

POST-COLONIAL GRATIFICATION AND CORRUPTION: A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF ACHEBE'S 'A MAN OF THE PEOPLE'

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ABSTRACT

Post-colonialism is borne at the very first moment of colonial contact. It is the speech of resistance which colonialism brings into being. The post-colonial literature shows the upshot of colonialism. It reveals the nostalgic self of the colonized. A colonized is bound to put up with the different disconcerting situations. He has to have high resistance and fortitude against lots of uncalled-for and inevitable conflicts. The postcolonial writers bring into light the suppression of a vast wealth of indigenous cultures beneath the weight of imperial control. As Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin pertinently assert, "All post-colonial societies are still subject in one way or another to overt or subtle forms of neo-colonial domination, and independence has not solved his problem". The primary concern of Chinua Achebe was his society, more precisely, the destiny of his people. Achebe, perhaps the most authentic literary voice from Africa, wrote not only to record the African, especially Nigerian, life but to analyze the reality experienced by the native people in different times and situations. In his view, the writer must be accountable to his society. To him it was absurd to think of art as a pure and autonomous entity coming into existence by itself in an aesthetic void. Accordingly, his aim was to make his fiction an instrument of awareness seeking to eliminate hydra-headed criminality and injustice. In this regard, the study is an attempt to show Achebe's endeavour to expose the rampant corruption and criminality in Nigeria to exert a decisive and positive influence on his people. For Achebe, the intrigues and contestation over power, especially within the civil service, assume a metaphoric significance in unraveling social contradictions in society. Achebe thus evaluates the various dimensions of power and how it is used to subjugate or tyrannize people. He evokes a consciousness, concerned with Manichaeism, alienation and characters that can adjust to the uncertainties of a postcolonial society with all the indices of underdevelopment, greed, corruption, bureaucratic, self-aggrandizement, tardiness, indiscipline, political instability etc. The study adopts the content assessment approach in order to unravel the constructive semantics and understanding of the post-colonial works.

KEYWORDS: Post-Colonial, Literature, Corruption, Nigeria, Metaphoric Significance

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