

https://dspace.org/

Stirring whispers: fictionalising the 'popular' in the Kenyan Newspaper

Ogola, George Otieno

2006-03-22
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/262

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Four years ago, I stared at the frightening bustle around the Johannesburg International, wondering whether my decision to come to *Mzansi* was such a good idea after all. Despite my initial skepticism, it has been a long but fulfilling journey, one that many have helped me travel. I am particularly indebted to my supervisor and mentor Prof. James Adera Ogude who suggested the topic of inquiry. I now realize it was every bit worth the trouble. To my first contact at the University of the Witwatersrand Prof. Isabel Hofmeyr, I'm not sure I can find the right words to express my gratitude. Quite literally, you helped be survive the city of gold, where, as 'natives' (colleagues) from 'up North' know, the precious metal can be so hard to come by. To Prof. Tawana Kupe, my thanks for the several insights you offered at the beginning of the project. I would also like to extend my appreciation to Karin Barber and her staff at the Birmingham University for the interest they showed on this study and for their very useful comments. My stint as a Cadbury Research Fellow at the Centre for West African Studies (CWAS) was extremely rewarding. To my fellow 'natives'—Ian, Tom, Maish, Patrick (Whis Jr.) and Siundu, you were all great. Siundu, my heartfelt gratitude for making time to proof read this work. You were a true 'mercenary' but may you live to do the same for others. The 'White native' Alex Ortolani, it was fun knowing you *mfethu*. Hopefully, this will get me a visa to Maine. For those that I have not acknowledged by name, you really are the stars. I will forever remain deeply thankful for your invaluable support. Lastly, my thanks to Gina for the love and support and to Levis for always looking up to me—it has been quite a challenge *Otoyo*. To my mum and family, thanks for the numerous 'Ave Marias'. I am sure He listened. I also want to extend by appreciation to the University of the Witwatersrand for awarding me the Postgraduate Merit Award, the University Council Postgraduate Scholarship and the Doris Tothill Bequest Scholarship for the duration of my study. I am equally grateful to the National Research Council for an award in 2003.

Parts of this thesis have been published. Chapter Three appeared as "Popular Fiction as a 'restorative' genre in the Kenyan Newspaper" in *Social Dynamics* (30) 2. 2004; Chapter Four appeared as "Mapping Texts: Imagining Audiences in Popular Fiction" in *English Studies in Africa* 45.2 Sept. 2002; Chapter Five will appear as "Christening Fiction: Sermonising the Popular in *Whispers"* in Ogude and Nyairo (eds.) *Popular Culture and Fiction in Kenya*, Africa World Press and New Africa Books (Forthcoming, 2005)