

**THE WOMAN, THE CHILD AND THE WORLD: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC  
STUDY OF BUCHI EMECHETA’S SELECT WORKS**

A Thesis

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## Chapter - 6

### Conclusion

The present thesis has made a detailed ethnographic study of the Igbo community through Buchi Emecheta's selected works. Such a work is relevant because it shows her characters' dedication to the community and its customs – thus representing these characters as caricatures of the Igbo culture. Emecheta's men esteem freedom, self-governance and just conduct, while her women characters esteem friendly relations among them. Emecheta examines this contention in *Head Above Water*, when she clarifies that the heroine of *The Bride Price* suffered incredibly in the end since she had tested the custom. She says, "I had realized that what makes all of us human is belonging to a group. And if one belongs to a group, one should try and abide by its laws." (Emecheta 1994, 166)

The aim of this thesis, to explore the pitfalls and possibilities of the native traditional Igbo culture of Nigeria, is assessed through Emecheta's works, wherein she ceaselessly reaffirms the cultural practices of the community. It was found that Nigerian men sell out their legacy after colonialism and the Nigerian women hate it. To put it plainly, both have been ruined by their stay in England. Having put some distance between their own moral framework, they appear to have adapted to the most exceedingly terrible moral choices of the western world. Then too, all the novels conclude by stating that finally the characters either return to their native country Nigeria and live according to communal standards or they find solutions to their problems through adapting their community's moral standards in a foreign country, in which they live.

One of the important subjects of the present thesis is to make a special examination of various Igbo myths that influenced the lives of the characters in Emecheta's books, which has been dealt in detail in the second chapter titled "Unlocking Native Culture and Primitive

Myths of Igbo Society.” The chapter finalizes that all the individuals of Emecheta’s works abide upon native culture of Igbo community, and those who defy it or go against tradition, face serious consequences later in the novel, thus showing the impact or power of native traditions on Igbo individuals, whether in their native country or foreign land.

While examining other research conducted on Emecheta’s works, and after the present study, it can be concluded that although a vast study has been conducted on aspects like feminism, positive impacts of westernization on Igbo culture, patriarchy, and race or gender studies, none of the earlier studies have proved or made a finding that almost all of Emecheta’s characters are perfect samples for ethnographic study of Igbo community and rather than combining western culture and native tradition to live (as suggested by other studies), the present study showcases that all of her characters are bound by their tradition and they do not dislike it or challenge it in order to find an easy life (as done by other research studies). As the present study itself proves, whoever defied the native culture had to face the serious fate or consequences upon their further living and thus return to their native culture to lead a peaceful life. Through this finding, the research study reaffirms the powerful impact of Igbo culture upon its individuals and how Emecheta has perfectly described it through her works.

As indicated in the Introductory chapter, the present study, through the main characters of Emecheta’s novels, shows what it means to be an Igbo man, woman and child in the Nigerian society as well as in the outside world. This research, through the lens of gender, culture and postcolonialism, provides a good source for an ethnographic study of Igbo culture.

The methodology followed in conducting the present study is selection and analysis of a few works that provide relevant and sufficient material for the purpose. The scholarly material of all societies reflects the standpoint, desires, fears, misgivings, standards and

estimations of that society. Similarly, Igbo literature mirrors the situation of Igbo people. Both oral and written literature is a noteworthy vehicle for spreading the customs and traditions of a particular culture.

In *Kehinde*, exilic imagination and the making of migrant female subject are embodied in the twinning of national identities, mediated by the voices of the twins Taiwo and Kehinde. Home is dialogized through the voices of the twins. The dead twin's voice comes close to representing the link with home. It appears as the stifled voice of submerged selfhood that clearly claims territoriality in the mother country. Both *Gwendolen* and *Rape of Shavi* show the characters' loving attitude to their native culture and the values it conveys. It is a process of enactment through fictional creation of a homecoming, a reconciliation with Nigeria, an appeal to the spirit of diasporic consciousness.

