



The Theory of African Literature: Implications for Practical Criticism (African Culture Archive)

Chidi Amuta

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This groundbreaking work, first published in 1989, was one of the first to challenge the conventional critical assessment of African literature, and remains highly influential today. Amuta's key argument is that African literature can be discussed only within the wider framework of the dismantling of colonial rule and Western hegemony in Africa. In exploring the possibility of a dialectical, alternative critical base, he draws upon both classical Marxist aesthetics and the theories of African culture espoused by Fanon, Cabral and Ngugi. From these explorations, Amuta derives a new language of criticism, which is then applied to works by modern African writers as diverse as Achebe, Ousmane, Agostinho Neto and Dennis Brutus. Amuta's highly original and innovative approach remains relevant not only for assessing the literature of developing countries, but for Marxist and postcolonial theories of literary criticism more generally. The author's elegance of argument and clarity of exposition makes this a distinguished and lasting contribution to debates around cultural expression in post-colonial Africa.

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