Gender in Cannon Formation in African Literature

Bukola Bandele
Department of English,
University of Ibadan, Nigeria

The main claim here is that novels by African female writers, often, enjoy a stereotype literary appraisal. The full merit of these novels are subsumed under gender with such labels as ‘feminist' or womanist', thus, making it difficult, if not impossible, to appreciate their multi-literary dimensions.

I assess the value of this acceptance of gender in cannon formation in African literary by examining some works of notable female - writers Flora Nwapa and Mariama Ba - and comparing them with the works of some established male writers - Chinua Achebe and Camara Laye.

I find that the works of the female writers, like those of their male counterparts, depict the universal basic questions that man daily grapples with, and, also reflect a multiple vision of Africa. I submit there is need for additional literary merits to be accorded the works of female writers.

Without this, the full insight and the complete benefit of both the history of Africa and progress in handling his conflictive environment would be lost.