In this enquiry, the chosen novels represent the continuity in affirming their traditional culture. The thesis sought to demonstrate that Emecheta turns literature to advantage and makes it fulfil the task ascribed for an ethnographic study. The researcher is thus of the belief that the status of Emecheta's literature needs to be reconsidered in the Nigerian context as an alternative to literatures in African languages. The scholar has accounted for the stakes involved in terms of audience and the didactic function of literature in the Nigerian context. In these novels, Emecheta further develops themes and ideas that can be ranked as belletrist achievements. Moreover, they contain the seeds of homecoming. Indeed, in these novels a significant turn takes place in matters represented related to cultural ideals. Ideas about polygamy and infertility undergo a different treatment. This is read as a dialogue with a culture that has been reconsidered in Emecheta's novels.

*The Joys of Motherhood* resounds the Igbo myth of motherhood as an institution that determines the cultural value attached to it. The investigator's reading of the novel has

yielded a dependable picture of the traditional world contrasted with the rising urban environment. The dominating narrative voice suggests some pride in the past and reflects the loyalty of a Nigerian to his or her society in the precolonial and colonial times. *The Bride Price* and *The Slave Girl* are accounts that deal with tradition and colonialism, with a stronger emphasis on constrictive effect of tradition on its characters. They make a caring attitude towards the home culture, carried to such an extreme by the passion in the narrative that they border on the acceptance of the original culture.

This enquiry into Emecheta's novels has established a development not simply in theme, but also in ideology underlying these texts. The novels offer a relative degree of representational verisimilitude in terms of culture and colonial issues. In *Second Class Citizen* and *In The Ditch*, the focus is on autobiographical orientation. The inquirer has sought to highlight the effort of the writing subject to construct a study that articulates ethnography through Emecheta's novels. This ethnographic study grows out of the experience that ensues from a caesura in the relational space between an Igbo character and his or her community. Out of this existential abyss there arises the ethnic study that has grappled with effect of displacement or colonialism. Emecheta's fiction is seen as embodying the search for access to an authentic account of the Igbo culture. It is a lens through which the researcher has mostly viewed Nigerian cultural experience, and bases the assumptions and analysis and satisfies an ethnographic study.

It is true that Emecheta's portrayal of men often verges on stereotypical representation as in the case of Nnaife (*The Joys of Motherhood*) and Francis (*Second Class Citizen*); she imputes their situation to colonial conditions. As the study endeavoured to show, all her novels are oriented toward an interrogation of the colonial interference and a re-evaluation of Igbo culture. They display an overall outlook on cultural issues and changes due to colonization that are representative of Emecheta's revisionary vision. Emecheta has a

tendency to feminize the black men, making him weak, flabby and unsuccessful in *The Bride Price*, *The Slave Girl*, *The Joys of Motherhood* and *Double Yoke*. She shows complexities such as black women and men equally victimized by the white patriarchal culture, and black women as victims of black men in postcolonial world.

The final and optimistic note in *Gwendolen* is in striking contrast to the traumatic events that beset the eponymous heroine. Despite her ordeal, Gwendolen faces the future with hope. Indeed, the ultimate reconciliation between mother and daughter heralds a healing of wounds for both of them. *The Family* is a celebration of women's bonding. The friendship of Sonia and Gladys and the mutual support they bridge reinforces cultural identification with Nigeria. Men are peripheral to the narrative. Uncle Johnny and Winston are destructive agents; Ilochina acts as an unsuccessful guide for Winston, and Emmanuel functions as the man-would-understand. While men are not removed from the text, husbands are somehow put under erasure or associated with death. Gladys's husband is granted a mere mention. Winston dies due to gas explosion and is a casualty of the colonial system. In a continuation of the intimation of the omnipresent death, James Allen (Sonia's new man) works in the hospital mortuary. Sonia appears as a strong woman who works hard to survive and support her family. In the power relations of household, she dominates Winston. Sonia seeks her own mother and desires to see her alive and well. The journey to Jamaica constitutes a return to native land, and also resembles a quest for native culture.

