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Reflections of Otherness in Post-Colonial Literature on
the Example of Novels by Buchi Emecheta

(Bachelor thesis)

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Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou práci s názvem „Reflections of Otherness in Post-Colonial Literature on the Example of Novels by Buchi Emecheta“ vypracoval pod dohledem vedoucího práce samostatně a s použitím literatury uvedené v závěru práce.

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Content

1 Introduction	5
2 Colonialism, post-colonialism and post-colonial Studies	7
2.1 Colonial era	7
2.2 Post-colonial era	10
2.3 Theoretical bases and establishment of post-colonial theory	12
2.3.1 The creation of the “Other” and anticolonial theory.....	13
2.3.2 Arrival of post-colonial theory and literature	19
3 Buchi Emecheta	24
4 Two London proses by Buchi Emecheta.....	26
4.1 Intended audience and the language of the novels	28
4.2 Phenomenon of racism and the Western society	30
4.3 The “Other” among the “Others”	34
5 Conclusion.....	39
6 Resumé.....	41
7 Bibliography.....	43
Anotace	44
Abstract	45

1 Introduction

The issue of the phenomenon of colonialism and its present consequences attracts a lot of interest of researchers from different branches of humane studies. There are many studies and essays focused on the economic and moral aspects of the whole enterprise. There are well-known cases of exploitation of natural resources of the colonized lands and also of the indigenous peoples inhabiting the territories a long time before the colonizers came. It is often said that the economic success of the European countries carrying out colonization in history would not be possible on such a scale and that the European economic hegemony over the world would not be so considerable. The most horrific case of exploitation of people was slavery applied especially to black Africans. All of this is remembered and reminded until the present day. The relationships between the former white colonizers and other peoples of a different ethnic origin are formed by the consciousness of historical blame and injustice. The word “other” is one of the key words for the creation of the “Other” was the basic reason why aggression, humiliation and subjugation of the later colonized was justified.

The colonial enterprise is interesting especially for researchers coming from the countries directly enrolled in that process. The issue is not so popular in countries that did not take part in it but still a lot of works from a historical or economic perspective could be found. As far as literature is concerned, just a few are interested and they are gathered mainly at universities in the departments of English or French studies. And that was one of the reasons such a topic was chosen.

This work is divided into three main parts that attempt to introduce the reader to the historical and cultural context by which and in which such a phenomenon as “post-colonial literature” emerged.

The first part deals with the history of colonization and the aim of this chapter is to define terms such “colonial” and “post-colonial” and it tries to define their temporal and cultural connotations. It tries to depict the historical and psychoanalytical ground on which “post-colonial” theory is based. A crucial aspect of the post-colonial theory is discovering a mechanism of how the “Other” is created and subjugated at the same time. The discovery shook the basic assumption about the absolute value of European culture and morality because

until that moment the “Other” was not allowed to talk.

The second part introduces a writer whose first two novels are the subject of critical evaluation. Such writer was chosen because she meets best criteria to be considered of typical representation of whom can be considered as “Other”: she comes from a former colonized country and the topic of her novels is a life of the “Other” in former foreign colonizing country and society.

The third part is focused on some aspects of the novels *In the Ditch* (1972) and *Second-Class Citizen* (1974) It deals especially with the problem and a form of racism – for it touches the minority of people as a whole group; and with a problem of the role of a woman and a wife in unequal relationship, because women are a minority within a minority, the “Other” among the “Others”.

2 Colonialism, post-colonialism and post-colonial Studies

To understand well how the field of post-colonial studies was established and what kind of cultural production it is connected to, it is necessary to introduce briefly such phenomena as colonialism, imperialism, post-colonialism etc., the historical and cultural context they emerged in and the theoretical basis upon which the post-colonial studies were grounded.

2.1 Colonial era

Although the largest colonial imperium belonged to the Great Britain, the beginnings of the colonial era are connected to medieval Spain and the explorer of Italian origin, the citizen of the Republic of Genoa, Christopher Columbus, who reached San Salvador in 1492. This moment is generally considered a crucial moment of the history of Europe, which helped Europe gain cultural and political hegemony over the rest of the world (at least until the half of the 20th century). The evaluation and interpretation of this enterprise may be (and it is more and more) arguable – e.g. Columbus was not the first one to reach the New World as it was thought for a long time, but the Vikings were there before him. However, the fact that it had (and still has) far reaching consequences for the European history stays undeniable.¹

Besides the term “colonialism,” it is also the adjective “imperial” that is frequently used in the contexts like “imperial power”, “imperial attitude” etc. Sometimes the adjective has rather vague meaning or is used as synonymous with the term “colonial”. In this work the term “colonialism” has a rather temporal meaning while “imperialism” is defined as a certain attitude to colonized lands or peoples. Imperialism is a phenomenon that

„makes the process begun by colonialism more efficient and generalized [...] In general, the colonialism characterized the period before imperialism: roughly the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries (it is, in this sense, chronological term). Colonies, especially in their origins, were often run by private ventures or holding companies rather than states. Colonization was carried out either for purposes of settlement or for economic exploitation; it was largely conducted in

1 See Dennis Walder, *Post-Colonial Literatures in English: History, Language, Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 23-24.

terms of a confrontation between the “White” and the “Dark” races; it often involved direct military occupation, and the setting up of alternative cultural institutions for the purpose of creating native caste that shared the same culture as those in the home country. Imperialism, by contrast, grows out of colonialism, both by extending its logic but also by responding more subtly to the demands for political independence launched by the freedom movements within the colonies during the twentieth century. It tends to be comprehensive and systematic, ruled by a central authority like a state or decisive financial or political institutions effectively controlled by a state or an alliance of states. Imperialism can and does involve military invasion and/or occupation, but usually not for the purpose of settlement.”²

In this sense imperialism is more oppressive than colonialism and it is also evaluated worse because it strives to make weaker communities (ethnic, racial or geographical) absolutely dependent (and thus obedient) to the ruling power. That is why the collocation “cultural imperialism” has such negative connotations. In this work, the term “colonialism” is used in wider meaning that also covers the meaning of “imperialism”. The term “imperialism” is applied when the fact of oppression and total physical or cultural subjugation is emphasized.

As far as colonies themselves are considered, there were two basic types: settlers’ colonies and colonies governed from the metropolis. The colonies settled by Europeans were mainly in Northern America, Australia and New Zealand.³ The fact of settlement was the most important condition for the emergence of literature understandable to Europeans and accepted by them especially in early times of colonization, for it was written by the colonizers in European languages and from the perspective of the émigré “European”. This is the start of the “writing back” process, a notion coined by the authors of the first book on post-colonial theory *The Empire Writes Back*.

Although, the start of colonization falls on the end of 15th century and was carried out by the means of a violent conquest, the colonial and administration rule was introduced in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies from the early moment. The situation in British colonies was different in those times for Britain (and other European states) did not impose direct political control and administration rule until the middle of the 18th century. Before that, European colonial empires (and especially the British Empire) were under the rule of

2 Timothy Brennan, “Postcolonial studies and globalization theory,” in *Postcolonial Literary Studies*, ed. Neil Lazarus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 136.

3 See Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 133.

peoples coming from the new industrializing nations of north-western Europe that were rooted in the culture of those nations. The spread of the peoples around the world resulted in spreading their culture and led to cultural hegemony. This is mainly true about the British Empire because even during the following period of imperial control and administration there were still areas under indirect control but in which the manners and beliefs of the colonizer were adopted by the local communities. Thus the British Empire was rather cultural than constitutional grouping.⁴

In Africa, the situation was rather specific, as most of the colonies emerged at the end of the 19th century and most of them were set as non-settler colonies (except for the colonies in southern Africa). The African western colonies were established in the places which served early as the source of black slaves for the Atlantic slave trade supplying the colonies in America with cheap labour. The Atlantic slave trade was not, of course, the first slave trade in human history. Slavery was present from the ancient times in different forms and in different cultures and was not something invented exclusively by Europeans but in the period from the 16th century to 1807 (when the Slave Trade Act was passed thanks to William Wilberforce in the United Kingdom, the first country that abolished the slave trade was Portugal) the Atlantic Slave Trade was made a huge industry and colonies in the New World started being dependent on the continuous supply of black slaves. Even when the slave trade was abolished and consequently black people earned the status of a human being, the consciousness that black people were formerly slaves, and thus property of their masters, made their human status lower than the status of other races. Another fact that supported the inferior position of the black race and its cultures of western and central Africa comparing to the peoples of northern Africa, Arabia or India, was that most of the indigenous black tribes and communities did not possess writing and other civilized arts for “the absence of writing was considered crucial, and their possession of it (at least among elites) was one reason why Hindu and Muslim cultures were thought superior to slave or oral cultures in the Americas and Africa.”⁵

The inferior position of blacks seemed to be confirmed also by science, specifically by the theory of natural selection by Charles Darwin, which was later

4 See Dennis Walder, *Post-Colonial Literatures in English: History, Language, Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 27.

