

Mapping the Metamorphosis of the Nigerian Female: A Womanist Approach to the Novels of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

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Abstract : The claim of feminists that women are made and not born is neither to set women on par with men nor to discriminate one from the other, but to establish and reiterate the fact that both the sexes have to understand, recognize and appreciate each other's ability and responsibility thus to contribute to the peaceful co-existence of both, leading to the creation of a better and brave new world, which is neither patriarchal nor matriarchal. But history has repeatedly recorded the relegation of women to the secondary position consummated through the highly biased cultural, ritualistic and customary practices across the globe. In Africa, bracing herself against many odds through generations, the African woman who has been facing multiple jeopardy promulgated by racial, cultural, economic and gender discrimination has slowly started moving from the margins towards the center. The African woman was able to undertake the journey from the margins to the center bravely only because of her grit, grace, courage, confidence, and spirituality. This journey has resulted in the metamorphosis of the African woman's psyche. Economic independence fortified with education has empowered the African woman. The various stages of metamorphosis are well delineated in the works of the contemporary Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. The objective of this research paper is to study the above said metamorphosis, the female protagonists undergo in Adichie's novels. The approaches on which the study is based on are the Africana Womanist theory propounded by Clenora Hudson-Weems and African feminism of Carole Boyce Davies. The findings of this study lead towards establishing the proposition that the emergence and evolution of the Nigerian woman has resulted in the birth of a new breed of women - the Emphatic Female, manifested in the power packed portrayal of the female protagonists of Purple Hibiscus, Half of a Yellow Sun and Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

Keywords : Africana womanism, African feminism, chimamanda ngozi adichie, metamorphosis, the emphatic female

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