mental torture till he also dies finally.

Sutherland uses the treatment of characters in her play to show how men and women are placed on the gender front in the Ghanaian society; she points out the fact that there are still genuine people in society who do not condone evil. She uses Kankam as symbolic of the principled people in the society. Kankam is one of the strict fathers who will not sit

and watch a son go wayward, no matter how arrogant that son may be. Father and son ironed out their difference about Ampoma's condition in the following lines:

Kankam: ...Edufa, I am here because I fear that time has come to claim that vow.

Edufa: Leave me alone, will you? [*He sits miserably*]

Kankam: Confess it or deny it.

Edufa: I owe you no such duty. Why don't you leave me alone?

Kankam: To kill? Say to myself, 'Father, your son wants to murder', and go? All the world's real fathers would not wish a murderer for a son, my son. Yes, in spite of my rage there is still truth of father and son between us. (p.17).

Though Edufa became rude to his father at a point, yet he respects the latter as an equal human being. Edufa intended to use his father for his selfish ambition due to his age but the agenda backfires. Sutherland I believe is trying through the confrontations between Edufa and Kankam to communicate something to women. She is telling women that they are as human as Kankam and therefore if Edufa respects him, then Edufa as well as men in general should show respect to women in general. That is to say, if Kankam succeeds in silencing and calling Edufa to order, then they the women can equally stand face to face with Edufa and men in general in our society.

Again, Senchi also exhibits negative attitude to women in the play. Women have allowed themselves for people like Senchi to become womanizers. This is because they are happy for example about what Senchi does to them. The Chorus meet Senchi for the first time and are ready to avail themselves again by evening just because they admired him at first sight. This attitude is still prevalent in this century where with a little goodness shown them, the majority of the female folk seem ready and willing to give out anything to make their male correspondents happy in return. For some, it may be due to poverty or the desire to be associated with a fine or famous man. Sutherland tries to let women realise that it is

they who have allowed men to treat them the way they do. Senchi holds and touches any part of their body for his own pleasure and all that the women do is laugh heartily; which means they enjoy it and therefore urge Senchi on for more. From my perspective, the male in our society can only succeed when they use people who are weak. Edufa could not use Senchi or Kankam for his diabolic plans. Kankam is able to stand firm and resist him and Senchi is proud of who he is and rejects Edufa's coat. He uses Sam and women by lauding it over them; he orders them about to do his bidding so as to satisfy his heart desire and to fulfil his intentions. The playwright projects that principled people in society cannot be used by the privileged for their self-preservation and self-love. She is calling on the women not to allow themselves to be used by the men and privileged but stand for their right. Though Senchi is poor Edufa could not use him because he knows what he wants. Likewise, if women can realise their importance and place in society and in turn carry themselves as such, no leader, rich man, renowned in society or the mere fact that somebody is male can marginalise, oppress or stand on their right.

Sam has been described as an idiot servant; even though an idiot, he knows his place and due to that Edufa could not use him anyhow. Sam is stupid but is used only to an extent. Edufa uses Sam in a foolish way to go to the diviner in order to cover up his deeds; this he does for fear that he may lose his respect and dignity when people get to know his secret dealings. All the men in the play react to Edufa whenever they dislike any tangent on which he tries to operate; but the women on the other hand only accept whatever he says without scrutinising it first. They all obey Edufa's instructions and orders even when they did not like them; some only complain or lament on his actions which they feel are wrong but they have no choice than to do them in silence. Due to these kinds of treatment imposed on women, Sutherland is advocating for women through her play so they could

learn and not remain subservient forever. In order not to be taken for granted eternally, women need to stand and defend their rights; because they are also human beings like men and are equally capable of reasoning and taking decisions as well as doing whatever it takes to better their lives.

3.8 Conflicts and Themes

In order to clearly bring out the true nature of both men and women in society in her play, especially the selfishness of Edufa, Sutherland fashioned out some conflicts among the characters. First of all, there happened to be an intense confrontation between Edufa and his father, Kankam. Three years back, Kankam had left his son's house upon noticing his evil intentions directed towards self-preservation. But it has become necessary for Kankam, a loving and concerned father to return to appeal to his son so that Ampoma's ill fate could be inverted. The hateful manner in which Edufa received his father tells the enmity that existed between father and son. Edufa is unrepentant, arrogant, proud and disrespectful in the way he attacked his father upon seeing him. He asks and his father queries him in return:

Edufa: (*Seeing his father and recoiling*) You? What do you want? (*His eyes shift uneasily as Kankam stares hard at him. He comes down the steps.*) What do you want? Three years ago you declared me not fit to be your son and left my house. Had my position not been well evaluated in this town, you might have turned tongues against me as the man who drove his own father out of his home. What do you want now? ...

Kankam: ... What do I want you say? (*Very deliberately*) I want the courage that makes responsible men. I want truthfulness. Decency. Feeling for your fellow men. These are the things I've always wanted. Do you have them to give? (*Edufa rises, angry*) I fear not, since you have sold such treasures to buy yourself the importance that fools admire.

Edufa: If you have come only to tempt me to anger, then leave my house.

Kankam: Oh, stop blabbering. I left before, and will do so again, but it isn't any absurd rage that will drive me out. (Pp.12-13).

The argument goes on and on, resulting in insults; the more Kankam tries to make Edufa speak the truth so that proper solution could be sought to Ampoma's condition, the more he denies that nothing like that is going on under his roof. This conflict heightens into verbal abuse, harsh language and unpleasant utterances that need not exist between father and son. Kankam insisted that his son has sacrificed the wife but Edufa would not budge. Edufa is headstrong for fear and pride and so holds tight to that which is evil. In the process of the accusations and arguments that are yielding nothing, the old man leaves in disappointment. The refusal by Edufa to accept his guilt and to seek another help in order to save his wife's life brings out the theme, Man's desire to do anything for wealth and self-preservation. Again, in this, the playwright is educating both young and old to beware of people they engage with because if such people are not genuine, they will always use their companions in getting what they want. Ampoma's situation is therefore an example for mankind, especially women to learn from in order that they may not repeat such a mistake.

Another conflict ensued between Edufa and Seguwa his matron; though this struggle is not all that pronounced it involves Seguwa's pressure on her master to seek some other assistance for the security of Ampoma's life to no avail. Edufa certainly hardens his heart against all attempts to get him drop his lukewarm attitude towards his wife and assume the kind of urgency that the situation demands. Seguwa in her disturbed mind says, "...though what I have sworn to keep secret, now frets against the closed walls of my skull..." (p.5) When Edufa selfishly insists that it is his wife's wish not to worry of any other assistance, Seguwa asks, "And is she dead that we should be bound to honour her wishes? She is not herself." (p.6) But Edufa tries to get her to compose herself but she retorts quickly by saying that, "It is your wife who needs calming, if I may say so." (p.6). Seguwa's

countenance indicates clearly that she is battling within and without herself and wishes she could free herself by sharing this secret with someone but her swearing prevents her from doing so. In an angry and sorrowful mood, she soliloquises, “I wish I could break this lock on my lips.”(p.11). To an extent, the information that she harbours is pricking her conscience making her feel uneasy because she could bear it no more. This inability to liberate herself from this psychological dungeon just because she has to please a man is pathetic. Again, I deduce that the playwright placed in these conflicts, the theme, the torturing experience of keeping a secret. This burden of keeping the secret of what Edufa has done to his wife demoralised both the victim and her matron. Neither Seguwa nor Ampoma had the confidence to inform anybody about this predicament. This also shows the control that men have on women in society; this goes to support what Awunyo- Akaba emphasised in chapter two of this work that Ghanaian men pressurise their women and subject them to unnecessary pain for their personal gains. Sutherland in her play impresses it upon women that they have been taken for granted by men for far too long; for this reason, they need to rise up now in order that their honour may be redeemed. Once they are freed from this taunting male hegemony, they would not have to succumb to just anything because it comes from men. The distinguishing fact here is that, fighting to free themselves from male domination is not the same as women refusing to be diligent in playing their legitimate roles to the fullest. That is to say, women should not take advantage of the situation to misconduct themselves, but to rather be wise in this legal right of self freedom they have to embark on.

There is yet another conflict where Edufa seems to have regretted his actions and wishes he could reverse the times but unfortunately for him, time spent is never regained. After the long interaction between him and his father about his greedy and insensitive nature as

well as his psychosis for gain, Kankam leaves, reducing Edufa to self-pity. He suffers intense inner pain that he finally resorts to agony and confession in a soliloquy:

...Tears within me that I haven't had the privilege to shed.

Father!

Call him back that I may weep on his shoulder.

Why am I afraid of him? He would stand with me,
even though he rages so.

Call him back to bear me on the strength of his faith.

He knows it all. I can swear he is too true a man to
play me foul.

But I could not risk confirming it...

No, a man needs to feel secure! ...

Don't ask me why I did it; I do not know the answer.

...She who lies there must recover if ever I'm to come to
rest. I love my wife, I love her. My confidence is her
hope and her faith in me, mine.

So are we locked. (Pp.19-20).

It is evident from the self-castigation by Edufa that, it does not profit a man anything if he possesses all the wealth in the universe without peace to enjoy it; his lamentations therefore boils down to the fact that all his efforts to secure his life is but vanity, which he realises but later than expected. It could be argued that, though it appears Edufa loves his wife, the desire for self-satisfaction led him to do what he did. No wonder he doesn't have answers as to why he took such a hostile step. Once more, the playwright cautions man to be appreciative of himself. This ideology is highlighted in the themes, the need to be content with what one has and the consequences of one's diabolic actions.

Finally, Ampoma laments of dying too early with the dilemma of whether her children would be well taken care of or not. The sacrifice that is making Ampoma die a premature death is caused by an ambitious husband who in his mission to secure himself falls on an innocent wife who ignorantly accepts to die for him. This act to get another person to die in one's place so that the other could live longer actually distorts the natural order; this is because, everyone has his own life to live and death to die at an appointed time. Again, instead of finding a more potent solution to safeguard his wife from the grip of death, all he could say is, "(catching hold of her) Oh, wife of my soul. You should never have made that fatal promise." (p.10) Realising the selfishness of the man she is dying for, she surprisingly says, "That I loved you? My love has killed me. ... (p.10). Ampoma seems to have loved Edufa so much that, she did not suspect any evil intention by her husband and so swore repeatedly to die for Edufa. Due to this natural conflict, Ampoma equally deemed it necessary to drag Edufa down the same lane of death. Ampoma then slips the waist beads that are to make Edufa hers, both in life and in death around his neck. She boldly declares, "...with it, I declare to earth and sky and water, and all things with which we shall soon be one..." (p.54). Ampoma is obviously going to die and she becoming one with Edufa equally means the latter will die too. Basically, Ampoma's death is due to her love for a man who unfortunately loves material things more than the life of a fellow human being. No wonder he accepts the diviners alternative advice that if he could get someone to die in his place, he has the chance to live on. Here too, the playwright underlines the themes, the prize for unconditional love and the inescapable consequence of taking human life.

In addition to the above discussions, Sutherland also touched on certain aspects of concern to the Ghanaian community in her play. Socially, Africans and Ghanaians for that matter

live communally. They live together happily and the life of one person concerns another. This is portrayed at the point in the play when the Chorus were cleansing the township as discussed earlier. Though globally, people live together the extended family ties among Africans seems to be very strong. Africans believe in gathering together to celebrate good fortunes as well as any occasion and eventuality. For instance, when Ampoma falls, the Chorus and the people around were all disturbed and when she finally dies, they wail for losing a loved one. This indicates that, if the Ghanaian people can live together as one, care for one another and be united, nothing is capable of overcoming them as a people.

Culturally too, adults are accorded respect and are held in high esteem; when this is missing in a particular society, there is always conflict and confusion. Children are supposed to be humble and obedient to the elderly; the culture does not allow a child to insult an adult but this is what Edufa does to his father. As if that is not enough, he goes ahead to abuse his father in a way that their culture frowns on by asking, “father, are you mad?” (p.16). Sutherland seems to suggest that our society is getting deplorable by the day because ethics like respect for the old and the aged are fast dying out of our society. To her, in order to be strong again as a people, we need to re-asset our minds and care for the old, the crippled, the ordinary and above all respect for the aged.

To add to the above, the playwright also underscores the fact that the African people must believe in what they have. Religiously, African divination is very potent and therefore needs not be underestimated. Edufa, even though an emancipated Christian has not been stable in his religion; he engages in different beliefs as told by his own friend Senchi:

(Sniffing) And I smell – what is it that I smell? Incense?

(To Edufa) Say, have you changed your religion again?

