

## **Abstract**

### **The Womanist Manifesto for Co-existence in the Nigerian Society in the Novels of Sefi Atta**

The literature of Africa is a powerful reflection of the lives of native Africans who have faced centuries of oppression while struggling against imperialism. Nigerian literature, which has existed for centuries in various forms such as myths, folktales, legends, and songs, has especially contributed to this tradition prior to the European invasion. The appearance of female Nigerian writers during the 1970s was a significant landmark in the country's literary advancement. Nigerian female writers are currently leading the African literary sphere, receiving recognition for their exceptional works and making a significant contribution to shaping the country's literary landscape. Among the accomplished writers is the distinguished literary figure Alice Walker, whose definition of Womanism is anchored in praxis, characterising a Womanist by her actions and approach to life. One of Walker's well-known phrases when discussing Womanism is the comparison of it to feminism, where “purple is to lavender.” This analogy illuminates Walker's view of the fundamental differences that exist between Black and White women, particularly in relation to issues of agency and community. Sefi Atta is treading the path laid out by Alice Walker as she carves out a fresh perspective on Nigerian society by drawing attention to the affluent class and the concerns of women in society. Her novels delve into the postcolonial trauma that persists in people's psyches, uncovering the status of women, and revealing how Atta's female characters triumph over the fetters of society to attain empowerment.

This study delves into the application of the Womanism theory and the Postcolonial trauma theory, which is evaluated with referential limits to Cathy Caruth's Trauma Model. The objective of this research is to scrutinise all of Sefi Atta's five novels namely, *Everything Good Will Come* (2005), *Swallow* (2010), *A Bit of Difference* (2013), *The Bead Collector* (2019) and *The Bad Immigrant* (2021) from a Womanist perspective. It also examines the postcolonial experiences of her female characters, exploring the societal pressures that women face and their journey towards empowerment. The protagonists in Atta's novels, who are primarily African women, exhibit extraordinary determination, resilience, and assertiveness in the face of a society dominated by men. The aim of this study is to delve into how the female characters in Sefi Atta's novels navigate and challenge the various societal constructs placed upon them based on their socioeconomic status, political affiliations, and gender roles. Their ultimate goal is to achieve harmonious co-existence with those around them. Through the exploration of Atta's literary works, this study illuminates the transformative potential of Womanist perspectives in African women's literature. It also emphasises the importance of acknowledging the lived experiences and voices of African women in the literary sphere. Atta's literary oeuvre offers a window into the rich complexities of African culture and tradition, while also highlighting the struggles and triumphs of women in an ever-changing world.