Flora Nwapa : from a Womanist to a Feminist in her Efuru

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ABSTRACT

In this article, the aim has been to discover Flora Nwapa's identity in the literary arena between being a womanist and a feminist. To carry out the research, the investigation has been done through her novel entitled Efuru ; the work has been divided into two main parts namely : Flora Nwapa as a womanist and Flora Nwapa as a feminist. As for the literary approaches used in the scrutiny, there have been the womanism and the feminism. At the end of the study, it has been found out that Flora Nwapa's literary identity has not been static in her Efuru.She has moved from being a womanist to a feminist. As a matter of fact, in the first part of her novel, Flora has been a womanist since she has been tolerant to her first husband called Adizua. However, in the second part, she has been a feminist because she has not tolerated any mistreatment from her second husband Gilbert Eneberi whom she has divorced for accusing her of adultery.

Keywords : Feminism, Womanism, Co-wives, Dibia

INTRODUCTION

In the world, humans differ from one another on basis of several characteristics. As a result, in literature, scholars are different from others by their trends, ideologies and so forth. Consequently in literature, some authors are said to be feminists whereas others are womanists. During the African Literature Association conference held in 2021 online, Flora Nwapa's daughter called Ejine did not agree with me when I called her mother a feminist. Ejine argued that her mother was not a feminist but a womanist because that was the way she preferred to be labeled. Thereby, to discover whether Ejine was right or not, through this work, the lynchpin is to unveil the Flora Nwapa's true identity when it comes to literature. Although the authoress is said to be prolific, this investigation will focus on a single novel of hers entitled Efuru. Before going further in this study, it is worth shedding light on what has been stated about Flora Nwapa's label in the literary arena.

The interest in discovering whether Flora Nwapa is a feminist has also been tackled by Dr. E.D Simon and Dr. G.E Worugji through their work : 'The African feminist ideology and The independent woman in Flora Nwapa's Efuru and Zaynab Alkali's The Stillborn(Simon & Worugji, 2021, pp.100-107) '. At the end of their research, they have come to the conclusion that both Flora Nwapa and Zaynab are feminists. As a matter of fact, they have painted the mistreatment women undergo from men. Nwapa and Zaynab have depicted how their main characters namely Efuru and Li are mistreated by their husbands.

Like the authors above, Ogbu Chukwuka Nwachukwu has researched on whether Flora Nwapa is a feminist in his article: 'War and survival : Female power and space in Flora Nwapa's never again(Nwachukwu,2018, pp.138-145)' : At the end of his study, Nwachukwu argues that Flora Nwapa is a feminist. This labeling is due to the fact that in her novel 'never again', Flora Nwapa is partial in her depiction of characters. She better depicts female characters in disfavor of male ones. Things which do not reflect the reality in the novel where men fight in front whereas women only deal with second rate tasks such as cooking for men in the front line.

Besides what has been argued above, Oluwayemi Adelakun has dealt with the issue in her article : 'Flora Nwapa : Ambition that went global(Adelakun,2022,00:19).' After the investigation, the author has stated that Flora Nwapa is a feminist although she shied away from the term because of its bad connotation it has in Africa.

In addition to what has been stated in the precedent lines, Sam Olukoya has researched on Flora Nwapa's literary identity in his article : 'Flora Nwapa : Mother of modern african literature(Olukoya,2020,-3:46) '. At the end of his scrutiny, he has argued that Flora Nwapa's most notable work is Efuru. As a matter of fact, through Efuru, the authoress breaks anti-feminist stereotypes.

Bringing his contribution to the research related to Flora Nwapa's literary labeling through his article :'Female self-affirmation and Self-fulfilment in Nwapa's One is Enough(Sene,1981, pp.1012-1019)', albeit Abdou Sene is reluctant to call Flora Nwapa a feminist, The author tacitly argues that Flora Nwapa is a feminist. As a matter of fact, according to Abdou Sene, in One is Enough, Amaka asserts her rights by stating loudly what she thinks.

As for the literary approaches, this work will be carried out through the lenses of two approaches namely womanism and feminism. Before getting further in this study, it is germane to explicate the difference beween womanism and feminism. In fact, as Rebecca Walker states :'To be a feminist is to integrate an ideology of equality and female empowerment into the very fiber of my life…Whereas Alice Walker, author of The Color Purple (1982), disputes the term feminist as applied to black women ; she writes that she has replaced feminist as applied to black women ; she writes that she has replaced feminist with womanist , remarking that a womanist does not turn her back upon the men of her community(Guerin et al., 2011, pp.257-265).

