



OJA



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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR IN-CHIEF

This is the fifth issue No 1 of *Oja*, a bi-annual arts journal of the University of Port Harcourt. The name of the journal is sourced from the environment of our university. *Oja* is the Igbo/Ikwerre word for 'flute', an uncommon symbol of human ingenuity designed to produce rhythms and narratives. The journal is published by the Institute of Art and Culture (IA-C), University of Port Harcourt, and was established in 2011 to promote viable creative and scholarly productivity through interaction with industry. Besides the commitment to offer "courses" in performing arts, visual arts, photography, film, television; creative writing, costume and make-up to various categories of individuals, we are also motivated to create enduring platforms for narrative and discourse. *Oja* is a plinth for new writing. Our definition of new writing comprises all artistic modes of narrative and discourses set in new perspective. This involves new interpretations of old narratives.

The journal is conceived with the desire to create a forum for a world-wide reception of the works of African cultural producers: scholars, writers, artists, filmmakers, theatre practitioners, etc. This is a journal for constructive interaction between scholars, artistes, and the audience. New and old efforts will be evaluated and promoted here with a view to finding new ways of seeing the world through the enterprise of arts producers.

Oja will therefore publish poetry, drama, fiction and essays and previews on all aspect of African arts (Literature, Theatre Arts, Music, Visual Arts, Film, photography, Costume and Fashion. Interviews with individuals and groups, who produce canonical objects of culture, are also welcome. Preference will always be accorded to creative materials and scholarly works with a multi-disciplinary approach because they create richly varied views that guarantee holistic comprehension of our cultural experiences and production in the context of diversity.

It is hoped that this journal will provide a common ground for scholarship and creativity, in so far as the content and meaning of such endeavours will bear relevance to studies in the arts and culture of the African World and the Black Diaspora.

In this fifth edition number 1, we have published essays. We believe that our barn will grow larger with every edition. We enjoin you to always read and contribute to *Oja*. A new rhythm is here with us.

Dr. Friday Nwafor

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Women and the Dearth of Wisdom: A Critical Perspective on Flora Nwapa's *Efuru* and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*

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Abstract

The need for one to relate and relate well with an opposite sex either for procreation or a deliberate attempt to avoid loneliness is as inevitable as breathe to life. Right from the Adams, the inescapable nature of the union between man and woman and the need to strew the thread of harmony in such a union have been the object of critical exploration by literary artists as well as those in various fields of human endeavour. Due to its unavoidable nature, deliberate efforts have been made and the act is ongoing to explore, explicate and postulate how a man and woman can harmoniously live as husband and wife, procreating super human beings who will continually leave the world a better place than they met it. There have been hues and cries about mistreatment, subjugation and abuse from both sides of the divide, though more from the female angle. Unfortunately, none did ponder on how to ensure a peaceful co-existence as none of the sexes can fulfill his or her dreams without an atom of relationship with the other. The thrust of this paper therefore, is an exploration of this ancient conflict whose resolution is the required intervention for women to have their joy filled to capacity rather than the feminist tendencies that call for single parenthood and other forms of prescriptions that permit the termination of husbands' life for the day a woman terminates her husband's life, hers is terminated. The analysis will be screened through Flora Nwapa's *Efuru* and Chimamanda Ngozi

Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*

Key Words: subjugation, Dearth of Wisdom, Intervention

Introduction

It is clear that the marriage institution has suffered some setbacks for decades now. The argument on both sides of the divide has been unfaithfulness and lack of care. Hence, women, as mothers should look inward and re-examine themselves in order to create the desired harmony for spouses to compliment each other in order to have a healthy and happy family.

The mistreatment, subjugation and abuse of spouses by their partners have reached a crescendo that it is expedient to state in very clear terms that marriage is not just for sexual satisfaction and procreation, but to avoid loneliness, a dynamite that is emasculating and destroying our world. Abuse of spouses cripples development and sets the hands of the clock backward. If this evil is left unchecked, sooner than later, either the man or the woman would be extinct. If all the men are killed for their flaws as Eugene or imprisoned like Jaja, in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, the female folks would be everywhere devastated, yawning for companionship that will never come. In the same vein if men keep battering and making them have miscarriages, our women will be highly dejected due to psychological trauma of unfulfilled births. In another dimension, men like Adizua in Flora Nwapa's *Efuru*, who deny their wives of sex, may equally abandon their homes that are too cold for comfort and "run away with a woman who had left her husband" (80) after destroying hers. This will do us no good.

