

Unpacking colonial legacy and identity in *Our Sister Killjoy*: A critical exploration of postcolonial perspectives and cultural resistance



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ABSTRACT

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This paper examines Ama Ata Aidoo's *Our Sister Killjoy* as a critique of the colonial legacy, perspectives, and relationships. The main argument centers on critiquing issues of migration, diaspora, language, and identity, given their significance in maintaining and perpetuating the colonial existence in Africa. The novel introduces a young woman from Ghana, named Sissie, who is on a scholarship to study in Europe, only to recognize the superficiality and materialism of the West, with which many African expatriates she meets abroad become increasingly disillusioned and lost in their absorption of Western civilization. Aidoo argues that the act of decolonization failed to achieve true independence in the African continent and did little to undermine and remove the power and presence of the West in its former colonies. She claims that this new situation makes the colonial influence and existence stronger and more effective even without any military intervention. The paper, however, employs a theoretical and interpretive methodology, mainly informed by Edward Said and Frantz Fanon, to provide penetrating insights into the novel's representation of the postcolonial character, its exposure of colonial legacies, and the dilemmas of identity, language, and migration facing African society in the era following its independence.

Contribution/ Originality: This paper presents a unique and distinctive study of *Our Sister Killjoy* by examining the cultural and psychological consequences of the colonial legacy on its protagonist's awareness. It contributes new insights into how issues of language, identity, migration, and diaspora, often overlooked in previous studies, are structured to perpetuate colonialism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Along with Chinua Achebe and J. M. Coetzee, among other African writers, Christina Ama Ata Aidoo earned international recognition in postcolonial literature. However, she distinguished herself by seeking to redefine the colonial discourse of neocolonialism and cultural displacement among the African diaspora. Her writings shed new light on the idea of colonization to question the validity of some established and unchallenged assumptions that romanticize displacement, migration, and other cultural and intellectual experiences among the African diaspora.

Aidoo was born in Ghana in 1942. She received a bachelor's degree in English literature from the University of Ghana. She was a novelist, poet, playwright, and academic. She wrote her first play, *The Dilemma of a Ghost*, while she was still a student at the University of Ghana. The publication of this play in 1965 grants her the label of being the first African woman dramatist of her time. Her interest in questions of identity, language, culture, and education in postcolonial African literature inspires the writing of her internationally recognized novel: Aidoo (1977). This novel

aims to challenge romanticized notions about the cultural and linguistic separation associated with migration and displacement in the African diaspora, and to criticize the colonial system that sustains and promotes these issues.

In short, the novel introduces a young woman from Ghana, named Sissie, who is on a scholarship to study in Europe, only to recognize the superficiality and materialism of the West, with which many African expatriates she meets abroad become increasingly disillusioned and lost in their absorption of Western civilization. After arriving in Germany, for example, she meets a Ghanaian fellow, named Sammy, whom she finds has lost his sense of identity and is becoming disillusioned in the face of Western temptations. Like many other Africans, Sammy shows a willingness to stay in Europe forever and build his career there without paying attention to his homeland or his people in Ghana. Sissie's meeting with Sammy at the African embassy in Frankfurt was not accidental. Aidoo emphasizes that perhaps he had been invited to the dinner just to sing of the wonders of Europe (Aidoo 9). Sammy represents the image of the African man who abandons his homeland and embraces Western civilization as an alternative. Aidoo confirms this notion by writing that many Sammys will come in the future (ibid).

