Preface

Buchi Emecheta is the most prolific and the best known Black African woman writer. She is undeniably an outstanding figure in the tradition of Nigerian Fiction and she is one among the very few voices of the feminist writers who have attempted to present the portraits of African womanhood from a 'female' point of view. Formerly, the task of depicting women in the African Novel has been left entirely to male writers who have confined themselves to the depiction of one dimensional, romanticized images of the African woman, as a mother, earth goddess, possessing mysterious powers of fertility. On the contrary, Emecheta, offers faithful portrayal patterns of self analysis and general insights into the female psyche which has been completely ignored by the male writers. This female point of view in her novels registers its disgust at male chauvinism and its dissatisfaction with what it considers as unfair and oppressive in the traditional African Society. Her literary works introduce new themes in the African literary history. She brings to light how the African women suffer oppression and why they need to be liberated. In other words, she is an advocate of women's liberation. She has, exhaustively and definitively, recorded the reality of life for African women at every stage of their lives and in all possible social and cultural contexts. She writes to raise the image of the African woman to a level commensurate with historical truth. In the present dissertation, an attempt has been made to study the position of woman in the traditional African society with reference to four of the novels of Buchi Emecheta.

The Dissertation is in six chapters. The First Chapter which is introductory in nature offers an overview of the African literature and the impact of the feminist movement in Africa. In this chapter an attempt is made to survey briefly the contributions of other major African women writers. It also highlights Emecheta's
thematic concerns in her novels. Though Emecheta has authored about thirteen novels, only four novels, Second Class Citizen, The Bride Price, The Slave Girl and The Joys of Motherhood are selected for this study.

The second, third, fourth, and fifth chapters highlight the significant issues discussed in the novels Second Class Citizen, The Bride Price, The Slave Girl and The Joys of Motherhood respectively.

In chapter Six "conclusion" a summing up of the observations made in the preceding chapters has been attempted.