Similarly, the damaging cultural dislocation explains Winston's faults of character. The text implies that a better economic opportunity in his mother country ameliorated his cultural unconsciousness by attaining cultural awareness through living in his own community. Ilochina's voice is a strong echo of the narrator's consciousness. Winston's ignorance of native cultural customs causes the pregnant Sonia to embark on a journey to Jamaica during which time he commits incest. Winston, deprived of frame of cultural reference, fails to

decode the signs in Mr. Aliyu's culturally informed statement regarding Granny Naomi's passing, which he takes at face value. The narrator conjectures that Mr. Brillianton would have known better, had he shared the landlord's culture. "But that man had that part of his cultural heritage taken away from him by slavery." (Emecheta 1990, 116)

In *Rape of Shavi*, Emecheta is engaged in combat against the West, her prize the revalorization of culture. The novel signals a return to the native land and re-joining the culture left behind. A tentative balance is brought by reconstructing nostalgic past for legitimizing the culture of homeland in the face of allures of metropolitan modernity. The novel reclaims the values that are often dismissed as primitive. Thus, it can be very well assumed that the writer is attempting or affirming to reconnect herself with Igbo culture after gaining insight into the West. She worked out the ideas of a stable precolonial Nigeria where women enjoyed independence prior to disruptive foreign invasion. The disastrous effect of western intervention is represented through the rape of the future queen of Shavi. Princess Ayoko reveals about her humiliation to her mother and the women decide to take the matter in their own hands. Ronje, the rapist, is captured in a net and left in the desert to be devoured by wild animals. This action of native women shows that aggressive tactics to punish misbehaving men were an inherent part of their culture.

Akunna's death in *Bride Price* portrays the power of spiritual forces on disobedient women who get defeated at the hands of tradition. The ancient Igbo worldview believes that the supreme being lives in the sky and the major divinities such as lightning, thunder, sun and moon and ancestral world are near humans. There are guardian spirits for various professions such as hunting, fishing, farming, and so on. The spirit world mirrors the human world; therefore, slaves are buried alive with their masters so that they can continue to serve their masters in the spirit world as done in an episode in *The Joys of Motherhood*.

In Emecheta's child characters, acculturation happens. Igbo child imbibes the ethnic values of his community settings when brought up in a specific society. The key factors which facilitate the process of acculturation are social institutions such as family, religion, age-grade institutions, etc. Each individual living in a society is encultured, drawing in the values, customs, food habits, etc, of that particular culture. Here the study showcases this process in the Igbo culture. Acculturation is a term that has gained importance in cultural studies. The central argument here is that being an Igbo person requires this process of acculturation. Here, the study proves that igbohood is a culture specific production whereby the individual becomes a type in the society. The investigation of an ethnographic study of Igbo community is the social process by which the Igbos learn the knowledge, skills and the practices that enable them to become members of a culture. For example, the character Right Reverend Osborne, who is a white man and the Head of the Mission school in Ibuza, comes all the way from Oxford in England and became acculturated with the Igbo community as can be seen in the novel when he addresses the school assembly –

When the time came for the announcements, the white man spoke in a strange sort of dialect which he seemed to think was Ibo. He did not realise that his audience was having so much difficulty in understanding him that it would have been better if he had simply addressed them in English. But that would have offended the Right Reverend Osborne, who had come all the way from Oxford in England and had spent many long years learning the Ibo language. He welcomed them all back after the holidays and said he hoped they would work even harder than they had the term before. He hoped that everybody's family was enjoying the best of health, and begged each member of the school to convey his own personal greetings and blessings to their mothers and fathers and cousins and friends. The whole school cheered. (Emecheta 1976, 82)



It is evident from this account that even foreigners like Right Reverend Osborne acculturated with the Igbo culture and hence captured the right Nigerian spirit.

The inquiry into Igbo culture proves that human beings of Igbo community both individually and collectively, become the agents of maintaining the native culture of their particular ethnic community. Igbo individuals sometimes get alienated from their culture once they are out of the native country and go to foreign countries like London or Britain where they become the outsourcing agents of their native culture as seen in many of the characters of Emecheta. For example, Adah and Francis in London, Albert and Kehinde in Britain, Asogba in Europe, Ete Kamba and Gwendolen in Britain, etc. This alienation from one's own culture points out how imperialism makes these Igbo people a product to be bought. This invariably makes them a commodity in the colonialist market as seen in Nnaife and Ubani in *The Joys of Motherhood*. The main argument of Marxist critics was that proletariat must sell his culture to survive, as can be seen in the novels of Emecheta. Majority of the characters, like Albert, Winston Brillianton, Ete Kamba, Nnaife, Ubani, etc, long for an economic prosperity in their own home country rather than being a slave or feminized man under the whites in a foreign country. As a consequence of making them available as the products or commodities of colonialists they wield power and influence over these natives.