Also, Sissie had some gossip during her stay in England about other Africans marrying European women and becoming fully assimilated into Western culture and life. Aidoo considers characters like Sammy and others like him, who leave their homeland in pursuit of better opportunities abroad, as active agents in the system of colonization. In *Our Sister Killjoy*, she seeks to expose the African diaspora, which participates in perpetuating the colonial project in Africa. Her argument centers on critiquing the colonial legacy inherited by some African elites and exposing their complicity in the new colonial system in Africa.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Critics celebrate Aidoo as a powerful advocate for numerous issues and concerns related to language, identity, culture, and education within the context of postcolonial literature. Most research on *Our Sister Killjoy* addresses issues of race, gender, binary oppositions, stereotypes, and other social and colonial constructs, treating them as major components of the colonial enterprise in Africa. For example, in "Representations of 'The New Woman' in *Changes* and *Our Sister Killjoy* by Ama Ata Aidoo," Nyamwiza (2023) argues that in *Our Sister Killjoy*, Aidoo aims to challenge the "overriding ideological hostilities that bring down Africa and African people" (26). This assumption holds true to an extent, but Aidoo's purpose extends beyond that. Nyamwiza (2023) suggests that the new colonial scene in Africa refers to contemporary forms of political exclusion (represented by exile), gender, and racial discrimination. She interprets our sister's journey to the West and her refusal to absorb Western civilization as a feminist attempt to resist the "traditional bias against females" because of their gender. By choosing a female character as the protagonist, Aidoo's goal is not only to highlight an individual issue related to women or gender, as Nyamwiza (2023) asserts, but also to send a hidden message through a female voice to the African diaspora, primarily represented by men, that their country is in urgent need of them. Additionally, Aidoo uses a woman's voice to appeal to the conscience of the African man who leaves his country in search of personal gain in the West. Ultimately, Aidoo wants this voice to resonate everywhere, reminding the African man that their country is crying out for their presence, like a mother who has lost her children. Therefore, this study aims to place Aidoo's novel within its proper context and to dispel the notion that issues of gender, race, and difference are the primary motivations sustaining colonialism and perpetuating its existence in Africa. These topics align with the traditional postcolonial novel, but for *Our Sister Killjoy*, Aidoo employs them primarily to remind readers of the significant legacy left behind after the end of colonial rule in Africa and beyond.

In an article titled "Counter-Discursive Strategies in Postcolonial African Novel: Revisiting the Peripheries in Ama Ata Aidoo's *Our Sister Killjoy*," Tagaddeen and Al-Matari (2018) introduce an important colonial legacy related to categorizing the other, which perpetuates and sustains colonialism and colonial prejudice throughout history (4). They discuss how negative stereotypes, "perpetuated in Western literature, media, and art," contribute to the ongoing Western enslavement and colonization of Africans, often without the use of force and even before direct contact.

Tagaddeen and Al-Matari (2018) convincingly argue that stereotyping leads to "blind prejudgment" and fosters preconceptions about people "before even knowing them"(17). Furthermore, this colonial legacy aims to hinder understanding, leading to suspicion, distrust, and exclusion, all of which serve to perpetuate colonialism and prolong its influence (18). Conversely, Tagaddeen and Al-Matari (2018) suggest that writing in English is a tool of power to deconstruct and subvert Western misconceptions, as it allows access to a broader readership beyond national borders (6). However, this study questions, alongside stereotyping, the colonial legacy represented by exile, migration, identity, and language politics. It challenges the assumption that using the colonizer's language signifies power and authority, as suggested by the authors. Instead, the paper argues that the use of English by some African elites functions as a tool of enslavement and colonization, serving as a colonial legacy that maintains African influence and control under colonial dominance.

Most of the African literature in the postcolonial context addresses the issue of using English or any other foreign language as a language of "commerce, formal education, politics, and literature," as Egbung (2019) assumes in her article "African Consciousness in Ama Ata Aidoo's *Our Sister Killjoy*" (93). Egbung (2019) rightly claims that foreign language "is handed over to the Africans for use through colonialism" again to "reach a wide readership," as Achebe puts it (94). This assumption is true as far as it goes, but claiming that the purpose is solely to reach a wide readership is questionable because Aidoo states in the novel that using a foreign language instead of an African indigenous language serves a colonial purpose and perpetuates colonial existence in Africa. The current study, however, argues that Aidoo addresses the issue of language discussed above as a colonial legacy handed over to Africans through colonialism, serving as a means of enslavement and colonization rather than a tool of communication and understanding, as many critics have emphasized.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes a postcolonial theatrical framework, primarily informed by the theories of Edward Said and Frantz Fanon, to analyze Aidoo's *Our Sister Killjoy*. These theories offer insightful perspectives on the novel's portrayal of the postcolonial character, its exposure of colonial legacies, and the dilemmas of identity, language, and migration faced by African society in the post-independence era. The novel critiques the African diaspora following independence and questions the effectiveness of political decolonization in achieving true independence in Africa. To explore these themes, this research employs a qualitative, interpretive, and analytical approach, mainly inspired by the two theorists mentioned above.

4. THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Edward Said and Frantz Fanon complement each other in the field of post-colonial studies. Despite its focus on the Middle East, Said (1978) *Orientalism*, a milestone in postcolonial studies, provides insightful implications in illuminating how Europe continues to define African identity through its intellectual diaspora and revealing (by implication) Western perceptions of Africa and similarly the African self-perceptions that perpetuate colonial existence in Africa. Fanon (1967)'s theory, however, is mainly inspired by Fanon (1963) *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon (1964) *Toward the African Revolution*, and Fanon (1967) *Black Skin, White Masks*. These sources offer a psychological and materialistic interpretation of colonial legacies and perspectives. Fanon examines the psychological trauma generated by colonialism to support cultural imitation and perpetuate feelings of inferiority and economic subjugation.

Our Sister Killjoy critiques the inherited assumptions from colonialism that portray Western civilization as a superior culture, emphasizing advancing science, wealth, and distinguished education. Sissie cultivates a critical perspective on Western civilization and questions its value. Attempting to subvert the traditional notions embraced by African elites who view the West in its materialism as an ideal, she seeks to encourage solidarity among Africans both within and outside the continent. Therefore, she resists all forms of seduction in Europe. Her "black-eyed squint,"

as Aidoo would call it, challenges the established systems of representation adopted by colonialism. The main argument of this paper centers on critiquing the problems of colonial legacy as theorized by Edward Said and Frantz Fanon.

In *Orientalism*, Said discusses a new colonial project, using knowledge and power interchangeably to create new modes or systems of colonization, called “a neo-colonial situation.” He suggests that these new systems, adopted here, do not require direct interference to maintain control and do not need military intervention to achieve their purpose. The influence of this neo-colonial situation, he claims, is more powerful than that of the machine gun, as it breaks the intellectual unity of Africans and disjoins their cultural, linguistic, social, and economic solidarity from within Africa and abroad.

While Said analyzes the politics of knowledge used in this neo-colonial project in representational terms and describes it as a means of perpetuating and sustaining colonialism, Fanon, on the other hand, describes how Africans are treated by Europeans after their independence and after the end of formal colonization in Africa as a continued form of exploitation and a new method of colonizing them. In *Toward the African Revolution*, he reflects on the period following decolonization in Africa and comments, “every former colony has a particular way of achieving independence. Every new sovereign state finds itself particularly under the obligation of maintaining definite and deferential relations with the former oppressor” (120). Additionally, language has always been a major tool of colonization. Fanon argues that using the language of the colonizer creates one of the most successful acts of oppression carried out against the colonized.

In *The Wretched of the Earth*, he describes the African colonized as imitating the colonizer in all aspects of life, “he [The African] dresses like a European; he speaks the European's language...; so, he is considered by the peasants as a turncoat who has betrayed everything that goes to make up the national heritage” (112). This research adopts a textual analysis approach, drawing heavily on narrative voices, textual structures, and thematic significance to examine how *Our Sister Killjoy* critiques the outcomes of material and intellectual inadequacy, the problems of migration, identity, and language as integral parts of a colonial legacy that aims to perpetuate colonialism across the African continent. The following diagram illustrates the research methodology and the theoretical framework informing this study.

4.1. Colonial Legacy

- Western perceptions, representations, and stereotypes of Africans (Said).
- Inferiority, Subjugation, and Cultural Imitation of the West (Fanon).
- Our sister's journey, her black-eyed squint (awakening).
- Our sister's unpacking and critique of the colonial legacy and perspectives (Aidoo).

5. DISCUSSION

The period following its formal independence experienced a significant setback in Africa because it failed to maintain complete self-reliance in all aspects of life, resulting in immediate waves of migration by African elites to Europe in search of better living conditions. Sissie, the protagonist of our story, views these migration waves as a direct consequence of an inability to sustain a successful economic system, heralding the beginning of a new colonial project in Africa—this time from abroad. Consequently, during her journey to seek education in Europe, she begins to change the narrative by encouraging some of her friends and other African intellectuals to shift their interests away from certain assumptions and beliefs that romanticize Europe and portray it as an ideal place and a perfect Anglophile haven. This idea is reflected in the section titled “From Our Sister Killjoy,” where the narrator states: “She was to come to understand that such migrations are part of the general illusions of how well an unfree population thinks they can do for themselves. Running very fast to remain where they are” (Aidoo 89).

In this section, Sissie goes beyond Said's notions of resistance, as she resists all the European temptations that prepare her to forget her culture and "sing of the wonders of Europe." (Aidoo 9). She even rejects the idea that Africans have no right to represent themselves in public and enjoy the freedom of self-expression like everyone else, and accordingly, adopts a critical perspective that questions and resists all forms of exploitation exercised against Africans living in the West.

