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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

ESSAI D'ANALYSE STYLISTIQUE DE *LES SOLEILS DES INDEPENDANCES* D'AHMADOU KOUROUMA

PAR JEAN KAPOMA

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Arts

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the degree of Master of Arts (Dissertation)

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Dédicace

A la mémoire de Beatrice Mpande Kapoma

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Aussi, à ma famille et à mes amis qui m'ont soutenu et encouragé lors de la rédaction de cette dissertation, permettez-moi de vous manifester ma gratitude.

Jean Kapoma

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. It is submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, for the degree of Masters of Arts (Dissertation). It has not been submitted for any other degree, or for examination in any other university.

Jean Kapoma

4th, June 2010

ABSTRACT

This essay of stylistic analysis focuses on Ahmadou Kourouma's novel, The Suns of Independence. The research project discusses the way Kourouma uses the French language in a distinctive and unusual form to convey his message. In the novel, Kourouma describes the post-colonial period, emphasising the dark side of African regimes established after the independence era in the early 60s.

After their political independence from their former European masters, most Africans hoped to enjoy democracy, peace and prosperity. But instead of shared prosperity for all people, most post-colonial African states brought misery to their people through mismanagement and intimidation underpinned by a one-party system. This social dissatisfaction has been African writers' interest and focus. Although a common focus in their works, each writer expressed his/her anxiety in his/her way, according to his/her experience and/or personality.

This is true for The Suns of Independence in which Kourouma portrays the same social dissatisfaction using French in an unorthodox or an 'extraordinary' style. The novel is marked by innovations, both at a lexical and syntactic level. These innovations, particularly the use of "taboo" words raise questions about their relevance for the author as well as for his readers. It is this aspect of language that I intend to explore in this study.

My interest in this novel is due to the fact that despite having been published in 1970, this novel is still relevant and a focus of interest for researchers. The novel is timeless and gives an impression of being a realistic portrayal of what is going on the African continent. Thus, it might be a memento of the African post-colonial period under the leadership of dictatorial governments characterised by a single political party system which Kourouma experienced in late 1960s in his country, Côte d'Ivoire. In addition, it may be argued that Kourouma's narration is an appeal, and a shocking one at that, which compels Africans to address the tribulations of the post-independence regimes.

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