Through the passage above, one can tell the difference between feminism and womanisn provided by Rebbecca Walker and Alice Walker. In fact, according to Rebbeca, feminists lobby for equal rights between women and men, and women empowerment. That is women want to be equal to men. Consequently, feminists do not tolerate either injustice or mistreatment from men. However, Alice walker posits that unlike feminism, in womanism, divorce does not prevail. As a result, there is cooperation and interdependence between men and women. Whenever there is misunderstanding, womanists promote dialogue to solve their issues with men .

As for its plan, this work has been divided into two main parts namely Flora Nwapa as a womanist and Flora Nwapa as a feminist

Flora Nwapa as a Womanist

Flora Nwapa as a Womanist in the Household

The household is a body of people mainly wife, husband and children who live in a single house. Since where people dwell there are always some issues that display their behaviour toward each other, in this section, the main purpose is to delve into Flora Nwapa's Efuru to discover whether there are proofs of womanism in her main character's couple life. This part has been divided into two subsections namely the relationship between two partners and the relationship between co-wives

Relationship between Two Partners(Husband and Wife)

The partners are people who live in a married couple as husband and wife or unmarried ones. As where people live, there are daily issues that they face, through this subsection, the main aim is to discover Flora Nwapa's literary school of thought by scrutinizing Efuru's behaviour toward her husbands in her two marriages through the authoress' novel under scrutiny.

When Adizua and Efuru started dating, as Adizua could not afford the dowry, Efuru eloped. This Efuru's deed depicted the love she had for her prospective husband. However, the elopement was not well appreciated by Efuru's father. Consequently, Efuru's father sent people to go and fetch her from Adizua's place. Since her relationship with Adizua was so precious, Efuru welcomed her father's envoys warmly in the following terms :

> 'Welcome, my brothers. What good wind brings you here today. I hope all is well.'
>
> 'All is well, our daughter,' the men said.

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> 'We have come for a business,' the spokesman added.
>
> 'We shall have kola before the business. It is a pity my husband is not at home.He went to the farm.
>
> Efuru brought two big kola nuts. They were fit only for kings. She put them before the men, with some alligator pepper. The spokesman took one kola nut and blessed it. Then he broke it and gave the men(1966:9).".

Efuru's reaction toward her father's envoys is not just for showing respect to her father's people. In fact, it is to protect her husband from humiliation. By offering big kola nuts that are fit for kings and alligator pepper, Efuru shows her father's people that although she had eloped, her husband is not useless person. In fact, Adizua is wise and well-mannered. He knows how to treat his guests. Consequently Efuru's reaction in the passage above depicts complementarity between husband and wife. Efuru acted in this way to save her husband's face vis-à-vis his prospective in-laws. As complementarity is part womanism, the passage above features Flora Nwapa as a womanist. Thus, to convince the people sent by father as far as Adizua's standard of living is concerned, Efuru also offered what follows to his father's people :

> Meanwhile, Efuru brought out a bottle of home-made gin- a very good one that had been in a kerosene tin for nearly six months.
>
> 'I am sure you will like this gin. Nwabuzo had it buried in the ground last year when there was rumour that policemen were sent to search her house… The men enjoyed the drink very much . They finished the bottle and some of them were even tipsy(1966 : 9).

Like above, in offering a bottle of gin to people sent by her father, Efuru continues saving Adizua's face toward her father. The bottle of gin conveys a message about Adizua's wisdom and standard of living. As a result, through the bottle of gin, Efuru means her husband is not anybody, he has financial means to treat his visitors decently. Since the treatment Efuru provided her visitors with was a kind of stopgap solution, her father demanded the payment of the dowry. Efuru went farther in protecting her husband. As Adizua could not afford the dowry, Efuru found herself in husband's shoes. Since in womanism, understanding and complementarity prevail over arguments, Efuru worked hard and decided to provide her husband with money so that he could pay the dowry. Given the fact some people realized that Efuru gave Adizua money to pay her dowry, they reacted in the following terms :

> "Poor child, she suffered.' One went on, 'I heard that her husband could not even afford the dowry. He could not afford the dowry. Efuru had to work hard trading in so many things and when they got the money they went and paid the dowry…"(1966:89)

