

Women's Vulnerability and Emancipation in Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*.

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Résumé

*Cet article cherche à mettre en exergue le traitement réservé aux femmes dans *Anthills of the Savannah* de Chinua Achebe. Dans ce sens, il vise fondamentalement à jeter la lumière sur quelques maltraitances dont les femmes font l'objet dans certains romans africains où une analyse approfondie montre que les femmes ont dû se battre rudement pour mériter le respect, l'estime et la considération de la part des hommes. Bref, le roman de Chinua Achebe semble dénoncer le manque de considération dont les femmes sont victimes. Dans le roman, Achebe semble également tresser des lauriers aux femmes qui ont reçu la même éducation que les hommes. En un mot, à travers ce roman, Chinua Achebe dénonce une injustice orchestrée contre les femmes et ne tarde pas non plus à louer l'engagement et le mérite des femmes.*

Mots clés : *vulnérabilité, maltraitance, patriarcat, émancipation, autonomisation.*

Abstract

*The study seeks to highlight the treatment of women in *Anthills of the Savannah* by Chinua Achebe. In this sense, it fundamentally aims to shed light on some abuses to which women are subjected in certain african novels where an in-depth analysis shows that women have had to fight hard to deserve the respect, esteem and consideration from men. In short, the novel seems to denounce the lack of consideration of which women are victims. In the above mentioned novel, Achebe also seems to weave laurels to women who have received the same education as men. In a word, through this book, the author denounces an orchestrated injustice against women but he is quick to praise the commitment and merit of women.*

Key words : *vulnerability, mistreatment, patriarchy, emancipation, empowerment.*

Introduction

In the past, many theorists used to talk about patriarchy in Africa to refer to the organization of the social life and structures in which men are supposed to have the ultimate control over women's lives and actions. Moreover, some people do not dispute the tremendous role carried out by men as heads of families and societies but it is the relegation and the sexual discrimination of the female sex to the background that is generally opposed. In every society, men are known to be leaders, to struggle for bread, to fight against dangers, to do things in a hostile environment in a way that women cannot do because a woman as the name implies is believed to be a weak sex that needs men's protection. Then, traditionally speaking, men have the unquestionable power and supervision over women whose role was very restricted. This fact has drawn the attention of many writers. Chinua Achebe does not delay to point out such a fact in his famous novel *Anthills of the Savannah* where he emphasises the weakness of women through the character of Elewa. In the same way, Achebe shows women's redemption that is embodied by Beatrice. Hence the following topic : *Women's Vulnerability and Emancipation in Chinua Achebe's Anthills of the Savannah*.

This topic aims at showing the mistreatment of which women are the victims and the reason why we have chosen this novel is that the developed themes are up to now relevant. Then, the choice of such a topic is motivated by a willingness to pinpoint women's struggle and sacrifices that have resulted in their present status. In this article, it will be of paramount importance to analyze women's weakness and strength. Then, we express the hypothesis according to which women have won their present status due to education and struggle. So, the study which is going to focus on a analytic approach will consist of two parts. The first one will have a particular focus on the ill-treatment of which women are victims. As for the second part, the stress is going to be laid on women' commitment.

1-Mistreatment towards women

As it is stated previously, men have the unquestionable power and supervision over women whose role was very restricted. Women were enslaved and were denied many rights in traditional Africa and even in Europe because the majority of them were poor and illiterate. Their role was restricted to cooking and giving birth seeing that it was believed that that housework is a woman's job. As a result, they are unpaid servants of despotic husbands, hard-working and obedient; they are factories for producing children and toys for men to play with. Writers who draw inspiration from societal realities do not delay to point out such practices. In this regard, Chinua Achebe christened Albert Chinualumogu Achebe Chinua belongs to this category of writers. In *Anthills of the Savannah*, he talks about Elewa who is victim of ill-treatment in the hands of Ikem, her boyfriend. One day, after having had a carnal knowledge of her, he puts her in a taxi saying that the battery of his car is low whereas when he needed her, he went and picked her up from her house. This behavior urges Elewa to talk to Ikem in the following words: *"Imagine...to put a girl for a taxi at midnight to go and jam with arm robbers in the road in Bassa.... Your battery is down.... why your battery no down for afternoon when you come to pick me."* (Achebe, 1987 :32)

