

Male perspectives of ‘womanhood’ in selected songs by Thomas Mapfumo

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Abstract

This paper examines the treatment of womanhood in selected songs by Thomas Mapfumo. The songs are also analysed in terms of their place in popular culture and their inherent influence on the construction of identity and social perceptions. Comparisons are drawn between Mapfumo's treatment of the subject and its treatment by other musicians performing in the same musical genre. This paper argues that over the past decades Mapfumo's songs reflect women as subordinates, adhering to traditional gender roles and expectations. He fails to acknowledge that women have taken on male roles as a result of the socio-political environment in which they live. The trend can be traced from his Chimurenga songs to what this researcher terms ‘leisure songs’. Some selected feminist theories are employed in the analysis of this paper.