This is a crystal clear proof of womanism in Flora Nwapa's Efuru. Since paying the dowry is a must for anybody who wants to marry a lady in Igbo society, knowing that Adizua could not afford the dowry, Efuru worked hard in trade to give her husband money to marry her. In providing Adizua with the dowry money, Efuru hides Adizua's true walk of life vis-à-vis his in-laws. This deed by Efuru depicts complementary between the two partners. Any woman, who does not foster the understanding in the couple, cannot offer money to her husband to marry her. Always, investigating Flora Nwapa's literary identity, during an interview with Flora Nwapa's niece called Njideka in Mount Poconos, Pennsylvania, USA in August in 2012, when I asked the latter if the dowry money Efuru gave to Adizua depicted womanism, Njideka agreed with me in arguing that Efuru's deed depicted an act of womanism in Flora Nwapa's fiction. In fact, the dowry money paints the cooperation that existed in Efuru and Adizua's couple life(M.A.L.Marain (personal communication, June , 2012).

Apart from what has been depicted in the previous lines, proofs of womanism in Flora Nwapa's Efuru were displayed when Nwasu with his wife Nwabata went to see Efuru so that she could give them a loan. In fact, as Nwasu and Nwabata both characters in Flora Nwapa's novel under scrutiny could not afford the coming planting season, they went to ask Efuru for a financial help. As Efuru's husband was not around, although she

was the one who had money, Efuru asked them to wait for her husaband. Thus, when Efuru's husband came, he reacted as follows :

> "My wife will give you ten pounds, at the end of the year you will give us our ten pounds, you shall have your child. If anything happens and you cannot afford to give us this money at the end of the year, let us know."(1966:40)

Besides the passage above, this one paints the existence of womanism in Flora Nwapa's Efuru as well. In fact, Efuru as a woman knows the man's place in the household, she cannot act instead of her husband. As a result, when Nwasu and Nwabata came to ask her for a loan, Efuru honored her husband by arguing that she could not give them the loan because her husband was not around. Acting in this way, Efuru made Nwasu and Nwabata believe that her husband was the owner of the money and has the last word when it came to giving the loan though the money was hers. The depiction of womanism in Flora Nwapa's novel under scrutiny did not only limit at her will to save her husband's face vis-à-vis his in-laws and the society.

Efuru went further in protecting her husband. In fact, when Efuru remarried after leaving Adizua's house, there was recurrence of her barrenness. As Efuru did not want to see her second husband called Gilbert Eneberi childless because of her incapacity to reproduce, Efuru married a young girl called Nkoyeni for her husband so that he could have children. Unfortunately, Nkoyeni was not respectful to Efuru's husband. There came a time that Gilbert Eneberi disappeared and nobody knew his whereabouts. Albeit when Gilbert came back, he told his two wives he was not in jail, Nkoyeni could not believe him and kept quarreling with Gilbert. As Efuru could not bear Nkoyeni's reaction toward Gilbert anymore, Efuru reacted:

> 'Nkoyeni,' Efuru said one evening after a quarrel between Nkoyeni and Gilbert. 'Nkoyeni, listen to me. You are a child, a mere child. You do not understand if our husband went to jail, will you leave him ? If he committed murder today, will you desert him ? Tell me frankly, will you ? I have told you that the story is not true. Our Eneberi did not go to jail. Jail for what ? Is our husband a thief ? …(1966 : 201) ?

Efuru's reaction toward her co-wife shows the consideration and cooperation that exists between herself and her husband. According to Efuru, a husband is a dear companion who should be considered almost a member of one's family. Consequently, although Nkoyeni has been married to Gildert, she should not mistreat him regardless what is being said about him. As the husband is the one who is in charge of the family, he is almost the king of the household. Thus, no one between his wives should question him for whatsoever. For Efuru, Nkoyeni does not behave decently toward their husband. The complementarity that is depicted between the main character of novel and her husbands also existed between Flora Nwapa and her husband.

