



**Epitome : International Journal
of Multidisciplinary Research**

ISSN : 2395-6968

**The Rural Woman as an Architect of Nation-Building: From the Spectrum of
Tess Osonye Onwueme in *What Mama Said* and Bole Butake in *Lake God***



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ABSTRACT

This paper analyses Onwueme's What Mama Said and Butake's Lake God to highlight the role of the African rural woman in the political, social, economic and cultural advancement of the society. She serves as a conscientiser in the struggle against patriarchy in contemporary African society. Her sense of community engagement and commitment to societal growth make her a veritable partner in nation-building. In these plays, the playwrights expose and criticize the irresponsible political governance in Africa and reveal that violence can be used for curative purpose, especially in the face of social injustice from an oppressive system. The analysis of these works is informed by

tenets of black feminist discourse with focus on the African feminism that seeks to expatiate on the various ranges of womanhood and her bearing of indigenous knowledge. The argument is that the African womanist vision is a redefinition of the new African rural woman, who is assertive and active in nation building as a companion to her male counterpart. In a nutshell, the works of Onwueme and Butake are interpreted from the backdrop of radical political and social commitment since postcolonial writers are not only interested in the stylistic correctness of their works but also in their functionality.

KEY WORDS

Rural Woman, Architect, Nation-Building, African womanist, African feminism