

The Bequest of Buchi Emecheta in 'The Joys of Motherhood'

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Abstract

Buchi Emecheta is one of Nigeria's major unique female writer. Her legacy has made a way of motivation for modern Nigerian female journalists. This paper expects to examine her compositions, concentrating on the two womanist portrayals of Nigerian female characters. All things considered, a standard examination of Emecheta's works, especially 'The Joys of Motherhood' (1979) uncover Nigerian women characters who demand recommended understandings of their functions as a 'female', 'spouse' and 'mother'. Emecheta's women portrayals build up a sect of women, who are solid, stubborn and engaged in spite of their shifted conditions, a depiction deserving of aspiration.

Key Words: womanist, feminine depiction, a class of women, self-identity

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INTRODUCTION

Buchi Emecheta, the second era Nigerian Igbo female author's works have made a breakthrough in African writing. Buchi Emecheta's life is as exemplarily as her versatile, solid womanist characters. This paper plans to demonstrate the immense cluster of female characters delineated in Emecheta's written work from the pre-frontier, pilgrim, and postcolonial time spans, examining the different changes and difficulties experienced by Nigerian Igbo female characters which consequently changed their characterized parts as a female, spouse, and mother. In that way, we will perceive how Emecheta's anecdotal works mirror the Igbo female's boldness in confronting different conditions. With the end goal of this paper, we find our talk inside the system of womanist hypothesis clarified by Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi and Alice Walker.

There are many fluctuating epistemological positions in which Nigerian women writers' works might be noticeably arranged, a gradual addition of speculations, for example, African woman's rights, stiwanism (Social Transformation Including Women in Africa), Africana Womanism etc., combined towards the articulations of different researchers' positions. Even though African women's activist scholars like Carol Boyce Davies and Susan Arndt explain African Feminism as a hypothesis that consolidates women's activist worries with African concerns, the feasibility of African woman's rights is tested by Africana womanist scholar, Clenora Hudson-Weems who verbalizes the inconceivability of amalgamating woman's rights into African worries as women's liberation was a hypothesis shaped and upheld by white ladies to address their particular motivation and in addition needs [2]. Although questionable, this point of view cannot be ignored and we discover that Buchi Emecheta being protective and resentful at whatever point they are alluded to as women's activist. Actually, Buchi Emecheta states that her kind of women's liberation is an African sort of woman's rights called womanism. In this way the African female battle for self-verbalization, strengthening and womanhood is the more noteworthy fight to characterize advancing philosophies and speculations, a procedure which ideally be continuously cleared up and clarified. All things considered, Ogunyemi and Walker's womanist hypothesis is utilized as a part of Emecheta's works to speculate the transformation and advancement of the female character towards organization and personhood. In spite of the fact that Alice Walker's womanist hypothesis draws on the African-American experience, we learn her meaning of womanist hypothesis valuable in giving a healthy meaning of the female mission for womanhood and establishment. Additionally, it is pertinent to utilize Walker's and Ogunyemi's talk of womanist hypothesis simultaneously, as their definitions cover, inferring a general

worry for the improvement and self-meaning of the Black female subject, embodying the womanist procedure towards self-completion and office.

BUCHI EMECHETA'S BACKGROUND

Florence Onye Buchi Emecheta is one of Africa's most acclaimed female journalists. Emecheta's life provided her the strength to face the battle as a Nigerian woman in safeguarding and demanding her female autonomy and office. Emecheta utilizes her very own encounters as the venturing stone in communicating and going up against female oppression. While illuminating perusers about the Nigerian culture, she likewise uncovered the heavy frameworks sustained by Nigerian culture and myth. Drawing on Nigerian oral tradition she experienced as a child from her paternal grandmother¹, Emecheta fabricates stories of female characters "through an African woman's eyes", a contemporary story-teller through her novels.