This statement allows us to assert that Elewa was a tool, an object of pleasure for Ikem who had no consideration towards her. Oppression is generally experienced through consideration linked to gender difference that enforces the supremacy of men and even substantial their tyranny over women. Therefore, among the recurrent forms of oppression are domestic violence, either physical or moral, sexual abuse, intimidation because of their deep lying psychological needs and men's self-interests. Men use violence to oppress women and this is perceivable in *Anthills of the Savannah* through Beatrice's mother. The latter used to be hit by her husband and Beatrice says:

She would come out afterwards...wiping her eyes with one corner of her wrapper.... And then, one day, as my mother came out wiping her eyes, I rushed to her and hung her legs but instead of pressing me to herself as I

had expected, she pushed me away so violently that I hit my head against the wooden mortar. After that, I didn't feel any more liking telling my father to die. (Achebe, 1987 :79)

Amma Darko is in the same wavelength with Chinua Achebe. In *Beyond the Horizon*, he deals with relevancy with women's oppression. In this novel, Darko's main character Mara, from the very beginning of her marriage, starts suffering in the hands of her husband who brutalizes her most of the time without advancing no reason at all. For example, she was beaten whenever her husband feels like doing it as she asserts:

I mean Akobi was not beating me for the first time and this was not going to be the last beating... So, this slap with its shock pain hurts me more than ever. I was so totally flabbergasted, for I didn't know what it was if I had done wrong or indeed if I had done anything wrong. (Darko, 1995 :20-21)

Moreover, Mara is exploited by her own husband who forces her into prostitution for his favor as it is noticeable in the following statement: *"My husband brings me to a foreign land and puts me in a brothel to work, what money I made, he uses to pay the rent of his lover apartment and to renovate a house of her in her village back home."* (Darko, 1995 :137-138)

Thus, men's brutality seems to be a phenomenon woman should face as part of their existence. Women are considered feeble sex and dominated gender is objectified, battered, oppressed and demeaned by the system. Amma Darko, presents a woman who is metamorphosed by years of sufferings. Mara's husband as well as Ikem are callous, and sadistic men. Akobi is a man whose way of communication manifests through beatings. For a yes or a no, he never misses an opportunity to slap or to beat his wife who says:

When I did not bring him the bowl of water and soap in time for washing his hands before and after eating, I received a nasty kick in the knee. When I forget to bring the chewing stick for his teeth, which he always

demanded to be placed neatly beside his bowl of serving food, I got a slap in the face... (Darko, 1995 :19)

Thus, most of the time, authors show women as tools in the hands of their husbands or in the hands of men in general. At the same time, they try to show how cruel African men are towards their wives only because, they think that they have the right to use violence. Aware of that fact, men profit from women's naivety and weakness so as to exploit them pitiless. In other words, women are reduced to objects of manipulation, tools men use for their own purposes. Women also stand as objects of pleasure in men's eyes as it is the example of Elewa in Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*. As a result, the ill-treatment of which women are victim tells us more about the realities of social inequalities that Achebe denounces through the character of Elewa. So, women are victims of physical and sexual exploitations in male-dominated communities and Fatou Diouf Kandji is of this opinion when she writes:

The sexual revolution profits men. It is male-oriented and anti-women in so far as women cannot compete with men in license and promiscuity. Women will always be the losers. The sexual revolution makes women more vulnerable as it turns them into sex objects and easily available common properties. (Diouf, 1995 :24)

This statement shows men's discourtesy and savagery against women. What is more, in Ngugi Wa Thiong'o *Devil on the Cross*, we see the way Wariinga, a young girl, is victim of bad situation in the hands of her aunt's husband. She is a very respectable woman whose future is promising. She is very good and quick at learning and she is often the top of her class. Wariinga has no thoughts or worries other than the sheer love of learning and her ambition is to complete school with high honor. Her dreams are to finish school successfully and win a place at the university.

