

ABSTRACT

The Presentation of Women in the
Novels and Short Stories of
Chinua Achebe

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This paper examines the presentation of women in all of Chinua Achebe's novels published to this date and the collection of his short stories entitled Girls at War and Other Stories. Part I and Part II of this paper explore the roles and functions of the women in his novels and show that there is a contradiction between their ritual and symbolic functions and their social and domestic functions.

Part III of this paper focusses on the women in Achebe's fiction who do not conform to the idealised image of womanhood and examines Achebe's presentation of this modern or non-traditional woman. The paper also explores the barriers placed in the woman's path which prohibit her from attaining individual fulfilment and shows that Achebe is critical of the male chauvinistic attitude.

This paper also reveals that in Achebe's fiction there is a progressive development of the female and that in his latest fiction, Achebe has given 'voice' and 'space' to the women and assigns to her both political and universal significance.