5 Dennis Walder, *Post-Colonial Literatures in English: History, Language, Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 33.

developed into Count de Gobineau's theory of racial superiority and on this basis the acquisition of African territory (called "scramble for Africa") was justified.

It is true that Britain did not succeed in keeping all its colonies until the dismantling of the Empire in the 20th century and the colonies in the Northern America were lost quite soon (1776), but until the end of the Second World War it is visible that the Empire was in its ascendancy.

2.2 Post-colonial era

The First World War was a very important event in European history as it marked the peak of the colonial rule of Europe. Until that time the British Empire extended to 12 700 000 square miles at its zenith and reached from the Caribbean, to the Indian sub-continent, included Australia and areas in Africa and South-east Asia⁶ so the sun did not set on it. The World meant extraordinary costs (financial and physical) for all European states including the colonial powers and they were forced to spend more on the post-war reconstruction of their countries and their restoration to their previous state. One of the consequences was a partial shift of the focus of the metropolitan administration from the colonies to the home matters and the funds spend on keeping the colonies in order started to be limited. This situation demanded an administrative change in organization of the Empire and finally led to the establishment of Commonwealth during the interwar years. The Commonwealth was also an administrative complex ruled formally by the Queen, but the control was not so tight anymore. By the Statute of Westminster in 1931, the white dominions gained a more independent position within the union. The release of control also resulted in the growing of national feelings and resistance in all the colonies,⁷ but especially in India where in April 1919 an event happened in Jallianwallah Bagh at Amritsar in the Punjab that strengthened general reluctance against the colonial power: General Dyer ordered to use fire arms against a group of civilians attacking an English woman. That was followed by protests during which nearly 400 people were killed and a lot more were wounded. It was around that time after the incident when Gandhi started intensive campaign for freedom of India.⁸

6 See Tamara Sivanandan, "Anticolonialism, national liberation, and postcolonial nation formation," in *Postcolonial Literary Studies*, ed. Neil Lazarus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 41.

7 See Tamara Sivanandan, "Anticolonialism, national liberation, and postcolonial nation formation," in *Postcolonial Literary Studies*, ed. Neil Lazarus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 44.

8 See Dennis Walder, *Post-Colonial Literatures in English: History, Language, Theory* (Oxford:

The period of the Second World War cost Europe even more than the previous war so it made the European superpowers weaker and forced them to focus exclusively on their domestic problems. The result was an even larger abolishment of the control and led to the Partition of India in 1947, which marks the start of the post-colonial era. From a political point of view, this era is characterized by a wave of liberation of the former colonized nations in Africa and Asia. Most of those nations departed from the British control in the next fifteen years (Nigeria gained independence in 1960). The most recent case of liberation of a British colony was the event of the handing-over of Hong Kong to China in 1997.⁹ However, in this case, it is highly arguable to identify the process of decolonization with the process of liberation for the colony under the liberal-democratic control is inevitably more autonomous and has more freedom than it has as a part of totalitarian state ruled by the regime of communists.

It is interesting that the fight for freedom was often carried out in the name of nationalism. It applied both in India and in Africa as well and in the literature it is aptly called anticolonial nationalism.¹⁰ Nationalism was typically a Western ideological concept unknown in the other parts of the world in which the communities were ordered rather ethnically or tribally. The border of the colonies, however, did not respect the traditional anthropological borders in between communities and gathered people of different ethnical origin together in an artificial unit. That was the reason why the new, ethnically different communities needed to find something that could join them together: “popular or insurgent nationalism served to reclaim or imagine forms of community again, to forge collective political identities within these imposed boundaries sufficient to challenge colonial rule.”¹¹

On one hand, in the present time, there is no discussion about the nature of colonialism and it is generally accepted that colonialism brought more harm than good. People that do not agree with this general assumption are definitely a minority and are often considered extremists or racists and at least their stance is

Blackwell, 1998), 39.

9 See Dennis Walder, *Post-Colonial Literatures in English: History, Language, Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 39-40.

10 See Tamara Sivanandan, “Anticolonialism, national liberation, and postcolonial nation formation,” in *Postcolonial Literary Studies*, ed. Neil Lazarus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 45.

11 Tamara Sivanandan, “Anticolonialism, national liberation, and postcolonial nation formation,” in *Postcolonial Literary Studies*, ed. Neil Lazarus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 49.

considered as cynical.¹² On the other hand, the hopes put in the positive change the gaining of independence was supposed to bring was, as it showed up later, a bit exaggerated. In most of the former colonial states, different kinds of conflicts or wars broke out – in Nigeria that happened almost immediately in the 1960s. Even in India in 1947 the huge authority of Gandhi was not able to prevent Muslims and Hindu people from fighting.¹³

“The rhetoric of anticolonial nationalism and the dreams of what independence would bring seem misguided in retrospect, for what is common to many – if not most – of these societies is their failure to attain the hoped-for social and economic freedoms for their peoples. What is to be found rather, is increasing division and oppression on the basis of class, ethnicity, religion and gender; the failure of the economy to provide even basic necessities, never mind prosperity for the mass of the people; a lack of democratic participation by the masses in the political sphere; and continued – often increasing – structural dependence, economically, politically, and ideologically, on Western imperial powers.”¹⁴

In the literature on the post-colonial era and post-colonial studies it is often possible to find the term neo-colonization, which suggests that all the bad things happening in and to the formerly colonized countries take place because the decolonization was not successful and was not led to the end. In the quotation above the collocation “Western imperial power” implies the evaluation of such a power as an oppressive one that continues exploitation until the present day.

2.3 Theoretical bases and establishment of post-colonial theory

The establishment of the post-colonial theory does not coincide with the beginning of the post-colonial era which start was marked by the Partition of India in 1947 as a moment of historical transition. However, a range of other social theories was at the disposal, which served as a theoretical basis on which the later post-colonial theory was (at least partially) grounded. The first of them heavily criticizing the colonial practices and the phenomenon of colonialism as a whole was the anticolonial theory based on Marxism and its conception of struggle. The colonial discourse was investigated by the means of the Foucaultian discourse

12 Neil Lazarus, “Introduction,” in *Postcolonial Literary Studies*, ed. Neil Lazarus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 45.

13 See Dennis Walder, *Post-Colonial Literatures in English: History, Language, Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 37.

14 Tamara Sivanandan, “Anticolonialism, national liberation, and postcolonial nation formation,” in *Postcolonial Literary Studies*, ed. Neil Lazarus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 42.

analysis and the colonial image of the colonized as well as the character of the relationship between them was explained in terms of psychoanalysis.

2.3.1 The creation of the “Other” and anticolonial theory

To be able to create the “Other,” it is necessary to understand who I am and what and whom I identify myself with. It is appropriate to use one of the most elaborated conceptions of the way the awareness of “I” is created and how the “I” starts reflecting the “Other” introduced by Jacques Lacan to demonstrate how the mechanism of creating “self” works.

According to Lacan, the moment of looking in the mirror at a very young age creates the consciousness of self. The crucial experience with the mirror takes place during the so-called “mirror stage”¹⁵ while “the child sees itself as an other, and beside an other. This other is its guarantee that the first is really it.”¹⁶ It is clear that the child is exposed to a paradoxical situation: the child sees himself and understands it is him but at the same time it feels that the reflection is a kind of a delusion because it is just his “imago”.¹⁷ The child feels that somebody that looks like him is not him in the full sense. It means there can be also somebody else looking like him but not him – somebody alien. So the recognition and misrecognition of the self takes place at the same time and the child in this way “[establishes] a relation between the organism and its reality.”¹⁸ This first visual identification is a basis for any other later symbolic identification through language ordering the world around and at the same time reflecting this order. In other words, Lacan says that the infant's (mis)recognition of its own image in a mirror introduces for the first time a notion of “self” (the I) and becomes the model for all subsequent identifications.

The concrete identification of self with a group of people takes place first in a family, which means in the most concrete environment the child sees around.

¹⁵ Jacques Lacan, “The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience,” in *Literary theory: an anthology*, ed. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Oxford: Blackwell), 2004), 441-446.

¹⁶ Christian Metz, *Psychoanalysis and Cinema: The Imaginary Signifier* (London: Macmillan Press, 1994), 45.

¹⁷ Jacques Lacan, “The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience,” in *Literary theory: an anthology*, ed. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Oxford: Blackwell), 2004), 442.

¹⁸ Jacques Lacan, “The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience,” in *Literary theory: an anthology*, ed. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Oxford: Blackwell), 2004), 443.

Thus, the identifications proceeds from the most concrete to the most abstract kind of communities. The most concrete identification usually means to have a lot of things in common, while the most abstract identification can involve such things like belonging to the same nation, being an inhabitant of the same continent, the religion based identification through the world (contemporary the most typical example of such conception of identification is Ummah – the Islamic community that covers all the Muslims in the world, and is the bases for establishment of the political nation of all Muslims – caliphate) or just the belonging to the class of Hominidae, which is the bases for claiming human rights for great apes.

