

Feminism and Diaspora in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s “Zikora”

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Abstract

This study offers an in-depth analysis of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s short story “Zikora,” arguing that the narrative functions as a potent critique of globalized patriarchy as it is experienced by professional African women in the diaspora. This paper makes an original contribution by employing a Diaspora and Postcolonial Feminist framework to analyze how the intersection of cultural displacement and traditional gender roles intensifies societal pressures on the protagonist. The analysis focuses on Zikora, a Nigerian lawyer in Washington, D.C., as she confronts unexpected single motherhood and abandonment. This research moves beyond a simple thematic reading to examine the dialectic between Zikora’s “Western” professional ambition and the “traditional” Nigerian values embodied by her mother. This intergenerational conflict is framed not merely as a clash of cultures, but as a site where local and international patriarchal norms converge. Specifically, the paper investigates how Zikora’s experience of cultural hybridity and displacement in the U.S. is not an escape from, but a re-inscription of, gendered expectations concerning motherhood and partnership. Utilizing close reading informed by Postcolonial feminist studies, the paper’s methodology involves analyzing key narrative moments, particularly the shifts in Zikora’s perspective on her own mother, to demonstrate how the diasporic condition complicates and intensifies gender inequalities. The core argument is that “Zikora” is a crucial text in contemporary African feminist literature because it illuminates how patriarchy adapts and persists across national borders, demanding a nuanced theoretical approach to fully appreciate its critique.

Keywords: diaspora, postcolonial feminism, globalized patriarchy, cultural hybridity, gender inequalities

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Introduction

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's short story "Zikora" is a powerful and complex text that delves into the intricate challenges faced by a modern African woman navigating a diasporic existence. This paper argues that "Zikora" functions as a profound feminist text, one that not only critiques patriarchal gender norms but also examines how these norms are complicated and intensified by the immigrant experience. Through the emotional, physical, and reflective journey of its protagonist, a successful Nigerian lawyer in Washington, D.C., the narrative exposes the unique struggles of reconciling a Western sense of independence and ambition with deeply ingrained cultural expectations of womanhood, marriage, and motherhood. As Zikora navigates the visceral ordeal of labor, the emotional storm of her partner's abandonment, and her own internal reflections, Adichie presents a nuanced perspective on how the diasporic condition shapes a woman's identity and intensifies the societal pressures placed upon her. This analysis will show that "Zikora" is a crucial contribution to African feminist literature, offering a compelling portrait of resilience and self-discovery in the face of cultural displacement and gender inequality.

Situating "Zikora" Within Nigerian Feminist Literature

African feminisms and specifically, Nigerian feminism, offer a powerful and distinct intellectual framework for literary analysis, one that challenges the universalizing claims of Western feminism. This paradigm recognizes that African women's experiences with patriarchy are deeply intertwined with unique cultural, historical, and socio-economic factors, including colonialism, traditional social structures, and the challenges of post-independence life (Okonjo-Iweala, 2021, p. 25). Consequently, Nigerian and other African feminist writers do not seek to simply emulate their Western counterparts. Instead, they center their narratives on issues that resonate within their own societies, often addressing themes like motherhood, marriage, and family dynamics not merely as "domestic" matters, but as sites of significant political and social struggle (Nnaemeka, 1994a, p. 155; Ogundipe-Leslie, 1994, p. 20).

This literary tradition is robust and well-established. From the foundational works of pioneers like Flora Nwapa's *Efuru* (1966) and Buchi Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood* (1979) to the later contributions of writers like Buchi Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen* (1974) and Mariama Bâ's *So Long a Letter* (1981), Nigerian literature has consistently explored the complexities of women's lives. These works expose the societal pressures to fulfill traditional roles and, as critics like Helen Olajumoke Oyeyemi (2021) have argued, serve as a platform for women to "reinscribe" themselves into history on their own terms (112).

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's short story "Zikora" continues this rich literary heritage while also marking a new direction. The story's intense focus on single motherhood and the protagonist's name, "Zikora" (meaning "assemble the throng" in Igbo), underscores the individual's struggle for identity and the need for communal support in a society that may not readily provide it (Oyeyemi, 2021, p. 113). Adichie's work reflects a contemporary sensibility, one that acknowledges the evolution of Nigerian women's challenges, particularly those living in the diaspora. Her writing is not merely a continuation but an expansion of the feminist project, demonstrating how the themes of motherhood and autonomy are complicated by globalization and displacement (Adeniyi-Ogunyankin, 2022, pp. 175–184).