What are you practicing now? Catholicism, spiritualism,

neo-theosophy or what? Last time I passed through here, you were an intellectual atheist or something in that category. I wouldn't be surprised to see you turned Buddhist monk next time... (p.28).

In spite of his emancipation, Edufa is inconsistent in what he believes: he may be in one belief system but he visits diviners in the dark. He tells his father, "You know nothing. Diviners! Ho! Diviners? What have diviners got to do with me?" (p.14). Sutherland proves that African charm is very powerful and no one must joke with it. Edufa, from the beginning takes things for a joke, bragging to his father that there are doctors who could treat his wife and that nothing will happen to Ampoma. His wife dies at the end before he realises that the charm is that deadly. He says sorrowfully that, "I told her not to swear. I didn't know that harm could be done." (p.60). Practices that are carried out by men and women on each side of the gender divide are able to make or mar an individual and these are what Sutherland seems to prove in Ampoma's case.

Finally, Sutherland gives the play a political twist. The conflict between Kankam and Edufa points to this fact. When Kankam realises what his son Edufa has done, he leaves but three years later returns to mend things but to no avail. But this happened to be a family that lived happily before, but now would not see eye to eye due to misunderstanding. It is therefore true that, a house divided against itself would not stand. Edufa's family for me is a representation of a nation; Sutherland's message here is that, as a country, we must be united because a country divided against itself will never ever stand.

3.9 Conclusion

Undoubtedly, Efua Theodora Sutherland remains the mother of modern Ghanaian drama and theatre practice. Her contributions to the dramatic arts and culture as well as her achievements, which strengthened the growth and survival of the arts in Ghana and beyond are tremendous and immeasurable. Her aesthetic ideas and theories upon which traditional story telling drama in Ghana is based are laudable while her efforts on behalf of children are recognised both nationally and internationally. The burning desire with which she established the *Kodzidan* which resulted in today's Theatre For Development is indeed commendable.

The canker of male domination and subsequent marginalisation of women in Ghana in the sixties has been well represented in the play *Edufa*. Her treatment of characters in her play outdoors a true reflection of the gender situation at the pre, during and post-independence era in Ghana. She used *Edufa* to represent male attitude towards women and their selfish nature when it comes to working for wealth, fame and power. Their insensitiveness as well as disregard for fellow humans, particularly women are well dealt with. Ampoma, on the other hand epitomises the helplessness of women in Ghana and how they have been turned into 'nonentities' who always become the victims of their men. Denigrating and dehumanising tendencies were at a very high rate in the 1960's where the privileged maltreated the less privileged in society, who were mostly the female side of the gender divide. Kankam is shown to be the loving and concerned in society who will not sit and watch things go bad where there is still time for making amends. This means that in spite of the differences in gender, there are still people in society who do not discriminate against those on the opposite side of the gender divide.

Sutherland through her play entreats all people, both male and female to beware of the choices they make because whatever the choices, one has a prize to pay and that the repercussions might be unpleasant and in some circumstances deadly. The play *Edufa* is educative and I am sure it has contributed in a way or another in the reduction of the gender imbalance which used to rule in Ghana, particularly among the elite. That is if we look at it from what Owusu and Asante stated which was discussed earlier with regards to what Sutherland intended her plays to do. I therefore establish that the hard work of Sutherland has also contributed to the re-assertion of mind by women and the recent respect, honour and recognition accorded them nationwide today. Women therefore have regained their status to a large extent in Ghana and in the future, the gender equality that has been fought for, for years will be fully attained. In total, Sutherland wants both men and women to regard each other for national development.

CHAPTER FOUR

EFO KODJO MAWUGBE AND GENDER PORTRAYAL IN, *IN THE CHEST OF A WOMAN*

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the biography and philosophy of Efo Kodjo Mawugbe, as well as synopsis of his play, *In the Chest of a Woman*. The chapter also includes detailed analysis of gender portrayal in the play; that is how the playwright treats his characters. It further delved into potent conflicts in the play that are gender related and their resultant in particular themes.

4.2 Kodjo Mawugbe's Biography

Efo Kodjo Mawugbe (1954-2011). He went through his primary, middle, Ordinary, Advance, Tertiary levels and various disciplines of education with ease in spite of several degrees of challenges due to his determination, hard work and vision.

His talent and interest in Theatre Arts is highly rated by many globally. His interest was not a selfish one but one that sought to give drama a push and to use his area of specialty to add a voice of change to the social, educational, political, moral and economic spheres in Ghana and beyond. As a pan-Africanist, his literary talent and values of African tradition were carried through the medium of writing plays.

In the 'book of tributes' to Kodjo Mawugbe, James Gibbs underscores the fact that Mawugbe was:

... not simply 'an all-round man of the theatre' but a performing arts virtuoso who redefined the meaning of the word 'theatre' and demonstrated again and again that 'all the world's a stage'...he combined

his work as a playwright and director with teaching, mentoring, consulting, journalistic writing, and administering...Mawugbe responded to development; he kept himself 'functional'. (2011:3).

The works of Mawugbe have touched on relevant issues that inconvenience society mainly Ghana. His ideas which focus on the total transformation of humankind reflect in his works as well as in the discharge of his duties. The ministry of Chieftaincy and Culture and the National Commission on Culture in their tribute to Mawugbe establish that:

Kodjo was a nationalist and a cultural revolutionary who did not use the sword nor might; he used IDEAS to bring the transformation envisaged in line with the cultural policy of Ghana... Kodjo also managed several theatre companies and authored several plays and presented papers at the local and international fora. (p.21).

While Mawugbe's wife in her tribute saw him as "a teacher par excellence; a patient listener, a caring guide; a fountain of joy... a true father...and most importantly... trusted prayer partner", his children intone that, "not only have we lost a man of integrity, dexterity and a great playwright, but a whole nation, Africa and the whole world have lost someone precious and a driving force behind theatre in the world." (Pp.9-12).

The contributions of Efo Kodjo Mawugbe in the world of theatre are innumerable and immeasurable. He served on many boards, panels, and committees which sought to refine and project theatre and drama among other things in which his impact was great and unique. He was an executive member of numerous associations and artistic director for several theatre and drama groups or companies in Ghana. He directed programmes both nationally and internationally. He researched, lectured, and also nurtured many in what he knows how to do best. Until his demise in 2011, Efo Mawugbe acted as the Executive Director of the National Theatre of Ghana.

The dramatic works of the genius Mawugbe range from stage, through Radio to Television. Some of his plays include: *A calabash of Blood*, *Aluta Continua*, *The Unbending Branch*, *In the Chest of a Woman* (2008), *Constable No Rank*, *You play me I play you*, *Take Me To The Altar*, *Tata Amu*, *The Royals*, *G-Yard people*. Others are: *Check Point Charlie*, *Queen Zariba of Zariba*, *Upstairs and Downstairs*, *A.P.T.S (Acquired Prison Traumatic Syndrome)*, *Ananse-Kweku-Ananse*, *Sitsofe*, *Free Justice For All* (Book of Tributes: 2011, Pp. 7-8) and others like *Beyond Beijing*, *Cindarama*, etc.

Mawugbe's influence at the fore front of Ghanaian theatre is without doubt enormous. His hard work earned him awards in both the world and local fronts respectively. It is relieving and encouraging but not surprising that "Former President Kufuor also presented him with a Grand Medal award for his immense contribution to the Arts and Theatre Management in the country." (Book of Tributes: 2011:8).

4.3 Mawugbe's Philosophy

Due to Mawugbe's versatile approach to issues concerning humanity, many find it difficult to categorise which side of the gender divide he really belongs. As a result critics referred to and tagged him as a feminist. The main ideas projected in his works have to do with gender equality and education on the need to eradicate male chauvinism, a canker that has eaten predominantly into the cultural fabric of people in Africa. The then Vice President John Mahama on his part views Mawugbe as "a champion and storehouse of our culture and tradition" (Book of Tributes; 2011:36). From my perspective, Mawugbe had a philosophy which was simple; to work hard, through discipline and humility; promote the rights of women and to point out practices in our customs and traditions which hinder progress and so need change. In short one can comfortably project the truism that Efo Mawugbe detested suppression, oppression, deprivation and above all marginalization of

any sort. He can confidently be referred to as a human rights campaigner, an art he cemented excellently through play writing, particularly in his play *In the Chest of a Woman*. The display of male chauvinism and the insistence on traditions that glaringly impede development were very much at play. To Mawugbe, women must be granted the chance to bring their talents on board so that together a people can build a meaningful society. Again I believe that the core of Mawugbe's philosophy is for a people to desist from the whimsical concept that men are superior to women when it comes to leadership talent; because wisdom and knowledge are never the reserve for men.

Agyeman Ossei in the introduction to the play captures what he believes are the underlining factors in the play. He states that:

In the Chest of a Woman is a complex story in which Ghanaian culture is interrogated on two fronts; contemporary relevance and the status of women in Ghanaian society. The contemporary significance of which essence is captured in Kwaku Duah's speech; "... who am I to suggest that the narrow mental foot path of our customs be widened" (81) and the stereotype of sexuality captured succinctly... (VI).

On his part, Prof. Atukwei Okai, the secretary-General for the Pan-African Writers Association (PAWA) also submits his opinion in his tribute on Mawugbe's play by stating that:

At the thematic-spiritual core of the play *In the Chest of a Woman* is a most humane conviction that women are never inferior to men; and the heightened quality of artistry deployed to achieve the organic manifestation of the body and soul of the play- that is, the message and its dramatization-REPRESENTS a most passionate plea for a democratization of the right to have our human rights recognized, respected and granted... male chauvinism, this denial of the rights of women as equal human beings will afflict human society for quite some time yet... the denigration of women's position in society has been occurring in many parts of the world... (p.24).

The above expressions by Ossei and Okai go deeply to support my earlier submission on the philosophy of Efo Kojo Mawugbe the memorable legend of what Ghanaian drama and theatre represents.

4.4 Synopsis of the Play

Once in the Kingdom of Ebusa, an ambitious Princess, Nana Yaa Kyeretwie sets out to prove to the men of the Kingdom that women are equally capable when it comes to courage and leadership skills. She is therefore greatly disappointed when her mother the Queen Mother of the Kingdom bequeaths the Kingdom to her younger brother Kwaku Duah. This decision baffles Nana Yaa and she protests vehemently. The Queen also decrees that, any of the two who first bears a son, should have that son to rule as King after Kwaku Duah. Even though Nana Yaa and her brother both gave birth to females, Nana Yaa took steps to disguise her daughter as a boy in order that she would succeed Kwaku Duah and rule as King. When Owusu, Nana Yaa's daughter is sent to the palace to be trained in the art of kingship, the King coaxes Ekyaa his daughter into courting her cousin Owusu so that when she ascends the throne she would become 'his' wife, the Queen. Ekyaa's efforts to make her cousin love her proves futile.

Ekyaa gets pregnant out of wedlock, an offence punishable by death. Ekyaa holds the entire durbar spellbound when she names Owusu as the man responsible. Owusu's crime is punishable by the severing of his genitals. Nana Yaa the schemer collapses and later dies of shock when Owusu is to be executed. It is discovered at the point of execution that Owusu is a girl who could not have made Ekyaa pregnant. Owusu must still die for a forbidden act of sitting on the judgment stool as a woman. Women could only sit on it if they are properly sworn in as Queen; a rite which Owusu did not go through. Ekyaa

subsequently names Akwesi Amoako the son of Nana Opong as the father of her unborn child. Nana Opong is also condemned in line with Owusu's decree to die alongside Ekyaa and Owusu.

The king becomes a victim of the customs which nearly results in the loss of an heir to the throne, his daughter and the unborn grandchild. The King attempts to abdicate making the Elders and people of the kingdom yield to change by setting the customs aside to pardon the condemned persons.

4.5 Analysis of Gender as Portrayed in Mawugbe's *In The Chest of a Woman*

There have been questions and counter-questions about why Mawugbe chooses to present issues in his play the way he did. While some students argue that he could not deal with the subject of gender accurately, others think there are too many biases and inconsistencies in the play. As a playwright, I am sure he definitely has a goal for his work. He, however, creates characters which he endows with certain qualities and attributes which may aid them carry out his objectives. But the question is what the intention of the playwright was when he embarked on this agenda to write the play. The motive behind his play is captured in Asiedu (2010: 125) as already discussed in chapter two of this work. Two main objectives can be traced from the interview: the dramatist's desire to change unprofitable customs and traditions, and to project women in society. Does the playwright, who is male trying to project women's course, succeed in fulfilling his plan?