Thus the image of the colonized was made on the bases of both the difference in physical appearance and the difference in culture while the “normal” appearance and high culture was the European one, i. e. the colonizer's one. The shape of the dialectic of the colonizer and the colonized was conveyed from the beginning of the colonial process through many texts of many generations covering all the fields of human knowledge: from the scientific to the artistic ones. The former notion was connected to the values such as civilization, humanity, metropolitan, while the reverse categories such as savagery, primitive or peripheral were established for the latter.¹⁹ The texts were mostly of metropolitan provenance and thus accepted by the rulers and consequently the ruled. The simple and good example of that is giving the names to colonized places which had their names in indigenous languages before the colonial era. Those names like, for example, West Indies (even if it was the part of India, from the Indian point of view it would be on the eastern side of the subcontinent, yet from the European are to the West and the names reflects that perspective) were introduced in Europe and consequently also in the colonized lands, where the settlers or indigenous élite educated in the western way took over the names and used them. In the same way the cultural canon (included the literary one) of the colonizer were adopted and the manifestations of indigenous culture (or even the nature) were evaluated by the approximations to the general criteria connected to the hegemonic culture. A well-known example of a poem trying to gain the acceptance and still describe the specific event in a colonized land is the one written by Rudyard Kipling called ‘Christmas in India’ in which “the evocative description of a Christmas day in the heat of India is contextualized by invoking

19 See Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 133.

its absent English counterpart. Apparently it is only through this absent and enabling signifier that the Indian daily reality can acquire legitimacy as a subject of literary discourse.”²⁰ Another strategy to win the acceptance of the audience rooted in hegemonic culture is to describe the reality of a colonized area as close to the reality of the colonizer as possible. A good example of this can be found in *Post-colonial Literatures in English* by Dennis Walder, who quotes the opening paragraph from the novel by Joyce Cary *Mister Johnson* (1939). The paragraph describes two black persons and puts them in contrast. It uses the environment of the Nigerian area called Fada by which the text is exoticized and pretends to be an authentic testimony of the narrator. Walder's comment on this paragraph aptly shows the mechanism of approximation and the consequent distortion of the colonized reality:

“At first glance, the opening of Cary's novel may seem fairly sympathetic, offering a value system foreign to its presumed reader at once: ‘The young women of Fada, in Nigeria, are well known for beauty.’ Well known, we take it, in Fada and the surrounding territory. And yet, by going on to describe the ferryman's daughter in terms of her ‘skin as pale and glistening as milk chocolate’ and her ‘high, firm breasts’, the narrator invites (and constructs) a European, heterosexual male reader to share that system of values on terms that incorporate it within his own. The young woman is like a European delicacy and, note, not too black. Johnson, on the other hand, we are invited to think of as a pathetic clown, ‘like a child’, his body resembling ‘a skinned rabbit’s and, ‘as black as a stove’. An idealizing, exoticizing tone has crept into the description of Bamu; Johnson is characterized in the equally stereotyping, but more patronizing tone of the amused European encountering a half-educated black man. Either way, the Africans are rendered as less than human, their history a matter of ‘war, disease and bad magic’.”²¹

The negative representation of blacks together with their lowest social position in the society caused discontent among black intellectuals that accepted the European system of ethical values mediated by different kinds of texts from artistic to religious ones, but they understood that those values were not fully applied as far as blacks were concerned. Being all of them interpreted as the alien black “other,” some attempts of unifying those scorned were undertaken by Alexander Crummell (an abolitionist and a preacher in the 19th century) that based the notions of black unity on the ties of race and traditions. In the field of culture,

20 Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 5.

21 Dennis Walder, *Post-Colonial Literatures in English: History, Language, Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 9.

it resulted in the emergence of the first black cultural movement ‘négritude’ in the 1930s in Paris. The founders of the conception were French speaking writers: Martinican Aimé Césaire, the Senegalese poet Leopold Senghor and Léon Damas from French Guayana.²² The conception of the movement was to “[celebrate] in a literary form the idea of a unitary African being, bringing together those of African origin in the Caribbean, in Europe, in America, and in the home continent itself.”²³

The conviction that race is the most important factor causing economic and political oppression was (and still is in certain fields of culture) strong so it successfully brought the black artists together. The strength of it consisted probably mainly in the endeavour to read as positive the negative difference or otherness.²⁴ To reread the otherness implied the necessity of defining it, therefore the typical categories of blackness were introduced: “black culture [...] was emotional rather than rational; it stressed integration and wholeness over analysis and dissection; it operated by distinctive rhythmic and temporal principles, and [...] claimed distinctive African view of time-space relationships, ethics, metaphysics, and aesthetics which separated itself from the supposedly ‘universal’ values of European taste and style.”²⁵ That definition reflected the image of European culture created by itself and the categories of blackness became mere antithesis of what was considered typically European. That is why it did not succeed in creating a distinctive value of blackness. An important constraint contained in the concept of ‘négritude’ was the elimination of everything that was not of indigenous African origin in any way. Thus possibility of extension of the concept to Polynesian, Melanesian, or Australia Aboriginal writing was excluded. What’s more, the idea of ‘négritude’ did not take into consideration the difference between the black literature produced in the countries with black majority and in the rich white countries where the black people constituted one of the minorities.²⁶

The first and most important intellectual that was interested in the mechanism of defining the colonial otherness by the Europeans and at the same

22 See Dennis Walder, *Post-Colonial Literatures in English: History, Language, Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 73.

23 Andrew Smith, “Migrancy, hybridity, and postcolonial literary studies,” in *Postcolonial Literary Studies*, ed. Neil Lazarus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 255.

24 See Andrew Smith, “Migrancy, hybridity, and postcolonial literary studies,” in *Postcolonial Literary Studies*, ed. Neil Lazarus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 255.

25 Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 21.

26 See Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 20-21.

time questioned the conception of 'négritude' because he was aware of the problem of putting 'blackness' in the centre of discussion about the causes of colonial discriminating practices was Frantz Fanon (1925-1961).²⁷ Educated as a psychiatrist, he worked at hospital in Algeria during the fight for independence and started being engaged in the fight. Among all anticolonial theories, the one he created had the deepest effect

on the oppressed people and changed the way of evaluating the colonial era by Europeans themselves until the present day, because his work was written by him as a colonial subject and addressed to the colonized. Thus his theory bears the sign of authenticity and in comparison to the concept of 'négritude' (for which the race was the main issue) Fanon's theory stepped a bit further and attempted to abstract from the question of race to the questions of culture, which he blamed for the legitimating the discriminative treatment of all of the 'others' (not just blacks).²⁸ It was not the race for him that caused assertions of racial 'difference' but the economic and political realities of which the focus on the race was rather the consequence and that is why his work is based on oppositional political (and not racial) stance. Besides defining the others as made on the cultural basis, Fanon adopted the philosophy of Marxism and its class-dichotomy to redefine this dichotomy in terms of colonial reality.²⁹ The Marxist reflection of the reality as "the reciprocal action between base and superstructure, between material conditions and ideas, thereby recuperating the Marxist formulation of a socio-economic *formation* within which a nexus of heterogeneous and contradictory determinations interact"³⁰ led Fanon to coin the term 'manichaeism delirium', which means the state of the colonized in the situation of total "division into paired oppositions such as good – evil; true – false; white – black, in which the primary sign is axiomatically privileged in the discourse of the colonial relationship."³¹ If such categories were to represent the 'négritude', the race dichotomy division would be the ground for all of the other divisions.

As it was said Fanon was inspired by Marxism (the title of his second and

27 See Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 124.

28 Dennis Walder, *Post-Colonial Literatures in English: History, Language, Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 73.

29 Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 124.

30 Benita Parry, "The institutionalization of postcolonial studies," in *Postcolonial Literary Studies*, ed. Neil Lazarus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 69-70.