In her short story, "Zikora," Adichie immerses readers in a woman's journey to childbirth, weaving together vignettes from her daily life. The narrative introduces Zikora, a Nigerian

lawyer in Washington, D.C., who is grappling with impending motherhood and the abrupt end of her relationship. Left to bear the consequences alone, she finds unexpected emotional support from her mother, whose arrival to help with the birth becomes a pivotal moment.

The 37-year-old attorney is abandoned by her boyfriend after she reveals her pregnancy. This betrayal, coupled with her mother's presence, transforms the seemingly independent Zikora into a vulnerable young woman once more. The physical and emotional turmoil of this period prompts her to reflect on her mother's own difficult history. She recalls how her father, a polygamist, started a new family with another woman while her mother chose to remain in the marriage, refusing divorce due to the significant cultural stigma it carried. For her mother, this acceptance of abandonment in the form of polygamy was a sacrifice for dignity and social standing, a stark contrast to Zikora's own defiant independence. As Zikora's seemingly perfect life unravels, she begins to understand her mother's motivations and the sacrifices she made. The story is fundamentally a passionate and poignant portrayal of a single mother's hardship, specifically within the context of Nigerian culture. It is a testament to the resilience of women who must forge their own paths in the face of societal pressures and personal betrayal.

The narrative frequently returns to the trauma of Zikora's father taking a second wife, an event that shattered her mother's world. In a feminist context, this memory serves as a cautionary tale about the instability of traditional marriage. Even in the diaspora, where polygamy is not the norm, the ghost of this betrayal haunts Zikora's expectations of Kwame. It underscores the theme that women, across generations and borders, must navigate the constant threat of being replaced or discarded by men.

Sisterhood

Beyond the individual struggle, the story powerfully highlights the crucial theme of sisterhood. Zikora's mother emerges as her most reliable source of support, a stark contrast to her father, who only offers empty promises to visit. While he remains a distant figure, her mother crosses continents to be by her side, underscoring the strength of the bond between them. This unwavering care is a reflection of a deeper network of female solidarity, also evident in the emotional support Zikora and her mother received from her aunt. In a world where patriarchal figures disappoint and abandon, Adichie illustrates that women find strength and support not from men, but in the mutual understanding and resilience of other women.

Adichie's portrayal of sisterhood goes beyond the immediate family unit, positioning it as a fundamental aspect of African feminist thought. Recent scholarship confirms this emphasis, arguing that for African women, female solidarity is not merely a social convenience but a vital strategy for survival and empowerment (Yussif & Nsawah, 2024, p. 263). The bonds between women often constitute a powerful counter-narrative to the oppressive experiences they face in patriarchal societies (Osigwe & Nekede, 2021, pp. 45–50). Through the relationship between Zikora and her mother, Adichie re-examines the concept of motherhood, showing it not as a passive, biological role, but as an active, empowering force forged by shared struggle and mutual support (Amari & Maoui, 2021, p. 225). The intergenerational dialogue between mother and daughter in "Zikora" is a testament to this, as the younger woman comes to understand her mother's silent strength and sacrifices, finding a new form of kinship that transcends geographical and cultural divides.

In Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's short story "Zikora," the protagonist serves as the first-person narrator, placing the reader directly within her experience. The narrative opens with Zikora in labor at East Memorial Hospital. Despite extensive research and preparation, she finds herself overwhelmed by the visceral reality of childbirth, describing it as, "It wasn't only pain, either. It was both similar to and distinct from pain. It sat like fire in my back, extending to my thighs, pressing against my internal organs and spiraling downwards" (Adichie, 2020, p. 11). This physical agony forces Zikora to confront the limitations of intellectual knowledge, realizing that psychological preparation and academic research are no match for the raw, bodily experience of labor.

