GENDER PERSPECTIVES IN THE CREATIVE WORKS OF MARJORIE OLUDHE MACGOYE

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Abstract

The central ideological relevance of gender as an emerging theoretical concept in the criticism of African literature is the locus of this study. Gender related studies of creative works by Kenyan writers like Ngugi wa Thiongo, Grace Ogot and Rebecca Njau have created the impression that Kenyan writers are gender-blind. The above writers depict women characters in their stereotypical, traditional and inferior roles. These studies have ignored the contribution of Marjorie Oludhe Macgoye, a British-born Kenyan woman writer who employs androgyny in addressing the plight of women in her published works.

The primary goal of this study is to investigate the ideological relevance of various gender perspectives in Macgoye's creative works. Specifically, the study seeks to identify, trace and evaluate gender perspectives as they emerge, develop and cohere in Macgoye's corpus. The study will cover eleven published works by the author. It proceeds by discussing gender, feminism, ideology and vision as concepts in the criticism of African literature. It then evaluates gender perspectives in the author's short stories, fiction and poetry. The study concludes by presenting a synthesis of research findings on gender perspectives in Macgoye's works before suggesting areas for further research on gender ideology in the criticism of African literature.

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12 April, 2001