The accumulative effects of these barbaric actions of spouses who willingly come together are enormous and highly devastating. The need for a harmonious relationship in marriage is as inevitable as breathe to life. The thrust of this paper, therefore, is the exploration of this conflict with a view to proffering lasting solutions that will engineer a harmonious relationship between a husband and his wife. It also intends to state in unequivocal terms that both husband and wife are as guilty as charged. This intends to

put an end to the wanton destruction of men's lives and that of children who would have been super humans, thereby turning our nation into a first class world order. This will be achieved when women begin to build their own homes with their hands, tolerate men's shortcomings rather than deliberately pull their homes down. The analysis will be screened through Nwapa's *Efuru* and Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*.

Textual Analysis

The Christian creed postulates that wisdom is a principal thing. It admonishes women to build their own houses rather than tear theirs by their own efforts. Indeed, spouses should strive to adhere to this in order to live a happy life. The quest for an ideal home is very paramount to African novelists, hence they are poised towards its realization. This is what Nwapa and Adichie try to achieve in their novels.

From Adams, it is evident that a woman's greatest problem is lack of wisdom. The Bible in Genesis 3:6 stresses that "the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired, to make one wise, she took the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband and with her; he did ate." (4) It is instructive to state that Eve failed to understand that not all that glitters is gold, and that it is foolishness to be wise in one's own eyes. The scenario above implies that Adam allowed his wife to make him derail. The above illustration shows that though human beings have the power to do what is right, they are prone to wrong choices. Having said this, it is necessary for us to analyse how Nwapa and Adichie evince that women due to lack of wisdom destroy themselves, wasting that which would have given them their much desired fulfillment.

In Nwapa's *Efuru*, Efuru's choice of husbands, first Adizua, and later on, Gilbert were done to the best of her knowledge which when critically screened demonstrate a lack of it. Efuru and Adizua "saw each other fairly and after a fortnight's courting, she decided to marry him. But the man had no money for the dowry. He had just a few pounds from the farm and could not part with that" (7), not even for his love for her. Adizua who professes that he loves Efuru "very much and that even the dust she trod on meant

something to him" (7), could not part with the proceeds from his farm to pay Efuru's bride price. Efuru, the feminist she is created to be, an apt description of the dearth of wisdom: "On Nkwo day when everybody had gone to the market, ... prepared herself... She took great care that morning over her appearance. Her father was now not at home. She took a few of her belongings and went to her lover's house" (8)

A wise woman would have taken care to x-ray the man she wants to marry, his personality, the family background, the fruitfulness of such a union and ensures that the needful is done. Rather than do the needful, she ensures that her father was not in the house and runs away to Adizua's house. Payment of bride price is neither subjugation nor mistreatment. It is done to make a woman take her rightful position in her husband's house for it remains a mark of honour to the girl and her parents. Even today, most families do not take up to five thousand naira for a woman who has a degree. Bride price dignifies marriage.

Ify G. Achufusi (1994) argues that Efuru eloping and marrying Adizua, an inconsequential nonentity who could not pay her bride price is an act of rebellion. Achufusi contends that:

A conservative non-feminist view would see Efuru as an obstinate child, who brings shame and humiliation to her father. But from a feminist perspective, she is a strong-willed, rebellious young woman, who respects and observes the tradition of her people, but who at the same time rejects those aspects which seek to oppress and dwarf her personality. For instance, she accepts the traditional 'bath' but firmly rejects the idea of an arranged marriage; nor would she succumb to long years of living apart from the man she loves, while he works and saves money for the bride-price. Rather she runs away and lives with him and together they work to save the substantial amount required. (107)

Achufusi's argument fascinating as it seems dodges the question of the rightness or otherwise of her choice and the attendant effects. Whether the feminists accept it or not, the truth is that one oppresses oneself and

diminishes one's personality when one makes a wrong choice especially in the area of marriage. Efuru's mother-in-law, a woman who "gained nothing from", her "long suffering" for a man who abandoned her for years, though stupidly pride herself for being faithful to her choice which destroys her, tells us that "the son of a gorilla must dance like the father gorilla. Our elders were quite right when they said this. Adizua is every inch like his father" (51). One may wish to know who Adizua's father, the "gorilla" is:

Just exactly six years after he had gone to Agbonema to sell his yams, we heard that he was at Abor and was married to a very wealthy woman. I did not doubt this because my husband was very handsome. You can see this in Adizua. Adizua is exactly like him - (60).