In fact, talking about the complementarity that existed between Flora Nwapa and her husband called Gogo Nwakuche, Marie Umeh stated what follows in Flora Nwapa's biography 'Everything that Flora did was in cooperation with her husband. "Gogo and Flora Nwakuche's marriage radiated joy and happiness.(Umeh, 2010, p.72).' This is a proof of womanism in Flora Nwapa's life. Like any womanist, Flora Nwapa always confided in her husband. Whatever she did, she always associated her husband and vice versa. Besides calling Flora Nwapa a womanist in her biography, Marie Umeh reacted likewise during an interview with me in 2012 in her office at John Jay College in New York, USA M.A.L.Marain (personal communication, June , 2012). In fact, when I asked how she would label Flora Nwapa, Marie Umeh posited that Flora Nwapa is a womanist. This is because during an interview with Dr. Perry in London, when the latter asked Flora Nwapa how she would be labeled, Flora Nwapa argued that she was not interested in being labeled. If she had to be, she would prefer Alice Walker's term womanism. In addition to what Flora Nwapa stated during an interview with Dr. Perry, Umeh also declared that Chikwenye Okonjo, the author of African Woman Palava said that Flora Nwapa is a womanist.

Likewise, in his research paper entiled : Exploring Flora Nwapa's Efuru as a womanist than a feminist(Sonkamble, n.d; pp.1-4), Dr. Uttam B. Sonkamble also calls Flora Nwapa a womanist. To justify his opinion on Nwapa, Dr. Uttam states that in Efuru, the authoress showcases the woman's power. In the novel, the main

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character remains composed regardless what she goes through such as failures in marriages. In addition to what has been stated above, Nwapa also paints the woman as someone who has strong beliefs and abilities.

After the analysis of the relationship between a wife and her husband, it is worth mentioning that there is complementarity between the woman and the man. In fact, they get along very well because the woman always saves her husband's face by protecting him from shame. She always contributes to her husband's happiness by assisting him in the fulfillment of his plans. This assistance exists in whatever they do, no one hides any issue from the other. After the scrutiny of the relationship between the man and woman's couple life, in the following section, the focus will be on relationship between co-wives in order to discover whether Flora Nwapa's womanism exists between co-wives as well.

Relationship between Co-wives

Co-wives are women that share the same husband in a society where polygamy is legal. Thus, in this subsection, the main purpose is to delve into the novel under scrutiny in order to unveil the kind of relationship exists between co-wives and discover the kind of label Flora Nwapa deserves.

As selflessness prevails in womanism, partners are ready to help each other in case of any problems. Thus, whenever one is in trouble, the other has to help out. When Efuru left her first marriage following the disappointment she underwent, she got married to Gilbert Eneberi. While at Gilbert's place, she witnessed the recurrence of barrenness. Since Efuru was not selfish toward her husband, she decided to look for a wife for Gilbert Eneberi. Before starting to look for a wife so that Gilbert could have children, Efuru had a talk with her mother-in-law as follows :

> "You are taking keen interest, my daughter, in getting a wife for your husband. It is good. I am happy."
>
> I want my husband to have children. I am barren.
>
> Don't say that, my daughter, please don't say that. You are not barren. God will open your womb, in his own good time.(1966: 180)

The fact, that Efuru goes to her husband's mother to express her will to marry a second wife for Gilbert so that he could have children , depicts Flora Nwapa's womanism in her fiction. Efuru reacts in this way because she wishes her husband's happiness. She wants her husband to enjoy fatherhood. Efuru's decision paints her love for Gilbert Eneberi. After she has informed her mother-in-law about her will to marry a second wife for her husband, Efuru also stated her plan to marry a second wife to her husband in the following terms :

> " Eneberi, I am thinking of getting a wife for you."
>
> "Why?" Gilbert asked surprised. "You know why. This is the fourth year of our marriage and I have not had an issue for you. We have lived happily these four years. And I am worried. If we get another wife a young girl, she will have children for you and I will love the children because they are your own children." 'I may not like your choice, "Gilbert said.
>
> "That is no problem. You are going to be shown several girls and you are to make your choice."(1966:174)

The passage illustrates the complementarity that exists between partners in womanism. Even though Efuru is an obstacle to fertility in her couple with Gilbert, she does not prevent her husband from procreating. Thus, Efuru intends to look for a young girl so that Gilbert could be a father one day. In making this decision, Efuru does not undergo any pressure either from her society or the in-laws. Moreover Efuru promised to love her husband's children. This womanism which is Flora Nwapa's label in literature does not limit at her fiction. As a matter of fact, womanism also manifested in Flora Nwapa's real life as her husband Gogo Nwakuche testifies in her biography by Marie Umeh as follows :