31 Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 125.

most influential book *The Wretched of the Earth* is a direct allusion to The International after all). He adopted that stance of view not just as a theoretical description of the colonial reality but he also brought a vision of the way how the colonized could be liberated, but first the real wretched of the earth must be found. Marx saw the source of the strength to bring about the revolution in the unity of the people of the hammer and sickle that used to be on the lowest social position in industrial countries. Fanon found that just the “wielders of the sickle [...] retained sufficient sense of community and self-value to reclaim their country and their dignity, by violence. Ultimately, this is the only way out of the [...] ‘Manichean delirium’ created by colonialism [...].”³²

Fanon's two books *Black Skin, White Masks* (*Peau noir, masques blancs*, Paris, 1952) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (*Les damnés de la terre*, Paris, 1961) were very influential not just among the oppressed peoples in the colonized countries but they gained huge attention in Europe as well, especially among leftist oriented humanists including the most significant one, Jean-Paul Sartre. Sartre became a European introducer and interpreter of the ideas of anticolonial theories and presented both writers connected directly to the ‘négritude’ movement and Frantz Fanon's books focused on psychoanalysis and Marxist interpretation. He was the one who wrote introductions to those books and promoted radical anticolonial position stands against the French colonial rules in Algeria and Indochina. Sartre represents the position of radical humanism attempting to bridge the gap between the colonized and the colonizer by the idea of universal humanity that was supposed to find all the people equal after colonialism. In his introductions in the books by Memmi and Fanon, he summarized his opinions about colonialism using his philosophical assumptions about history leading all the people to recognize the universal truth, centering the human subject and its consciousness to the lived world and the question of freedom as the most important question of human conditions. The last point was of significant importance as Sartre interpreted colonial reality in terms of Hegelian master/slave dialectic: two persons – two consciousnesses meet and see each other as the other and consequently as a threat to their existence. Thus it comes to conflict and struggle that leads to win of the one and defeat of the other. The winner becomes the master and the loser (to save the life) accepts the role of the

32 Dennis Walder, *Post-Colonial Literatures in English: History, Language, Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 76.

slave. Slavery, or the dominance of one over the other, is a result of a violent struggle over the identity of the loser. But losers, even in the position of slaves and so not in a fully human condition, long for freedom which confirms their status of human beings. Fanon used this conception of the struggle and the consequent subjugation and applied it to explain the condition of the colonized peoples as being imprisoned in their experience of blackness. This imprisonment imposed on them by the winner in the struggle (the white man) caused the loss of self-recognition as a distinctive and valuable human being and the only way how to regain the position of human is to “become white” in metaphorical sense. That was the discovery which Fanon made in *Black Skin, White Masks*. The black élite puts the white mask and thus lost the desire for self-recognition as blacks.³³ The authentic blacks being able to resist and break the imprisonment were the wielders of the sickle as was already said.

2.3.2 Arrival of post-colonial theory and literature

Everything what was said above was of great importance for understanding how the post-colonialism as a theory and also as a political stance was created as the term post-colonial was used for the first time not in a cultural context but in the context of politics in a British newspaper article concerning India. Later, the meaning was broadened to the whole post-colonial reality including the cultural products. On one hand, in the frame of politics, the term indicates that the era of direct colonial rule has ended, but on the other hand, it also hints “that the colonial experience persists despite the withdrawal of political control as a result of the continuing strategic and economic power of the former colonizers, the new global dispositions which keep groups of poorer in thrall.”³⁴

Not just the economic dominance but also the cultural dominance was maintained by the means of European discourse on the former colonial areas and this discourse was considered an authentic and apt description of what the previously colonized countries, peoples and their cultures really were like.

In this work “a discourse in the Foucaultian sense is [...] understood as a

33 Simon Gikandi, “Poststructuralism and postcolonial discourse,” in *Postcolonial Literary Studies*, ed. Neil Lazarus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 101-106.

34 Dennis Walder, *Post-Colonial Literatures in English: History, Language, Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 3.

system of possibility for knowledge.”³⁵ So the discourse is a set of texts that constitutes our knowledge about certain things and that constitutes also an attitude to those things on the background of our own cultural identification. The post-structuralistic methodology of the analysis of the discourse in the 1960s significantly undermined the firm supremacy of the European humanistic and philosophical texts. Those European discourses were considered a source of fundamental and objective description of reality and truth and in the same way the literary canon of western provenance was considered as having more artistic value than the literature and stories of the other culture.

As the beginning of the post-colonial theorizing was based on the post-structuralistic analysis of discourse, it is considered the publication the study *Orientalism* in 1978 by Edward W. Said (of Christian Arabian origin). He studied English and History at various universities (including Harvard) and were influenced mostly by Antonio Gramsci and Michel Foucault. Said primarily dealt with the scholarly texts from the end of the 18th century that were preoccupied with the topic of Orient and showed how the East was constructed by the West.³⁶ Said pointed out that the western image of Orient was based on the fabricated assumptions introduced in the texts of imperial origin through which the colonial power kept control over the societies for which the text was considered trustful. Those texts marked the Orient in the geographical sense and also in the sense of its identity that was constructed by its difference in the relationship to the West. Thus, the identity was a negative image of the West, rather than its equal or alternative counterpart. Orient lacked in essence.³⁷ Said's book was not of course the first analysis of certain discourse but it was the pioneering book in the scope of theories of colonialism.

But even sooner, before the publication of *Orientalism*, the recognition that European literary and theoretical discourse anchored in historicism and gained its value mainly because it had a long tradition had consequences in the field of English studies. During the 1950s, when Britain's power was gradually declining, the emergence of literature written in English but not in the UK was observed. Such literature in the colonial era was underestimated or ignored. The states that

35 Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 167.

36 Dennis Walder, *Post-Colonial Literatures in English: History, Language, Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 70-71.

37 See Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 167.

gained independence started their own literary production and what was the most important thing about that literatures was that they were written by the authors coming from the previously colonized peoples. Under the wave of the new literary production from the countries a field of Commonwealth literature was established as an official field of study and it was based at Leeds University in 1964. Before that, in 1962, Heinemann publishing house started its African Writers Series with the publication of *Things Fall Apart*, probably the most famous novel by the African author Chinua Achebe. Heinemann continues with the African Writers Series until now.³⁸ This was a radical change in the attitude to non-English literature written in English that prefigured the arrival of the concept of post-colonial literature.

Whereas the body of literary production called Commonwealth literature was limited to the literature of certain geographical areas, the conception of post-colonial literature brought a larger extension of what could be grouped under this term.

There were a few basic models under which the post-colonial writing were grouped. The first was the model of literature that reflected national and regional awareness. In this sense the literature of the USA of the late 18th century is the first post-colonial body of literature, because it reflects the specific conditions of the new-born nation in contrast to the reality of Britain. This model is based on the assumption that “the development of national literatures and criticism is fundamental to the whole enterprise of post-colonial studies. Without such developments at the national level, and without the comparative studies between national traditions to which these lead, no discourse of the post-colonial could have emerge.”³⁹ The second model based on race was promoted by the ‘négritude’ movement about which was written above. The third model of writing is more complex and involves such notion as hybridity.

It is obvious that colonialism left its imprints in all the indigenous cultures which were influenced by it. Later, especially after the Second World War, when Europe started losing its power in the colonies and started giving independence to the colonies, a new group of intellectuals from indigenous people appeared, and the question of an authentic culture and authenticity came into discussion. The

38 See Dennis Walder, *Post-Colonial Literatures in English: History, Language, Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 61-63.

39 Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 17.

calls for authenticity were connected firstly with the question of language, specifically if English is suitable enough to express the story of the colonized. A famous discussion appeared in Africa between Nigerian writer Wole Soinka on one side and three other writers (Chinaweizu, Jemie, Madubuike). The debate covered not the problem of language but the general possibility and necessity of going back to pre-colonial traditions. The position of Chinaweizu was a radical one for he claimed that without restoration of the ancestral culture there would be no Nigerian identity. Soinka's position was that there is no sense to deny syncretic character of contemporary post-colonial culture in the name of authenticity.⁴⁰ Hybridity of writing is typical for literature of migrants coming from the former colonies and living in previously colonial countries.

What is the post-colonial literature then? What criteria should be applied to consider certain literary product post-colonial? There are different attitudes and to answer the question is not so easy. Some of the attitudes use the term post-colonial in a broad sense “to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day [...] because there is a continuity of preoccupations throughout the historical process initiated by European imperial aggression.”⁴¹ This usage of the term allows to include in the group of post-colonial literature also the literary production of the settlers’ colonies written by settlers themselves.

In this work, the post-colonial literature is understood in a narrower sense. As it was said above, for the constitution of colonial reality and the relationship of domination – subjugation is crucial to create the “Other”. The border between the “Other” and the colonizer creates different stories in the same context. So the most important criterion to consider a piece of literature a part of the post-colonial literary discourse is that it must be written by a person considering themselves the “Other” and this “Other” should be connected by their origin to the colonial past. The past and origin changes the perspective and makes a mirror to what the majority takes for granted. Such a mirror is even more interesting if provided by migrants because “migrants, whether individually, in groups or as whole displaced societies, are open to new influences. Many of these provide a challenge to earlier self-perceptions, self-images, and through such challenges the compositional

40 Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 30-31.

41 Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 2.

elements of multiple identities may be redefined.”⁴² Buchi Emecheta is an example of such a person and in following chapters the character of the mirror of society provided by some of her books will be analysed.

42 Paul White, “Geography, literature and migration,” in *Writing Across Worlds: Literature and Migration*, ed. Russel King, John Connel and Paul White (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 2-3.

