

Common sense by thomas paine

Literature



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Critical Analysis of “ Common Sense” by Thomas Paine In substance and style, the literary piece“ Common Sense” by Thomas Paine may be analyzed to constitute the distinguishing elements and traits of both the colonial period and the early national period. On one hand, it was composed the time when the British invasion of America was coming to its descent and a War on Independence between Great Britain and the thirteen colonies had commenced. The critical work spoke on behalf of the colonial states in their yearning for liberation and conveyed expressions which were meant to stir feelings of wrath with an alluded sense of nationalism. One concrete instance is the author’s use of sarcastic tone in “ We have boasted the protection of Great Britain, without considering, that her motive was interest not attachment” (Lauter et al, 993).

The series of pamphlets in publication between 1776 and 1783 period documenting Paine’s “ Common Sense”, as they occur to meet the objective of agitating sentiments of a reader to a certain degree concerning American independence, are undoubtedly a form of propaganda. At the time such independence was being raised a matter of contention on indecisive grounds, “ Common Sense” in particular became popular in its argumentative content which favored the American colonists who had long sought freedom from the British conquest. This is so primarily in the order of Paine’s way with his philosophies that were written down based upon the prevailing cause for the American Revolution especially one that was justified by the burdening economic policies of Britain.

Apparent grievances which comprised such propaganda were quite compatible with the real protest toward the British authorities who only wanted to make as much money out of the New World to add to their home

treasury and finance British wars in Europe so they restricted trade and raised taxes against the desires of the native Americans. Similarly, the fateful Stamp Act of 1765 which required tax stamps on all publications, commercial bills, legal documents, and public papers heightened the anguish of the American people. Paine managed further to incite an amount subtle indignation on adding “ I am not induced by motives of pride, party, or resentment to espouse the doctrine of separation and independence; I am clearly, positively, and conscientiously persuaded that it is the true interest of this continent to be so..”

Moreover, Paine patterned “ Common Sense” after the structure of sermon, heavily based on the Holy Scriptures which the traditional American people could readily relate with as when he expressed: “ The Almighty hath implanted in us these unextinguishable feelings for good and wise purposes” (997). Through “ Common Sense”, Paine brought up sensitive points regarding the origin and design of the government in general with concise remarks on the English Constitution as well as its association to the monarchical government and hereditary succession. Then a complete balance of discourse is set upon the accounts pertaining to insights on the prevailing ability and state of American affairs including reflections thereof during that age. Knowing the people’s heart and thought toward the delicate matter of protest concerning independence, his writings and approach to reasoning were carried out in a style which aligned exactly with their level of understanding and common manner with voice and speech.

Work Cited

Lauter et al. The Heath Anthology of American Literature: Volume A: Beginnings to 1800. 6th ed. Cengage Learning, 2008.

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