Interdisciplinary Research Journal for Humanities

A Peer-Reviewed Journal

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Edited by V. S. Joseph Albert V. John Lizie Williams



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V. S. Joseph Albert
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Articulation of the Obmutescent Female Voices in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Purple Hibiscus

Dr. G. Priya, Assistant Professor, Fatima College, Madurai

A free bird leaps on the back of the wind and floats downstream till the current ends and dips his wing in the orange sun rays and dares to claim the sky.

-Maya Angelou (And Still I Rise, 1-6)

Purple Hibicus (2003), Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's debut novel, begins with a forceful retrospective allusion to Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart, "Things started to fall apart at home..." interspersed with evocative details of the food of Nigeria (balls of Fufu rolled between the fingers, Okpa bought from the roadside vendors) and unfolds like the Purple Hibiscus of the title, rare and fascinating. The story is in first person narration, I-protagonist, fifteen-year-old Kambili Achike, painfully shy and the dutiful, selfeffacing daughter of a rich, religious fanatic, domestic tyrant Eugene whose political image is of a politically courageous newspaper Standard-publisher and philanthropist. No one in Papa's ancestral village, where he is titled "Omelora" (One Who Does For the Community), knows why Kambili's brother Jaja cannot move one of his fingers, nor why her mother Beatrice keeps losing her pregnancies.

Throughout the novel, Kambili and her mother Beatrice learn to navigate within a multiplicity of religious, class, educational or political paradigms to find their 'place' in Nigerian society. Though a humanitarian in public, in private, Eugene represents the terrorist, who controls and governs Beatrice, Ifeoma and Kambili with fear;

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