The story highlights the pervasive interpersonal betrayals women endure, many of which stem from patriarchal expectations. The protagonist's younger cousin, Mmiliaku, suffers at the hands of Emmanuel, a man who would "prefer to have sex with her in her sleep" (Adichie, 2020, p. 10). Similarly, Mmiliaku's "impoverished boyfriend" leaves her for an "older and wealthy" woman, a decision driven by her parents' impatience (Adichie, 2020, p. 10). The theme of male-centric priorities is further underscored by Zikora's father's polygamy, where he marries a second wife to ensure he has male heirs, disregarding his devotion to his first wife. Zikora's own seemingly flawless relationship with Kwame, who is younger and earns less than her, shatters when he discovers her pregnancy. He views the child as a "miscommunication," abandoning her to face motherhood alone (Adichie, 2020, p. 11).

Adichie (2020) suggests that female solidarity and emotional support are essential for navigating the physical and psychological transitions of motherhood. While the protagonist, Zikora, initially presents as a self-sufficient and successful woman, the reality of her partner's abandonment forces her to confront a profound vulnerability. This need for a support network is first articulated in her confession to her cousin, Mmiliaku: "I was scared to do it alone, I was scared to be alone" (p. 16). Beyond this peer connection, Zikora begins to find a deeper, more grounded sense of security through her mother's compassionate care during a prolonged labor. Her mother's calm presence—exemplified by her simple reassurance that "some babies just cry"—offers a stark contrast to Zikora's own frantic intellectual anxieties (pp. 18, 27).

This shared experience of care allows their relationship, which was once distant and strained, to thaw and deepen. The evolving bond culminates in a moment of raw honesty when Zikora admits, "I don't know what I'll do when you leave," to which her mother replies, "I'm not going anywhere yet" (p. 27). This exchange provides Zikora with profound relief and a new understanding of her mother's historical strength and the sacrifices she made as a woman who was similarly mistreated. Ultimately, this intergenerational support serves as a crucial antidote to the isolation Zikora experiences, transforming motherhood from a solitary struggle into a shared act of resilience.

The story concludes not with a romantic resolution, but with a quiet, domestic one. The forgiveness Zikora extends to her mother is the ultimate feminist act of the story. By understanding her mother's choices, Zikora heals the rift caused by patriarchal structures that pit women against one another. In the diaspora, this reconciliation acts as a homecoming, providing Zikora with the ancestral grounding she needs to raise her child in a foreign land.

In many societies, single mothers face significant challenges, carrying the entire weight of responsibility for their families. This can occur due to various circumstances, including the death of a partner, divorce, or, as in the case of Adichie's protagonist, Zikora, abandonment

by a partner. A parent raising a child with little to no involvement from the other parent is a distinct experience, one that profoundly impacts a child's development. *Zikora* represents a new generation of women who, despite being the product of such circumstances, are empowered and socially conscious.

Adichie's narrative explores motherhood as a socially constructed role, defined not just by biology but by a woman's capacity for endurance and care. As *Zikora* navigates the overwhelming realities of new motherhood, her own mother's presence triggers a profound shift in perspective. While her mother embodies traditional motherhood—a woman who accepts polygamy and remains in a difficult marriage to maintain social standing—*Zikora* begins to understand the complex interplay between cultural expectations and personal resilience. The story highlights the gendered asymmetry of reproduction, where only one parent, the mother, endures the pain of labor and the sole burden of raising a child. In "*Zikora*," Adichie portrays women who are left to shoulder both their own duties and the responsibilities abdicated by men, a theme that speaks to a new wave of writers unafraid to tackle such sensitive issues. The story is unique for its immersive, first-person perspective, allowing readers to fully inhabit the emotional and psychological world of the protagonist.

Writing the Body

Women writers use the body as a central theme to challenge patriarchal narratives and create an authentic space for female experience. This literary tradition aims to reclaim the female body from its historical objectification and reposition it as a subject of lived reality, consciousness, and power. Writing the body becomes a form of resistance against a culture that often silences or sanitizes female pain, desire, and bodily processes. This practice is particularly significant for African women writers, who often address how the female body is a site of intersecting oppressions related to gender, race, and culture. They write the body to give voice to experiences like childbirth, female genital mutilation, and reproductive health issues that are often overlooked in mainstream discourse (Amuche & Atoyebi, 2023, p. 5; Oyeyemi, 2021, p. 116).

