

DECOLONIZING POETRY: FORM, CONTENT AND LINGUISTIC IMPLICATIONS OF NIGERIAN PIDGIN POETRY

ASIKA IKECHUKWU EMMANUEL

Lecturer, Department of English, Anambra State University, Igbariam, Anambra, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The Nigerian soil over the years has proven to be a fertile ground for poetic overflow. This is evident in the outburst of poems that have emanated from the country and now grace the African and world literature at large. Poetry, a genre of literature which some scholars believe to be of Western origin is not alien to Africa. Africans have their own poetry laced in oral tradition and cultural artefacts of the people prior to colonialism. Poetry in Africa in the course of its evolution has undergone several changes. Some schools of thought have emerged in the defence and promotion of the gains of poetry and the form it ought to take. We have the likes of Wole Soyinka and Okigbo who believe in the obscurity of poetry. Also in contention are the likes of Niyi Osundare and Tanure Ojaide who believe in the simplicity of poetry if it must meet the criteria of being a weapon of criticism. They are called the 'Alter-native' poets. In this rank also is Ezenwa Ohaeto, Peter Onwudinjo, and Akachi Adimora -Ezeigbo who have resorted even to the level of using the Pidgin English as the language of some of their poems. This paper selected the poetry of Ezenwa Ohaeto and Peter Onwudinjo and studied the use of pidgin in their poetry. The paper examined the form, content of these pidgin poems and above all the effect and implication of this usage on poetry and society at large. It concludes that the pidgin poetry is of great appeal to many lovers of poetry and has come to serve as the bridge and a link towards the task of decolonizing the African poetry of all western influences.

KEYWORDS: Greek practices, Historically