4.6 The Power of Women in the Play

The action of the play begins by presenting two very important characters; Nana Yaa Kyeretwe the queen mother of Kyeremfaso; and her daughter Owusu who she disguises as

a boy. Nana Yaa as the playwright would have her is an intelligent, bold, ambitious, courageous, daring and very confident personality. She confronts every issue with the self-assurance that she would win. She uses the game of *oware* to prepare Owusu's mind on war strategies. She does everything within her power to cajole Owusu onto her side in order to turn the tide from what tradition has made society practice over the years. It is evident from some of her lines that she took inspiration from her mother who is also brave.

She says:

“...If the customs and the political history of this kingdom are silent over what offices a woman can hold, or the role played by women in the struggle to free ourselves from the domination of the Akwamu, especially the courage and bravery displayed by our mother in our last war against the slave raiders from the north it only proves one thing (p.20).

One of the mannerisms that Mawugbe gives Nana Yaa is her fighting spirit. This she showcases in the flashback of the play when her mother insisted, that Kweku Duah her kid brother be King instead of she becoming queen after their mother. She categorically establishes her resentments about this daylight robbery which the elders and her mother try to force on her. She reacted instantly when she realised things were not favourable:

Queen Mother: And you my son... I give this whole Ebusa Kingdom and everything within it...

Nana Yaa: (Rising up sharply, cutting short the applause from the elders)
This is nonsense! (There is instant silence)

It is most unacceptable to me,

Mother, if this is what you call an honour,

Then may I beg to be dishonoured immediately.

Queen Mother: Why... my princess, why?

Nana Yaa: I am the elder child. Customarily, it is I who must succeed you and not my younger brother.

2nd Elder: Don't forget he is a boy and you a girl.

1st Elder: Besides, he will soon grow into a man

Nana Yaa: And is that going to make him older than me? Tell me.

And who says the chieftaincy stool is made for only the hard buttocks of men.
(p.18).

This starter continued into a heated argument and exchange between Nana Yaa and the elders resulting in a physical battle between her and Ofori. Nana Yaa recognized from their actions and utterances that they were ready to do all they could to keep themselves at the top, just in the name of custom. She also gained the understanding that the laws were made by men for their parochial interest. This attitude of the men in the kingdom infuriated her and she decided to confront and resist the men even at her own peril. This was to enable her break every barrier of custom; she sets the wheel of change into motion by mapping out certain strategies. She started off with the intention to eliminate her brother; this is the main reason why she threw the challenge to the men during the flashback, thinking her brother would rise to the occasion to defend men. She told Owusu of her motive:

Owusu: ...Why did you engage that man in the duel?

Nana Yaa: Hmm ...as a matter of fact,

It wasn't the man I wanted.

It was a careful trap meant to lure the one

With whom I once shared the same womb.

Owusu: Who...My uncle?

Nana Yaa: Yes

Owusu: (shocked) Your own brother?

Nana Yaa: I thought he would rise up to defend the honour of manhood

So that I could kill him and succeed our mother

But his stars were awake. (Pp.30-31)

Fortunately for Kweku Duah and unfortunately for Nana Yaa, her brother escapes her first trap which is set to change the mind-sets of men about women. True, the first agenda failed but she carved another plan. It appears the playwright embedded in her some special wisdom through which he could execute his plans of causing change and promoting women, as discussed earlier.

Nana Yaa, however, plots to make use of her daughter. This makes her disguise the girl as a boy so as to outsmart everybody in the kingdom. She also brainwashes Owusu into believing in her capabilities. Nana Yaa has some wicked nature in her which aided in doing some of the things she did in order to keep her daughter's true identity hidden from the public. She confesses her actions to Owusu:

Owusu: Tell me whatever I have to know about myself.

Nana Yaa: (Thoughtfully) Well, you've asked for it.

My child, do you know how many people had to
Lose their lives just to keep your true identity
Hidden from the public?
Do you know that I had to poison your father
Because at a point he couldn't bear it any longer
And swore to tell the world you were a girl?

Owusu: what?

You mean you...

Nana Yaa: Yes, I had to do it.

The midwife who stood by my bed
When I was in labour and supervised your birth
Had to lose her tongue for fear that she might
Squeak.

Owusu: The gods forbid...

Nana Yaa: She is that dump nurse who serves you.

Many servants in the palace who seemed a little

Bit suspicious and inquisitive about your sex

Were quickly eliminated or sold into slavery.

And I had the singular satisfaction of

Despatching the Chief Executioner myself (Pp. 28-29).

The above character traits of Nana Yaa in what she says to her daughter come as a dent on her personality, especially being a woman. This may be because such evil machinations which seemed to have been associated with men are being displayed by a woman so accurately. In a pre-production conference of the play with Abibigromma, the resident theatre group of the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana, Nana Yaa's role came under numerous criticisms. Many said she is a wolf in sheep's skin; some claim the playwright over empowered her while others referred to the character as a 'man-woman'; which is to say she exhibited more than expected masculine characteristics. The question is, does a woman necessarily become a man because she displays a certain degree of manly traits? Again, Efo Mawugbe summarizes what characterized Nana Yaa as a powerful ruler and a formidable force to reckon with. The first Royal Bard ushering in the Queen Mother during the durbar in the final leg of the play sings her praise with:

Hail!... Hail!... Hail!...

All hail her majesty.

She who bears the leopard's heart

The only woman who treads where men

fear to tread but is never harmed.

Of her strength, not even the tiger is an equal

Of her courage, only a loin can compare.

Hail her...

Hail the mother whose mind is a cistern of
Wisdom.
From which the younger ones take gentle sips
The sight of her sends creepy feeling
Through the spines of all the men
A fleeting feeling of fright
(Enter Nana Yaa Kyeretwe and entourage)
Yes here comes the mother of the people.
The mother with a chest of a father
Walk softly... Tread Softly...
Tread softly on the soft bosom of Mother Earth...
Not so hard...
Else mother earth shall tremble with fear.
Yes ge-e-e-ntly...
to avoid the snares of the owls in the
kingdom. Nana Yaa Kyeretwe
The Leopard that breaks the horns of the bull
She sprinkles you with greetings! ...
Her glorious highness salutes you all!
Her majesty is resting herself...
The Thursday-born Leopard that breaks
The horns of the bull is seated.
Be warned, ye little children,
That the Leopard tamer is only having sister
It is not yet dead. (Pp 76-77).

The above attributes make Nana Yaa stand out tall among the lot. Traditionally, people of royal birth have praise singers who portray them as insurmountable, no matter what the challenges may be. In addition, those traits go to support some of Nana Yaa's earlier

exploits in the play. This is to say, the crafty and intelligent manner with which she managed Owusu through to the final leg of the dramatic action without anybody noticing it. This makes her a leader with a difference since her type of boldness is not too common among women.

In an article “Masculine Women, Feminist Men: Assertions and Contradictions in Mawugbe’s *In the Chest of a Woman*”, Awo Asiedu (2010) registers her disapproval about the praises poured on Nana Yaa just quoted above. To Asiedu:

The appellation read thus may be deemed to be tongue in cheek, rather than in genuine praise. Here is not a celebration of femininity but a ridiculing of feminine imitation of masculinity. There is no doubt that her characterization is negative. (130).

I disagree with the above. The praises of Nana Yaa are in every respect genuine without much exaggeration. The playwright’s purpose as stated earlier is not to celebrate femininity; but rather to showcase the capabilities of women in doing whatsoever they desire once they get the opportunity and set their minds to it. His attempt is to rule out the perception in society that women are weak and therefore lack leadership talents. Even though there is no denying the fact that the personae’s actions seem a little to the extreme, the playwright’s use of the character is fantastic. The character of Nana Yaa captures for me the fundamental expectations of the dramatist in her in order to achieve his aim for the play. This is because Mawugbe’s intentions to effect changes needs a certain level of rating in terms of courage and wisdom; these were well planted in the character by the playwright for his intended purpose. At the end Mawugbe achieved his goal because the customs were set aside and the condemned persons were pardoned. Again, it is obvious that Owusu would be the Queen Mother when Nana Kwaku Duah II dies because she is next in line.

This idea of what actually spells out who a character is or should be is purely dependent on what the playwright wants to establish through the said individual. For instance, according to Martin O. Owusu and Benjamin O. Asante in their 'Analysis and Interpretation' of Kobina Sekyi's *The Blinkards* "Characterization is the method an author uses to acquaint the reader with his or her characters. It is the creation of imaginary persons so that they exist for the reader. Characters are therefore a dramatist's primary images of human nature." (2009:31).

From my perspective, Characterization is not just the 'creation of imaginary persons' but the character's ability to manifest the inbuilt characteristics to the fullest. The knowledgeable way in which a character presents exactly or the closest possible to what the dramatist wishes to communicate, is what defines who a character is in totality. Nana Yaa is not only stern and authoritative but also very hospitable to her guests and she discharges her duties with decorum as testified in the following encounter with Okyeame Boateng:

Nana Yaa: Are you ready to depart?

O. Boateng: Yes your highness.

Nana Yaa: Were you fed well?

O. Boateng: Your highness, I have run errands upon errands for my king, your brother. I have visited palaces very far and near but nowhere have I seen hospitality displayed in its raw form, by women, than in your palace. (Nana laughs) Your highness, may the gods sprinkle more years upon your age.

Nana Yaa: I am flattered... all the same, thank you. I always do my best.

O. Boateng: And your best is the best of all. (General laughter) (Pp. 9-10 & 33).

Her hospitable manners go a long way to foreground the fact that no matter how hard a woman may be, she still is and definitely has a degree of tenderness of a mother with which to show care. In view of this, Mawugbe's play is not to undermine the integrity of

women but to showcase some of their inner traits which probably to him will make a people appreciate their women the more. Nana Yaa assumes Efo's ideology which appears to establish that, 'what men can do, women can equally do and in some circumstances, they could even do better'; for this reason she refused to let men think of women as people who are incapable, especially in leadership abilities. It is also clear from the occurrences in the play that the lead female character tried to dominate men in the play and she also demonstrated some calmness of a mother at certain points. This suggests that she acted harshly only when occasion demanded it.

The duel between Nana Yaa and Ofori is an encounter which underlines Kyeretwe's readiness to confront every challenge that will be in her way in her bid to succeed their mother by capturing the ultimate stool of the Ebusa Kingdom. She zeroed in on Ofori, pinned him to the ground but was stopped by her mother just at the point she wanted to kill him to prove to the men that bravery does not belong to men alone.

Though Nana Yaa's plot gets exposed at the end, her schemes brought the desired change in the antiquated traditions, paving the way for women to rule not only when there is no man to do so. I argue, however, that Nana Yaa is without doubt, an extraordinary strategist; for being able to carry her plans through to establish the playwright's intentions successfully, without even the so called wise men in the kingdom noticing it.

Though, Nana Yaa Kyeretwe the mother with the chest of a father, died earlier in the world of the play, her actions no doubt made an immeasurable impact in the kingdom of Ebusa. Had she not strived that far, the desired change would have been a nine days wonder. Mawugbe might have killed her because her assignment was concluded. The

bigger vision was not for Nana Yaa as an individual to benefit but for the general good of the women folk. In her bid to persuade Owusu to avail herself for this all important mission, she encourages:

...my child, the stool shall be your reward.

The shining trophy to crown your long suffering.

(Passionately)

Will you go ahead and play the game to the
end? Don't think about me!

Think about womanhood...

Think about us...

Your fellow sisters, all the down-trodden women
out there. It is for them you are doing this great
sacrifice of honour. Will you do it?

(Long pause) (p.29).

The above sentimental expressions by Nana Yaa show clearly that women at the time had been relegated to the background and were down-trodden. The idea seems that women do not usually accept challenges, which give their male counterparts an advantage over them. It may be for this assumption that Ofori in the flashback of the play tells Nana Yaa, "(Confidently)...Now stick out your tongue and step forward and let me cut it for you."(p.22) He might have been thinking that Nana Yaa will retreat but unfortunately for him, she does no such thing. The stage direction indicates, (Nana sticks out her tongue and begins to move back as Ofori advances towards her. She suddenly draws a similar long knife concealed in her cloth to the amazement of everybody (p.22). This could mean that Nana Yaa is quite informed on the attitude of the men in the kingdom to suppress and therefore came prepared. It is no wonder, however, that the men were surprised at the

outcome of the duel. The elders shouted, “Look, our man has fallen”, (p.23) because they least expected what they witnessed.

Efo Mawugbe, wishes to communicate the fact that, a person needs some level of confidence in order to be heard especially in a male dominated situation. This idea has been well expatiated by Nana Yaa in a conversation with her daughter. She foregrounds the fact that:

Nana Yaa: ...I tell you,

if there is anything men fear in this world it is a
woman who is a WOMAN!