Almost all the heroines of Emecheta's novels are in ambivalence. Here ambivalence is used as a term in psychology where Emecheta's female characters at one time get attracted to the western culture, but later show repulsion towards them. For example, Nko in *Double Yoke*, Gwendolen in *The Family*, Ojebeta in *The Slave Girl*, etc, face similar kind of ambivalence – initially they get easily carried away for western life but later return to their native culture. This process of ambivalence has been adapted into postcolonial theory by Homi Bhabha where he describes the complex mind of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. The relationship

between the colonizer and the colonized is ambivalent because the colonized subject is never completely opposed to the colonizer. There exists a constant flux between being complicit and resistant against the invading powers. Ambivalence also characterizes the way in which colonial discourse relates to the colonized subject, for it may be both exploitative and nurturing, at the same time. Most importantly, through Bhabha's theory, we can analyze that ambivalence disrupts the clear-cut authority of British domination because it disturbs the simple relationship between the Britishers and the Igbo. For example, the characters Akunna and Nna-ndo, in the novel *Bride Price*, are in ambivalence with their newly accustomed traditional culture in Ibuza and their old ways of western culture in Lagos. "Akunna and Nna-ndo soon grew accustomed to things at Ibuza, learning in school the European ways of living and coming home to be faced with the countless and unchanging traditions of their own people. Yet they were like helpless fishes caught in a net; they could not go back into the sea, for they were trapped fast, and yet they were still alive because the fisherman was busy debating within himself whether it was worth killing them to take home, seeing as they were such small fry." (82)

When we see the character of *Chi*, Taiwo and *Ogbanje* in Emecheta's novels, we are actually witnessing anthropomorphism. It is the attribution of human qualities to non-human entities. So, the *Chi* in *Joys of Motherhood*, *Kehinde*, *Slave Girl* and *Bride Price* controls the actions and thoughts of characters in the novels; similarly Taiwo is a dead twin who possesses the living character Kehinde in the novel by the same name and *Ogbanje*, which means "the living-dead", functions as the prime examples of anthropomorphism. All these mentioned examples are endowed with human thought and capabilities.

The introductory chapter introduced some of the major questions analyzed in the thesis. The definition of ethnography and the main aim of the thesis, i.e., to make an ethnography study on Emecheta's works has been stated. The research design of the study and the

methodology going to be carried out is further explained. Each paragraph has been allotted to various sections like importance of the subject, literature review, justification for dealing with the subject, limitations of the present study, statement of topic being discussed, etc.

Then the general characteristics of Nigerian literature are described. A small account has also been given about the personal life of Buchi Emecheta and her literary career. Various influences on Emecheta's works, such as her Igbo cultural heritage, the contemporary writer Flora Nwapa, her British education, the Bible, and the worldwide experiences of women, are dealt with. Subsequently a short note on how the native culture influenced her writing style has been provided. A brief note on various chapter divisions along with a short summary of contents included in each chapter has been outlined.

The second chapter titled "Unlocking Native Culture and Primitive Myths of Igbo Society", as the name itself suggests, analyses various traditional cultural practices and myths associated with the Igbo community and how they are incorporated in Emecheta's works. The chapter seeks to analyze how people suffer or face serious consequences when they defy or cast off their tradition. The geography of Igbo region in Nigeria is described briefly and the various social, political and religious lifestyles of the Igbo people are elaborated in the chapter. The importance of *Umunna* and *Onuama* in the Igbo social milieu and their different functions are described. Later, the role of age-grade groups and their duties in communal life are mentioned. The agricultural practices of Igbo, along with various responsibilities associated with men and women, are analyzed. Association of flora and fauna with divinities, thereby providing various environment conservation practices, are delineated. Their various spiritual Gods and rituals associated with them are also mentioned. A brief mention has also been made of *Dibias*. Various punishments for people who defy Igbo customs are examined.