NNU EGO IN 'THE JOYS OF MOTHERHOOD'

'The Joys of Motherhood', the most remarked on work by Buchi Emecheta, is a result of the novice stage of her writing profession. This novel, published in 1979, discusses the Nigeria amid the pre-pioneer and frontier period and the existent social circumstance. The changing situation from African towns to urban towns is a depiction of the transformative impact of history and the remarkable attack of nonnatives into the land. This work concentrates on urban Lagos of the colonized period and the lives of African females in provincial Iboza amid pre-colonial times in the depiction of the hero Nnu Ego and her mother Ona. It handles the way of life crash shock in the effect of colonization from a female's perspective. In the beginning of the novel, Emecheta unfurls the narrative of Ona and her boyfriend Chief Agbadi. In the later parts which concentrate on the account of Nnu Ego, the climate is of the postcolonial Africa.

The novel 'Joys of Motherhood' ventures African womanhood in the preliminary phases of colonization. Ona, the grandma, appearing in the beginning of the novel, gives us knowledge into the life of the African female as a free native. Nnu Ego, her little girl, is the graft of the later era, amid the inception of westernization. The move from the pre-pioneer conditions to provincial after-effect is an intriguing illustration to study. Emecheta wisely utilizes such a background and area to depict the change in the perception of womenfolk in a particularly African environment.

As the settled or the enslaved race, the locals experience a mental disturbance of their battlements. The general population inhabiting the middle (Europeans) condemn the marginal to comparative insignificance. In *The Joys of Motherhood* the African condition is brought into liberation. Colonization and its consequential mutilation course for the enslaved group are explicated in the altering environments of African character.

The white provincial experts attempted to extend the African as moderate and languid, but we can understand from the native literature that it is the unrivaled conduct of the colonizers that changed over the lively race into one of disorderliness. The tremendous head and hunter Agbadi, assessed the 'white man's job' in urban communities like Lagos: "He could not help feeling that only lazy men who could not face farm work went to the coast to work" (JM 37). He is appropriate in considering that working for the white man is shameful. The men who went to the urban regions looking for occupations ended up noticeably in the modest employments like cleaning up and cooking-employments, which are assigned exclusively for the females universally. African men had before valued being great hunters and suppliers, overcoming every unfavorable condition. In any case, they generate a slave attitude and detachment once they fit themselves into the colonized 'black slave' class. Nnaife is portrayed as "one of those Africans who were so used to being told they were stupid in those days that they started to believe in their own imperfection" (JM 83). He acknowledges every one of the disgraces and abuses inflicted by his lords with no protest: "He would just shrug his shoulders and say, He would simply shrug his shoulders and say, "We work for them and they pay us. He calling me a baboon does not make me one" (JM 42).

The strategy utilized by Emecheta to present the two characters Nnaife and Nnu Ego is outstanding. A positive inversion of the acknowledged traditions of sexual orientation roles is undertaken for exhibiting the characters. The remark made by Nnu Ego on first observing him is, "why, marrying such a jelly of a man would be like living with a middle aged woman!" (JM 42) . This inversion is seen in Nnu Ego's description as well. She is presented to the readers as "wrestling like a man" (JM 60) when somebody tries to prevent her from killing herself. As the story advances, Nnaife's work is washing garments for the white lady, a vocation assumed to be done only by women since remote days; and Nnu Ego comprises to help the family. To cite Cordelia, Nnu Ego's confidant, the circumstance can be summed up as: "Men here are too busy being white men's servants to be men. We women mind the home not our husbands. Their manhood has been taken from them" (JM 51). In the last part the readers observe that in the times of Nnaife's nonappearance, it is Nnu Ego who needs to help the family individually.

Emecheta's Nnu Ego in 'The Joys of Motherhood' mirrors an Igbo womanist who alters with the progressions experienced by Igbo customary society with the approach of expansionism. In this novel, Emecheta exhibits how the conventional perspective of a female's part in pre-pilgrim Nigeria was not material amid the pioneer time frame. She demonstrates how the Nigerian lady does not pick up anything from

provincial Nigeria and has lost the place and partly credited to her amid its pre-pilgrim arrange. As Nigerian culture changed, females were as yet anticipated that would assume their customary roles as spouses, financial suppliers, and nurturers. This change achieved numerous issues to them. One of the real changes that the Nigerian females confronted was in the territory of mother ship. As an author devoted to investigating the distresses confronted by Nigerian females, Emecheta challenges the regular idea that bearing numerous kids will bring a lady much satisfaction.