Her name is known in all the neighboring schools and even beyond because her knowledge in mathematics is legendary. Studying night and day, going to church every Sunday is Wariinga's routine from Monday to Sunday. Unfortunately, her aunt's husband whom she calls

uncle is the man who causes Wariinga's disappointment. He gives Wariinga to marriage to a rich old man. One day, the latter teaches Wariinga a lesson she will never forget. After making her get pregnant, he chases her away refusing the paternity when he says:

How could you possibly have conceived so soon if I were the only man who went with you? Go away and look for the young man who has got you into trouble, and tell him to marry you or to take you to the forest or somewhere else for an abortion. I thought all along that I was with a clean school girl, a girl without many problems, a girl I would have loved to marry, so that she could be balm for my old bones. But instead, I picked on Kareendi Ready-to-yeild, did I? (Thiong'o, 1982 :138-153)

Consequently, all Wariinga's hopes disappear. This disappointment is caused by her uncle's lust for money and the rich old man pushes her to be willing to commit suicide. Thus, we can say without any shade of doubt that women are sometimes victimized by forced marriages. That is to say, when it comes to getting married, women are expected to submit to their parents' decisions. This phenomenon occurs in Seydou Badian's *Sous l'Orage* as well as in Amma Darko's *Beyond the Horizon*. In the first mentioned novel, Père Benfa makes the decision to marry his daughter Kany to a rich trader called Famagan without warning her. One day, Père Benfa gathers his three brothers: Tiemako, Moussa, and Sori and his elder son Sibiri together in order to tell about Kany's marriage to Famagan. After the meeting, Père Benfa asks Maman Téné, his wife, to inform her daughter. In the latter too, Mara is also victim of parental authority. Being granted of no parcel of freedom, her husband is chosen by her father: "*your father has found a husband for you. He gasped a good man.*" (Darko, 1995 :4)

Her mother told so when she came from the village well. Asking who the chosen husband is would be considered rude. Girls are not allowed to ask for information because it is interpreted as the manifestation of an evil curiosity, disobedience. Akobi, the chosen husband of Mara is the son of the local undertaker, first child from his village to get a form from school certificate. This piece of information shows that

marriages are arranged without love, thing sine qua non for a good union. For most African girls, choosing a husband is out of question. Additionally, this parental authority is visible in Ebou Dibba's *Chaff on the Wind*. In the named novel, Dinding's sister is forced to marry a man called Adamma whom she did not know. In this regard, Ebou Dibba says:

The last time they had all gathered together like this was to see his favorite sister off to marry a man she did not know. That was also a painful day for Dinding, because he knew his sister would not have married Adamma if she had had her say, and therefore, he knew she was not happy.... To see her sacrificed to an alien had filled Dinding at once with pity.... (Dibba, 1986 :16)

So, many African writers, especially women, most of the time, denounce the difficult conditions in which women are often put. Among these committed women writers is Nawal El Saadawi. In her controversial novel entitled *Woman at Point Zero*, she deals with father's authority. Nawal is an Egyptian novelist known for her controversial writing often an invitation to question authority and patriarchy power. She was imprisoned in 1987 for her courageous political activities. She has always been silenced for advocating women's liberation and she is the President of the Arabic women's solidarity association. Her novel is an allegory for women's struggle against patriarchy, an allegory of the life history of Firdaus, an Egyptian woman convicted for murder and waiting for execution. Firdaus is the main character of the novel. Her parents died when she was an adolescent and after their death, she was sent to live with her paternal uncle in Cairo. She was sent to a boarding school where she was graduated. Unfortunately for her, she was compelled to get married when she was nineteen years old with a man of over than sixty years, a physically repulsive man with a tumor in his lip. Her uncle arranges the wedding and makes sure that Firdaus would serve her husband, cook for him and share the same bed and intimacy with him. But, during the marriage, Firdaus is often abused and punished on many occasions. Her husband hits her violently. One day, she is punished for having thrown away food. As a result, she leaves the

house and goes to look for a shelter at her uncle's house but there, she is told that men do beat their wives and the latter have to accept. Having no choice, she leaves her husband definitely and finds shelter in the street where she feels free. Unfortunately, she has to earn her life by prostituting. As soon as she becomes wealthy and successful as a prostitute, she attracts the attention of a man who intends to exploit her work in exchange for protection. But their relationship is that of a slave and his master. She has to work days and nights without being paid. Her husband takes her money and even threatens her in these terms: "*You will never leave me.*" (Sadaawi, 1983 :95)

Nawal Sadaawi is very subversive in the portrayal of Firdaus. We are making this parallelism in order to show the diversity of the depiction of consequences father's decisions may have on the lives of their daughters.

