

Summary of the Report

The Concept of Nativism in Indian and African Literary Criticism

Indian and African Literature

1. In Africa African literature written in European languages was misunderstood as African literature only as if there had never been literature in African languages. African literature refers to literature of and from Africa. It consists of a body of work in different languages and various genres ranging from oral literature to literature written in colonial languages (French, Portuguese, and English).
2. Africa is continent comprising 54 small countries. Each country has its own constitution. Each country has its own language and tradition. Though the constitutions and languages are different, the customs, traditions and cultures are same. In this way African continent is similar to that of India.
3. After the publication of the journal *Presence africaine* in 1956 the concept of African literature became prominent in Africa. In short African literature is the literature produced in indigenous African languages. It is a body of that work which has thrown away the influence of foreign languages.
4. Thus the idea of Indian and African literature is an aggregate of all writings in all Indian and African languages respectively, presenting itself as a pattern with common strands through the ages.
5. So the concept of Nativism does not remain limited to India only. We have to consider the situation in Asia also. Considering the similarities between Asia and Africa, the concept of Nativism relates itself to the continents: Asia and Africa. Both the continents strive to preserve their identity with reference to their tradition, cultures, morality, native modernity, realism and languages of peoples.

Nativism: African Critical Discourse

1. English is not an indigenous language; naturally the basic urges cannot be presented through it. It is an alien language which provides pieces of entertainment to foreign readers. This craze hampered the development of native literature.

2. Nativism in African literature starts with the *Decolonization of African literature*. During the post-independence period English acquired the status of official language and medium of instruction in educational institutions. All the indigenous languages were accorded secondary position. Even the production of literature in indigenous languages is banned. This socio-political condition gave birth to Nativism in Africa.
3. In Africa the concept of Nativism emerged from the then famous Makerere conference. It is a group activity. The writers participated in the conference sat to discuss the issue of African literature and concluded that African literature must be produced in African languages and should be evaluated with the indigenous African standards. In India the concept of Nativism is advocated by Bhalchandra Nemade, whereas in Africa it emerged out of a group activity. In Africa Chinua Achebe, Gabriel Okara, Wole Soyinka, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Ngugi Wa Thiong'O are the critics who advocated the movement of nativism.
4. African literature was evaluated by the standards developed by the West, which were not altogether applicable to the African situation. Even after liberation from the colonial clutches African culture was continued to be dominated by Western standards.
5. African Nativism is basically divided into three categories, i.e. Classical Nativism- teaches that "usefulness" is the fundamental African aesthetic principle; Structuralist Nativism- focuses on the clear expression of public themes; and Linguistic Nativism- advocates producing an effective pedagogy for national development of written artifacts in the indigenous languages.
6. In Africa Nativism is the vehicle of idealism and pragmatism in literary criticism. For them literatures are not languages but linguistic embodiments of cultural patterns.
7. Hence, the term Nativism needs to be exhibited in the Glossary of Literary Terms as well as in all the Standard English Dictionaries.

Principal Investigator