

Benga Meets Ohangla: An Analysis of Animal Metaphors Used In Selected Dholuo Political Songs.(2017).

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Abstract

Music, a vehicle through which communication takes place, reaches a wider audience as compared to other channels of oral communication. The artist, who is the conveyer of the message, may employ various devices to ensure that effective communication takes place. Because of the ethnic division that characterizes the Kenyan political field, musicians who out of their own volition or as mouthpieces of certain political outfits and by extension politicians, may express challenges (social, political, economic, moral or otherwise), views or ideologies through their music. When this is done, music fulfills a dual purpose: that of entertainment and that of disseminating crucial information that may direct an ethnic block towards a certain political direction. Thus, Luo Nationalism has been conceived, nurtured and developed by some Luo musicians through their music. In such songs the musicians express their frustrations at ethnic exclusion in matters development; they vent their anger towards real and perceived enemies thereby passing judgements; they make political declarations and eventually rally their audience to a common cause that is geared towards charting a path politically. To achieve such milestones, persuasive devices are employed and metaphors, the subject of interest in this study, are such a device. A metaphor not only enables an individual to look at an unfamiliar entity through the lens of a familiar one but it also aids in comprehension and interpretation of the entity in question. Through metaphors, an ideology that may seem complex is simplified hence achieving the purpose of communication. This paper seeks to explore animal metaphors used in selected Dholuo songs with the intention of interpreting them and unmasking the political undertones and hidden meanings contained therein. The analysis will be guided by Critical Discourse Analysis of Fairclough & Wodak (1997). The study wishes to reiterate the fact that language is a powerful tool that can be used to manipulate a populace either positively or negatively.

Key words:Metaphor, Language, Critical Discourse Analysis.

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