Adichie writes the body in "*Zikora*" not as a biological object, but as a complex and politicized site of experience, pain, and agency. She challenges the idealized or sanitized depictions of pregnancy and childbirth often found in mainstream culture. The body becomes the central, visceral stage where the story's key conflicts—feminist, cultural, and personal—play out. This approach is a deliberate feminist strategy, as female authors use the body to expose the societal expectations and power dynamics that govern women's lives (Oyeyemi, 2021, p. 115). By centering the narrative on the physical self, they grant agency to the body as a source of knowledge and a medium for self-discovery (Ebe, 2020, p. 48).

Adichie's primary focus is the raw, unvarnished physicality of labor. *Zikora*'s description of her contractions is brutal and detailed, portraying the pain as "both similar to and distinct from pain," a "primitive wind" that sits like fire in her back (Adichie, 2020, p. 11). This visceral reality serves as a direct contrast to her intellectual, privileged life in the diaspora. Her mind, the tool of her professional success as a lawyer, feels helpless against the overwhelming physical experience of the body.

This sense of alienation from her own body is compounded by the cultural expectations placed upon her. Her mother's stoic, "laced-up dignity" and insistence on silence during labor clashes with *Zikora*'s instinctive screams, highlighting how even in moments of extreme

physical agony, the female body is subject to rigid cultural norms and judgments (Adichie, 2020, p. 18). As noted by Obinna (2020), this portrayal underscores that motherhood is not just a biological event but a “journey” shaped by the tension between individual experience and societal “performance” (p. 2).

Beyond physical pain, the body serves as a repository of memory and trauma. Through her contractions, Zikora reflects on past indignities and the ways her body has been policed and misunderstood. She remembers her mother’s lack of sympathy for her menstrual cramps—dismissed as a lack of “discipline”—the subtle judgment from Kwame regarding her birth control use, and the tragic death of a cousin from complications in childbirth (Adichie, 2020, pp. 14–15). These flashbacks demonstrate that a woman’s body carries a hidden history of patriarchal control and societal expectations.

The pain of the present is thus connected to a lifetime of struggle; as Osborne-Crowley (2021) argues, the female body often “keeps secrets” of past traumas that resurface during moments of physical vulnerability (p. 82). This intergenerational transmission of bodily knowledge and trauma is a key aspect of African feminist literature, where the bodies of mothers and daughters often tell a shared story of oppression and resistance (Amuche & Atoyebi, 2023, p. 9). In essence, Zikora’s labor is not just about the birth of a child, but the “re-inscription of womanhood” through the reclamation of her own physical narrative (Nnaemeka, 1994b, p. 140). This reclamation extends beyond the immediate physical ordeal, as the body also serves as a profound repository of memory.

In women’s writing, the body serves as a profound repository of memory, etching personal and cultural histories onto its physical form. This concept challenges the traditional mind-body dualism—an intellectual framework that has historically prioritized the “rational” mind over the “irrational” female body—asserting instead that memory is an inherently embodied experience (Tiukało, 2012, p. 78). Trauma, for example, can be inscribed on the body, influencing a woman’s physical sensations and behaviors long after the event itself; as Osborne-Crowley (2021) suggests, these “secrets” manifest most clearly when the body is under the stress of illness or labor (p. 82). This embodied memory often bypasses linear, verbal narratives, manifesting instead through the sensory metaphors and disrupted chronology seen in Adichie’s use of flashbacks, where the pain of a contraction triggers a sudden, non-linear memory of past policing (Adichie, 2020). By exploring the body as a geographical memory, women writers reclaim their experiences from patriarchal narratives that have historically objectified the female form as a mere biological vessel (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 65).

Simone de Beauvoir’s (2011) philosophical work, particularly *The Second Sex*, is foundational to the deconstruction of bodily objectification. She argued that in patriarchal societies, women are reduced to the “Other”—their bodies defined purely by biological functions and societal expectations rather than individual will (Tiukało, 2012, p. 80). By analyzing the lived experience of the female body as a “situation” rather than a mere object, Beauvoir provided a framework for understanding how a woman’s body becomes a site of both oppression and potential liberation (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 65). This framework empowers contemporary writers like Adichie to reclaim the body as a subject, making physical experience central to the narratives of memory and identity. This identity is inherently tied to the geography of the diaspora; throughout the labor process, Zikora’s body becomes a map of her history.