Adizua's mothers' life is a tempest caused by her dearth of wisdom and choice of Adizua's father as a husband. She informs that "No woman of today can suffer as I have suffered" (61). Perhaps, Efuru does for when Adizua "runs away with that worthless woman, the daughter of a bitch" (73) and left her to bear the burden of the death of Ogonim her only child, the encumbrance of choice and trust took its toil on her.

My argument is that Efuru's tragedy and women generally is due to dearth of wisdom. Ezeigbo (1997) subscribes to my conviction by affirming that "Efuru's tragedy is that she gave her love to a worthless man" (65). The villagers also comment thus: Poor Efuru, the other said, "we all were surprised when she married the fool. And now see how shabbily she has been treated" (75). The two men she gave her love are worthless. The burden of Efuru's choice makes one shoulder when one remembers that in her wisdom, she said "she would drown herself in the lake if he (the worthless Adizua, emphasis mine) did not marry her" (7). When Efuru's marriage with Adizua ended abruptly, one would have expected her to take stock, tarry a while before making another choice. This, she never did.

Achufusi (1994) posits that Nwapa "creates in Efuru a character who takes control of her life" (107). Truly, she decides what she has to do with her life and executes such to her self destruct. John Harris (1962) argues that "we

must remember that to deny someone control of their own lives is to offer them profound insult, not to mention the injury which the frustration of their wishes and the setting at naught of their own plans for themselves will add" (35). Most critics view that Efuru is in charge of her life, hence none has denied her of choice of marriage, is correct. Even when Adizua, her husband wanted her to join him in the farm she vehemently refused. Her refusal made Adizua to abandon farming for trading, which finally took him away. The thrust of the argument is that if a fool is allowed to be fully in charge of his or her life, the end product will be monumental display of foolishness and the attendant devastating effects. Efuru due to her dearth of wisdom could not dispel the darkness of ignorance and give womanhood a pride to live for. This is why societies create laws to cultivate her citizens.

It is worth noting as one explicates further, that her decision to worship Uhamiri, the woman of the lake "who gave women beauty and wealth", (22) and could not give them children because she had never experienced the joy of motherhood was not hindered by Gilbert, her second husband. Uhamiri's worshippers have special days of the week devoted to her. "Orie day is her great day... You are not to sleep with your husband" (153 – 154). A day her worshippers must not have sexual relationship with their spouses. Her involvement denies her husband certain rights. The truth is that any form of liberty not exercised under the ambit of any law is destructive. It is on record that Efuru's marriage with Adizua had an issue of sexual problems.

And my daughter is nearly two years old now' Efuru continued in thought. 'And there is no sign that I am going to have another baby. But how can I have another baby when for nearly six months my husband has not slept with me. How then can I be pregnant... (53)?

No man avoids the wife sexually for six good months without a genuine cause. The offence might be the issue of unrestricted freedom which Efuru exercises with impunity. A novice will feel for her as she says 'oh, if only I could know how and when I offended him" (53). The truth is that emotional outburst is not usually accompanied by deliberate attempts to

evaluate one's commitments to a chosen path with a view to perfecting things. There is need to truly find out what is not unnecessary in one's life and get rid of it. We are not mules who spend their God's given lives carrying burdens. As humans we must know that our action counts. Hence if one is to grow one must deliberately change to carefully match the changes taking place in one life.

Nwapa and Adichie, whose novels are the texts for my analysis are from Eastern region of Nigeria. They belong to different generations of Nigeria writers. Nwapa's *Efuru* is seen in most circles as the seminal on which other Nigerian female writers works irrespective of social and religious leaning keep signifying. Adichie who belongs to the third generation of Nigerian literary world, is another feminist whose input, *Purple Hibiscus* in particular indicates that women's tragedy is their lack of wisdom. Fwangyil, Gloria Ada (2011) posits that:

In as much as reformists believe that there are good marriages where husbands love and care for their wives, they emphasize the need for the liberation of women from an oppressive and abusive marriage. Although the antagonist in this novel is murdered, it is worthy to note that reformist feminist literature does not always end in the murder of men. This is because of the belief that bad men can change in character, value and behaviour, which in turn lead to a better and improved society. In other words, it does not encourage crime, murder and sexual promiscuity (264).