3 Buchi Emecheta

Florence Onye Buchi Emecheta, as her full name sounds, was born in Nigeria in a small village near Lagos on 21st July in 1944 and her parents come from an Igbo tribal community. Her father Jeremy Nwabudike Emecheta was a worker on the railways but died as a soldier of the British army in Burma. After his death, Emecheta started being educated at a missionary school called Methodist Girls' School in Lagos, where she learnt English, beside other native languages. When she was sixteen years old she left school and married Sylvester Onwordi, a man she was engaged to from the age of eleven.⁴³

After the wedding her husband moved to London to study and shortly Emecheta joined him there. Where she worked as a library officer at the British Museum. The marriage was not happy and Onwordi tried to discourage his wife when she attempted to develop her talent as a writer. In spite of his effort, she managed to publish some of her diary entries in *New Statesman*.⁴⁴

After leaving her husband in 1966, Emecheta focused on raising her five children, studying sociology (she graduated with bachelor's degree in 1974) and further developing her literary career. Her first two novels *In the Ditch* (1972) and *Second-Class Citizen* (1974) have the same main character – Adah – and are set in Great Britain and deal with Adah's life as an immigrant in a foreign country previously ruling her own one. Later, the stories were published in the single volume *Adah's Story* (1983)⁴⁵ which will be a subject to the analysis further in this work.

Her further works set in Africa – *The Bride Price* (1976), *The Slave Girl* (1977), *The Joys of Motherhood* (1979), *Destination Biafra* (1982), *Double Yoke* (1982) – are realistic novels⁴⁶ mostly depicting the sad destiny of African girls and women in traditionally structured man-dominated environment that suffer from scorn and humiliation. *Destination Biafra* uses the historical background of civil unrest in Nigeria during 1960s and *Double Yoke* is focused on relationships in

43 Sarah K. Horseley, "Buchi Emecheta," *FemBio*, accessed May 5, 2015, <http://www.femBio.org/english/biography.php/woman/biography/buchi-emecheta/>

44 "Buchi Emecheta Essay," *ENotes*, accessed May 5, 2015, <http://www.enotes.com/topics/buchi-emecheta/critical-essays/emecheta-buchi>

45 "Buchi Emecheta," *Encycloædia Britannica*, accessed May 5, 2015, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/185704/Buchi-Emecheta>

46 "Buchi Emecheta," *Encycloædia Britannica*, accessed May 5, 2015, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/185704/Buchi-Emecheta>

which the main female character enters with men during the stay at Nigerian university.⁴⁷ *The Rape of Shavi* is considered as her strongest novel and it is set in an imaginary idyllic kingdom in Africa in time when Europe is afflicted by the nuclear disaster and refugees seek asylum there.⁴⁸ It is an allegory of the European colonization in Africa.⁴⁹ In her later novel *Gwendolen* (1989), Emecheta returns back to the UK where another story (this time the one of a woman of Jamaican origin) takes place after her leaving her native land.⁵⁰

Emecheta's works include also literature for children and youth, e.g. *Nowhere to play* (1980), a TV play *A kind of Marriage* screened by BBC in 1976 and an autobiography *Head Above Water* (1986). She also contributes to the *New Statesman*, the *Times Literary Supplement* and *The Guardian*.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Emecheta was a visiting lecturer at various universities in the USA, Great Britain and Nigeria, and together with her son she established Ogugwu Afor Publishing Company with branches in London and Nigeria.⁵¹

In 1979 Emecheta was awarded by New Statesman Jock Campbell Award for Commonwealth writers for *The Slave Girl*.⁵²

47 "Buchi Emecheta Essay," *ENotes*, accessed May 5, 2015, <http://www.enotes.com/topics/buchi-emecheta/critical-essays/emecheta-buchi>

48 "Buchi Emecheta," *Encycloædia Britannica*, accessed May 5, 2015, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/185704/Buchi-Emecheta>

49 "Buchi Emecheta," *Literature. British Council*, accessed May 5, 2015, <http://literature.britishcouncil.org/buchi-emecheta>

50 "Buchi Emecheta Essay," *ENotes*, accessed May 5, 2015, <http://www.enotes.com/topics/buchi-emecheta/critical-essays/emecheta-buchi>

51 "Buchi Emecheta," *Literature. British Council*, accessed May 5, 2015, <http://literature.britishcouncil.org/buchi-emecheta>

52 "Buchi Emecheta," *Literature. British Council*, accessed May 5, 2015, <http://literature.britishcouncil.org/buchi-emecheta>

4 Two London proses by Buchi Emecheta

This chapter deals with some aspects of the first two novels written by Emecheta after her arrival in London. Those two novels are connected chronologically in a retrospective way. The first one *In the Ditch* (1972) was written about the period following the time the second one *Second-Class Citizen* (1974) describes. Both of the novels are also connected by the main character Adah, a young Nigerian black girl coming to England to fulfil her dreams. Although the character is the same, each of the novel focuses on a different central topic. *In the Ditch* is an attempt to describe a life of a single immigrant female parent in London after leaving her husband, whereas *Second-Class Citizen* focuses on the private life of an immigrant family in a foreign country. Both of the novels try to present an image of a young girl of exotic origin in previously colonial white country in various types of social contexts which gain new interpretations through Adah's eyes. Adah enters in contact with administrative institutions of the foreign country, with institutions she works for, persons representing different kinds of communities or ethnic groups. Quite a lot of space of the novel *Second-Class Citizen* deals with Adah's relationship to the Nigerian diaspora and the social pressure that the diaspora generates on her personally and her family with all the consequences for her professional career and family life. In this net of relationships Adah plays different roles and from the various vantage points conditioned by the roles she evaluates and interprets reality how it appears for a mother, a Nigerian in a foreign country, a black woman etc. Both of the novels are very strong personal confessions that bear autobiographical elements: In *Second-Class Citizen*, Adah comes to London to join her studying husband Francis, but the marriage becomes a huge disappointment and finally ends by her leaving her husband. During the marriage she discovers her talent to write, decides to develop it and tries to write a sample novel. That novel is burnt by her husband. The novel *In the Ditch* describes the time after leaving her husband when Adah becomes a single mother forced to gain her self-sufficiency and to make her own way of life in very special community of “problem” families consisting mainly of lonely women (with or without children).

In *The Second-Class Citizen* Adah tries to become a writer and makes herself ready for it by reading English literature and also the black writers, about

whom she learns from her colleague Bill from the library where she works. Bill becomes a person “of particular note [...]” He is the character who not only encourages Adah to read several African and other literary works, but who also literally guides her on the path of becoming a writer. Not surprisingly, the narrator remarks that “Bill was the first real friend [Adah] had had outside her family”.⁵³ Adah's first attempts at writing gives her some self-confidence as a beginning author but not as a woman and a wife. The strong focus on the role of a woman and a wife both in society and in a family caused Emecheta to be considered a feminist (or womanist) author “who has most openly tried to reach an accommodation with Western feminism [...]”.⁵⁴ But during the stay in England Adah's attitudes and preferences change and although the career of a writer is still attractive, other things get more important as well. Porter suggests reading *Second-Class Citizen*

“as a novel of personal development (bildungsroman) [...] [because] a look at this work as a novel dealing with a young African woman's gradual acquisition of knowledge about herself as a potential artist and about the themes of love, marriage, and the subject of student life overseas (especially in a hostile environment) will add more weight to the already popular feminist theme in the book. Finally, Emecheta's (albeit lukewarm) acceptance of Dickens – that master creator of apprenticeship novels – as a possible source of influence and the structure of *Second Class Citizen* can be seen as further reasons for reading the work as a novel of personal development.”⁵⁵

It is true that the novel describes the development of a young African girl but what was said above suggests that it is a development of a young African writer in the first place. That is questionable because the description of Adah in the role of a beginning writer takes up a minor part of the book. From all the twelve chapters of the novel Adah starts writing in the last but one chapter named “The Collapse” which indicates that writing is even not the central topic of the chapter. From that chapter, which means quite late, Adah also meets Bill, her “real friend” and a guide as well as other friendly people from her new work at the library that are interested in Adah's literary activity and with whom Adah develops

53 Abioseh Michael Porter, “*Second Class Citizen: The Point of Departure for Understanding Buchi Emecheta's Major Fiction*,” *The International Fiction Review* 15, No. 2 (1988): 129.

54 Williams, Patric. “West African writing”. *Writing and Africa*. Ed. Msiska, Mpalive-Hangson Msiska. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1997. p 42. Print.

55 Abioseh Michael Porter, “*Second Class Citizen: The Point of Departure for Understanding Buchi Emecheta's Major Fiction*,” *The International Fiction Review* 15, No. 2 (1988): 124.

as an intellectual person.

Another, possibly misleading, claim in Porter's quotation above is that Adah gains experience about the student life overseas, especially in hostile environment. That poses some questions about the kind of environment overseas that is hostile to Adah and her children and what the reader learns from Adah's narrative about the student life overseas. All of the issues deserve deeper analysis grounded on the concert extracts from the texts because according to what they are taught at school and according to what is now more or less the official attitude to the colonial history and the interpretation of the role of former colonial superpowers in the former colonized country – which was briefly introduced in the first chapter of this work – Western readers must assume that the hostile environment is the one created by the inhabitants of the foreign country and the student life overseas is full of obstacles put in the way of the student by the society which is inherently racist and xenophobic. In the novels it is clear that the hostile environment has rather a form of the Nigerian diaspora than the traditional one of the foreign country.