The origin of the Igbo ethnic community is analyzed through the *Umejei* legend. Subsequently, the *Ogbanje* myth is described through the novel *The Slave Girl*. Later, the Igbo culture of favouritism for male children is examined through the novel, *The Second Class Citizen*. Subsequently, Emecheta's writing style, which is similar to one of the cultural traditions of *Ifo*, has been dealt in detail. By analysing various characteristics of *Ifo* in Emecheta's novels, the researcher tries to prove that Emecheta not only includes myths and customs in her works, but the work itself, through its narrative technique, is heavily influenced by the Igbo culture. After giving an introduction to the *Ifo* tradition, her change of English language to Igbo culture through *Igboization* – a term used by Susan Arndt, has been briefly noted. Even the names of characters in Emecheta's novels are culturized. The moral didactic purpose of *Ifo* and the oral narrative style ends the section of *Ifo* in the chapter.

The next section starts with the *juju* myth in *In The Ditch*. The powerful effect of *juju* myth in a foreign country like London is deeply analysed along with quoting an example from contemporary society through a news report to substantiate the same. Next, the custom of bride price and a failure in payment of bride price causing death of the child during delivery is discussed through the novel *The Bride Price*. The section also discusses certain taboos related to Igbo culture. In Igbo society, women are not supposed to choose or select a man of their own choice for marriage. Akunna, in the novel mentioned above, does so and face serious consequences from the society. Another ritual important to the community discussed in the later part is with regard to fertility or motherhood for a woman in Igbo culture. Igbo culture gives a vast significance to motherhood, and failure to bear a child or infertility is largely a taboo among the Igbo people. Further, *ibeji* myth is analyzed through the characters of Kehinde and Taiwo in the novel *Kehinde*. The presence of twins is considered to be good luck for Yorubas as seen in the novel, whereas Igbo disregard twins, and believe them to be ill-luck. A small introduction to the concept of *Chi* is also briefly

noted from the novel *Kehinde*. The serious consequences of committing an abortion (which is a dare act) is also discussed through the novel *Kehinde*. *The Rape of Shavi* is an ideal primitive civilization of the past Nigerian culture. Various lifestyle and traditional practices of the Kingdom of Shavi create an ideal utopic world in front of us. The benefit of communal living, socialization, societal harmony, and primitive practices in Shavi, are discussed in the final section of this chapter. The section also analyses the interference of westernization into their culture, but after several hardships, they retain their native tradition and make the western intruders to their land, get easily influenced by their civilization. All the matters mentioned above constitute the second chapter of the thesis.

The third chapter titled “Interrogating Voiceless Womanhood” discusses various women characters through the lens of cultural customs expected of them. The final finding of the chapter was that whatever they do or wherever they go, Igbo women stick on or uphold their native culture. Those who moved away from tradition are back to their track of native culture at the end of the novel. Although Katherine Frank labels Emecheta’s women in “female bondage” with relation to feminism, the researcher analyzed it as the bondage to one’s native culture. All Igbo women of Emecheta are bounded in native culture, which they enjoy or finally revive to life. It is evident from the novels itself that Igbo women happily accept their bondage, and they want to be chained within this cultural bond forever. The stereotyping of African women as slaves and African men as highly dominating or patriarchal, by several scholars is refuted in the thesis. Such a chain maybe due to the unawareness of the cultural or historical understanding on the part of the critics. African women had a high power and social status in their community long before colonization, it is after colonization, that communities like Igbo society became highly patriarchal. Subsequently, the presence of conventional organizations like Women’s Associations and mystery societies, found in precolonial Igbo society have been analyzed. The traditional *Omu* of women age-grade associations, the role

and functions of it in society, are all discussed. Various social organizations for women and the title holders among them have been discussed to show the prevalence of women in precolonial communities, which lost or got destructed and damaged by colonizers. Different associations connected with women, like *Umuada*, *Umuaghabo*, *Ndi'nyom* or *Umuokupu*, the head or title holder *Anasi*, or *Ada Igbo*, and *Ndi Lolo* have been discussed briefly. Later the agricultural practices of Igbo economy and the gender-based roles and functions of individuals are discussed. Various ceremonies related to marriage and the preparation for a young girl for a family life are the succeeding topics analyzed. The rituals related to first menstruation of a girl (*nkpu*) in Igbo culture are also briefly noted. The system of bride price and various customs related to it forms the subject for the consequent discussion. Next, the system of polygamy and the benefits of it in precolonial society were also analyzed. Later, the impact of colonization on cultural practices of Igbo are examined.