Fwangyil's position above, gives credence to our thrust that the dearth of wisdom is women's major labyrinth. No sensible being destroys his or her house because the roof leaks. All that he or she does is to device ways of mending the leakage. In another perspective, will a woman who gets into her kitchen and finds her ten-year-old son has loosen the nub of her gas cylinder, str a match in order to punish her son for carelessness? Only a foolish woman will for the resultant inferno could end her life, her son's and her entire family. Hence Beatrice action is criminal and unpardonable, more especially when hers are deliberate and calculated and not based on the spur of the moment. If they were fighting and Eugene falls and dies, it

would be a different thing.

If feminist tendency is to bring about attitudinal change in the life of men and the women themselves in order to end subjugation for which men are accused of, the men who must change must be alive to go through the process and affect the women and their society for good. Eugene's death marks the end of Beatrice and everything good that would have come to the family. If Beatrice had allowed Eugene to learn and change attitudinally, he would not only have been a better husband but would have saved Jaja from destroying himself in his attempt to save a murderer from being prosecuted. Auntie Ifeoma's statement to her late husband's Umunna clearly explains the beauty of an ideal wife.

Last Christmas, one of the women from their compound even told me I had killed him. I wanted to stuff sand in her mouth. Then I thought that I should sit her down, eh, and explain that you do not kill a husband you love, that you do not orchestrate a car accident in which a trailer runs into your husband's car, but again, why waste time? They all have the brains of guinea fowls (74).

Her explanation is that no woman kills the husband she loves. If anything, all she need do is to sit him down and talk the matter over with him. Beatrice's reply in that discourse will help us to elucidate the fact that she has "the brain of guinea fowls" (74): 'Did our own Umunna not tell Eugene to take another wife because a man of his stature cannot have just two children? If people had not been on my side then...' (75). If Eugene could say no; it means he really loves his wife in spite of their marital problems. A woman whose husband demonstrates this kind of affection should reciprocates by tolerating the husband's flaws and help him to overcome them.

In Nwapa's *Efuru*, the woman whom Adizua elopes with did not kill her husband: So Beatrice's argument: "Where do I go if I leave Eugene's house? Tell me where would I go? Do you know how many mothers pushed their daughters at him to impregnate them even, and not bother paying a bride price", is not tenable. If Beatrice is worried about where she would go

should she be separated from Eugene, she would have sought help from Rev. Fr. Benedict, the church and her in-laws, Ifeoma. Instead of consulting these people to help resolve whatever differences she had with her husband, she called Sisi, their housemaid who will do anything possible to step into her shoes, for advice and procurement of the poison she used in killing her husband. Her action is an act of foolishness and wickedness: "I started putting the poison in his tea before I came to Nsukka. Sisi got it for me; her Uncle is a powerful witch doctor" (283). What a shame.

Kambili, a woman and victim of Eugene's high handedness knows that murder is and remains a criminal offence. She tells us "for a long, silent moment I could think of nothing. My mind was blank, I was blank" (283). Kambili could never have imagined her mother being as cruel as that. Hence she asked "Why did you put it in his tea?" ... But Mama did not answer. Not even when I stood up and shook her until Jaja yanked me away" (283). This is why Charles Nnolim (1999) states that: "We must assert that murder is murder, and murder is a criminal act under the laws of all human societies. What is a woman, a symbol of nurturance doing with murder?" (53).

In cultivated climes, murder for whatever reason is criminal. It becomes more grievous when a murderer passes the burden of the act upon another. It must be highly stressed that there is no where in the text where Adichie tells her readers that Beatrice made frantic efforts, in fact effort in its minutes form to call her erring husband to order.

Beatrice reaction when Eugene's death was communicated to her also serves as a Litmus test for the validation of her criminality. The death of ones spouse, indeed a loved one is very devastating and stressful. A widow who loses her beloved husband will be down and out, spiritually and physically. When a widow is seen trying to take stocks of her late husband's property and driving away sympathizers, it becomes easily discernable that she must have killed her husband This is the case of Beatrice. Kambili, the narrator puts it thus: I sat with Jaja in our living room, staring... Mama was upstairs, packing Papa's things. I had gone to help ... holding his red pyjamas pressed to her face. She did not look up when I

came in; she said "Go nne, go and stay with Jaja (281).

Kambili above, opens a can of worm which will interest us greatly in this discourse "holding his red pyjamas pressed to her face" (281). It explains the main cause of the problem that engulfed the whole family. The need for sex and the denial of such emotional desire remain the major cause. It could be easily deduced that her pressing the pyjamas on her face makes her relive the memories of what must have transpired. It must have dawn on her that she erred, she tells Kambili "Go nne, go and stay with Jaya" (281), for I am gone.