Furthermore, women are victims of prejudices. Traditionally speaking, male babies were much more desired than female ones. When a woman gave birth, the first question was "is the baby a boy? Of course, the expected answer was yes. Women even preferred baby boys to baby girls. It was considered to be well lucky to get a baby boy as a first child because for them, it was a source of respect, envy, and consideration. This preference is justified by old assumptions according to which daughters will, sooner or later, leave their father's house, join their husbands and belong to other families whereas boys stay at home and perpetrate the family names and burdens. Such a preference pushes a sympathizer to Efurú during the latter's child Ogonim to say: "*You were married and for a long time, you did not have a child. Then, our gods and the ancestors opened your womb and you had a baby girl. We all rejoiced for you. A girl is something though we have preferred a boy.*" (Nwapa, 1967 :73)

In African societies, there are beliefs that are established and allow the domination of women. Those beliefs are strengthened by the Christian and Muslim religions because it is said that a woman who disobeys her husband will never ever enter paradise. In other words, it means that this woman refuses to obey God. It is also argued that women's benediction and salvation depend on their husbands. That is to say that men's words are law and women only exist to serve their pleasure and

obey their commands. Men are supposed to be the yardsticks, the points of reference in our societies. A woman's achievement and that of her children are measured in respect of her husband. In another context, it is said that if a child succeeds, his father is the greater winner but if he fails, his father disowns his faulty offspring but the mother cannot. Such a statement leads Buchi Emecheta in *Joys of the Motherhood* to assert: "When the children are good, they belong to the father, when they are bad, they belong to the mother. Every woman knows it." (Emecheta, 1979 :28)

Uchendu, Okonkwo's uncle in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* shares the same point of view. Okonkwo is compelled to go to exile in Mbanta after his crime consisting in killing a man; his uncle welcomes him gloriously and talks to him as followed:

A man belongs to his father and his family, not to his mother and her family. A man belongs to his fatherland, not to his motherland.... But, when a father beats his child, it seeks sympathy in its mother's hut. A man belongs to his fatherland when things are good and life is sweet. But, when there is sorrow and bitterness, he finds refuges in his motherland. (Achebe, 1958 :94-95)

Women are like slaves to men in the old African societies due to the fact that they must not only be submissive to their husbands but they must also accept sufferings for God's sake. Consequently, they work hard from pregnancy to delivery. They are, in many novels, hard-workers. But, despite their struggle so as to succeed in their womanhood or marital life, women are, most of the time, exposed to things they do not deserve even though we have not to forget that the traditional rules perceive that women's existence is only possible under men's authorities. This restricts them to a situation in which the only opportunity which is given to them is a total submission to men's orders.

All this shows women's vulnerability and victimization in traditional societies and that they were not given the same status as men. However, nowadays, since the majority of offences and discrimination against women are committed by men, the desire to improve women's

situation must come equally from men as well as from women. The aim is not to disapprove the long and well-established traditional belief but to satirize the abuse of such a practice in order to reduce women's secondary position and allow them to express themselves freely and to make decisions. It is important to argue that these traditional views and practices are no longer relevant today seeing that male domination is, for the time being, source of problems such as divorce, betrayal....to name but a few. The latter are caused, in some extent, by women's involvement and commitment in all fields of the society.

2-Women's emancipation.

The nineteenth century marks black women's commitment and empowerment manifested through rebellion and search for justice. In other words, we can say that with less means and strong hopes and being objects of years of suffering and exploitation, a stream of consciousness as important as education comes. Thus, troubling a long period during which black women have been useless. Nowadays, these black women no longer worry about enslavement laws or any other moral injustice. What they care is how they lead their lives into freedom, consideration, respect, and equality without restriction or heavy burden.

What is more, they are no longer dependent as far as financial, economic, social and political fields are concerned. Black women's commitment is somehow characterized by their willingness to separate themselves from the long tyrannical rule they have been victims of in the hands of men, the bad ill-treatment they have undergone for the name of right into self-justice.

In modern Africa, women's fight for freedom, and liberation since the colonial period has been successful. This success is caused by the fact that modernity demands much more because it wants women to be individually, intellectually, economically, socially and politically active agents capable of contributing to nations building. Thus, women become more and more committed to liberate themselves from men's domination and to earn their parts of consideration. That is why, they make themselves heard.