Last but not least, Emecheta's novels are interpreted often as feminist ones, as said above. If so, then the question appears about the kind of feminism Emecheta represents through her main character. And can those attitudes be considered feminist?

But first, before starting to show how the main character evaluates the different kinds of environment and different ways of life in them, the strategy of writing and form of the novels will be briefly introduced.

4.1 Intended audience and the language of the novels

It was said that post-colonial literature includes a great deal of literature written in previously colonial countries and by authors connected somehow to the colonized peoples. But literature, like all kinds of art, is a way of communication, but unlike the others using language so the choice of the language is the first problem a post-colonial author has to face.

Emecheta's two novels are written in English although it is not her mother tongue. The problem of starting writing in a foreign language is explained by Adah in the last chapter of *Second-Class Citizen*: “She could not write in any African language [...] it was the English language she was going to use. But she

could not write those big those big, long, twisting words. Well, she might not be able to do those long, difficult words, but she was going to do her own phrases her own way. Adah's phrases, that's what they were going to be.”⁵⁶ It is true that the language is rather simple without any fancy words or syntactically complicated constructions but this is also conditioned by the topic and the whole composition of the novels. The novels are built rather chronologically, especially *In the Ditch*, and they describe simply and realistically everyday life.

The fact that the novels are written for an English audience has other consequences for the text from the linguistic point of view. There is a gap between the culture of the author and the culture of the reader and so the writers need to decide how close they approach the reader. The most obvious extraneous elements in the language of the reader are names of the things for which the target language does not have equivalents. The writers then decide if they explain the meaning to the reader or if they leave the reader alone with the words. Emecheta uses some of the names when she wants to create exotic atmosphere by describing how his African landlord uses magic means called “juju” against Adah wearing “lappa”,⁵⁷ when her mother in Africa was forced to drink the whole pot of “gari” (a sort of flour) as a punishment, when she was among women selling “boli” (roasted plantain) or later in England when she speaks with other Nigerians about ethnicity the original word “yaimirin” (a cannibal) is used.⁵⁸ There is certain development in her writing because in the first novel Emecheta does not explain those things to the reader, she simply describes the environment the things emerges but left fantasy of the reader work. In the second novel, the African context is a bit more developed and Emecheta needs to explain more, otherwise the reader would be easily lost and miss the context.

The targeting to the English audience influences also the form of the intertextuality in the novels. It applies especially to the *Second-Class Citizen* as the novel is much more developed and complex than *In the Ditch*. Emecheta paraphrases the Bible and uses the well-known sayings to contextualize them in many places in the book and when Adah is getting ready to start writing she “[needs] guidance. The simplest books she could think of were the Bible and the complete works of Shakespeare. [...] As for Shakespeare, she had never stopped

56 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 177.

57 Buchi Emecheta, *In the Ditch* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1994), 3-5.

58 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 6-7, 182.

being fascinated by him.”⁵⁹ Where then does she draw her inspiration? From the books of which the first one is considered as a fundament of the whole European culture and the ones by the second author are considered as a fundament of British literary tradition. Thus Adah openly admits she adopts the European literary tradition. There are further allusions to great British authors like Byron⁶⁰ or people known to Britons from their history like Dick Whittington⁶¹ etc.

As for the composition of both of the novels they are built chronologically. *In the Ditch* is from that point of view simple realistic description of a certain period of main character's life and the plot of the *Second Class-Citizen* follows mostly chronological order but retrospectives and digressions in the form of a dream or vision appears. Assuming that the second novel is a kind of bildungsroman, the connection to the European tradition is confirmed even stronger by the genre.

4.2 Phenomenon of racism and the Western society

The phenomenon of racism is evaluated by Adah in an interested and also unexpected way. The name of the second novel itself *Second-Class Citizen* implies that one of the main aspect of the plot will be hard life of black people in a racist white society. This suggests also the back side of the paperback where it is written that “rejected by the British society [...], she is forced to face up to life as a second-class citizen.”⁶²

Let us start with the chapter whose name is a quotation from an advertisement for a flat to rent: “Sorry, No Coloureds”.⁶³ This chapter deals with the problem Adah and Francis must face because they have jealous neighbours that could not stand that Adah is successful at gaining a job (a first-class job). The process of searching for the flat seems a real suffer for immigrants:

“During the days and weeks that followed, she had asked people at work if they knew of anywhere. She would read and reread all that shop windows had to advertise. Nearly all the notices had ‘Sorry, no coloureds’ on them. Her house-hunting was made more difficult because she was black; black, with two very young children and pregnant with another one. [...] Every door seemed barred against

59 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 177.

60 Buchi Emecheta, *In the Ditch* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1994), 80.

61 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 34.

62 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), backside of the paperback.

63 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 68-80.

them; nobody would consider accommodating them, even when they are willing to pay double the normal rent.”⁶⁴

From this extract it really looks that the majority is racist and the race is the main criterion which is taken into consideration when offering the flat to hire. Emecheta goes further and to increase contrast she describes the situation when the family has almost succeeded and gained the flat but the colour of their skin was the obstacle which prevent them from it:

“The voice that answered the phone was that of a middle-aged woman. [...] Yes, the two rooms were still available. [...] Yes, she would keep the rooms for them. No, she didn't mind children. [...] It was all so friendly, so humane. But what would happen when the landlady was faced two black faces? Adah told herself that it would be better to postpone this discovery to the last minute.[...] Now the day of reckoning had arrived, thought Adah. The lights would certainly show them up for what they were. Niggers. The door was being opened... At first Adah thought the woman was about to have an epileptic seizure. [...] That voice was telling them now that she was very sorry, the rooms had just gone. Yes, both rooms.[...] She hoped they would understand. The room had just gone. She was breathlessly nervous and even frightened as she explained.”⁶⁵

This piece of text perfectly fits an expectation of what a reader could find in a post-colonial piece of literature. The characters are strictly divided by race, social status and age. While the young black couple in trouble raises the sympathy of the reader, the white middle-aged lady is one of the narrow-minded, rich white people maintaining their prejudices that make them be so inhumane that they are not ashamed to leave the young family alone with their troubles, close the door right in front of them and in addition to that hope that “they would understand”.

But Emecheta's reflection of racism is not so simple and shallow. From direct and indirect hints the reader obtains a more complex description of the racism the black people are exposed to. The two extracts of text above gives the reflection of a possible form of racism applied by the majority. The problem is that such open descriptions are rare in the *Second-Class Citizen* and it is almost impossible to find them in the other novel *In the Ditch*. The major part of claims about racism has the character of general statements uttered often by Adah's husband Francis and are not based on the situation experienced by Adah or Francis or their children. For example after Adah's arrival in England Francis reprimands her: “You must know, my dear young *lady* [...] day you land in

64 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 70-71.

65 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 76-78.

England, you are a second-class citizen.”⁶⁶ In another place in *In the Ditch* there Adah tries to define what a term “problem family” means and says: “We are not all problem families, you know. A family is a problem one if, first, you're a coloured family sandwiched in between two white ones; secondly, if you have more than four children, whatever your income is; thirdly, if you are an unmarried, separated, divorced or widowed mother [...]”⁶⁷ But in a while such a simplification is problematized by another coloured woman of West Indian origin Mrs Williams: “Rubbish [...] I live between two white neighbours, and we get on very well together.” But then again the reader get to the point when it is confirmed that Adah's friend “calls yours a problem family because of your; your – you know, your skin.”⁶⁸ Several places in the books display similar theoretical claims that racism exists and that this is the main problem of minorities in the United Kingdom.

However, in the *Second-Class Citizen* and *In the Ditch* as well Adah enter in close contact with the majority and the racist attitude are very rare. Except for one concrete girl working with Adah at the Chalk Farm Library, Fay, who “did not like to associate herself with black people because she was too white, a mulatress”,⁶⁹ no open example of racism from the people close to Adah appears. It is on the contrary, almost all the people she meets at work are – according to Adah – nice people: her first boss Mrs Konrad (of Czech origin, she later sends presents to Adah's children for the Christmas) whose image is strongly positive contrasts a bit with the image of the rest of the staff, young girls making Adah “feel inferior somehow [but not because of race but because of] talking of boyfriends and clothes. Adah would have liked join in, for she was the same age, but she knew that if she opened her mouth she would sound bitter.”⁷⁰ Here the feeling of inferiority is not based on her race but on her unhappy marriage. In other places she meets white people the experience is also positive and in the Chalk Farm Library Bill (a white Canadian) becomes his real friend outside the family (this claim may be a bit confusing for the reader because in England Adah lives only with Francis and their children, no other family). The only negative white character in the *Second-Class Citizen* is a child minder Trudy (but she is not a

66 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 37.

67 Buchi Emecheta, *In the Ditch* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1994), 98. Print.

68 Buchi Emecheta, *In the Ditch* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1994), 99.

69 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 161.