Every contraction acts as a bridge between her current life in America and her biological origins in Nigeria. This focus on the physical body is a powerful feminist statement; it asserts that despite the intellectual and professional heights Zikora has reached, she is still tethered to the universal female experience of creation. Her body performs a labor that is both uniquely hers and shared by every woman in her lineage, effectively “mapping” the transition from the diaspora back to the ancestral source (Adeniyi-Ogunyankin, 2022, p. 178). In this sense, the body becomes the ultimate vessel of migration, carrying cultural identity across borders through the blood and bone of the maternal line.

Ultimately, through this intense physical ordeal, Zikora’s body transforms into a source of agency and self-knowledge. By enduring the pain and eventually giving birth, she reclaims control over her body and her life. The final moments of labor are described as a raw, almost violent act of creation that reduces her to her essential self (Adichie, 2020, p. 26). This experience forces her to re-evaluate her life and her relationships, leading to a profound understanding of her identity as a woman and a mother, independent of the patriarchal expectations that previously defined her. As Ebe (2020) notes, when female authors center the narrative on the physical self, they grant the body agency as a primary source of knowledge (p. 52).

Furthermore, Zikora’s journey illustrates how the body serves as a bridge between generations and cultural legacies. The pain of labor does not merely represent physical endurance; it is a rite of passage that enables her to connect with her maternal lineage in a way that intellectual understanding never could. Her body, in this context, functions as a historical archive, holding the collective memory of female resilience and survival (Nnaemeka, 1994b, p. 142). By embracing the power and pain of her physical form, she moves beyond patriarchal definitions of her worth and steps into a new identity shaped by her own lived experience.

While the body serves as a site of presence and connection, the male figures in the story are defined by their absence. While Kwame represents the failure of the “modern” man to handle the weight of reproduction, the memory of Zikora’s father represents the failure of the “traditional” man through the lens of polygamy and neglect. Adichie (2020) creates a vacuum where a positive male presence should be, forcing a radical redefinition of the family unit. In the diaspora, the “family” shifts from a patriarchal structure to a matriarchal one, centered around the mother, the daughter, and the newborn. This shift is not merely a social convenience but a “vital strategy for survival” that replaces the unreliable patriarchal figure with a stable, intergenerational female network (Yussif & Nsowah, 2024, p. 263).

The matriarchal shift necessitated by male absence forces a confrontation with the “single mother” label, a term loaded with divergent meanings across the diaspora. In the Nigerian context, being a single mother often carries a heavy social stigma rooted in traditional marital expectations; in the American diaspora, the stigma shifts toward racialized socio-economic tropes. Zikora must navigate the internalization of both these stigmas. Her journey toward accepting her role as a single parent is a feminist act of defiance; she chooses to see her child not as a mark of her “failure” to keep a man, but as a testament to her own capacity to endure. As noted by Obinna (2020), this transition represents a “journey to motherhood” that redefines success outside of patriarchal validation (p. 2). By rejecting these labels, Zikora aligns with the broader project of African feminisms which seeks to (re)inscribe womanhood as a position of power rather than one of lack (Nnaemeka, 1994b, p. 138).

In “Zikora,” Adichie subtly weaves in the reality of a Black woman navigating the American healthcare system, where the feminist struggle is inseparable from the racialized experience. Zikora’s high socioeconomic status as a lawyer does not fully insulate her from the vulnerabilities inherent in the medical-industrial complex. This reflects a stark documented reality in the United States, where Black women are 2.6 times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than White women, a disparity that persists regardless of income or education level (CDC, 2024). Her labor, therefore, serves as a metaphor for the broader Black experience in the West—a process of intense creation and pain that is monitored by a system that does not instinctively empathize with her cultural history. This reflects the “fragmentations” discussed by Adeniyi-Ogunyankin (2022), where the Black female body in the diaspora is often subjected to a gaze that overlooks its specific historical and geographical origins (p. 180).

Furthermore, the lack of empathy Zikora feels from the medical staff echoes the “silencing” of female pain described by Osborne-Crowley (2021). Within this racialized “situation”—to use Beauvoir’s (2011, p. 45) terminology—Zikora’s insistence on her own narrative and her mother’s physical presence becomes a form of reproductive justice. They reclaim the hospital room, turning a sterile, institutional space into a site of ancestral grounding. In doing so, Adichie illustrates that for the woman in the diaspora, the body is the final frontier of resistance where the “biological” meets the “political” to produce a reclaimed sense of self rooted in the pluralities of African feminisms. The vulnerability exposed in this racialized healthcare experience highlights the fragility of the diasporic myth of the “global citizen.”