The discourse adopted by some African writers in postcolonial literature signifies a significant shift in resisting the inherent values of colonialism. Moukhlis (2003) argues that the concern of postcolonial and emerging voices has focused on subverting the assumptions of colonial discourse and rewriting its history from the perspective of the subaltern (66). Among the various efforts Sissie has made to challenge the legacy inherited from colonialism is her rejection, initially, of what Aidoo termed as "universals," including "talks of universal truth, universal art, universal literature, and the Gross National Product" (Aidoo 6). She perceives these universals as part of the colonial legacy, intended to re-enslave and reshape new forms of oppression, thereby perpetuating Western colonization of Africa.

Sissie's black-eyed squint reveals a new form of colonial occupation practiced against Africans in Europe, the colonization of the mind, or the intellectual colonization of the African diaspora. It is a new method of restructuring slavery. In her journey to seek education in Europe, she critically reflects on the consumption of the African continent by a new colonial project that supports the migration of African elites to Europe in order to maintain European control and presence in Africa. This new system, she believes, will result in a widespread crisis and generate problems on all levels, again hindering the African movement towards progress and keeping it under the mercy of international and external funding. There are many metaphors she draws in the novel to show how the African man is being used and exploited in the West. For example, she relates the story of Kunle, an African intellectual who comes to Europe to realize his dream of becoming wealthy and obtaining a better job opportunity. Kunle meets a tragic ending while driving his car back home. The tragic irony lies in the fact that he was killed by the very car he had long dreamed of buying, only to have his heart used in a surgery to save the life of an elderly white man. This horrible story reveals the dark realities beneath the romanticized perception of life for the African diaspora in the West. The following quotation reveals the horror lurking beneath the romance of Western civilization and shows the true color of colonization:

It is funny. But among a
Certain rural Fantis
It is believed that cutting the throat
Of a pig is simply
Useless: The
Only way to get your good pork
Is to tear the heart out of the chest of a
Squealing pig – the louder he
Squeals, the better the pork (95)

Moreover, Sissie exposes the hypocrisy of certain African leaders, who urge their citizens to migrate to Europe, as they leave their nations exposed to several external threats only to achieve personal goals and gain external support from the West. Assuming a fake dedication to their countries, these African leaders, Aidoo hypothesizes, perpetuate a system of colonization by keeping the economies of their countries tied to their former colonizers. This reiterates Fanon's notion of obligation that each independent state maintains in following its former colony in all aspects of its life (120). As a result, colonial influence and control will be maintained in Africa without any military intervention from abroad. Additionally, the former colonial powers will be exempt from exerting any efforts and costs involved in maintaining a direct presence in Africa.

Upon her arrival in London, Sissie notices that most of the African communities there are implicated in a contemporary wave of colonial projects, attempting unknowingly to establish a new settlement for colonization in its

modern form, often referred to as "neocolonialism." She also observes the European exploitation of the African diaspora in maintaining and reinforcing colonial ties through cultural tolerance and coexistence, rather than direct intervention by military forces. According to Fanon, neocolonialism aims to create a situation where colonists retain power without resorting to violence. He argues that this new situation benefits African politicians and a small elite but does not significantly serve the majority of the population. It widens the gap between the rich and the poor. Additionally, it allows former colonizers to reduce their reliance on military force and destructive policies. Fanon suggests that colonizers seek to maintain control over the colonized by "[looking] for [their] support in local assemblies that have been extensively compromised and devalued" (Revolution 132). One of the most striking elements of Sissie's critique of colonialism is her condemnation of African politicians who manipulate political discourse to conceal their self-serving agendas and acts of betrayal. Sissie depicts these politicians as active agents installed in Africa to serve Western colonial interests. In the following quotation, for example, she critiques how certain African and non-African leaders amass wealth and profit from their positions.

From all around the Third World,
You hear the same story;
Rulers
Asleep to all things at
All times-
Conscious only of
Riches, which they gather in a
Comma-
Intravenously - (34).

The African post-independence era saw a rise in new political systems, largely shaped by European powers to maintain their dominance and control in the continent. In other words, the European colonial presence in Africa was removed only to be replaced by an African-dominated one. Aidoo finds the new political system followed in what she called new Africa as a colonial legacy installed by the former colonizers to perpetuate their existence and maintain their control. In following this policy, Europeans will be ruling Africa from abroad, using African nationals to achieve their goals and dictate what to do, now from within. This idea is reflected in *Toward the African Revolution* where Fanon argues that "French colonialism in the majority of cases has been able to rely on the support of African politicians" (132).