Christopher and Racheal McCuskey (2002) in their article "Threats to Sexual Intimacy", posit that "one of the first areas of disagreement often encountered is the desired frequency of love making" (187). More often than not you find that the degree of sexual drive among spouses varies. While one clamours for more, the other feels too much has been done. This can lead to marital crises of the highest order and if not properly handled divorce or murder.

The Intervention

Modern African Novel remains an in-estimate arbiter, a settler of this fierce dispute between man and woman for in it, the aggrieved parties in their various kingdoms vent their anger on their presumed enemies and in venting their anger forget to hide their prejudices, their short comings or faults which make all parties wanting in one area or the other. And for this and all other things One could say ALL HAVE SINNED.

Clement Idegwu (2015) argues as stated above that this ferocious dispute between a husband and his wife needs urgent attention. It -should be handled with utmost care because none of the parties is free from blame and the consequence of a protracted fight remains very devastating to the family and society at large. The African novel remains an indisputable powerful weapon for a deliberate and conscious reordering of the mind sets of both man and woman for a healthy family living. This submission is in line with Francoise Loinnef's (1997) postulation that "literature, as a discursive practice that encodes and transmits as well as creates ideology,

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is a mediating force in society" (205) Loinnet further stresses that "it structures our 'sense of the world since narrative or stylistic conventions and plot resolutions serve to either sanction and perpetuate cultural myths, or to create new mythologies that allow the writer and the reader to engage in a constructive re-writing of their social contexts" (205). No one consciously reads a novel and remains unaffected by its thematic construct.

A critical analysis of our social environment will show that the problem is our character. Though the decay is high, men and women of integrity still exist. Ajanupu, one of the major characters in Nwapa's *Efuru*, complains of the moral standard among couples thus:

What is wrong with men these days?" Ajanupu complained to Gilbert's mother "You must send some people to go for your son. This is getting too much. A man like Nwashike Ogene died and Eneberi, did not come home. Nearly everybody in this town came home at the time. And Eneberi, the husband of Efuru Ogene failed to return. This is four weeks since the death: And here again is Nkoyeni, who has given birth to such a bouncing baby boy, and Eneberi is not home. What kind of trade is that? What has come over young men these days. It is disgraceful. Absolutely disgraceful (206)

Ajanupu's outburst above is very significant in our exploration of women, the dearth of wisdom and the desired intervention in our genuine attempt to ensure healthy family living. "What is wrong with men these days?", simply means that men have been good before now. That "a man like Nwashike Ogene died and Eneberi did not come home", and 'nearly everybody in this town came home at the time' also means men of integrity came home. The problem therefore, is that women choose spouse wrongly. Efuru's choice of Gilbert is wrong. Her choice of her first husband is equally wrong. She acknowledges her dearth of wisdom when her marriage with Adizua hits the rock. "I don't know how I can go on tolerating this. God in heaven knows... Our ancestors know that since I ran away from my father's house to Adizua's... But Adizua has treated me shabbily, he has treated me the way slaves are treated" (58). Girls who have integrity do not run away with men the way she does. Ajanupu tells her the truth "Some

men are not fit to be called men. They have no sense. They are like dogs that do not know who feeds them" (58) If Efuru is wise, she would have been free from her errors. Her life is a journey in error. This is why Akachi Ezeigbo (1997) affirms that Efuru's tragedy is that "she gave her love to a worthless man" (65) The two men she gave her love: Adizua and Gilbert (Eneberi) are worthless men.

Efuru's acceptance of the Lordship of Uhamiri, a woman who "gave woman beauty and wealth but had no child" (221) and who "had never experienced the joy of motherhood" (221), and her total commitment are clear indications that wisdom is a scarce commodity in her kingdom.

Though Shalini Nadaswaran (2012) in an article "Dispelling the Myth of the Silent Woman". argues that: Nwapa... indicates through Efuru's worship of Uhamiri that there are possibilities for different types of joys in a woman. An Igbo woman can be happy in the wealth brought by her industry. She does not need to feel less significant or meaningless if she does not have children as perpetuated by patriarchal doctrine (115), it is instructive to state that even when Efuru may derive joy from her wealth she remains unfulfilled throughout her life. Childlessness in a woman's life is a burden that nothing can ameliorate. Influence and affluence do not remove the psychological trauma of childlessness in marriage. Even Nwapa's argument in an interview with Adeola James that "Whatever happens in a woman's life... Marriage is not the end of this world; childlessness is not the end of everything. You must survive one way or the other, and there are a hundred and one other things to make one happy apart from marriage and children" is consolatory for no woman is truly happy without a child, and a husband, even in today's 21st century.