So, after many years of struggle for recognition, women succeed in getting involved in all fields. Today, they are active agents because we can see that the traditional belief is more and more changing due to the fact that in these contemporary societies, there is a new generation of women who are proving by their availability, ability, competence that they are able to play the same roles like men. Hence, the parity system in which men and women are treated equally, are given the same lucks, the same opportunities of success. Therefore, the parity system opposes to the belief according to which women should remain at home, cook food, fetch water and look after their children. In this vein, in Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*, women's motivation, determination and commitment are no longer to be doubted. Their only care, and concern are their liberation, consideration, and involvement. In this novel, Beatrice can be considered the heroine. Chinua Achebe deals, in differing ways, with the question of women's restoration in postcolonial Africa. *Anthills of the Savannah* depicts a strong, central female character who serves as sources of passion, and inspiration. This proves that Achebe is clearly interested in rethinking women's roles. He also frames their narratives in such a way that begins to highlight the essential relationship between the postcolonial independence and gender equality.

With the passing of time since independence, African authors have begun to turn their eyes to the harsh realities and in so doing, attempt to discuss a dialogue about the issue of women in African societies. Achebe's novel is a modern work insofar as the book, with an eye towards the trends in postcolonial theory, is written with an awareness of the need for a new, consistent and more realistic vision of African women. This obvious inequality of the sexes seems to be the subject of amusement for Achebe's understanding of women's roles in a post-colonial nation. African women are politically and socially committed. As far as the political commitment is concerned, women are in the forefront of the scene.

Through the character of Beatrice in *Anthills of the savannah*, Achebe projects a new vision of women's role, importance and commitment. So, women represent new hopes for the transformed political world since they are, right now, aware of their role. In the named novel,

Beatrice appears to be a politically committed woman. Let's say that the political history of Kangan is essentially that of three male friends Sam, Chris and Ikem. These western-educated men have, in their own minds, risen to a level above most of the bedraggled and suffering population, yet they are doomed to fail due to their insistence on attempting to rule the country according to preexisting patterns, whereas the country's turmoil is their own. In the midst of this is Beatrice, the woman who emerges as the true spirit and heart of the novel. Removed from the inner-workings of the men's government, she alone is able to observe the status of Kangan with a perspective more geared towards reality as she tells Ikem: "*All three of you are incredibly conceited. The story of the country, as far as you are concerned, is the story of the three of you.*" (Achebe, 1987 :60)

Beatrice appears to be a well-respected woman in post-colonial Africa. She is used to serving as a middle woman between Chris, her boyfriend and Ikem whenever there was a problem between them. Sam, the Head of State of Kangan, respects her too much. This respect comes from the personality Beatrice embodies and the high education she receives from England. That is why; Sam invites her to come to the presidential palace. Next to the political commitment, African women are socially committed too. Apart from being freedom fighters, bearers, and transmitters of tradition, women promote changes by their involvement in societies to which they belong. In this regard, Beatrice can be seen as a symbolic defender of resistance to gender social oppression.

In addition to this, women are on the verge of taking over and this can be exemplified by Beatrice in Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* where she who relies on her personal endeavor in order to achieve her goals successfully is the defender of women's rights in all levels. She succeeds in helping, supporting and consoling her counterparts, especially Elewa when the latter loses her boyfriend Ikem: "*From that day, she had addressed herself to the well-being of the young woman through the remaining weeks of her confinement.*" (Achebe, 1987 :202)

In the course of the book, Beatrice repeatedly accuses Ikem of having no consideration, no clear role for women in his political view. Hence

the turning point of the novel with Ikem's recognition about his prior mistakes regarding women. Thus, Achebe portrays Beatrice as a modern woman who is ready to fight for self-respect and women's freedom and consideration from male domination. She always fights against injustice, inequalities in societies. She tries to be the spokeswoman of her counterparts and clarifies Ikem's thoughts about gender issues.