Questioning her scholarship and its underlying motives, Sissie is determined to adopt a critical perspective, or, as Aidoo suggests, a "black-eyed squint" while on the plane to England. Although the term "squint" implies a short-sighted vision, Aidoo metaphorically refers to African elites who are blinded by the materialism and superficiality of Western civilization. It also alludes to the political shortsightedness of certain African leaders and politicians, who serve colonial interests by romanticizing the West and glorifying its civilization. For instance, Sissie cynically observes the facilities provided for her, the swift handling of her travel arrangements, and the respect she receives while preparing for her journey to England. This section cynically describes how the ambassador personally greets and hosts her in his office, requests a fancy dinner in her honor, and arranges for a luxurious car, a "black Mercedes-Benz," to take her to the airport, among other grand gestures intended to elevate her image of the West. Despite these attractions, Aidoo notes that "our sister" chooses to be a "killjoy," with a black-eyed squint: "She tried very hard to understand why they [the ambassador and his followers] wanted to go to such trouble" (Aidoo 8). Ultimately, Aidoo concludes that Sissie "decided she did not care anyway" (ibid 134).

On the other hand, the problems of colonial legacy are evident in the failure of Africa's economic system to provide meaningful opportunities for its intellectuals and elites. This systematic failure results in the emergence of a renewed wave of migration, as African elites and intellectuals seek better opportunities in Europe that they cannot find in their own countries. *Our Sister Killjoy* portrays the migration of these elites as an extension of the colonial

legacy, largely motivated by external forces as a means of maintaining influence and control over Africa from abroad. In this light, the novel can be interpreted as a critique of migration, which Aidoo reads as strategically functioning to serve the European project in Africa. Osei-Nyam (2004) convincingly argues that "*Our Sister Killjoy* problematizes the transformative moment of exile, or the movement or migration from what is considered to be 'periphery' to the 'core' or center" (184).

According to Said, migration involves various forms of dislocation and displacement within the context of postcolonial theory and literary texts. The "been-to" migrants to Europe and their intellectual support for such migration reflect a form of intellectual and political complicity. For Said, among other postcolonial theorists, the most prominent aspect of migration is its intellectual diaspora the migration or exile of intellectual elites which he considers the most severe consequence of the colonial legacy. Through this form of migration, the imperial project achieves its ultimate goal. However, Said describes the intellectuals who choose to live in a land that is not their own as being disconnected from their own culture and identity. He writes, "the whole problematic of exile and immigration involves people who simply do not belong to any culture" (qtd. in Mandeville (2001)).

Our Sister Killjoy portrays migration as a form of self-imposed exile, wherein migrants detach themselves from their homeland and neglect their responsibilities toward it, in pursuit of what Fanon has eloquently described as a "real world." He observes that these migrants choose the land of exile to live in as "to stand with the white world, perceived as the real world, in opposition to their own world, the black world of the colonized" (qtd. in Liddell (1999)).

Being ashamed of their roots and heritage, along with feelings of inferiority, pushes such migrants to renounce their identity and identify themselves in relation to their colonizers, both intellectually and substantially. They find that culture, to use Gurr (1981)'s words, as "a means of compensating for that sense of cultural subservience"(8). Rather than submitting her will to European illusions, however, Sissie sees the migration land not as a promised land that her fellows see but as an appeal against which the Africans go into a bad dream. In other words, she refuses to allow this dream to mislead her into believing that she can be a better person if she adopts the colonial legacy of Western culture and forgets her own culture. Therefore, she critiques this world before visiting it.

Yes, my brother

The worst of them

These days, supply is local

Statistics for those population studies, and

toy with

Genocidal formulations

That's where the latest crumbs

are being thrown! (7).