> On August 15th, 1979 when I went to marry second wife, Maudlin, from Udi in Enugu State (who is now a lawyer), Flora was in support. She even accompanied me in my car and we drove many kilometers from Ugwuta to Udi for the traditional wedding. Also accompanying us was Flora's cousin, Chief U. G. Okwuosha, and dancing troupes from Ugwuta.(2010: 215)

This extract from Flora Nwapa's biography by Marie Umeh shows that the authoress was a womanist both in her fiction and her real life. Nwapa understood her husband's desires. She did not argue with her husband for

mere things. Consequently she did not divorce her husband even though he married a second wife. Something that a feminist woman would not accept. The testimony of Flora Nwapa's husband related to the authoress's womanist's chararcter did not limit at the fact that Nwapa accompanied him to marry his second wife, he added what Flora Nwapa told him in the following terms :

> Polygamy is still part of our culture. Flora understood that. Flora, in her simple clean mind, used to tell me that she was not interested in female liberation protest. She was opposed to that. Flora had told me that in her lectures in America she often dwelt on the African extended family system and polygamy in Africa and citing herself as an example(Umeh, 2010, p.215).

This passage shows that Nwapa was a pure womanist. In fact, she told her husband that she was not interested in separation between men and women. According to Flora Nwapa, the man and the woman should go along. She often stated that polygamy was part her background. As a result, she was not for divorce. She promoted harmony and complementarity in a couple life. In case of any misundertanding, people did not opt for a divorce but found ways to solve their issues.

Since Efuru's decision could not be taken seriously by some of the people from her society, as actions speak louder than words, she decided to fulfill her plan. Efuru married a young woman called Nkoyeni for her husband and moreover she acted as midwife for her during labour as follows :

> "No, no, my child. Wipe your tears. Wipe your tears, at once . If you shout this time, you are going to shout in all your subsequent labours. So wipe your tears and lie down on the floor. Ajanupu will soon be here."
>
> Nkoyeni did not hear. She shouted at the top of her voice: "I am being burnt inside. It is here, right here. No, it is there, there. Ewo-o, I am dead, I cannot survive this. I cannot, mother I cannot. When I say press you press very hard. If you don't press hard enough, you have yourself to blame. Press now, press-press…" A bouncing baby boy emerged. It was like magic…"(1966:205)

In addition to the passages above, The extract above paints the existence of womanism in Flora Nwapa's Efuru as well . The fact that Efuru acts as a midwife while her co-wife is in labour is a proof of complementarity between partners. Through what is stated above, one can understand that according to Efuru, whenever people get married, they become one. Consequently if one gets anything beneficial, both partners will benefit from it. Thus, Efuru knows that although she cannot procreate, if Gibert has children, they will be helpful for both of them.

After the investigation related to the relationship between co-wives, it is worth positing that co-wives enjoy a peaceful atmosphere in Flora Nwapa's Efuru. As a matter of fact, the main character has married a wife for her husband and played a midwife during her co-wife's labour. Likewise Flora Nwapa is said to accept polygamy. As a result, she accompanied her husband Gogo Nwakuche to marry a second wife. All these facts make Flora Nwapa a womanist because her main character Efuru and herself have got along very well with their husbands. After it has been unveiled that Flora Nwapa is a womanist because herself as well as her main character get along well with their husbands. As stated in the plan, in the following section, the aim is to scrutinize the novel under scrutiny to discover whether apart from being a womanist, Flora Nwapa is feminist in Efuru.

Flora Nwapa as a Feminist

Although both feminism and womanism are literary schools of thought through which women assert their rights vis-à-vis men, the main difference between the two schools is that in feminism, women consider men like their enemies. That is they can divorce their husbands when things fall apart in couples. However, in womanism which is considered to be the black feminism, women do not divorce their husbands. In fact, womanists argue that albeit there might be misunderstanding with their male partners, they opt for settling their issues instead of divorcing their men(Guerin et al., 2011, pp.257-265). Thus, in this part, the main focus is to find out whether besides being womanist, Flora Nwapa is a feminist in this work of hers.