What is more, Achebe tries to show the moral and intellectual strength especially since the social condition which has kept women down. Women think that they must be able to participate in the development of their countries. Beatrice inhabits the post-colonial world of her community. As eminent intellectuals, women should be involved in the ruling of their countries. Beatrice represents a minority in which men receive education while the female gender remains at home and takes care of the household. That is to say, women's place in the society is made possible because of education. Seemingly, African women are aware of that because through education, Beatrice becomes an outstanding person in her community. Again, her home at the end of the novel becomes a rallying point of her counterparts and Achebe to say: *"In the weeks and months that followed, her flat became virtually the house of Emmanuel and Braimoh and the girl Adamma. The captain also came quite frequently. Sometimes, especially at week, they would all be there together."* (Achebe, 1987 :203)

What is more, she carries respect from her counterparts in particular but from the whole community in general. She also forms the revolutionary elite fighting against the oppression brought by the military regime controlled by Sam. For instance, the great number of women leading responsibilities in many fields mirrors somehow that things are changing because men as well as women are all engaged as active agents so as to contribute to the nations building and development. Traditionally speaking, babies were named by men, their fathers and this naming event is usually led by men masters, fathers, uncles and husbands. But, Beatrice, in *Anthills of the Savannah*, does not see things in this way. So, she breaks a long traditional and respected belief. In so doing, she, as a modern and a good spokeswoman of women, performs the ceremony herself. In this

respect, she represents both fathers and husbands at the naming ceremony when she says:

In our traditional society, the father named the child. But the man who should have done it today is absent.... This man is not here although I know he is floating around us now, watching with that small boy smile of his. I am used to teasing him and I will tease him now. What does a man know about a child any way that he should presume to give it a name...? I think that our tradition is faulty there. It is really safest to ask the mother what her child is or means or should be called. (Achebe, 1987 :206)

This breaking with the tradition suggests a new beginning, a subversive of not only western tradition, but Africa as well. Beatrice leads the changes, forcing the others to adapt with what is present. Achebe appears to have realized the need for women to declare themselves their place in African societies, if it is ever to heal itself and progress onwards. In Ayi Kwei Armah's *Fragments*, Araba, the young mother and her own mother, Efua do the same as Beatrice as far as the naming ceremony is concerned. They even go further by shortening the day the ceremony should be held and by choosing, according to their advantages, to name the baby without Kwesi, the father. Nowadays, women satisfy their needs without men's aid and participate in the well-being of their families. In *Fragments*, women show that their abilities are against the opinion according to which women must be disadvantaged in favor of men and this leads Araba, Baako's sister to reject the traditional belief, that is to say, men's dominance, and supremacy over women when she says: "*Nothing prevents the mother from helping the father make a good decision. Men think they rule the world.*" (Armah, 1970 :86)

Such an assertion allows us to say that women are getting more and more involved politically as well as socially. As many people think, gender equality is not a threat but rather, an advantage for men and women to help one another. In a nutshell, Beatrice is the voice of unheard women. In this way, she looks like Penda in Ousmane Sembene's *God's Bits of Wood* who, though is illiterate, dares to take

the floor and speaks in the name of her fellows in the following words:

I speak in the name of women; I'm the voice they have chosen to tell you what they have decided to do. Yesterday, we all laughed together men and women and today, we weep together but for us this strike still means the possibility of better tomorrow. We owe it to ourselves to help up for heads and not to give up now. So, we have decided that tomorrow we shall walk together to Dakar. (Sembène, 1980 :18)

In so doing, Penda and her fellows are ready to help their husbands in order for the latter to get good living conditions. Women in all levels need empowerment; they also need to be psychologically empowered to build their confidence and to assist themselves at work if they are to rise to top levels in organization and education has been the most important tool in empowering women in the African Diaspora. Therefore, this is a call addressed to both male and female writers to produce literature that would act as a catalyst in a mission to transform the society and to encourage physical, economic, social and political emancipation and in this way, women's empowerment will be encouraged as well.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the present article which is intended to be a reminder of the living conditions of women aims at laying emphasis on the particular attention Chinua Achebe has allotted to women in his novel, *Anthills of the Savannah*. On the one hand, Achebe points out the mistreatment some women are victims and Elewa is a good illustration insofar she does not receive the consideration she deserves from her boyfriend, Ikem who considers her an object of pleasure. At the same time, the author praises women's commitment and merit through the character of Beatrice who is the embodiment of reconciliation, success and respect. Many African writers have done the same as Chinua Achebe. We have come the conclusion according to which women's emancipation was hindered by traditional perceptions and they have

won their present status through struggle, sacrifices and the high education they have received. Achebe tackles such a fact with relevancy through Beatrice. Now, it is necessary to ask if the mistreatments we have pointed out are the only ones from which women are suffering and if they are given the places they deserve seeing their high education and everlasting struggle for better living conditions.

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