70 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 42.

racist because Francis has sex with her) and in *In the Ditch* the Smalls family where the fact that Adah is coloured is mentioned, but it is rather Adah's interpretation that the fact she is black is the real problem. Thus a reader gains much different feeling about the racism because even a negative white characters, and especially Trudy whose personality is developed in the book, is not racist (at least not openly). By the general claims on external racism from the whites Emecheta creates an expectation that what was said will be confirmed by the life of the characters itself but such a confirmation does not come. On the contrary, most of the whites are kind to Adah and help her both morally and materially. In the *In the Ditch* Adah thanks God for her friends of whom all of them are white.⁷¹ In such way the tension between the expectation of a reader and reality described in the novels is created.

The most interesting reflection of the racism in England is the insight into the mentality of the immigrants themselves, into their own reflection of themselves on the background of the foreign society and country. When Adah comes to London, she discovers that her neighbours are Nigerians and that she is going to live in the diaspora. That community has certain rules and does not like when somebody is out of the way of what they consider a normal living of second-class citizen because they are coloured that is why they are second-class and therefore Adah must be solidary with them and become similar. But what it is and what it is not a proper for the people of the Nigerian diaspora is defined by the people themselves. How much influence such a community can make is well visible on Francis that "had become so conditioned by this phrase [second-class citizen] that he was not only living up to it but enjoying it, too."⁷² Francis is fully swallowed by the community and uncritically accepts its standards. The difference between Adah and Francis self-estimation is well expressed by Adah's contemplating during the way home from the library:

"Even if Francis did qualify, he would never have the courage to bring her to a restaurant to eat [...] Adah knew that his blackness, his feeling of blackness, was firmly established in his mind. [...] Francis's mind was a fertile ground in which such attitudes [of discrimination] could grow and thrive. Personally [...] she would have walked straight into such places and was sure she would have been served."⁷³

⁷¹ See Buchi Emecheta, *In the Ditch* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1994), 61.

⁷² Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 38.

⁷³ Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 57.

The feeling of inferiority leads to paranoid interpretations of certain situation happening to Francis as the postman, when he notices English people love their dogs. Francis pursues this fact into the conclusion that the dogs are more than black people for the English and that

“they would rather the dogs butcher a black man, than let the black man kill the dog. [...] Francis was sure not only that it could happen, but that it was going to happen to him. And he was sure [...] it had happened to a man he used to know. Adah did not want to ask where he heard it and what the name of the man was, because Francis might accuse her of wanting to know too much.”⁷⁴

Feeling of inferiority is not a destiny of black people imposed on them only by white society but it includes also the acceptance of the community spirit, yielding to its pressure and identification of self as a part of it. The diaspora dictates to its members everything: what kind of job is suitable for its members, how to treat their children etc. Thus the diaspora makes a racist monster of itself which terrorize its members and is a major obstacle blocking their effort to reach success and Francis is an embodiment of such a member.

4.3 The “Other” among the “Others”

It was said above that Emecheta belongs to feminist writers. Her two novels are mentioned as examples of such feminist pieces of literature, although feminist literary critics talking about Emecheta's feminism demonstrate as examples of such works rather later Emecheta's novels, especially those set in Africa like *The Joys of Motherhood* etc.

However, *In the Ditch* and *Second-Class Citizen* are Emecheta's first two novels and because Adah is the main character of both of them the reader has a chance to follow three different periods of her life (childhood in Africa and first year with Francis in London in the *Second-Class Citizen* and the life after leaving her husband in *In the Ditch*). This gives a possibility to some of the hypothesis based on one text confirms by the other. When it was said that the *Second-Class Citizen* is a form of bildungsroman

In Africa a reader meets a young and intelligent girl Adah from Igbo tribe. Adah's intelligence paradoxically becomes her biggest problem because it makes

74 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 134.

her different from the other girls. And Adah was a problem herself for the family because Adah being born first caused a disappointment because “she was a girl who had arrived when everyone expecting a boy [and therefore] she was so insignificant.”⁷⁵ Adah is supposed to go to school for a year or two and then learn how to sew. Thus your education was supposed to finish.

The insignificance of girls acknowledged by the African society and the awareness of her own exceptionality causes restlessness in the little girl which is strengthened by the fact that her mother does not feel any compassion with her and is not willing to support her in her desire for education: “She thought that it was these experiences with Ma so early in life that had given her such a very low opinion of her own sex.”⁷⁶ The inferiority of (African) females is confirmed in her eyes when she realizes “their wants were simple and easily met [because] when a good man holds a woman, she becomes like the queen.”⁷⁷ She unconsciously feels she needs to get a higher position in the society as the first step on the way higher was to get proper education. In contrast to her mother, Adah’s father supports her in going to school and when her mother is punished for child negligence the obstacles on the way to get education are removed. But for her mother, education is good for girls only because prospective suitors would have to pay more money to marry them. This narrow-minded attitude of women towards women reinforces Adah’s old dream to go to the United Kingdom, which she imagines as a paradise. Frustration gets bigger when Adah compares her possibilities with those of her brother Boy. The Boy is there to take all the financial means for education for himself and leave nothing for Adah. The dream to escape from the country is a reflection of the desire to escape from the inferior position of the role of a daughter and from a role of being one of the African girls.

Before Adah could fulfil her dream she reaches being enrolled in the Methodist Girls' School and gets good education there. But before this happened Adah was supposed to marry one of men her mother managed for her. In this place there is remark about what kind of man Adah imagines to marry:

“She would never, never in her life get married to any man, rich or poor, to whom she would have to serve his food on bended knee: she would not consent to live with a husband whom she would have treat as a master and refer to as ‘sir’ even behind his back. She knew all

75 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 1.

76 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 6.

77 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 9.

Igbo women did this, but she was not going to!”⁷⁸

During the childhood Adah seems to develop as a later feminist as she rejects to be conform to the rules society imposes on girls and is ready to suffer to reach her own aims. Even her marriage with Francis, a silent man reading to be an accountant, was a kind of rebellion against or revenge taken on her people for

“she got great satisfaction, too, from the fact that Francis was too poor to pay five hundred pounds bride-price Ma and the other members of her family were asking. [...] The anger of her people was so intense that none of them came to her wedding.”⁷⁹

The moment of wedding symbolize an attempt to interrupt the connection of the culture she was born in and to try a new life according to her own rules. Adah got good job and enter a middle-class as far as both her working position is concerned (she works for the American consulate in Lagos) and the material benefits she can enjoy (she has enough money to feed all the husband's family, pay for the studies of her husband and his sisters and still have enough to hire servants in her house). A reader can imagine that in such a way a happy-ending feminist novel could finish. But Adah is not satisfied and feels “tensions between the individual's desires and opportunities – as reflection of past circumstances and of expectations for the future.”⁸⁰ Finally, she succeeds and joins Francis studying in London.

Here all of the hopes gradually turns into ruins. This happens paradoxically because in England there was “new Francis”⁸¹ welcoming Adah with their children as it is explicitly written. But what is more important there is new Adah as well. In England Adah does not have a problem finding a job and thus keeps all the family secured. The good feeling about the spoils the atmosphere at home. While in Africa Francis seemed as a relatively decent man but that all changes in England. From the very first night Francis pushed Adah into inferior position first by the means of sexual abuse and the psychological terror. The narrator describes the first night together as “an attack, as savage as that of any animal”, but more important is innocent rhetorical question of Adah “how could she protest to a man past reasoning.”⁸² That indicates something changes in Adah and she starts becoming to be passive and subservient. When she fell ill

78 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 14.

79 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 19.

80 Paul White, “Geography, literature and migration,” in *Writing Across Worlds: Literature and Migration*, ed. Russel King, John Connel and Paul White (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 15.

81 Buchi Emecheta. *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 33.

82 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 38.

“Francis was dissatisfied and started shopping around outside for willing woman. Adah was quite happy about this; she even encouraged him. At least she would have some peaceful nights.”⁸³ In comparison to African Adah, who did not want to marry a master whom she would have to call ‘Sir’ even if he is absent, later in the text Francis is gradually changing not just into this role but he becomes a monster. Although, Francis is finally forced to start working and earn his bread and butter his position gets stronger. He can still tell Adah what she can and what cannot do because she is his wife. And “Adah hoped and prayed that this new sense of awareness and of pride in himself would continue.”⁸⁴ She likes so much Francis starts working and is able to pay the rent that “for the roof over their heads, she paid by being a wife to Francis at night, and by washing his endless shirts.”⁸⁵ In other words Adah accepts becoming a sexual instrument for satisfying Francis's needs and a house keeping lady. All of this she is able to accept although she theoretically knows that “if the worst came to the very worst she would leave Francis with her children she had nothing to lose but her chains.”⁸⁶

From those few quotation from the text clear that even for the self-confident African girl there are still institutions about which there are no doubts they must be respected. After the she comes to London she does not want to join conversation her colleagues at work had because the marriage is not a bed of roses but the “tunnel of thorns, fire and nails.”⁸⁷ To save the marriage Adah is able to give up her studies and wants to be just a mother and a wife.⁸⁸ The central position of the male in the life of every girl conforms also Adah's opinion in other novel describing the time Adah is alone: “Mrs O'Brien was still better off than she was – she had her man beside her [...]”⁸⁹ After reading the whole story of Adah's marriage with Francis the reader tends to stop believing that Adah is able to release herself there is still something more important than a husband: children. At the very end of the story the murder of a child is the reason why Adah leaves Francis definitely. Of course Francis does not kill her real child but her ‘brain child’, a symbolic child in the form of her first manuscript. This is also the symbolic last chance for Francis to keep Adah for him because Adah asks him to

83 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 39.

