

Oliver Mtukudzi as a Cultural Activist: Exploring Africanity in Tuku Music

Allan T. Maganga, Charles Tembo & Tendai Owen Chikaraa

Abstract

This chapter critically engages Oliver Mtukudzi's lyrical compositions, *Tsika Dzedu* (Our cultural traditions) and *Mwana Wamambo* (The Prince/Princess). While utilizing these selected renditions among the musician's musical corpus, the chapter notes that Mtukudzi's music is both functional and valid art for it advances Africanity in a multicultural context. It further argues that such cultural activism and reconstructive agenda permeating the selected lyrical renditions demonstrate that Tuku is a musician par-excellence since he is an embodiment of Shona and/or African culture. This, in turn, makes Tuku more of a cultural hero; the chapter argues that Mtukudzi's art is art-for-life's sake. The appreciation of these selected songs is hinged on analytic Afrocentricity as defined by Asante (*An Afrocentric Manifesto: Toward an African Renaissance*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007: 41) who posits that; "when Afrocentricity is employed in analysis or criticism, it opens the way for examination of all issues related to the African world."