After marrying Nkoyeni, Gilbert was about to marry Ogea who was Efuru's maid. Unfortunetly, before their marriage, things did not go smoothly as they planned :

> Before the final arrangements were made for the marriage between Ogea and Gilbert a sad thing happened. Efuru suddenly took ill. For three days, she was unable to get up from her bed. The illness was so sudden that everybody was afraid. Many dibias were contacted and all of them gave different diagnosis. Some said she was going to have a baby, others said the gods were angry with her, for what , they could not tell. When Gilbert's mother was tired of the contradictory dibias she went to a village a few miles away from the town…(1966 : 215)

Efuru's disease was something that no one could pinpoint its cause. Thus, although dibias are considered to be the intermediaries between the physical and supernatural worlds according to Igbos' belief, when it came to the origin of Efuru's illness, none of the dibias could tell. This meant that Efuru's health condition could not be natural. As a human being, Efuru could fall sick and recovered. Given the fact that no cause of Efuru's sickness was brought to light, Gilbert's mother could not help discovering the reason behind Efuru's disease. Consequently, Amede, that is Gilbert's mother consulted another dibia who said what follows to her :

> 'Amede, your daughter in law will die. She is guilty of adultery. Let her confess and her sickness will leave her. She has wronged the goddess of the land and she is being punished accordingly. She must confess otherwise our ancestors will kill her. I am warning you. It is better for her to confess than to die.' She was gone before Amede recovered from her shock. Ogea was not at home when Omirima came. She was filled with hate when she heard what she said(1966 : 215 : 16)

The fact that the dibia argued that the cause of Efuru's sickness was an adultery that she had committed was a tipping point in the marriage between Gilbert and Efuru. Thus, Efuru could not accept to be called adulteress while she did not sleep with a man apart from her husband. According to Efuru, to accuse her of adultery is the worst thing she would never accept. After being accused as an adulterous woman, Efuru had a conversation with a doctor who is her male friend. Through that conversation, Efuru told the latter how Ajanupu who is one of the characters in the novel took her to a hospital during her illness and she made a decision as follows :

> 'She took me to a doctor in Aba. I was cured. I came back only a month ago. I went to my husband 's house and collected all my belongings. Then I called my age-group and told them formally what I was accused of. According to the custom of our people, selected members of my age-group followed me to the shrine of our goddess- Utuosu. There I swore by the name of Utuosu, she should kill me if I committed adultery. She should kill me if since I married Eneberi any man in our town, in Onicha, Ndoni, Akiri, or anywhere I had been , had seen my thighs(1966 : 220).

As to be called an adultress was something Efuru would not accept, after her recovery, Efuru divorced Eneberi. Efuru's decision to leave her husband because of the adulterous accusation makes Flora Nwapa a feminist in her fiction. In fact, womanists do not abandon their husbands for whatever. Womanists are tolerant towards their partners. In divorcing Eneberi, unlike womanists who need men by their side, Efuru does not need a man in her life. Efuru thinks that she can live her life without a man. In other words, as Eneberi has

accused Efuru of adultery, Efuru takes Gilbert Eneberi for her Enemy. Since an enemy is someone who can hurt you at anytime, Efuru leaves the couple life to live an independent life.

After the investigation whose purpose has been to discover whether besides being a womanist in her first novel, Nwapa can also be called a feminist, it is worth arguing that the authoress is a feminist as well. This is because, at the end of her novel, the main character divorces her husband because the latter has accused her of adulterous woman. As in feminism the separation between men and women prevails, the character's divorce makes the authoress a feminist.

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion related to the study, after a scrutiny to discover whether Flora Nwapa could be called a womanist or feminist in her first novel, Efuru, it should be stated that in the novel, Nwapa is both a womanist and a feminist. In fact, when Flora Nwapa's daughter called Ejine did not agree with me when I called her mother a feminist during the African Literature Association conference held online in 2022, she failed analyzing her mother's novel from the beginning to the end. As a matter of fact, in scrutinizing Efuru's relationship with her first husband Adizua, the main character makes the authoress a womanist because while married to Adizua, Efuru has been tolerant and open minded by bearing her husband's wrongdoings. Efuru helped her husband by providing him with money to pay a bride price. Besides that Efuru did not divorce Adizua although he cheated on her. However, during Efuru's second marriage, that is when Efuru married Gilbert Eneberi, Efuru has not been tolerant to her husband. When Efuru fell sick and was accused of having committed an adultery, Efuru decided to divorce Gilbert Eneberi. Consequently, in leaving her husband because of the adulterous accusation, Efuru makes Nwapa a feminist because womanists do not divorce their husbands but solve couple misunderstandings.

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