The second part of the chapter deals with the examination of women characters in Emecheta's novels through various customs of Igbo culture. The starting point deals with the issue of fertility or the importance of motherhood in the novel *The Slave Girl*. The use and role of *dibia* for the purpose of infertility is also briefly mentioned. The importance of motherhood for a girl is also discussed through *The Bride Price* in the subsequent section. A significant notice on how Emecheta herself signifies cultural importance of motherhood by dedicating her books to her children is also mentioned. Another important discussion on motherhood happens in *Joys of Motherhood*, where the custom of a slave buried alive with her mistress and the *Chi* concept are elaborated. The character Nnu Ego's dependency on *Chi* throughout her life showcases the importance of certain myths and traditions in the life of an Igbo. Reverence for various elements of nature like rivers, and tagging them with spiritual divinities, is the subsequent topic being discussed. The worship of rivers as goddesses for various desires and fears is common among the Igbo characters in Emecheta's novels. The

next section of the chapter deals with various widow ceremonies or grieving rituals observed by women characters in novels like *The Slave Girl*, and the custom of widow legacy (woman being married or acquired by husband's brother) is discussed through the novel *The Bride Price*. The positive aspects of polygamy in precolonial Igbo community is examined through the novel *The Joys of Motherhood*. The bi-culturation of various heroines has been examined, for instance Akunna in *The Bride Price*. Akunna gets easily adapted to her new traditional way of living and enjoys the association of sisterhood (age-grade of traditional Igbo) within which she feels comfortable and protected. Consequently, the psychology of group mind or collective mind among people of Igbo community is analyzed. The tradition of women being owned by men in different occasions throughout life is being discussed. The power and rights of a woman in her natal home are discussed later in the section. The taboo of choosing one's man is strictly followed in the Igbo custom, which is examined in the novel *The Bride Price* through the character Akunna, who elopes with Chike, and later dies due to her defying of tradition. The stronghold of community over an Igbo individual is analyzed in this section. The Igbo custom of being quiet on one's native home or birthplace and not praising one's father or brother in front of husband or in-laws is a strict tradition adhered to in the novel *The Bride Price*. The various wifely duties to be observed are also discussed through the dialogue between Ma blackie and Akunna in the novel *The Bride Price*. The harmony and cooperation among women are a significant theme in all of Emecheta's novels. After a thorough examination, it was found that almost all of Emecheta's women find solace in these kinds of sisterhoods. The final part of the chapter deals with colonization of Igbo culture and traditional practices followed by women. Women like Ojebeta and Ma Palagada become the victims of colonization through the modification of their cultural habits. Ojebeta takes the name of Alice after she is forcibly pushed into the religion of Christianity and Ma Palagada becomes a whore for foreigners in order to improve her financial status. The marital

disharmony or discord between Igbo couples happens after colonization in Emecheta's novels. The study proved that women wanted their native traditional man not the modern one who was a slave of colonization. Women enjoyed their marital life in native communities as described in the analysis, and they disliked men being feminized through the domestic work done by them for the Whites. All those women who defy tradition, at some point or other in the novels, face tragic end like Nnu Ego and Kehinde in *Joys of Motherhood* and *Kehinde*, respectively. Analysis of characters like Debbie in *Destination Biafra* shows how, inspite of her modern living, she chooses to revive her native living by mothering the orphaned children of war and writing a report on the war. Thus, the finding of the chapter was that Emecheta's Igbo women, as always, show regard to their Igbo native heritage and majority of them were in a better position when they are compared with their postcolonial displacement and distress.

The fourth chapter of the thesis is entirely dedicated to child characters in Emecheta's books and is based on a thorough analysis of some of her juvenile literature like *The Wrestling Match* and *The Moonlight Bride*. The chapter begins with the major children's characters to be analyzed in the chapter. It initially quotes Chieka Ifemesia's view on traditional communal living of Igbo. In the novel *In The Ditch*, Emecheta shows Adah Obi's problems with raising of her children in the confusion between native cultural rearing practices and upkeeping the standards of a London society, expected from parent-child relationship. The study of this particular novel proved, how, despite her poor circumstances, she overcomes the tragic sufferings of London life through her association with other women – which is similar to the native tradition of the women's associations. The next section is on the child character Gwendolen in the novel *The Family*. Gwendolen is the victim of both colonization and the impact of westernization upon her parents. She faces multiple sexual assaults, first from her neighbor Uncle Johnny due to her parents' neglect of her and their marathon behind a modern lifestyle in Britain; later from her own father because of his