Owusu: And by that you mean?

Nana Yaa: A woman who accepts challenges.

A woman who can shout back when a man
Shouts.

A woman who is all out to give the command like
a man.

A woman who in no uncertain terms,
rejects absolutely the definition of the word
feminine to mean home-oriented, passive,
needing-to-be-guided-and-protected.

To the men, such a woman is a real woman and
A woe unto manhood.

In short, what men fear most is female power in
Motion!

Owusu: why?... If I may ask.

Nana Yaa: Because such power, seeks to break not only
the bonds of customs,
taboos and antiquated traditions to which

women are chained, but also deals a heavy blow to the age-old myth of male chauvinism...(Pp.31-32).

Again, the role of the Queen Mother is a major key to the development of the plot of the play. Mawugbe may have placed her there to register the understanding that the woes of womanhood cannot be blamed entirely on Male Chauvinism. The Queen Mother had the mandate to effect changes in the customs of the people knowing they were formulated by men and not by gods. She, however, played along the status quo by asking that they follow what was already there. Her decision on how the inheritance should go was still in favour of men because in Akan customs, inheritance is matrilineal in lineage. Her declaration as carried by the First Elder is what oiled the wheel of the dramatic action. He says, "Well Princess, your mother insists that never in the history of Ebusa has a woman ruled where there is a man to do so..." (p.20) This is what may be referred to as women being their own enemies because the Queen Mother wields a lot of authority as seen in her last edict which is echoed by Nana Yaa to Owusu:

That my brother be king after her, But after him, any of us who first brings forth a son, Shall have that son ascending the stool after Kwaku Duah, Even though customarily it is the nephew who ascends a throne, Due to the matrilineal inheritance we practice. My mother, for once, set the custom aside... (p.26).

The Queen Mother did set the custom aside anyway, but why not in favour of her elder child? Her decree of who succeeds Kwaku Duah became the catalyst for the quest of Nana Yaa to make her daughter a male by force, in order to capture the stool which she believes belongs to her at the time. The Queen mother appears to be unfair, in that her decree deprives her daughter from succeeding her. She had all it takes to scrap those unprofitable customs but did not take advantage of the opportunity that was available. The argument

that women, especially African women are to a large extent their own enemies is also highlighted in Femi Osofisan's *Nkrumah -Ni... Africa -Ni*. Andree and Jane in a chat reveal this phenomenon:

Andree: ... You represent for me an ideal of freedom to which I have always aspired, but which at the same time I know I can never fulfil!

Jane: Why not?

Andree: Why not? Because I belong to a different culture of course! A Muslim culture. And no matter how much I long to be free, how much I join in preaching freedom for our people, I always know that it has fixed bounds for women. And that I, as a woman, am a prisoner to those bounds! No, my dear, freedom here does not come in equal measures for both sexes. Our men will never allow it.

Jane: That is, never until you fight for it. Until you yourselves make them see that slavery has nothing to do with religious faith.

Andree: Slavery?

Jane: Yes! The discrimination against women is nothing but another form of slavery! I'm not a very religious person, I know, but still, the truth is that no religion in the world preaches, or permits, such enslavement. None of the great prophets advocated it, and not one, even, of your African religion!

Andree: It will take time, my dear Jane, before we Africans achieve that stage of enlightenment! Maybe even several centuries, several generations! Our men, even the most educated, are not yet prepared to set the women free.

Jane: And the women, are they prepared to set themselves free? Or will they forever wait for the men?

Andree: You know the answer to that. We women are the most fervent collaborators in what you call our own enslavement. Because we have been brought up brainwashed like that, to believe that the man is the master we must always bow to and kneel for. No one will change that habit in one day, in one decade. It's the same thing as colonialism is in Africa ... (Pp.66-67).

It is clear based on the above which also goes to support Nana Yaa's earlier assertion that, African women have been taken for granted for far too long. They have been marginalized

as far as leadership roles are concerned; unfortunately, those decrees as to what office a woman can hold is determined and passed into law, not by gods but by men as stated by Okyeame Boateng in the final leg of the play. The only way African women can totally be emancipated is for them to rise to the occasion and fight for their liberation; that would be better for them than depend on their men to do so for them as Jane questioned Andree in their interaction earlier. Efo Mawugbe in an attempt to represent the plight of African women in drama cleverly uses Nana Yaa as a motivating tool for women to take consolation and encouragement from. This builds in Owusu the confidence to live up to her mother's expectation and to play her role as though a boy, right from start to end.

Again, Mawugbe uses Owusu Agyemang the young princess to bring out some of the inherent traits in some of the characters. For instance, she was used as a puppet by her mother through whom she accomplishes her ambitions of change in some of the outmoded traditions in her society. She is an intelligent child who wishes to understand every bit of life's scenarios. She is a smart thinker; this is evident in the kind of questions she pose to her mother who, as stated earlier, uses the game of Oware to enrich her with lessons in warfare; thus if she gets the opportunity to lead her people in future. The dialogue between mother and child is clear on this subject of warfare:

Nana Yaa: ... Truce! another cardinal strategy in warfare that is often employed by an army. You need truce to take stock, re-plan your next offensive based on fresh intelligence that might have filtered in, boost your logistics, strengthen your line of defence, evacuate the wounded from the front and check on your casualties. Learn the lesson right away. Should the lot fall on you in future to lead your people to battle, never give in easily to a request for truce unless you are very sure it offers you the maximum advantage...

Owusu: I see

Nana Yaa: Such an assumption causes the non-truce-seeking opposing army to feel superior and, more often than not, cause it to lower its guard. And at that very instant, the seemingly

capitulating, truce-seeking enemy attacks more fiercely and takes its opponent by utter surprise.

Owusu: (Greatly impressed) It's so amazing how such wonderful military manoeuvres are hidden in the game of Oware.

Nana Yaa: That is why it is a game for Royals; kings, princes, princesses, I mean people like you.

Owusu: (coily) Oh mother. (Pp 3-4).

Owusu is a critical thinker. She is top mostly anxious to have explanations as to why certain things occur. This attitude was manifested by the coming in of Okyeame Bonsu who reported the arrival of a delegation from Nana Kweku Duah's palace.

Owusu is viewed to be the centre of attraction as the next king of Ebusa Kingdom according to tradition. The play revolves around Owusu right from start and perhaps Nana Yaa's ambition. Even though she was mistaken for a boy, the message by Okyeame Boateng says it all:

thank you Okyeame. Hear and let it reach Nana that as she was able to decipher from my staff, my colleagues and I are on a peace mission. Our Great King, Daasebre Kwaku Duah II, has asked us to tell your highness that the time has come for her to send to his court Owusu Agyemang, the heir-apparent, to be trained in the art of kingship. He says further that old age is fast catching up with him and his eyes are failing. He therefore feels the earlier the heir is trained the better. I am done. (p.8).

Owusu is very discerning and critical; she was very disappointed in her mother who took certain steps because of her political ambition. This revelation is made manifest when Nana Yaa unveils to her in a conversation, the secrets that were kept from her over the years:

Nana Yaa: ..I quickly took steps to hide your true identity so that you could succeed your Uncle Kwaku Duah when he died.

Owusu: Oh, mother, Is it for this my life has been a lie? Was it that I might cheat my unoffending cousin of her right? Spare me, mother, spare your child! I can't do it. That stool belongs to my cousin Ekyaa. I cannot usurp her right to it. No, mother, I have no right to what is not mine. It is her birth right, not mine.

Nana Yaa: Nonsense! ...You have a right to it just as anybody. (Boldly) And I am saying you SHALL be King, I repeat KING, Not queen...

Owusu: (sighs heavily) Hmm... (pause) And in case they find out I am a woman...

Nana Yaa: You shall be made to pacify the gods with your blood.

Owusu: (frightened) No, Mother, I can't act a boy anymore. I want to be the girl that I really am. (Pp. 27-28).

Owusu is pricked by compassion for those her mother had to eliminate in order to keep her true sex hidden from the public. She did not hesitate in “(screaming) Murderer... Murderer... You are a murderer and...” (p.29) when her mother narrated to her, the atrocious acts she undertook to safeguard her actual sex from the public. The brain behind her mother's schemes did not seem right to her at a point so she emphatically states “... No mother, I can't act a boy anymore...” (p.27); and then soon after that, with a little coaxing from her mother, she sees the big vision and decides, “Alright...I'll try and do what you want.”(p.30).

The handsome but beautiful looks of Owusu did not elude the beholding eyes of even the palace slaves. Akosua states “... He is such a beautiful boy. What is such feminine beauty doing in a body like that?” (p.39). This is quite ironic to who Owusu is; this is because she was disguised as a boy and her ability to live that manly role made them to ignorantly refer to her as such. The playwright endowed her with certain characteristics which aided her in playing her role excellently without any doubt. Her agility and dynamism is without doubt encouraging for future heirs. She is calm, humble, reserved but bold in nature so is able to endure difficult tasks as far as her training in battle strategies and endurance exercises are

concerned. She says “Tiredness. I am completely exhausted. Today’s training in the forest was quite strenuous”. And the king states: “All the same, you went through with distinction I am told. From the reports I have been receiving, it is evident that you are doing very fine.” (p.46) Nana Kweku Duah’s political ambition to retain the wealth in the Kingdom is exposed because of Owusu; the King uses her as a bait to get his dreams fulfilled. Her role actually brings to bear, what lengths some people in authority could go in order to satisfy their selfish desires. Furthermore, Owusu is mostly independent minded on matters of love. He tells Ekyaa, “I don’t think like everybody. I think and do things like myself. I please myself... and perhaps my mother.” (p.52). This explains the thought that Owusu found herself in the palace.

The playwright uses Owusu to play the role as a boy to fight against male domination. Her ability to play false of being a man gives clear evidence that there is absolutely nothing women cannot do. She is strong and brave and is committed to the course of her decisions as she reacts to Ekyaa’s threats: “(shouting after her) You can not threaten me. I am not going to bow low to empty threats. I mean what I have said. You can do your worst.” (p.56).

Due to her boldness, Owusu is referred to by the crowd and elder as “... son of a leopard” and “Brave words well spoken, young prince” (p. 82) respectively. Owusu is by all standards well nurtured and possesses true sense of decency coupled with leadership ability. This foregrounds the dramatist’s fundamental projections that women in society are equally capable in venturing into almost every area of life when granted the opportunity.

Again, Ekyaa is used by the playwright to propagate the political agenda of her father. The King refers to her as “A daughter of Royal blood” (p. 80). Her role as a princess meant to serve a political purpose is to get married to Owusu in order to sustain the wealth of the kingdom within the family. The king whispers this to Ekyaa succinctly thus “... (Conspiratorially) I ostensibly brought him here under the pretext of studying the art of kingship, but the real reason is for you to win his heart forever. That way, when he succeeds me as king, you shall be his wife, a queen. That is the hidden political angle to the whole enterprise.” (p. 49) Using Ekyaa in that manner by the playwright is a bit baffling because one may wonder if that is the only way by which the wealth of the Kingdom could be sustained? However, it may be appropriate in the sense that it is only what one has that he or she can use in exchange of what that person wants. Like the adage goes, it is the stick that one has in hand that he can use to kill a snake.

Adowa and Akosua even foresee the intentions of Nana Kwaku Duah II in their conversation:

Adowa: ... Why would Daasebre want the two cousins to marry?

Akosua: Very simple; that way, the stool and the wealth of the kingdom remain in the family for good. (p. 44)

Ekyaa’s disrespectful, arrogant and pompous behaviour which is mostly towards her father the king is captured through her exchanges with her father during his probing into her suspected pregnancy:

King: Are you sure its fever?

Ekyaa: (sharply) what sort of question is that father? Am I not old enough to know what ails me?

King: (cautiously)... between father and child tamperers shouldn’t be let loose. For when that happens, it’s like pulling the hair on one’s skin...

Ekyaa: I don’t think you disturbed my sleep to tell me about the rising and falling of Tempers ... (p.71).

In another instance Ekyaa abuses her father:

King: Is it true that you are what the rumour say you are? ... Who is the man responsible? Stop staring at me that way and answer the question.

Ekyaa: (Boiling with rage) If you were not my father, I would have spat into your face or hurled this stool at you. (p. 73).

As if the above conduct was not enough Ekyaa publicly disregarded her father with impudence when interrogated about the true source of her pregnancy:

King: My daughter, the allegations you are levelling against your cousin are very grave. Can you prove them?

Ekyaa: Father, am I not pregnant? And is he not a man? What other prove do you need? Perhaps you think I made myself pregnant. (p.85).