Eventhough Nnu Ego had many children, she still died alone. Here Emecheta tries to convey the message that “having so many children does not mean you are going to be rich in your old age” (JM 3). Generally, transformations of Nnu Ego have dependably highlighted her weaknesses as a female character, not able to roll out reasonable improvements for her life as an autonomous Nigerian woman in frontier Lagos.

In spite of the fact that Emecheta might be straightforward in her portrayal of Nnu Ego’s failure to adapt up to the adjustments in the public eye, her depiction of female characters in the novel does not constitute reward or discipline of characters. Rather, her concentration is to demonstrate the impacts of imperialism on the life of Igbo women who commit themselves absolutely to their family while discrediting themselves. In this light, it is appropriate to break down the womanist characteristics in Nnu Ego’s character as she really shows quality and strength. In spite of the troubles of changing in accordance with frontier Lagos, Nnu Ego without any help brought up her eight kids, clothing, feeding and “[scraping] and [saving] to pay the...school fees for Oshia and Adim”from her income as a peddler (JM, 171). In fact, her divine nature is also replicated when she is not able and would not allow herself to meet the expense of buying another dress [lappa] because she gave first preference to her children in her life (JM, 171). Continually advising herself that her youngsters were her need, Nnu Ego carried on with her life as a pacifying mother dependable and genuine in sustaining her kids and her spouse. Her powerlessness to get used to the adjustments in her part as ‘spouse’ and ‘mother’ in pioneer Lagos does not prevent Nnu Ego from being a decent ‘wife’ and ‘mother’ to Nnaife and her kids, characterizing therepresentation of an early womanist character. It is very interesting that Nnu Ego challenges the norms of Igbo culture in her demise, a sign of her refusal to be oppressed, taking supply of her life and the lives of future females. Nonetheless, Nnu Ego was seen as a mischievous lady even in death in light of the fact that, however many individuals engaged her to make a female creatively, she never did. Poor Nnu Ego, even in her death had no peace; the delight of being a mother was the delight of sacrificing everything to their kids. The individuals ignored

to comprehend why she did not answer to their petitions, for what else could a lady need yet to have children who might give her a fair funeral? Nnu Ego had it all, yet regardless she did not answer to the appeals of her youngsters.

In her demise, Nnu Ego's denial to provide children to her admirers is simply the emergence of her individuality, a free choice of a female who has endured the results of having abundant offsprings without having any happiness for her. Nnu Ego's defiance in death in spite of being named a 'devilish' lady demonstrates her detachment from her old conventional Igbo customs. In passing away, Nnu Ego is not a vanquished champion but achieves a comprehension of different potential outcomes and definitions for females, instead of the obsession of parenthood as a definition to womanhood. Nnu Ego in her death declines to admit kids to her admirers, an unmistakable sign of her refusal to burden her admirers with youngsters to the damage of themselves. Truth be told, Emecheta make this a stride further to put Nnu Ego in a place of energy as a chi, to give or decline kids to her admirers. In Nnu Ego, Emecheta makes another stage of early womanist characters that make ready for her last characters like Kehinde, Nko and Gwendolen (Kehinde).

TO CONCLUDE

Emecheta's books speak about African women writing taking care of representing very excellently as it inspires females' determination to free themselves. These show females as persevering through their roles as the abused and the degraded. Emecheta's females, whatever it may, perceive the opposition against their sect; and go through an insubordinate stage. This movement drives them to liberation in due course of time. Though Nnu Ego died challenging subjugation, AkuNna being more taught makes a valiant offered for opportunity. However being excessively near the coupling impact of pre-colonial authority, they figure as saints to the cause for females' freedom.

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