Abstract

Hope in Hopelessness in Lenrie Peters’ “In the Beginning”

By

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This paper examines “45,” a poem opening with the line, “In the beginning,” by the Gambian writer, Lenrie Peters. The paper discusses how the poem that was published in 1967 just after most of the colonies in Africa had become independent states traces as it condemns the hopes for equality, plenty and unity the people had entertained as they fought for independence led by freedom fighters who as the political leaders of the independent states had betrayed them. The paper shows how the narrator uses biblical allusions to underline this betrayal of a people who can only lay their hopes in nostalgia of how it was and should be as it was “in the beginning.”

Key words: anticolonial struggle, betrayal, biblical allusions, hopes and hopelessness, in the beginning, Lenrie Peters, narrator, OAU, ordinary people, political independence, political leaders