The King regards Ekyaa as rebellious in her quest to incriminate Owusu. The king summarizes this attitude by saying "My nephew, your true identity has saved you from the lies of my rebellious daughter. You are free to go". (p.90) Ekyaa's role goes a long way to support what is usually perpetrated in society that the children of rich men and people in authority are disrespectful. Perhaps Mawugbe highlights this to send a message across to all especially those who lead to give proper home training to their sons and daughters.

The treatment of Ekyaa points to the idea that a woman could go the extra mile to get whatever she wants, either through fair or foul means. Her desire to have Owusu as a husband at all cost is to satisfy her father's political plan and to cushion her own future; her attitude proves that if she can't have Owusu, nobody else can. Her role in pointing accusing fingers at Owusu as the father of her unborn child actually quickened the wheel of change that Nana Yaa sets in motion. She could lie without shame before everybody just to drug Owusu into the jaws of imminent death. Her role as a matter of fact brought about a turning point in the dramatic action. It was her accusation levelled against Owusu

that led to the severing of 'his' genitals, with regards to his earlier decree, since she was acting as a boy unknown to the elders. The discovery that Owusu is a girl who sat on the judgement stool is deemed illegal and so calls for her death. Her condemnation alongside Ekyaa and Nana Oppong made the King attempt to give up the throne which eventually led to the people bringing about change by setting the customs aside. Mawugbe's intention it seems is to use Ekyaa to provoke the elders to enforce their customs so that in the process of it, have a reflection of how gruesome and unproductive their customs are; this makes them see the urgent need for change in a positive way without anybody influencing them to do so. What Mawugbe seems to portray is for a people to have a proper self-assessment or examination of their situations, practices and belief systems; this is necessary in order that when they notice any anomaly, they can consciously redress it.

The playwright furthermore treats the palace slaves as people who have access to and give background information about what actually goes on in Daasebre's palace and in society at large. They virtually throw light on happenings which the audience are not privy to. They are informants who disseminate information earlier before it is publicly announced. This role given to these women perpetrates the stereotype in society that women are gossips; but do the women condemn this as blackmail? They rather justify how important the act is, per Akosua's explanation:

... By the way, what's wrong with being a gossip? Gossiping is no crime. As far as I am concerned, It's only a communication channel that allows one access to the facts by word of mouth long before Nana's gong-gong beater announces it. (p.37).

It may be true that women gossip, but there are men who gossip more than women. It is interesting to indicate that I have both male and female friends, but then the men are guiltier by way of others accusing them of gossiping than my female friends. Though they

entertain themselves with gossiping, their role is much more important to the development of the plot than just gossiping. They are slaves who are hardly free but when they take advantage of the slightest opportunity to converse, they reveal certain facts which always turn out to be authentic. It is through them that we hear of how Owusu is doing in Kwaku Duah's palace; they also give details of Owusu's features and how gloriously she does the 'kete' dance as well as their secret admirations for her. Akosua mentions "... The graceful way he walks and the lovely manner he gesticulates when he is talking, coupled with his soft voice... Not to mention the way he does the traditional dances, especially the *kete*." (p.40). They mainly refer to her as 'he' because they had no idea that she is a disguised male who the playwright as well as Nana Yaa are using to get her to achieve the targeted goal of grabbing the throne for change.

Again, they give us first-hand information on why the king sends Akwesi Amoako to Asokore to supervise the slaves instead of the Akuafohene. To them, Daasebre did that for his daughter's interest. Akosua intones that, "It's all part of the grand scheme to prepare the heart of the princess for the arrival of Owusu Agyemang." (p.43).

In addition, the slaves are very cautious on the information they carry because their lives will be on the line in case they slander a person of royal birth. They conduct a thorough investigation about Ekyaa's pregnancy to be extremely sure before reporting to the king. Their role is very important since without them, the issue of Ekyaa's pregnancy for instance would have come to the king as a surprise, when it would have been too late.

Furthermore, the slaves underline the fact that all was not well between the Prince and the Princess. They were categorical that the Prince and Princess were no longer in talking terms.

They also tell us about the return of Akwesi Amoako and the secret meetings between Ekyaa and Amoako. It is the slaves who break the news of Nana Yaa Kyeretwe's death by budging into the durbar grounds in tears singing a dirge. It is worth concluding that Akosua and Adwoa are loyal to their king. They dared against all odds to prompt him on issues which were capable of bringing destruction to the kingdom. The king clearly points this out by asking his Okyeame to, "Tell the women that I thank them very much for coming straight to report to me their observation. Such are the people who would not stay to see the kingdom fall apart". (p.75).

One can argue that, the playwright's use of women in the play is not to belittle their importance in society but foreground the truth that women are mothers who are caring and dutiful in society. Again, things that escape men or men gloss over are things which women will pay particular attention to and observe critically. Thus men who are up there do not know it all but the supposed women who are regarded as low class in society are capable of having vital information than their male counterparts.

The playwright also uses Abrewanana the octogenarian to humble the men in the kingdom; thus upon all their raving to show that they are in control, it took the wisdom of a woman to break the deadlock on Ekyaa's lips on the issue of her pregnancy. Her appearance in the play was very timely and it brings about total justice since it revealed Nana Opong as the grandfather of Ekyaa's unborn child. Abrewanana is a symbolic representation of wisdom in the kingdom. Traditionally, whenever a difficult knot is supposed to be untied or a secret unravelled, 'The old lady (Abrewanana) is almost always consulted. She is the source or reservoir of wisdom into which the elders, chiefs and kings tap when a difficult decision needs to be taken. Kodjo Mawugbe intends to correct the

seeming ideology in society that men are wiser than women and for that matter their words should be final in serious deliberations. Nana Opong for example nearly rubbishes what Abrewanana wished to contribute as noted in the following utterances:

Voice: Daasebre! ...

Just a moment!

(there's silence)

Nana Opong: (Impatiently) Aaagh! What again?

(Enter Abrewanana the octogenarian)

Abrewanana: Okyeame!...

I, Abrewanana, who have been listening to the proceedings from outside the palace walls be allowed to say a word.

Nana Opong: You are too old,

What better contribution can you make to that

Which we have already made?

Abrewanana: I agree I am old.

In fact, very old.

But when a man is swollen

It doesn't mean his teeth are also swollen...

Abrewanana: ...All I want to know is whether the man is circumcised or not.

Nana Opong: (jumps to his feet) Daasebre, I object.

That question is irrelevant, obnoxious,

out of context, unnecessary and time-wasting.

We should allow the executioner to take them away and deal with them.

(there is strong protest from the people at the durbar) (Pp. 97-99).

Ironically, it was out of the useless contribution of Abrewanana came the long awaited mystery that surrounded Ekyaa's pregnancy. The result of Abrewanana's input left the so

called wise men in the Kingdom spellbound. This underlines the reality that people should not look down on or underestimate the abilities of anyone, no matter the side of the gender divide the individual may belong.

It generally appears as if, women the world over, Africa in particular and Ghana specifically have been marginalised when compared to their male counterparts. While some seem to view women as mere sex objects and reproductive machinery, others take them to be the stooges of men's welfare: thus, cooking, washing, serving, cleaning and for that matter domestic oriented. Nana Yaa categorically fathoms the mentality of people, especially men on women's status to, "mean home-oriented, needing-to-be-guided-and-protected." (p.31) This ideology is perhaps one of the mentalities that Mawugbe sets the lead female character out to erase from amongst those who may harbour such perceptions.

Until recently women in Ghana and Africa at large, were not heard in majority because they had little or no opportunity to do so. Due to certain traditions as in the case of the Ebusa Kingdom, society views them to a large extent to be unimportant, less intelligent and weaker vessels as far as nation building and leadership abilities are concerned. When Nana Yaa challenged the elders in the Kingdom on why a woman cannot rule when there is a man to do so, the 2nd Elder authoritatively registers that, "Nation building belongs to the energetic." (P.20) This infuriated Nana Yaa leading to her arrogant reactions towards the elders for thinking women of being incapable to lead.

Perhaps, it may be some of such assumptions which the playwright might have noticed within the Ghanaian setting, making him to deem it prudent to educate society on the ills of relegating women to the background. He did this by looking at the flaws within the

traditions and customary practices in the Ghanaian society through the lens of the Ebusa Kingdom which he represents in his play. Once again, the author uses Nana Yaa Kyeretwe in a robust way to stand in the gap as the advocate for the voiceless women in society. She serves as a defender for women's right. She takes this stride because she questioned why she cannot succeed her mother as queen. It is obvious from the actions of Nana Yaa that she grew vocal, violent, hard and radical before the men other than that, they would not have taken her seriously due to her gender. The women it is clear are intentionally given their specific roles to combat the hegemonic nature of men so that together they may re-define who women are; it also brings out what men fear as far as Nana Yaa's words to Owusu are concerned:

Nana Yaa: ...I tell you, if there is anything men fear in this world, it is a woman who is a WOMAN

Owusu: And by that you mean?

Nana Yaa: A woman who accepts challenges... In short, what men fear most is female power in motion!

Owusu: Why? ... If I may ask

Nana Yaa: Because such power, seeks to break not only the bonds of customs, taboos and antiquated traditions to which women are chained, But also deals a heavy blow to that age-old myth of male chauvinism... (Pp.31-32).

It appears from the above premise that women are more powerful than men and for this reason, the men do all they can to suppress and relegate them to the background so that they (women) do not realise their full potential. Yes, women may be capable of standing shoulder to shoulder with men, at all junctures if only they re-assert their minds, become more united and not think themselves as subservient to men. A woman like Yaa Asantewaa has gone down in the history books of Ghana due to her can-do-spirit on matters that inconvenienced the welfare of humanity. For this reason, she led the people of Ashanti to war against the British slave traders who invaded the land and made life

unbearable for them; though her life was on the line, she went ahead in spite of the glaring dangers. She categorically refused to take refuge in the men whose delay in confronting these whites could result in spelling doom for the Kingdom of Ashanti. This is what the playwright refers to in Nana Yaa's lines as, "A women who accepts challenges...female power in motion." (p.31).

Though Owusu's conscience pricked her to a point and wished to confess to Ekyaa the whole secret after having had a confrontation with her, she could not do so. This may be that she had a second thought not to let her mother down nor betray the course of womanhood.

In Ekyaa's quest to get Owusu at all cost can be labelled as she being an opportunist, who wanted to take advantage of her cousin just for what is in it for her? This is because she was already in a relationship with Akwesi Amoako so why taunt Owusu? Or could it be for what happens in society that Mawugbe uses that scenario to allude to what lengths some Ghanaian women can go in order to satisfy their desires?

4.7 Men as Custodians of Power

In Ghana, kings, chiefs, queens as well as elders are the most powerful personalities in their respective kingdoms, towns and villages. They are well respected and their authority reaches the lengths and breadths of their territories so much that their words rule as final over issues. The customs and traditions of a people it appears mandate their leaders to have the last word in cases of punishment, conferring of honours and even banishments. This is demonstrated in Mawugbe's play where the words of the queen mother ruled in the decision on who should succeed her when she joins her ancestors. The first elder re-stated what the queen mother said. He says, "Well, Princess, your mother insists that never in the

history of Ebusa has a woman ruled where there is a man to do so. And so you have to accept...”(p.20) In contemporary times, we have democratically elected officers, the judiciary and laws in Ghana that see to order in the country; however, Kings and Queens, Chiefs and Elders also serve as judges who sit on serious matters that affect their cities, towns and villages.

The case of Nana Kwaku Duah II is no different from the usual role traditional leaders’ play in building their societies. Such roles are played interchangeably by both male and female custodians depending on the beliefs, traditions and customs of a particular ethnic group. The 2nd elder states that, “Nation building belongs to the energetic.” (p.20). This ideology coupled with traditional beliefs left the elders and the queen mother with no other choice than to choose Kweku Duah over Nana Yaa his sister in spite of age. The final decision, says it all when Nana Yaa is informed that she could not rule because of the presence of her younger brother.

It is also clear from what happened in the world of the play with reference to what pertains in our Ghanaian society that if a family, community or kingdom does not have a man as a leader, such a setup may not be accorded the respect it deserves. It may be due to such thoughts that the 1st Elder emphatically declares the final decision by the Queen Mother and her council thus, “Well, Princess, your mother insists that never in the history of Ebusa has a woman ruled where there is a man to do so...” (p.20). It appears from the above establishment that the playwright is using the 1st Elder to erase what pertains in the Ghanaian society which in a way or another does not help; it is for that matter that he is preaching a kind of change that will advance our development. In the olden days just as in the 21st century, men are mostly at the fore front of affairs especially in difficult situations.