The racialized healthcare experience Zikora undergoes highlights the fragility of the diasporic myth of the “global citizen.” While she initially believes her professional status has transcended the cultural limitations of her home country, the abandonment she faces reveals that globalism is often a thin veneer. When crisis strikes, the protections of her American identity feel secondary to the patriarchal stigmas she thought she had left behind in Nigeria. Her struggle proves that the diaspora is not an escape from patriarchy, but rather a different stage upon which the same gendered dramas are performed. This reflects the “fragmentations” and “double consciousness” described by Adeniyi-Ogunyankin (2022, p. 182), where the subject is forced to navigate the tension between their ancestral identity and their Western “situation.”

This internal tension is further articulated through the use of language, where the standard English register fails to capture the depth of Zikora’s emotional reality. While she operates in the sharp, precise English of the American legal world, her emotional breakthroughs are mediated through the cadences of her mother’s Nigerian-inflected speech. This linguistic shift represents a feminist reclamation; by the end of the story, Zikora stops fighting the “African” parts of her identity and starts using them as a source of power to withstand her solitude. This is what Nnaemeka (1994a, p. 156) identifies as the movement from “rebellious silence” to “literary creativity,” as Zikora finds a voice that combines her Western education with her maternal heritage.

This “architectural” loneliness is a hallmark of the diasporic experience, where Western privacy often morphs into isolation. Unlike the communal support systems in Nigeria, the diaspora offers a “fragmented” existence (Adeniyi-Ogunyankin, 2022, p. 182). Zikora’s journey is about transforming this isolation into a self-sufficient solitude. Her apartment, once a symbol of her independent success, becomes a site of “ancestral grounding” as her mother fills the space with the traditional care and practical wisdom required for survival.

In this light, the story challenges the neoliberal feminist idea that economic independence is the final frontier of liberation. Zikora is financially secure and professionally successful, yet she is emotionally devastated by Kwame's cowardice. Adichie suggests that while financial autonomy is a vital tool for the "second-class citizen" seeking freedom (Emecheta, 1974, p. 181), it does not automatically dismantle the emotional hierarchies that prioritize male desires. The diaspora allows Zikora to pay her own bills, but as Osborne-Crowley (2021) suggests, it does not protect the body or the heart from the "secrets" of patriarchal entitlement and betrayal (p. 84). This realization forces Zikora to look toward intergenerational female solidarity—rather than capital—as her true source of security.

Conclusion

This study has examined Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's "Zikora" as a transformative text within contemporary African feminist literature, illustrating that the diasporic experience does not dissolve patriarchal structures but rather reconfigures them. By navigating the intersection of professional success in the West and the traditional expectations of her Nigerian heritage, Zikora exposes the fragmented reality of the modern African woman. The narrative's focus on the visceral physicality of childbirth serves as a powerful reclamation of the female body, transforming it from a biological vessel of patriarchal concern into a primary site of agency and ancestral memory.

Adichie challenges the neoliberal feminist myth that economic independence alone constitutes total liberation. While Zikora's professional status as a lawyer provides her with financial autonomy, it offers no protection against the emotional betrayals of a globalized patriarchy that persists across borders. Instead, Zikora finds her true source of resilience through a matriarchal shift—a deliberate movement away from reliance on male presence toward a stable, intergenerational network of female solidarity. This transition, underscored by the reconciliation between Zikora and her mother, represents a re-inscription of womanhood that values shared struggle over solitary success. In the sterile landscape of the diaspora, Zikora's journey to motherhood becomes a profound act of reproductive justice and cultural homecoming. By embracing the African cadences of her identity and the quiet strength of her mother, she transforms her architectural loneliness into a self-sufficient solitude. "Zikora" thus stands as a testament to the fact that for the woman in the diaspora, the most radical act of resistance is the healing of female relationships and the reclamation of her own physical and emotional narrative.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

The author declares that no AI or AI-assisted technologies have been used to generate, refine, or correct the content in the manuscript. The ideas, design, procedures, findings, analyses, and discussion are originally written and derived from careful and systematic conduct of the research.

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