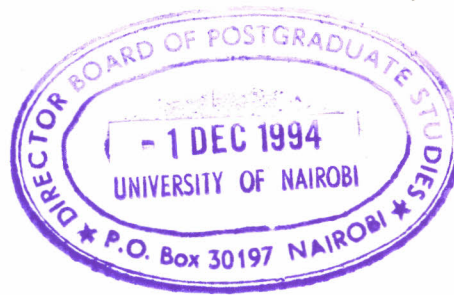


A STUDY OF ALIENATION IN SELECTED SONGS BY JOSEPH KAMARU

BY



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A B S T R A C T

The question of alienation is pertinent for us today, for alienation continues to permeate the social, cultural, economic and political spheres of our daily lives. For this reason alienation has been and continues to be the subject of scholarly dissertations and debate.

This study is an analysis of Joseph Kamaru's treatment of the theme of alienation. The study begins with an over-view of the position held by various scholars on the definition of alienation and how it applies in an African context. Within this analysis is a discussion of the role of song in the study of alienation.

The study then charts out a literary biography of the singer. It is established that Kamaru's styles and concerns are dominated by the theme of alienation and that his figures of speech are mainly derived from a fusion of the oral literary tradition and contemporary social reality.

The study proceeds into a textual analysis of sixteen selected texts that are representative of Kamaru's world-view. This study places the singers' verbal works in a socio-historical context.

In this respect we trace the singers interest in the theme of alienation to the socio-historical development of society and delineate the social nature of his songs.

Kamaru, in dealing with the problems of post-colonial Kenya is forced to reckon with the persistent estrangement of man from history, culture, traditions and society. It is evident that the

social relations Kamaru portrays are symptoms of the alienation in society, and that his songs are a mirror of this alienation. In Kamaru we see an artist committed to the use of song as a weapon of protest against social forces that dehumanize man and deny him his claim to humanity.

After an analysis of Kamaru's treatment of the theme of alienation we turn to an examination of the language of Kamaru and an evaluation is made of the effectiveness of the figures of speech the artist employs. This analysis demonstrates the importance of language in its interpretation of social issues and in the perpetuation of culture and traditions.

Ultimately, this study highlights the potential that culture has for the regeneration of society and this study seeks to assess Kamaru's contribution to this regeneration.

This study will be of use to scholars as it highlights the ways in which verbal artists and in particular popular singers address themselves to the problems in society. Oral means of communication are very effective in transmitting knowledge and in developing society, they provide an avenue through which development planners and policy makers can effectively address themselves to the problems of development.

Lastly, we would recommend that more research be done in the area of the popular song as it is undoubtedly the most accessible and widespread genre of literature existing today.