84 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 171.

85 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 171.

86 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 161.

87 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 42.

88 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 174.

89 Buchi Emecheta, *In the Ditch* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1994), 48.

read the manuscript and in this way she asks the acceptance of her symbolic child and through this she asks Francis to accept her. But Francis burns the manuscript and Adah realizes that it is not just indifference what Francis feels to her, but pure hatred: “Do you hate me so much that you could kill my child?”⁹⁰ asks Adah. The answer to her question is positive and there for Adah is forced to liberate herself involuntarily.

What are the most important things in life for Adah? They do not seem to be the same as for feminists. After the arrival in London Adah starts preferring family life instead of carrier, she prefers carrying for children and having sewing job than to have a job demanding higher qualification, she would be happy to be just a house wife instead of being bread winner (although she is most of the time), she tolerates polygamy, she tolerates being assaulted and sexually abused under the condition that the husband pays a rent, she able to sacrifice all her dreams about carrier for children. Thus Adah seems to be rather an example of a female loving her victimizer and passively accepting her destiny than a woman struggling for independence and self-realization. That is why the reported feminism is highly questionable.

90 Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (London: Heinemann, 1994), 181.

5 Conclusion

Buchi Emecheta is one of the most famous African female writers around the world and her works are typical examples of what is traditionally called post-colonial literature. There are, of course, many post-colonial writers but Emecheta is interesting because she comes from the community, black community, which suffered from the biggest deal of scorn from the white colonial masters because of the colour of their skin and as a woman coming from a conservative community of Igbo people in Nigeria. From the end of the colonial times (Nigeria gained the independence in 1960) the former colonialist were criticized for the practices in treating the colonized and for imposing feeling of deep inferiority on the peoples not belonging to the rulers. Such critique did not come just from the intellectuals representing indigenous peoples (Fanon, Achebe etc.) but were supported also by the people belonging to the community of former colonizers, from who the most famous was probably Jean-Paul Sartre.

Emecheta is not just an Igbo person but her gender also plays an important role in her life. Being a woman meant always being a little bit less than men in history. While in Western countries the differences between men and women are slowly disappearing especially as far as the possibility to make free choices in professional and private life are concerned in other parts of the world traditional division of the role of genders still remains.

Our main interests during investigating first two novels of this writer were two: her personal reflection of the consequences of colonial period for the acceptance of the “Other” in the former colonial country, and the role of a woman and a wife of the “Other” in an indigenous and foreign environment.

It was expected (in accordance to the ideology of the *négritude* movement) that the race would be the basis of the all bad things happening to the Nigerian diaspora in the UK and from the position of a feminist writer Emecheta shows up an example of an unconventional and brave woman fighting for the possibility of being educated and releasing herself from the chains of traditionally acquired social roles.

As far as racism is concerned, Emecheta through her main character of Adah does not blame just the major society of all the failures of black newcomers. She does say that white racism exist but she also doubts that such a form of racism

is the main problem for the black diaspora. She is brave enough to show that the great deal of what is called racism is just a comfortable excuse to mask the laziness, lack of motivation and lack of discipline of the blacks themselves.

The story of a young and intellectually well-equipped woman is a main plot in the novel *Second-Class Citizen* which is possible to read as a kind of bildungsroman. However, this bildungsroman is not the one dealing with intellectual development of the main character, but rather dealing with main's character erosion and loss of self-esteem as a consequence of a relationship with a real monster. At the end Francis embodied everything what Adah detests at the start but is forced to tolerate and accept because she herself is not able to throw away the conventions she takes with herself from Africa to England. At the start it seems that Adah is strongly motivated reach something that is prohibited for most of the women in Africa: freedom and self-sufficiency. The story ends in a paradox because she has not reached the freedom and self-sufficiency but is forced to accept it against her will. If the feminist movement attempts to liberate a female from the chains of traditional roles and conventions, i. e. if the main feature of all the feminist endeavour is intended move from the state of non-freedom to the state of freedom then *Second-Class Citizen* should not be called 'feminist' novel because the main character's development goes in the contrary direction.

6 Resumé

Tato bakalářská práce se snaží čtenáři představit problematiku studia a interpretace specifického literárního fenoménu, tzv. postkoloniální literatury. Vzhledem k tomu, že středoevropské země nebyly nikdy koloniálními velmocemi, netěší se výzkum koloniálního či postkoloniálního období široké popularitě a odborné práce na toto téma se týkají spíše aspektů historických nebo ekonomických, než uměleckých.

Práce je rozdělena do třech hlavních částí. První shrnuje základní historická fakta, charakterizuje období kolonialismu a postkolonialismu a snaží se na jejich pozadí ukázat nejdůležitější příčiny, které vedly k rozpadu koloniálních říší a k přehodnocení postojů vůči kolonialismu jako takovému. K tomuto přehodnocení dala podnět jednak materialistická Marxova filosofie a jednak také psychoanalýza, díky níž byl pospán mechanismus podvědomého vytváření kolektivních charakteristik a všeobecné generalizace určitých skupin na základě etnické či jiné odlišnosti. Právě odlišnost od skupiny, která je chápána jako „my“, byla hlavním důvodem diskriminace a nepřiznání rovné pozice těm, kteří byli chápáni jako „oni“ nebo „ti druzí“. Mechanismus vytváření takové abstrakce je vysvětlen na základě Lacanovy psychoanalytické teorie.

Druhá část je krátkým medailonkem autorky, která je typickým reprezentantem skupiny „těch druhých“ z hlediska země původu i etnického původu. Jedná se o nigerijskou spisovatelku Buchi Emechetu, která se ve svém díle věnuje postavení menšin, postavení žen a ve svém díle reflektuje postkoloniální atmosféru v zahraničních diasporách i bývalých koloniálních zemích.

Třetí část se zaměřuje na konkrétní formu reflexe postavení příslušníků menšiny nigerijské diaspory a postavení žen uvnitř i vně takové diaspory v prvních dvou románech Emechety *In the Ditch* a *Second-Class Citizen*. Závěrem práce je zjištění, že větším problémem než vnější rasismus většiny, je sociální tlak a požadavek stejnosti uvnitř diaspory samotné a že rasismus často slouží jako pohodlná omluva vlastní lenosti, neschopnosti nebo nedostatku motivace dotčených.

Vzhledem k tomu, že Emecheta je často považována za feministickou

spisovatelku, je v práci věnována pozornost i postavení a vývoji hlavní hrdinky Adah. Během svého manželství směřuje hrdinka od relativní samostatnosti k psychické závislosti na svém tyranském manželovi, a proto je charakteristika těchto románů jako feministických značně zavádějící.

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Anotace

Jméno a příjmení: Leoš Navrátil

Katedra: Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Název práce: Reflections of Otherness in Post-Colonial Literature on the Example of Novels by Buchi Emecheta

Vedoucí práce: Mgr. Pavlína Flajšarová, Ph. D.

Počet stran: 45

Klíčová slova: kolonialismus, postkoloniální éra, menšiny, rasismus, psychoanalýza, feminismus, postkoloniální literatura, Buchi Emecheta

Olomouc 2015

Bakalářská práce se zabývá obdobím kolonialismu, postkolonialismu a fenoménem postkoloniální literatury. Na základě historických faktů a s pomocí teorie psychoanalýzy se snaží pojmenovat základní příčiny úspěchu kulturní kolonializace a příčiny, které následně vedly ke kritice kolonialismu a vzniku postkoloniální teorie a literatury. Na dvou románech Buchi Emechety, které se řadí k diskurzu postkoloniální literatury, se práce pokouší charakterizovat autorčino vnímání rasismu a postavení ženy uvnitř nigerijské diaspory.

Abstract

Name and surname: Leoš Navrátil

Department: Department of English and American Studies

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Supervisor: Mgr. Pavlína Flajšarová, Ph. D.

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The bachelor thesis deals with colonial and post-colonial era and with the phenomenon of post-colonial literature. On the grounds of history and psychoanalysis it tries to explain main causes why cultural colonization was successful and also the causes of later criticism of the colonial era and practices which helped the creation of the post-colonial theory. On two pieces of typical post-colonial literature, Buchi Emecheta's two first novels, the thesis tries to characterize reflections of racism and the role of a woman within Nigerian diaspora.