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CHARACTERS ANALYSIS OF PROTAGONIST CHARACTERS IN THE SELECTED NOVELS OF BUCHI EMECHETA WITH REFERENCE TO DEBBIE IN 'DESTINATION BIAFRA' AND NKO IN 'THE DOUBLE YOKE'

Ms. R. Bhuvaneswari, Ph.D. Scholar in English, PSGR Krishnammal College for Women, Coimbatore 641004 (Affiliated to Bharathiar University, Coimbatore)

Dr. S. Lavanya, Assistant Professor in English, PSGR Krishnammal College for Women, Coimbatore 641004 (Affiliated to Bharathiar University, Coimbatore)

Abstract

Their characters were analysed and studied in depth. One is Debbie Ogedemgbe, an audacious heroine of the novel 'Destination Biafra (DB)' and the next is Nko, a timid one who then transforms into a daring personality in the course of action in the novel 'The Double Yoke (DY)'. Both these characters reveal their innate potentiality that always exists in the women. They provide a lot of message to the woman at large, by their reaction to the situation that they face in their life and the way they have handled it and the decisions taken by them on those occasions. It is the novelist, Buchi Emecheta, who explains her inner self in the form of these characters, a wonderful message that has been hinted to the society especially to the women folks of the modern era. The pains undergone is identical for both of them, they are betrayed by their own men, whom they believed but they act as a role model exhibiting courage in boldly facing it and by challenging the life's ordeal.

Keywords: audacious, character, protagonist, ordeal, potentiality, traditional

Introduction

Buchi Emecheta, a Nigerian novelist has been a forerunner amongst African female writers, voicing her thoughts for the upliftment and liberation of women in her novels. Mostly her novels were semi-autobiographical that the novels circle around the incidents taken place in her own life, her battle for early education and her interest in studies as she firmly believes that the education is the only liberating force for woman. Her novels could be enlisted in order as: 'In the Ditch' (1972) and 'Second-Class Citizen' (1974) which describes the tortures of a black, single mother residing in North London facing all types of struggles, the next novel which is paradoxically entitled as 'The Joys of Motherhood' (1979), narrates the story of a woman who longs to become a mother and lives for the sake of her children in a colonial Nigeria, then published her autobiographical novel Head Above Water (1984), followed by Gwendolen, a transformation of an innocent Jamaican girl (1989) followed by her other novels. Emecheta's writings are centred around female individuality, and the inevitability that lies in female folks to grow tougher in the life to face challenges.

The principal character of the novel "Destination Biafra" is Debbie Ogedemgbe. She is the daughter of a well-known, prosperous, greedy minister who is depicted as a corrupt politician named Samuel Ogedemgbe and a traditional bound mother Stella Ogedemgbe. She is privileged to obtain her education at Oxford University in England. She has an affair with a British officer named Captain Alan Grey, son of Sir Fergus Grey. She is introduced in the novel in the auspicious occasion of Chijioke Abosi's marriage, where "Debbie charmed everyone, playing the dutiful daughter of Samuel Ogedemgbe. The climax for her was when she confidently gave the bridesmaid toast, her accent perfect and her smile unwavering. That was what most fathers wanted: a daughter who not only was a been-to but who could talk and behave like a European." (DS, 44) Debbie's parents were proud and energized by their talented daughter. She has not been brought in a traditional background, the post colonial period that she experiences and her university education has encouraged her to be modern and spirited provided her way to express her liking to their parents directly. Debbie thoughts are not limited to lead a life of ordinary women whose choice lies in leading a life of a perfect house wife and bearing children. She wishes to join the army and do service for her country. She never hesitates to reveal her liking of hers to her parents.

TRANSFORMATION OF BUCHI EMECHETA'S ADAH WHO ACT AS EMECHETA'S ALTER EGO DESCRIBING HER INCESSANT AFFLICTION FROM HER CHILDHOOD TO A RENOWNED WRITER WITH REFERENCE TO SECOND CLASS CITIZEN AND IN THE DITCH

Ms. R. Bhuvaneswari, Research Scholar, Department of English, PSGR Krishnammal College for Women, Coimbatore – 641004

Dr. S. Lavanya, Assistant Professor, Department of English, PSGR Krishnammal College for Women, Coimbatore – 641004

ABSTRACT

Buchi Emecheta born at Lagos in Nigeria sets her theme mostly emphasising the ordeal of woman folks and the ways to liberate themselves from such forces. Her innate longing to become a story teller similar to her great aunt provoked and encouraged her to make a maiden attempt in writing about her troubles that she has faced before she attained this position as a prominent writer. The present article briefly takes the account of her first two novels Second Class Citizen and In the Ditch which describes her struggles she has encountered being a girl to be identified in her own house and then her sufferings to bring up her five children alone in the alienated country after her broken marriage. In her novels she shares not only her sufferings but also the problems of women folk around her who has been facing the similar type of sufferings is vividly portrayed in her first two novels. She depicts the suppression of woman by the dominating patriarchal forces from all corners, at home and by the society. She burst out that this exploitation to woman folks is universal and she would witness it throughout the world in all times, both by colonist and neo-colonist from all directions regardless of nation or division. Emecheta's novels mostly deals with the themes centring around women, here in these first two novels, Second Class Citizen and In the Ditch she introduces Adah, a character representing herself and has been considered as an alter Ego of herself. Adah has been faced with similar situations like feeling of the Second Class, the reaction to prevailing racism, and their invisibleness and treatment by the foreign people, the struggle for existence against all strong forces to liberate and to be a successful person at the end. Emecheta in the voice of Adah narrates that how she is able to withstand all tremendous storms that she has come across and her innate strength which provided courage to her to challenge those storms and come out with triumph in spite of facing all unfavourable conditions. It is the uniqueness of Emecheta that instead of collapsing by the misfortunes she has turned into a prominent persona. This quality has been exhibited in most of her heroines.

Key words: Challenging, Second Class, Triumph, Adversity, Liberation, Eminence INTRODUCTION