

Notes: Analysis of 'The Voter.' A Short Story by Chinua Achebe

by **Emmanuel Kachele** - March 08, 2020



INTRODUCTION

Chinua Achebe is a Nigerian author. He was born on 16th November 1930. He was born in the eastern Nigerian town of Ogidi, where his father taught at Mission school. His father was a Christian convert.

He planned to study medicine, but love of literature and his country's nationalist movement forever changed his plans. As a student, he came to realize the destructive effects of colonialism and dedicated himself to redefining Africa, to telling Africans' true story, including their achievements and failures. In his words, the European idea that "*Africa was the Primordial Void, was sheer humbling: Africa had a history, a religion, and a civilization*". Achebe believed that

“Africa’s meeting with Europe must be accounted a terrible disaster in his matter of human understanding and respect”, yet his African characters were not idealized. They are held responsible for their private decisions and for solving the problems that threaten their nation’s future.

He chose to write in English, which he began to learn at age eight, in order to reach a wide audience.

During Nigeria’s civil war of the late 1960s, Achebe worked for the cause of the secessionist Biafrans. Since then he was concentrated on teaching, and on encouraging and publishing promising young authors. Through his many works of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, he has been a catalyst for an entire younger generation of African writers.

SUMMARY OF THE STORY

THE VOTER

The story, ***The Voter***, is about the main character that has to choose between the modern culture and the traditional culture and this has to be through his political campaigns and elections.

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- The setting
- Style and other Literary Techniques
- The plot
- Characterization
- Language

ANALYSIS OF CONTENT

- Theme

- Conflict
- Message
- Lessons (Morals)
- Philosophy
- Relevance of the Story

THE TITLE

The title, ***The Voter***, clearly expresses the unsatisfied poor African voter who has been pictured as the voter. He is used by the politicians. Because of money and other promises, he is unable to maintain his or her loyalty during election. The Voter has been confused with bribes and wonders whom to he should vote for because he has taken the bribe from both two political candidates.

THE SETTING

The story is set in Umuofia Village, Nigeria.

THE PLOT

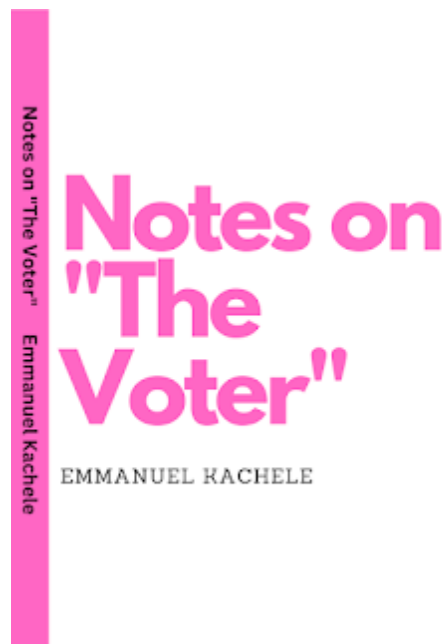
The story talks about Mr. Rufus Okeke. He is a bicycle repairer who influences people in his village in political affairs. He is popularly known by his people as Roof. The whole villagers support the People's Alliance Party (PAP), the party that Roof campaigns for. The party's candidate is Mr. Marcus Ibe. Marcus Ibe was formerly a school teacher but he later on becomes the politician and the Minister for Culture. Ibe is a Member of Parliament as well. He is very tough in his constituency that he does not want any person to oppose him during election.

Roof is again behind Mr. Marcus Ibe who again wants to participate in the fourth coming election. Roof is believed to have a great convincing power. Thus, he is almost listened by all people of different ages and status. The writer says about Roof;

"He had become a real expert in election campaign at all levels – village, local government or national."

Normally, voters do not need money from their leaders but to solve their problems like construction of infrastructures, better healthcare, and education for their children. But most of the time, voted leaders do not remember the voters. It is even said that it is only their money which helps them to be elected. Even after five years of being in leadership, they go back to the local people to ask for the vote. This is what happens to the people of Umuofia village.

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Reference

Achebe, C (1968) *Girls at War and Other Stories*, Heinemann, Nigeria.

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