In the past, men had the courage and strength to lead their people to war and to do hard work. In today's dispensation, the trend is still paramount with men reigning in most sectors, making certain areas a no go area for women. This may be based on the immeasurable achievements that men have churned out and the display of extreme courage over the years, and the trust society has reposed in them.

Again, the spokespersons of those in the helm of affairs all turn out to be men in the world of the play just as it is in most societies in Ghana. They interpret the messages of their masters or mistresses to their subjects. They add colour to the words of the Kings and Queens to make such messages easily understood and appreciated by their subjects. Hardly are women seen to be playing the role of spokespersons. That may be why even queen mothers who people may think will flow better with women still have men as their spokespersons. Interestingly, Ga queen mothers have female spokespersons. According to Kwakye-Opong (2011), "the female *otsaame* plays the same role as her male counterpart, but her allegiance is to the queen mother." (p.173). If the playwright is truly canvassing for change in old fashioned traditions, then he should have used one woman as a spokesperson so as to strike out the balances; to this end, I argue that the playwright was somewhat biased in the manner in which he treated the role of the spokespersons.

The role of spokespersons best suits orators and though the position's occupancy follows a particular lineage, women are not considered even if they fall in line. Is the author really trying to correct this ill in our society so that women could be given the chance to also contribute their quota to both national and societal wellbeing? It is clear from the representation of the playwright that if we as a people are progress minded all hands need to be put on deck in spite of gender. Competence and efficiency is paramount in

development but will traditions, customs and obsolete mind-sets give way to fresh ideas and technology? It has come to light over the years that those who have been less rigid and giving way to profitable modernity have greatly reaped immeasurable successes.

Again, it is amazing to note that men are mostly appointed to serve as elders, a role which people say goes hand in hand with wisdom and high level of intelligence. Hardly are women considered as elders in any court in Ghana because it is assumed that their words do not hold water. Drama reflects society, and the playwright is portraying what actually happens in the Ghanaian society. One can conjecture that women in most parts of the Ghanaian traditional set-up are mostly not given the chance to air their view if 'Men' are deliberating on important issues. This attitude is clear from Nana Opong's behaviour towards Abrewanana when he impatiently says, "You are too old, what better contribution can you make to that which we have already made?" (p.97).

Old age is believed to come with wisdom most of the time and for an old woman to be brushed aside for having absolutely nothing to contribute to an investigative process is surprising. The playwright's attitude here it seems is to create the awareness that, no matter a person's class on the social ladder, he or she still has a role to play in the development of society. In as much as age counts in people who lead in society because of experience, the administration of true justice must not necessarily be dependent on age and gender. This is important because of the swaying turn that things nearly took in the case involving Owusu and Ekyaa.

Once again the playwright uses the elders in a unique way in order to realise his dream of change. Their basic role is to ensure that the status quo continues. They appear to be

antagonistic to Nana Yaa in particular but from my perspective, they are only there to preserve the traditions they inherited. They have been given the task to rigidly counter anybody who tries to flout the laid down principles of the society. Though the Queen Mother is to have the final word under all or most circumstances, the elders are key in the decisions that affect the kingdom. Mawugbe uses the elders to bring out the true nature of Nana Yaa. As custodians of the laws of the land, nothing else matters to them but to insist that things are in order, whether beneficial to the people they represent or not. They used wisdom and maturity at the end of the day in taking the final decision. They are the conduit through whom the playwright's message was carried; it is they who decided finally to undo the customs thereby bringing change to the Kingdom of Ebusa. Nana Opong for instance does not consider women to be important when it comes to serious matters. He thinks men are superior to women, not only in strength but intellectually too. Being the *Gyaasehene* (chief custodian), he is never bending even a bit but insists on what he believes and understands. The playwright I believe uses him in such a manner so that by exposing certain flaws in the customs, people will come to terms with the truth and yield to positive change. This idea by the writer becomes clearer when Nana Opong became a victim to the customs which he vehemently tries to preserve.

Nana Opong's plight underlines the fact that a people should not continue to keep laws which turn to lash them from behind. Nana Opong the main advocate for custom and tradition finally falls prey to the same 'age old law' as he claims and is shown the exit to face death for a crime he did not commit personally. It is clear that the rules will never have mercy on anybody despite his/her status once he/she falls foul to it; just as it is shown from Nana Opong's experience. The King who represents the society and the voice of the people also falls victim to the same laws. Efo Mawugbe's biff here may be is to

advice leaders to use wisdom to set aside unprofitable customs rather than just following them for their mere existence. The playwright wants us to know that society must not be rigid and be powerless before their own laws; thus, if people make laws, they should be able to unmake them if the need arises.

The treatment of the male characters in the play by the author is a bit baffling; because one may conclude from proceedings that the playwright wishes to promote women's right but gives too much power to the men in the kingdom. The justification it seems is an intentional map out to expose the flaws of those men who hold rigidly to antiquated traditions which undermine progress. I agree with the playwright in the manner in which he twists the plot of the dramatic action which exposes the rigid nature of men pertaining to what they believe. He uses the same men after coming to terms with the unfruitful aspects of what they have practiced over the years to finally effect the needed changes.

4.8 Conflicts and Themes

In order to hype tension in the play so as to arrive at certain thematic concerns that he wishes to communicate, the playwright introduced conflicts in the play. The clash between Owusu and Ekyaa concerning Owusu's resolute decision not to have anything to do with her cousin is a very thorny one. The aftermath soliloquy by Owusu reveals a conscience pricking experience. Reflecting on her reaction towards Ekyaa, she sinks into a state of sobbing as a sign of regret of her display of physical strength. She subjects herself to an inner battle resulting in a physical manifestation. She then poses rhetorical questions which only ended in uncontrollable tears. She bursts out, "O! Spirits of our mothers, Are you around? Why didn't you forewarn me of the insecurity that lay strewn on this Carved-out path chosen for me by an Ambitious woman of a mother?" (p.56).

Once more, Owusu feels tortured by the circumstance in which she gets herself entangled and castigates herself with blames descriptively; “Look at me now, ye spirits...I am a thief...Yes, a thief...A thief disguised and sent into a palace through an opened window by the mother to steal a stool and sit on it.” (Pp.56-57). She again gets emotionally traumatised and wishes she could reveal her true identity. This is perhaps the ultimate way to pour cold water on Ekyaa’s burning desire but there seems to be an internal restraining power before which she is completely powerless; thus, she has no choice at this stage than to keep the secret and do her mother’s will. She, however, resigns herself to fate and wallows in the mood of confusion and shouts:

...O, how I wish I could call her back (sobs)
And whisper into her ears the whole secret.
Yes the secret that the self within wants to let
loose,
But the outer self strongly rejects. (sobs)
O spirits! ... (sobs)...
Look kindly upon me.
I had no will to usurp (sob)
No... No! That has never been my intention.
I wish... that woman... my mother... (sob)... (p.57).

This final confession by Owusu underscores the truth that the motherly imposed suppression has reached irreversible heights. The mental flogging that Owusu experienced just to sacrificially satisfy a mother's ambition is worse than an accidental sting of death. This is a true representation of a helpless fight against oneself.

The other inner battle has to do with Nana Yaa. This conflict starts as a result of the untimely request for Owusu to be taken away to be tutored in leadership skills. At this

point Nana Yaa finds herself in the dilemma of either revealing the secret that foregrounds her plans or not. In a state of confession, she states, "... Forcing me against my will to loosen my tongue and let out, the unspeakable secret to my son. The secret I have guarded all these years." (p.10).

Nana Yaa over the years has defied all odds to keep the secret of Owusu's sex a secret. She takes dangerous steps in doing so. The cruelty and ill motives of Nana Yaa in her attitude and relations to others, particularly the male characters in the play is frightening: She kills her own husband (by poisoning), dares to lure her brother into standing to defend manhood so she could kill him in order to succeed her mother; she killed the chief executioner, sold citizens into slavery, cut off the tongue of the nurse who supervised Owusu's birth for fear that she might squeak. She attempts to kill Ofori, insults and silenced all the elders without any restraints. The playwright highlights such traits in Nana Yaa to establish the extremes to which an ambitious woman can go to satisfy her desire. Her wish to ensure that her daughter ascends the throne, Mawugbe built in her a high degree of confidence; this he did to convince the men that the silence of women over the years must not be taken to be weakness on their part. Owusu is needed in Kwaku Duah's palace, and must be told the truth so that she could carry out her part of the plan with all carefulness. This is because, if Owusu is not properly informed with the truth, danger may loom on both mother and daughter, when the elders should find out the secret earlier than expected. In this self-conflict, Nana Yaa explodes:

I am trapped! ...

I am cornered...

Invisible sharp-pointed spikes of bamboo

Aimed at my head everywhere I turn; ...

This was not the hour you promised to show up...

At my old age or when my brother has passed
on ...
I wish you could postpone yourself to save me
the unbearable agony of thinking of what to tell
my daughter...
No!... I mean my son. (p.10).

It is obvious that both Owusu and Nana suffer a great deal of harbouring the various degrees of secrets. Whiles Owusu battles with her identity, Nana for her side struggles with letting Owusu know the mystery that surrounds her identity. It is quite evident from the above experiences that: The act of keeping a secret could be burdensome, is a theme that must inform people before accepting the challenge to keep any secret.

The playwright also maps out a confrontation and subsequent fight between Nana Yaa and Ofori. This is to intensify conflict in the play so that society may be educated based on the outcome of those struggles, as to what could be a better practice. Nana Yaa stands to defend the right of womanhood, while Ofori stands to prove the superiority and bravery of men. This fight comes because Nana Yaa is being denied the right to succeed her mother when she passes on. The statement by the queen mother that “But you are not a man” (p.18) and the elders supporting the idea infuriated Nana Yaa to react the way she did in the flashback of the play. In settling the scores on why somebody qualifies and another not fit to rule, brought tension between Nana Yaa and her elders. Nana Yaa gets agitated and begins to abuse the men who in turn reacted angrily.

Nana Yaa filled with renewed vigour dared the men folk to do their worst. The following stage direction captures Nana Yaa’s reactions, “(Nana quickly dashes to the nearest palace

executioner and snatches his long knife from his scabbard and holds it in the air” (p.21). Nana Yaa challenged the men asking any of them who deems himself man enough to come for the knife and cut off her tongue. Ofori, steps out to defend the pride of men by confronting Nana Yaa:

Ofori: Let me have the knife.

Nana Yaa: (Throws the knife on the floor at his feet) ... (Man picks knife)

Ofori: (Confidently) Now stick out your tongue and step forward and let me cut it for you. (Nana sticks out her tongue and begins to move back as Ofori advances towards her. She suddenly draws a similar long knife concealed in her cloth to the amazement of everybody)

Ofori: (Jumps back in fight)...

Nana Yaa: ...You thought it was easy...

Nana Yaa: ...Go back four paces then we attack.

Ofori: What are the rules?

Nana Yaa: No rules, anything goes. (There is complete silence as the combatants stalk one another. The men keep chanting “Ofori-o-Ofori-o” as the two combatants stalk each other)

2nd Elder: See how she stalks him like a leopard ready to attack its prey.

Nana Yaa: I am going to kill you and give your heart to the vultures... (They keep on stalking like two wrestlers, each looking for the slightest opportunity to plunge the knife into the other. Somehow Ofori falls heavily on his back losing the grip of his knife)

Elders: Look, our man has fallen. (Nana quickly kicks the knife far off and sits on him and pins him to the ground) Pp.22-23.

Nana is, however, disappointed when she was stopped from killing Ofori. The playwright used the duel between Nana Yaa and Ofori to indicate the understanding that, the calm nature of women in society must not be mistaken for cowardice. Comparatively, the courage displayed by Nana Yaa and the fear shown by the men of the kingdom underlines the theme: Courage is NOT the monopoly of men.

Again, Nana Yaa in an attempt to change custom and tradition questions the elders: “...where is it written that a woman cannot rule when there is a man? I want someone to tell me.” (p.20). The playwright might have engineered such a confrontation to lay bare the fact that many leaders enforce certain practices without understanding them. The 2nd Elder in reacting to the above question confirms my suggestion on the playwright’s idea; the elder says, “that has been the practice since time immemorial.” (p.19)

Nana Yaa’s challenge to the men in the flashback had a hidden intention which she confesses to Owusu in the following dialogue:

Owusu: Why did you engage that man in the duel?

Nana Yaa: Hmm... as a matter of fact, it wasn’t the man I wanted. It was a careful trap meant to lure the one with whom I once shared the same womb.

Owusu: Who... My uncle?

Nana Yaa: Yes

Owusu: (shocked) Your own brother?

Nana Yaa: I thought he would rise up to defend the honour of manhood so that I could kill him and succeed our mother. But his stars were awake. (Pp. 30-31).

