

Tribhuvan University

Struggle for Identity in Paulo Coelho's *The Witch of Portobello*

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Abstract

Paulo Coelho's *The Witch of Portobello* portrays the women's struggle for independent identity in the 21st Century. Athena, the protagonist of the novel, represents all the females who are trying hard for establishing their free identity. This study has been focused at making a wide research of her different activities linking them to the female's fight for freedom. The theoretical tool used to prove this research is 'feminism'.

Athena could have lived a contented life in London without a single worry. She does not do that. She does not follow the norms of patriarchal society as it is. Thus she does not stay only inside the home by doing household works. She goes through several experiments in every step of her life. The objective of that is only for creating her identity in the society where she lives. She does everything by following her intuition to prove that women are capable to take any decision of their life. She gets marriage at the age of nineteen and gives birth to a son. She adopts dance at her workplace for increasing the outputs. She learns art of calligraphy through her heart. Ultimately she learns witchcraft and uses it as a tool of raising awareness on women that they are free and equal as male members of their community. She badly gets disturbances in her mission by a orthodox Christians Rev Ian Buck and his groups. Finally she gets victory over all kinds of challenges. In this way she is able to establish her independent identity in the city of Portobello as a successful spiritual leader.

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