unawareness of culture and submerged status or his position in the city life due to colonialism. Further, an analysis has been done on Emecheta's children's books *The Moonlight Bride* and *The Wrestling Match* set in the precolonial times. The children in these works, showcase the moral values and upraise the culture of their tradition. Through various characters in the novels like Ngbeke and Ogoli in *The Moonlight Bride* and Okei and his agemates in *The Wrestling Match*, a vivid portrayal of the Igbo child's life is drawn. The positive qualities of traditional age-grade association and the unique harmony found in the sisterhood are discussed through the character of Ojebeta and Amanna in *The Slave Girl*. Different kinds of cultural disruptions as strategies of reading are also analyzed as a short section in the chapter, for example the Nigerian heteroglossia in the narrative. A short introduction of Nigerian proverbs used in the novels is also mentioned. The ideal world for children sets up in the Kingdom of Shavi and the importance that such a role gives upon children to function as the future hope for the nation is observed in the novel *The Rape of Shavi*.

The clashing cultural traditions under the period of imperialism, especially among children, is the further topic of discussion in this chapter, by analyzing the youth characters in *A Kind of Marriage* (Osita and Afam) and *Naira Power* (Latifu). The unique relationship between a father and daughter is explained in the last part of the chapter through the characters of Akunna and her father in *The Bride Price*. All these are the constituents of the third chapter titled "Synergism of Community and Children in Emecheta's Works."

The fifth chapter titled "A Demographic Profile of Igbo Men" analyses some of the major male characters in Emecheta's works and how a cultural modification happens in their behaviour due to colonialism – thus making them villains of an immediately created patriarchal society after colonialism and a feminization of Nigerian men happens under the White people - which makes them detested and humiliated by their very own women and

children - thus makes them hated. The chapter begins by a short definition about traditional Igbo man, finding a parallel in the Indian text of Manusmriti. Later, Kirsten Holst Petersen's theory originally about African dilemma on women is impacted upon Emecheta's men and finds that African men became more rigorous and dominating after the colonial pressures and oppressions that they faced from Whites – this resulted in a wide modification of their behaviour. The next section deals with how Emecheta herself faces this African dilemma and how her characters portray it. The first novel taken for analysis in this respect is *The Joys of Motherhood*, in which the characters like Nnaife and Ubani showcase feminization of Nigerian men during the phase of colonialism. The study also portrays how this feminization really affects their marital life. The next section analyses the character Ete Kamba in the novel *Double Yoke*. Despite being educated in the modern city, Ete yearns for a traditional living. Subsequently, the same yearning or longing for one's native land and traditional living can be found in the character of Albert in the novel *Kehinde*, which is further analyzed in this chapter. His further traditional life in Nigeria is being analyzed in the section. The next major male character analyzed in the subsequent section is Francis, in the novel, *Second Class Citizen*. Cut off from the native culture of his community, Francis is unfit to keep up a similar dimension of emotional well-being as a traditional man in native Nigeria would. The immediate section after this analysis is about Mr. Winston Brillianton, in the novel *Gwendolen* or *The Family*. The study shows how westernization destructed the Brillianton family due to a father's negligence of his cultural consciousness and due to the modernization and a western mode of living under colonialism. He did not show affection or care to his daughter, and also had incest with his daughter, thereby resulting in his death due to natural forces as said by his friend Ilochina, who describes the punishment for Igbo who defy their tradition. The succeeding part of the chapter deals with the character of Chike in the novel

*The Bride Price*. All these male characters and their analysis on the negative influence of westernization constitutes the fifth chapter of the thesis.

The final sixth chapter of the thesis deals mainly with the affirmations that the objective of the thesis accomplished and the various assumptions and hypotheses stated in the introductory chapter proven true. The limitations and further scope of the study are also mentioned and a detailed analysis and chapter wise summary of each section has been comprehensively outlined – thus asserting that an in-depth ethnographic study of Buchi Emecheta's works has been completed.

This thesis offered a critical reading of Emecheta's works in which the main concern has been ethnography, various questions of readership, and the strategies involved in the works due to cultural influences. But her work remains fruitful ground for further enquiry into the condition of legal concepts, traditional medicinal system (*dibia's*) and general African critical theory concerns.