Owusu having accepted to embark on this deadly voyage carved by her mother, Kyeretwie rejoices with hope in a soliloquy:

“Ye spirits above, may you let me live to see the successful end of the wheel of change I’ve set in motion. A wheel of change that shall leave all men convinced that, In the chest of a woman is not only an extension of the breasts and a feeble heart but a flaming desire to possess and use power!” (Pp. 35-36)

Once again, Efo uses Owusu to accept the challenge to do her mother’s bidding. This probably is to indicate that, it is never a one man’s business in fighting for a worthy course. In addition, the struggle for freedom comes with a lot of challenges based on the

many things mother and daughter had to suffer before getting the customs out-of-the-way. In spite of all the obstacles that came her way, Nana Yaa stood her grounds to fight for the common good for women. The actions of Nana Yaa can broadly be captured in the theme: Vaulting aspiration can sometimes yield positive results.

The playwright also used Nana Opong to face the other elders on who made the customs of Ebusa and why they cannot be amended. When Owusu falls victim to his own pronouncements pertaining to the customs, the king felt she should be given the chance to defend herself but Nana Opong protests vehemently. When Owusu and Ekyaa were to be executed, the elders pushed for setting the customs aside but Nana Opong refused. He strongly believes in preserving what binds the kingdom of Ebusa together. He reacts to Okyeame Boateng's statement:

Okyeame Boa: Nana Opong, all we are asking is that for once let us cast the custom aside and...

Nana Opong: Speak no more, You elder with an infant mind... What a thing to say. "Cast the custom aside"? To ask that the custom be set aside amounts to asking Daasebre to strip himself naked and walk through the streets of Ebusa... (p.94).

Nana Opong had a heated argument with the other elders who he feels want to sabotage his office as the Gyaasehene (keeper of the people's custom). He therefore reproaches and matches the elders boot for boot. This exchange between the elders is registered as follows:

1st Elder: Nana Opong, why must they die?

Nana Opong: What says the people's custom?

Okyeame Boa: Nana Opong, who made the customs?

Nana Opong: Answer that question for yourself.

Okyeame Boa: The customs were made not by gods they were made by men and therefore can be unmade by men.

Nana Opong: Only inexperienced young men intoxicated with the sweet wine of youthful exuberance speak with such undue recklessness. But take note, before we unmake the customs, we'll first have to unmake your position as Okyeame and go on to unmake Daasebre Kwaku Duah's position as king... (p.94).

Here again, the playwright treats Nana Opong in a manner that ended him in the very jaws of the custom he stands to defend. He gets condemned to death by the same custom. This is the core of the playwright's message, which he envelops in the fate that befell Nana Opong. Another educative theme can, however, be formulated from Nana Opong's fall to be: Unhealthy Traditions must give way to reforms.

The attempt by Nana Yaa to turn Owusu into male through disguise is against a natural course. In her ambition to have a son who will succeed her brother, she visits powerful shrines all of which predicted a son for her but contrary to those forecasts, she gave birth to a girl. In fighting nature, with reference to her plans, she kills many, some sold into slavery with others losing their tongue for fear that they may betray her course. By killing her fellow human beings, she distorted the destiny of such people. Her murderous hand that lurked in the society just to satisfy her ego is unfathomable. Again, Owusu had no choice but to submit to his mother's plot even though he suffers secretly. He was denied the passage of puberty rites and many other entitlements naturally reserved for women. Owusu is enslaved by a mother's ambition, oppressed and suppressed against his will; at a point he could not bear the torture anymore and so bursts out as if to purge his own emotions by stating "It's a dangerous game you want me to play, mother, ... I...I... want to be a girl and taste the joy of womanhood. I have suffered for far too long." (p.29) Owusu sustained himself in that manly role excellently though the act is a bit absurd, since it is

opposite to natural programming. However, the playwright treated the character that way to create the awareness that when given the chance, women will excel.

Owusu's ability to live the role of a man led to the fight between her and Ekyaa. Ekyaa desires Owusu in love knowing not that she is a girl just like herself. Owusu does everything possible to conceal her identity to an extent that she had to hit Ekyaa so hard when she tries to touch her chest. This encounter disturbs Owusu psychologically and so contemplates revealing the truth of her true sex to her cousin. Owusu faces death when Ekyaa falsely accuses her of being responsible for her pregnancy. Owusu's situation was worse when it was discovered that she is a girl, who had rested her buttocks on the throne without having been properly enthroned. She got condemned to die in the end because of fulfilling her mother's ambition. Mawugbe's treatment of this character built the suspense on which the play thrived.

Finally, the physical endurance exercise which is traditionally reserved for men is vented on Owusu who suffered a great deal. The strenuous nature of the exercises coupled with the frustrations in the entire journey onto the throne brings with it a kind of unbearable feeling. Nana Yaa disguises Owusu and Owusu herself tried to live the role in futility; Owusu's true identity is revealed at the end of the dramatic action. Change came at the end though it is discovered that Owusu is a girl. The dramatist uses this scenario to emphasize the truth that one does not need to reverse a natural course in order to achieve a desired goal. Based on the circumstances surrounding Nana Yaa's intentions and the subsequent outcome, one can deduce the theme: Truth cannot be hidden forever. Everyman needs to accept his/her fate because no matter how small one may seem, he/she is endowed with talents which in a way or another may benefit human kind; because nature is irreversible.

4.9 Conclusion

Drama, theatre and culture of Ghana are gradually metamorphosing into a high standard. Efo Kodjo Mawugbe in his quest to ensure that Ghana attains an enviable status in the dramatic front wrote a lot of plays to boost the dramatic arts. He tried to empower women in his practice because women in Africa and Ghana for that matter have been marginalized by chauvinistic ideas. This made critics mistake him for a feminist. He promoted good Ghanaian cultural values and underlined vices in society that do not enhance progress in his works especially in his play, *In the Chest of a Woman*.

Though men in the play are seen to be powerful, I argue that women in the play are rather more powerful since they hold the key to all the secrets that ever existed in the play. For instance Owusu's true sex and identity is known mainly by Nana Yaa and Owusu alone. The whereabouts of Akwesi Amoako and Ama Ekyaa's pregnancy until revealed was in the known by women. The mechanisms put in place by Nana Yaa to conceal Owusu's sex so as to achieve her intended plans are kept within the women's domain by the playwright. The intentions of Nana Yaa for which she used Owusu as a tool to usurp Ekyaa's right, as well as Ekyaa's underground meetings with Amoako were also known only to women. The bitter story of the dumb nurse who serves Owusu is no doubt a secret for females. The level of intelligence with which Nana Yaa hatched such a plan proves that when given the chance, women can make a difference.

The above notwithstanding, I argue that the playwright's treatment of male and female characters has been fairly done without much biases; especially being a male playwright, one can say that he has accurately placed what happens in Ghana within the context of the play.

Though times have changed, it is sad to register that male chauvinism is still prevalent in Ghana, embedded in our customs and traditions. It is noteworthy that, no matter the circumstance, the power of women can neither be underestimated nor taken for granted. Treatment of characters from the opposite sides of the gender divide is not well balanced since men mostly were dominant and the female duly subservient. However, Efo Kodjo Mawugbe does this intentionally I believe, to help point out certain flaws which he has identified within the Ghanaian society for a solution. The issues discussed in the play are greatly representational of what actually occurs in areas of the Ghanaian setting. The conviction is established that women are never inferior to men. I dare to conclude that life of men without women will be a mini hell full of agony and loneliness. Mawugbe uses the medium of drama to address the need for change.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The final chapter looked at gender issues as they have emanated from the study, the working definition of gender re-captured and then some recommendations are made for further studies.

5.2 Gender Issues

Matters that have to do with gender are universal and therefore affect different categories of people. This phenomenon ranges from boys and girls to the youth through to men and women. It is generally clear from the study that gender cuts across all spheres of life; domestic, religious, academia, political arena, trade unions, the media, security services, the judiciary as well as the various levels of leadership within the global world.

The continent of Africa has seen a great deal of gender imbalance over the centuries; this comes as a result of African men exercising superiority over their women. This mentality has impeded progress over the years because efforts geared towards development and nation building, have until recently been male centred. It is also evident that gender issues rather than dealing decisively with men and women matters holistically, have been substituted for an interest for women; especially in the area of empowerment and the focus of the literature on politics and governance.

It is also generally recognised that a great proportion of women are oppressed, suppressed and above all marginalised in Africa. However, it is also established that men have also suffered some degree of violence on the continent. It is comforting to put on record that,

due to wide ranges of education on the continent for gender equality and balance, women are fully represented and they play key roles in most sectors in society in recent times.

One great dramatist who emerged in the 1950's is Efua Theodora Sutherland of blessed memory. It was an era in which male hegemony was at its peak. She took a long stride in contributing to the dramatic arts and culture while her achievements were tremendous. Sutherland theorised the *Anansegoro* concept which became the foundation for the traditional story telling drama in Ghana. The *Kodzidan* by Sutherland became the springboard for what is popularly known as Theatre For Development in the country today.

Sutherland used the play *Edufa* as a cyclorama on which she reflected her observations within Ghana. In this, she wants women to see in earnest what men have reduced them to and the urgent need for them to emancipate themselves, from male domination and enslavement. Sutherland was very much against maltreatment of women; she had women at heart just as she had children at heart, and for that matter worked hard to free them from their entanglement. Sutherland made adequate use of conflicts in her play in which she **planted lessons that are directed at changes in society. Among these themes are: Mans desire to do anything for wealth and self-preservation, The torturing experience of keeping a secret, The need to be content with what one has and The consequences of one's diabolic actions. The play also talks about, the prize for unconditional love and The inescapable consequence of taking human life.**

In order to promote the good cultural values in Ghana, Efo Kodjo Mawugbe wrote plays through which he channelled his views. Significant among his works is his play, *In the Chest of a Woman*; in it, he underlines certain practices which serve as stumbling blocks in

the path of societal progress. The various roles given to particular characters helped to unravel definite truths that have hitherto been underestimated in society. For instance, the notion that men are wiser and stronger when compared to their female counterparts has been disproved. It is further recognized unarguably that women are never inferior to men.

The treatment of characters: - male and female alike has been well executed. The playwright captures perfectly the scenarios in the Ghanaian society; this he plants as core in his play, thereby preparing the grounds to effect the needed change. It is made firm that the power of women should not under any circumstance be underestimated or taken for granted. Mawugbe again registers through the play, firm lessons (thematic concerns) which when taken seriously will bring more transformations to Ghana, Africa and the entire world. Among the didactic intents are: **Courage is not the monopoly of men, Truth cannot be hidden forever, Unhealthy traditions must give way to reforms, Vaulting aspiration can sometimes yield positive results and The act of keeping a secret could be burdensome.** Mawugbe seems to underscore the relevance of considering one another on the gender divide; this is because both men and women have their part to play in nation building and societal development.

Comparatively, there was gender imbalance in Ghana in the 1960's, and the marginalisation of women was to the extreme. Sutherland identified the canker of male domination and therefore used the medium of drama to address it. Many years after Sutherland's play, the problem of gender inequality still exists in Ghana, though on a lower rate. Mawugbe also recognised the same menace and also used drama to address it. In Sutherland's play women were not considered much; therefore, their basic duty was to act as though they were slaves who must say yes to everything, especially if it comes from

a man. In Mawugbe's play as well, the men dominated in leadership and decision making, reducing most women into subservient stooges. Both plays revolved around one major female personality who represented the women in Ghana; thus Ampoma in *Edufa* and Nana Yaa in, *In the Chest of a Woman*. Again, the voices that stood strong in opposing most moves by the women were also championed by one key character in each play. Edufa stood tall in Sutherland's play whilst Nana Opong served as a controversial person in Mawugbe's play. These men actually represented the men in the Ghanaian society and Africa in their display of supremacy. While Sutherland's play attempts to empower Ghanaian women in a subtle way, Mawugbe's play does same in a vigorous manner. Both dramatists recognised the unhealthy trends in our society and the inhumane treatments that were imposed upon people. The intention of both writers is clear, is to get society to understand the negative effects of most of their practices, and how they turn to hinder progress. This is done in order to bring about change so as society will be a better place for mutual co-existence. The two writers focused on the ills in society; in their ideas, they rejuvenated people's interest and desire so that they could rise up and fight for their rights. They mainly ginger up women to see how capable they are and how much their contributions will be beneficial to society. They injected into them the can-do spirit so that they could liberate themselves from oppression, suppression and marginalisation. In short, what has been captured in *Edufa* and *In the Chest of a woman* I am convinced are freedom of women from male domination and change in practices that impede progress and development. I can say emphatically that the problem of gender in the Ghanaian society for decades has been well dealt with and very well represented in the discussed plays by their respective authors.

