UNPACKING THE IMAGE OF THE FEMALE CHARACTER: THE JOYS OF MOTHERHOOD IN PERSPECTIVE

by Richmond Amgbo Blay

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UNPACKING THE IMAGE OF THE FEMALE CHARACTER: THE JOYS OF MOTHERHOOD IN PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This paper focuses on Buchi Emechta’s depiction of the female character in her novel, The Joys of Motherhood. In particular, this paper examines how Emechta directs attention at restoring the image of the “fallen” woman in the novel where the patriarchs dominate affairs. The novel achieves this aim through the narrative technique employed in the complex role of the woman figure who defiles all odds to achieve her heart desires at the end of the story. The findings reveal that Emechta presents both positive and negative archetypal images of the African woman in the novel. It is however worthy of note that Emechta’s negative depiction of the African woman far outweighs the positive ones. To an extent, Emechta’s portrayal of the figure of a woman is an affront to the way a female writer ought to present the woman with exalting images rather than images of disgust.

Keywords: African woman; patriarchal society; The Joys of Motherhood; Post-colonial feminist

Introduction

Buchi Emechta was drawn to write about the plight of the African woman through her personal experience as a Nigerian who has been a victim of the way some women have been ill-treated as a result of patriarchy. In the novel which is narrated from the third person’s omniscient point of view, the heroine, Nnu Ego marries but her childlessness makes it difficult for her to fulfill
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