
Intersections of Race & Gender in Adichie's Americanah and Morrison's The Bluest Eye : a Comparative Study

Nadia Abdelhadi*¹

¹Mostaganem University – Algeria

Abstract

Being one of the most diverse nations the world over, America represents the stage for an ever changing literary landscape. The new life conditions brought in the train of the numerous political and social reforms of the last century helped previously underrepresented groups to express themselves more fully. Indeed, generations of women writers and reformers coming from different ethnic groups, contributed to the debates around identity and home in America. The Nigerian Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is listed among the most influential African women writers of contemporary literature. She gives voice to the new generation of African immigrants living in the USA. Along with other African authors Adichie came to form the group named "Afropolitans." Portraying the adversity of the everyday life that African immigrants, in general and women in particular, have to undergo as part of adaptation and acculturation processes has formed, more often than not, one of the principal motivations behind the works of notable African American women writers among which Toni Morrison stands as a key figure. Despite the fact that both Morrison and Adichie come from two different generations, both of them see women of African origins victimised on the grounds of their skin colour as they join in depicting the plight of growing "black" and "female" in America in their respective novels "The Bluest eye" 1970 and "Americanah" 2013. Reflecting on the novels as marvels about women experiences in a world with very little mercy to the "non- white" and "non- male" one may ask the following question: how are the ideas around the intersection of race and gender vehiculed in the novels mentioned above? As background for discussion, we will first look at the concepts of race and gender and then move to the peculiarities of each novel in relation to such issues. A conclusion would possibly touch the differences and /or similarities as to the female protagonists' struggle to find themselves as women and as black persons in America.

*Speaker