5.3 Working Definition of Gender Re-Captured

Finally, gender is variously considered to be men and women taken as one; however, based on all that has been said and done, I have defined gender in the following categories. From my perspective- Gender, like culture is the way of life of a people with particular focus on how men and women, ladies and gentlemen as well as boys and girls are viewed in their societies and as such their treatment. Again, it deals with matters of concern to both men and women and the effort to balance life, erase negative mentalities that have been created about men and women so that both sides will be treated equally with respect and dignity. Furthermore, it views how men and women are portrayed in society, prompting dramatists to create concepts which are represented in their drama; with the intention to playback to society, actions that retard progress in order to effect change.

In the end, I have achieved all my objectives set for this research. The treatment of characters by the playwrights was well executed without much bias. The achievements and contributions of the playwrights to the dramatic arts in Ghana have also been established. The problems of gender imbalance as represented in the plays have also yielded some lessons.

However, undertaking this study exposed the fact that Efua Theodora Sutherland's works have been studied in detail but studies on Efo Kodjo Mawugbe are very minimal. In addition, work on both playwrights in terms of how they portray gender in their plays appears to be almost non-existent.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings in the research, the following recommendations are made for further studies towards the development of the Dramatic Arts in Ghana and beyond.

- Since gender is said to be everywhere at all times, it will be appropriate for both published as well as unpublished works of the dramatists in this work to be interrogated further in the light of gender.
- The works of other Ghanaian playwrights like Asiedu Yirenkyi, Mohammed Ben Abdallah, Martin Okyere Owusu, and Ama Ata Aidoo should be given much attention from the gender perspective.
- Furthermore, recognised theatre groups like Abibigromma, the resident Theatre Group of the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana and the National Theatre Players; must be tasked and sponsored to stage more un-staged plays by both the named and un-named Ghanaian playwrights. They must also organise workshops, especially for Senior High School students and Tertiary Institutions with particular emphasis on how gender is portrayed in those plays. This will motivate the up-coming scholars to do further work on plays with regard to gender. This is because, as stated earlier, Prah's take is that gender issues are still on the margins in Africa and the gender equality perspective is yet to be achieved. It will also encourage academics to investigate plays in view of other challenges that confront the Ghanaian society, other than gender.
- Lecturers in Tertiary institutions must also be encouraged by their authorities to organise internal workshops/ seminars for their students based strictly on their syllabus. These must be supervised by personnel who have enough knowledge in workshop/ seminar organisation; this will prepare young scholars in doing same in

their various communities to educate them on matters that may affect such communities.

- Students, especially those in the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana, should be encouraged to interrogate plays in line with specific matters in the Ghanaian society.
- There must also be biennial competitions where students are made to write plays on particular topics or debate on thematic concerns in existing plays. Such competitions can even be aired on television so that the lessons in such plays will be made known especially to non-drama persons in society for subsequent changes to be consciously effected. Treating drama from these perspectives will make people; especially those who frown or look down on the discipline develop interest in the Dramatic Arts to a higher degree, because they would become more aware of how drama addresses issues in society. This exercise, when carried out will help eradicate some negative perceptions that have been formed about men and women in society over the years in different respects.
- Workshops, Seminars and any educative programme especially in the Dramatic Arts must be documented and archived for future reference. This will assist people venturing into such areas have a guide and also improve upon what has been there to suit new trends that may evolve in the global world.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adjei, Kwabena. "Gender, the State and Environment in Africa". *Gender, the State and Different Places: Perspectives from Developing Countries in Africa and Asia*. (eds.) Ardayfio-Schandorf E. And Momsen Janet H. Accra, Ghana Universities Press, 2009:10-14.
- Adomako, Ampofo Akosua, Beoko-Betts Josephine, et al. "Women's and Gender Studies In English-Speaking Sub-Saharan Africa". *Gender and Society*. 18.6 (Dec. 2004): 685-714.
- Adomako, Ampofo Akosua and Boateng John. "Knowledge Transmission in Ghana: Alternative Perspectives". *Research Review Supplement*. 19. 2009:243-260.
- Amponsah, Ernest Kwesi. "Expanding the Frontiers of Anansegoro: Yaw Asare's Contribution to the search for an Authentic Ghanaian Theatre", an M.Phil Thesis, Department of Theatre Arts, University of Ghana, Legon. 2008.
- Anyidoho, Kofi. "Dr. Efua Sutherland (A Biographical Sketch)" *The Legacy of Efua Sutherland: Pan-African Cultural Activism*. (eds.) Anne V. Adams and Sutherland-Addy Esi. Oxfordshire: Ayebia Clarke Publishing Ltd, 2007:235-238.
- "Dr. Efua Sutherland: A Biographical Sketch" *FonTomFrom, Contemporary Ghanaian Literature, Theatre and Film*. (eds.) Kofi Anyidoho and James Gibbs, GA. Amsterdam-Atlanta: Rodopi B.V., 2000:77-81.
- Ardayfio-Schandorf, Elizabeth. "Gender, the State and Environment: An Introduction." *Gender, The State and Different Places: Perspectives from Developing Countries in Africa and Asia*. (eds.) Ardayfio-Schandorf E. and Momsen Janet H. Accra, Ghana Universities Press, 2009:1-9.
- Ardner, Shirley. *Defining Females, The Nature of Women in Society*. Oxford: Berg Publishers Ltd, 1993.
- Arkhurst, Sandy. "Kodzidan." *The Legacy of Efua Sutherland: Pan-African Cultural Activism*. (eds.) Anne V. Adams and Sutherland-Addy Esi. Oxfordshire: Ayebia Clarke Publishing Ltd, 2007:165-174.
- Aruna, Rao, Stuart Ricky and Kelleher David. *Gender at Work; Organizational Change for Equality*. Connecticut: Kumarian Press, Inc., 1999.
- Asiedu, Awo Mana. 'Nneora: An African Doll's House: A Study of the Virtues of Womanhood'. *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature*. 38.2 (2011) 172-185.
- "Masculine Women, Feminist Men: Assertions and Contradictions in Mawugbe's *In the Chest of a Woman*", *Theatre History Studies*. 30 (2010):122-137.
- Awunyo-Akaba, Yela. "A woman Lives in a man's World". *The Ghanaian Times* Thursday, 16 February, 2012.
- Charmain, Pereira. "Locating Gender and Women's Studies in Nigeria: What Trajectories for the Future?" *Gender Activism and Studies in Africa*. (eds.) Signe Arnfred,

- Babere Kerata Chacha et al. CODESRIA Gender Series 3, Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, Dakar-Senegal. 2004:1-26.
- Cohen, Robert. *Theatre*. California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2000.
- Cole, M. Catherine, Miescher F. Stephan and Manu Takyiwaa. "Introduction: When was Gender?" *Africa After Gender*. (eds.) Cole M. Catherine, Manu Takyiwaa and Miescher F. Stephan. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007:1-14.
- Cole, M. Catherine. "Give Her a Slap to Warm her up: Post Gender Theory and Ghana's Popular Culture." *Africa After Gender*. (eds.) Cole M. Catherine, Manu Takyiwaa, Miescher F. Stephan. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007:270-284.
- Cornwall, Andrea. "Introduction: Perspectives on Gender in Africa." *Readings in Gender in Africa*. (ed.) Cornwall Andrea. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2005:1-19.
- Divya, Singla. *Experiences: Male Chauvinism*: <http://usmemoirs.co.il/2010/01/male-chauvinism.html> 10:15am
- Dolphyne, Florence Abena. *The Emancipation of Women: An African Perspective*, Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1991.
- Ebron, A. Paulla. "Constituting Subjects through Performative Acts". *Africa After Gender*. (eds.) Cole M. Catherine, Manu Takyiwaa and Miescher F. Stephan. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007: 171-190.
- Eileen, Julien. "When a Man Loves a Woman: Gender and National Identity in Wole Soyinka's *Death and The Kings Horsemen* and Mariama Ba's *Scarlet Song*." *Africa After Gender*. (eds.) Cole M. Catherine, Manu Takyiwaa, Miescher F. Stephan. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007:205-222.
- Fiawoo, Kwasi F. *The Fifth Landing Stage*, Accra: Sedco Publishing Limited, 1983.
- Fortes, M. *Informants L'Uomo*. London: Athlone press, 1980.
- Harris, Stephen L. and Platzner Gloria. *Classical Mythology, Images and insight*. California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1997.
- Kwakye-Opong, Regina. "Clothing and Adornment in Ga Culture: Seventeenth to Twenty First Century", a PHD Thesis, Department of General Arts Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi. 2011.
- Kwapong, A.T.F. Olivia. *Male Support for Gender Equality*, Accra, Ghana Universities Press, 2009.
- Lindsay, A. Lisa. "Working with Gender: The Emergence of 'Male Breadwinner' in Colonial Southwestern Nigeria." *Africa After Gender*. (eds.) Cole M. Catherine, Manu Takyiwaa, Miescher F. Stephan. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007: 241-252.
- Mama, Amina. *Feminist Africa: Rethinking Universities II*. Cape Town: South African Gender Institute, 2007.

- Masterson, Dick. *The Mind of Male Chauvinism*, <http://shrinktalk.net/?2012>. 12:00pm
- Mawugbe, Kodjo E. *In The Chest of a Woman*. Kumasi: Isaac Books and Stationary Services, 2008.
- Minas, Anne. *Gender Basics, Feminist Perspectives on Women and Men*. Stanford: Wadsworth Thomson Learning, 2000.
- Mugambi, Nabasuta Helen. "The 'Post-Gender' Question in African Studies." *Africa After Gender*. (eds.) Cole M. Catherine, Manu Takyiwaa and Miescher F. Stephan. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007: 285-301.
- Njoka, Nderitu. "Kenyan Men to go on hunger strike to protest Domestic Violence": Kenyan Broadcasting Corporation (K B C): Sunday, 19 February, 2012, <http://WWW.Kbc.co.ke/news.asp?nid=75053>. 12:09.
- Osofisan, Femi. *Nkrumah-Ni...Africa-Ni*. Lagos: Concept Publications Limited, 2009.
- Owusu, Martin and Okyere Benjamin. *An Interpretative Analysis of Efua Sutherland's Edufa*. Accra: Black Mask Ltd., 2002.
- *Analysis And Interpretation of Kobina Sekyi's The Blinkards*. Accra: Read Wide Publishers, 2009.
- Owusu, Martin. *Drama of the Gods: A Study of Seven African Plays*. Roxbury and Massachusetts: Omenana, 1983.
- Oyeronke, Oyewumi. *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourse*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1997.
- Prah, Mansah. "Chasing Illusions and Realising Visions: Reflections on Ghana's Feminist Experience." *Gender Activism and Studies in Africa*. (eds.) Signe Arnfred, Babere Kerata Chacha et al. CODESRIA Gender Series 3, Council for the Development of Social Sciences Research in Africa, Darka- Senegal. 2004: 27-40.
- Seidu, Rashida. "Dramaturgy of Efo Kodjo Mawugbe: Form and Themes", an unpublished M.Phil Thesis, Department of Theatre Arts, University of Ghana, Legon. 2012.
- Sutherland, Theodora E. *Edufa*. Accra: Sedco Publishing Limited, 1967.
- The Book of Tributes. *Celebrating the life of Efo Kodjo Mawugbe* (2011). Individual messages. Accra: G- PAK Ltd. 1-40.
- The Ghana Police. *Intelligence Report, The Domestic Violence Division of the Ghana Police Service, Last Quarter (October – December)*, Madina- Accra. 2011.
- The Holy Bible-* Authorised King James Version, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2000.
- Utoh-Ezeajugh, Tracie C. *Nneora: An African Doll's House*. Anambra: Valid Publishing Company, 2005.

- Wetmore, Kevin Jnr. *The Athenian Sun in An African Sky: Modern African Adaptations of Classical Greek Tragedy*. North Carolina: McFarland, 2002.
- Wickramasinghe, Anoja. "Understanding Environmental Changes from the Gender Perspective." *Gender, The State and Different Places: Perspective from Developing Countries in Africa and Asia*. (eds.) Ardayfio-Schandorf E. and Momsen Janet H. Accra, Ghana universities Press, 2009: 15-44.
- Wilson, Edwin and Goldfarb, Alvin. *Living Theatre: A History*. Boston: McGraw-Hill Higher Education Companies, 2000.
- Worthen, W. B. *The Wadsworth Anthology of Drama*. London: Cengage Learning EMEA, 2004.