It is important to stress that the calls for independence, single parenthood, divorce or separation are due to failed marriages. No woman who enjoys the bliss of marriage ever thinks about independence, divorce and single parenthood.

The African novel in its interventionist role explicates the implications of the actions of couples and expects them to re-order their lives for good. It

subtly explains how humans could be fulfilled in their various endeavours including marriage. Having screened through Nwapa's *Efuru*, it behoves us to turn our search light to Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*.

Chineke Bless me let me find enough to fill my stomach. Bless my daughter, Ifeoma give her enough for her family". He shifted on the stool. His navel had once jutted out, I could tell, but now it looked like a wrinkled elephant, drooping. "Chineke! Bless my son Eugene. Let the sun not set on his prosperity. Lift the curse they have put on him". Papa-Nnukwu leaned over and draw one more line. I was surprised that he prayed for Papa with the same earnestness that he prayed for himself and Anuty Ifeoma. Chineke! Bless the children of my children. Let your eyes follow them away from evil and towards good (166).

Papa Nnukwu's action as stated above serves as a moral standard on which human actions should be built. This is to ensure that we create a fertile environment for the planting, nursing and the nurturing of the seed of a hate free world. His son, Eugene not only denies him access to his mansion, but leaves him uncared for like an ant in the open field. It is symbolic that in spite of this gravious act of wickedness, he prays for him, believing that one day, the curse placed on him by his action would be revoked.

The African novel in its interventionist role encourages us to critically x-ray his prayer for Eugene. It is very instructive because it lays bare that which needs to be urgently addressed. "Chineke! Bless my son Eugene let the sun not set on his prosperity. Lift the curse they have place on him" (166). In all climes, and in the heavenly places as Ephesians 6:1-2, posits a child who fails to honour the parents is cursed. Beatrice knows about this as a Catholic, yet fails to ponder on it. She never talk to Revered Father Benedict about it, not to talk about secretly meeting Papa Nnukwu in order to find a lasting solution to the problem. Like most women, she wants to enjoy the husband alone. Her likes fail to realize that if Eugene's parents never did their part in making him whom he is, he will never be there for them to marry and enjoy. Eugene indeed is cursed, hence, Idegwu (2015) succinctly states that:

Man gets blind to his best interest when he is in love. Adam did. Eugene Achieke followed. As if that was not enough Jaja appended his signature to that which he never did, got jailed where he remains. Adam lost the splendid nature of the garden and in the scorching sun he toiled. Eugene laboured for another to eat. Jaja, left his inheritance for a murderer – His mother, an Eve to enjoy. Eugene in his error of judgment for the love of his wife left the father uncared for.

Idegwu, further argues that the African novel in its interposition helps to educate the people for any woman who claims to have come to marry her husband alone, is doomed forever. And a husband who is so blind that he fails to see, runs away from his people and cliff to his wife and Christian religion to the extent of not caring for his relatives is fated to die early. This is because when the harvest has been gathered into the barn, the wife will eat him up as Beatrice did.

Adichie in her desire to deliberately reflect on the evils of committing murder for whatever reasons writes that mama has become “a painfully bony body, of skin speckled with blacked heads the size of water melon seeds” (288). She further adds that:

Mama shakes her head, and her scarf starts to slip off. She reaches out to knot it again as lovely as loosely as before. Her wrapper is just as loose around her waist, and she ties and reties it often, giving her the air of the unkempt women in Ogbete market, who let their wrappers unravel so that everyone sees the hole-riddled slips they have on underneath (287-288)

Conclusion

In conclusion, there is need to state that Nwapa's *Efuru*, and Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* are explications of the problems in marriage in our time, and is in them the much-needed solutions. Through the actions and inactions of *Efuru* and Beatrice, who are the main characters in our texts, the shortcomings of the women are highlighted, and what need to be done to create an ideal family are also x-rayed for both sexes to learn and adjust.

According to Nelson Mandela (1995), "to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others" (624 – 625). And to achieve this, Mayer (2000) admonishes that "we are all to be sensitive to the other person's needs, even in little thing" (188). This indeed is our position.

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