The issues surrounding identity introduce a new layer of complexity in the field of postcolonial studies. A key aspect involves the colonizer's strategy to deny the colonized their identity, aiming to detach them from their cultural background and national belonging. Fanon's key points on colonial identity center on the issues of race and binary oppositions, which he hypothesizes are strategically designed in the colonial system to maintain a wide gap between the self and the other, or between the colonizer and the colonized. He argues that, to preserve their identity, Africans should work hard to resist "the rigid, clear-cut binaries," which Sissie perceives as the main cause of segregation exercised against Africans in Europe. Through her black-eyed squint, we see how the African's identity has been shaped by the other and how African elites are excluded from shaping it, only to serve colonial purposes by colonizing them with their consent. Fanon believes that the white man in Europe continues to view the African as an inferior black servant. Additionally, the white man constructs blackness as a fixed reality and an unquestionable fact, alienating the black man from himself, his identity, his culture, and most importantly, from his society.

In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon assumes that "I am given no chance. I am overdetermined from without. I am the slave not of the 'idea' that others have of me but of my own appearance" (87). Sissie recognizes this European-

constructed fact of her blackness when hearing a white mother telling her daughter while staying in Germany: "Ja, das schwarze Mädchen," which means: "Yes, the black girl." This turning point in the story awakens our sister to the materialism of the West and the decay of its civilization, which Aidoo articulates in our sister's wearing a black-eyed squint.

In a similar vein, our sister acknowledges the importance of a national identity in the founding of a truly decolonized nation. Caminero-Santangelo (2005) suggests that, echoing Frantz Fanon's argument concerning national identity, *Our Sister Killjoy* insists that the development of a truly decolonized nation necessitates an open-ended, mobile approach to collective identity formation that resists a retreat to rigid, clear-cut binaries (113). Aidoo emphasizes the urgent need for a collective identity to unify Africans within Africa and abroad, fostering African solidarity and maintaining collective integration, strategically through adopting a unified concept called Pan-Africanism. Her aim is to address the problems and challenges inherited from the colonial legacy.

The issue of normalization lies at the core of problems inherited from colonialism. Its aim is twofold. The first is to create illusions about Western civilization, the white-black conflict, the self, and the other, among other colonial constructs. The second aim, however, is identity-based: to make Africans embrace the identity of the white man without question or as the ultimate truth. Aidoo observes the process of normalization as a means of justifying colonial practices in Africa and an illusion to encourage displacement and identity detachment among the elites of the African diaspora. The White man continues to deceive Africans into believing that his civilization is the only valid one and that his identity is uncontested, making it the model to be followed and adopted. Aidoo argues that the White man in Europe introduces universal illusions related to his civilization, culture, language, and identity, all to normalize his superiority and the inferiority of others, thereby justifying his existence, dominance, and control. Our sister discerns how Europeans manipulate such universals to reject acknowledging the identity of Africans working abroad. She concludes that Africans lose their sense of identity when they accept these universals and take them for granted. She reflects: "They [the Europeans] say that after all, literature, art, culture, and all information are universal. So, we must hurry to lose our identity quickly in order to join the great family of man" (121).

Among the universal illusions crafted to normalize Europeans' superiority and dominance are those related to issues of language. Aidoo views language as a means of asserting one's own identity. "That is why," she explains, "we have to have our secret language" (116). Using the language of the colonizer by some African elites rather than speaking in their own language introduces a colonial legacy that perpetuates colonialism and maintains its influence.

"But how can I help being serious? Eh, my love, what positive is there to be when I cannot give voice to my soul and still have her heard? Since then, I have only been able to use a language that enslaves me, and therefore, the messengers of my mind always come shackled." (112).

Fanon observes that language is a verbal instrument used by the colonizer to control the colonized. He concludes that to use the language of the master means simply to adopt that master's culture and to forget about your own. This explains why our sister stresses, in more than one context, the importance of speaking in our own language. For example, she perceives using the language of the other as a verbal acknowledgment of their superiority. On the other hand, Sissie believes that speaking in our own languages keeps our secrets, fears, or hopes uncommunicated, which could be used against us.

So, you see, my precious something, all that I was saying about language is that I wish you and I could share our hopes, our fears, and our fantasies without feeling inhabited because we suspect that someone is listening... but we are sure they are listening, listening, listening (135).

6. CONCLUSION

The conclusion that can be drawn from this argument is that the legacy of European colonialism remains evident abroad and within national borders, education systems, and economic and social structures. Although it is structured outside the borders of Africa, this neocolonial situation has a greater impact on Africa than the previous one, as it

succeeds in shaping the cultural and social character of the postcolonial state. The act of political decolonization, therefore, failed to bring about true independence and autonomy. Aidoo hopes to transform, at least intellectually, Africa from dependency into a state of being self-contained and unified.

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