AN INVESTIGATION OF FORM AND STYLE IN
YUSUF DAWOOD'S WORKS

BY

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DECLARATION

No portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other University.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents David Kamau Irungu and Mary Wanjiku Kamau, who, through educating me, have dedicated all the product of my labours to themselves:

You taught me the value of hard work,

Had faith in me even when mine slumped

Are the fountain of my willpower.
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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the content, form and style utilized by popular works. Selected works of Yusuf K. Dawood have been used as illustrative material.

The study adopts New-Historicism as the theoretical framework. This approach has been chosen because it treats all texts in a culture as necessarily expressive of its values and trends. It does not privilege any kind of writings over others. In addition this approach recognizes the symbiotic relationship that exist between ‘socio-historical context’ and ‘literary context’. New-Historicism enables an analysis of the link between Dawood’s works and their immediate social-cultural realities that influence them.

The study seeks to investigate whether works of art can be both popular and serious, and is so, what particular elements make this duality possible. Chapter one establishes the scope and purpose of the study. Chapter two identifies and characterizes the link between Dawood’s works and social realities like urbanization, mass media, and social stratification based on racial and economic considerations.

The study explores the way Dawood orientates his content and form to a heterogeneous urban population in chapter three. The strategies which target wide readership are discussed. The style and techniques of popular literature are examined in chapter four.

This chapter discusses devices of humour and wit, the ‘I’ narrator and the use of medical language as crucial literary choices and as strategies to amuse and entertain.

In conclusion, Dawood’s works exhibit a duality of seriousness and popularity. His works are characterized by inclusiveness and innovation of content and form which
give it a unique newness. The findings of this study reiterates our thesis; that works can be both popular and serious and that such works draw their strength from their duality.
CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION: SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study examines a representative sample of Yusuf K. Dawood's writings which can broadly be divided into his collections of short stories and novels. The short stories appeared first as anecdotes published by 'Sunday Nation' under the title 'Surgeon's Diary', before being collected into anthologies. This study analyses two anthologies of short stories, *Yesterday Today and Tomorrow* (1985) and *Off My Chest* (1988) and two novels *The Price of Living* (1983) and *Water Under the Bridge* (1991).

The purposes of this study are; first, to investigate the popular and serious aspects in the writings of Dawood, and second to assess whether works of art can be both 'Popular' and 'Serious'. Dawood's works have been used as a case study.

1.1 Background to the Problem.

The concept of popular literature goes back to the advent of the printing press in the 1600. Popular writings at this time consisted of the broadsides, jestbooks, and narratives. In England, these writings borrowed heavily from the oral tradition of popular culture.
The fact that the production and consumption of popular literature were identified with unsophisticated population, greatly influenced the definition adopted by the Western World for these kinds of writings. This literature has been perceived as having the sole purpose of entertainment. In addition, it is seen as a literature that does not make great intellectual and emotional demands on their readers.

The other significant definition of popular literature is offered in marxist terms. To Marxist scholars popular literature is pro-people. To them popular literature identifies with fears, conflicts, problems, hopes and the aspirations of the masses. The popularity here is not measured in terms of the numbers consuming these works but rather the content of these works. Ngara (1985) cites Maxim Gorky and Mikhail Sholokov as popular artists and he observes that when we talk of popular literature:

we do not mean 'mass art' or impoverished low level art produced with the idea of feeding the masses on such cheap stuff as detective stories, sensational romantic fiction, exciting adventure film stories or low level pop music ... popular art is capable of appealing to the highly educated ... while at the same time being intelligible to the common man. In the words of Bertolt Brecht 'popular' means intelligible to the broad masses, taking over their own forms of expression and enriching them/adopting and consolidating their standpoint. It also means 'intelligible' to other sections too/linking with traditional and carrying it further/handing on the achievements of the section now leading to the section of people that is struggling for the lead (Ngara, 1985:47).

Ngara encompasses the definition of popular literature as having both a functional utility and the capacity to involve the worldview of the whole social stratum.
In East Africa in general, and Kenya in particular, the concept of popular literature seems to have evolved from the Western understanding of 'literature for mass consumption.' Chris Wanjala (1978) discusses popular literature as an art without the aim or the capacity to objectively mirror the conditions of society. Indeed, Wanjala argues that popular literature can be injurious to the moral and social development of a society in which it takes root. Scholars like Wanjala (1978) contrast and gauge popular literature against what was referred to as 'Serious' or 'intellectual' literature. They find popular literature wanting with regard to its sensational treatment of matters of relationships, sex and values in general.

It is with regard to these definitions of popular literature that we define serious literature so as to evaluate the differences that exist between popular and serious literature. Serious literature has been used in this study to mean writings that exhibit a commitment to the burning issues affecting a society. Serious literature concerns itself with the momentous events in a society which are immediate and central to the lives of the people of the society in which it thrives. Ime Ikiddeh, in a foreword to Nazareth's *The Third World Writer* (1978), registers similar sentiments when he observes that literature should validate its claims to life by offering a dynamic social purpose. Thus, serious literature is here understood as more valid and plausible in its interpretation of society's conditions than popular literature.
1.2 Statement of the Problem

Pursuant to the background of the debate of serious and popular literature, certain writings were labelled exclusively popular and others necessarily serious in nature. While some critics like Wanjala rigidly categorized works by Mangua Son of Woman (1971) and Maillu's After 4.30 (1974) as popular, and the writings of Ngugi and Kibera as serious, others like Angus Calder were uncomfortable with such dichotomy. In his essay entitled 'Meja Mwangi's novels' Calder observes that the judgement of Mangua's and Mwangi's novels as 'pop' fiction without any real aim beyond entertainment, and therefore literary value is indefensible; he notes:

_Carcass for Hounds_, Mwangi's second Mau Mau novel, uses such popular convention to deal with serious, 'historical' subject matter that it might be acclaimed for bridging the gulf between serious ('overserious') and popular ('crude') fiction (Killam, 1984:179).

The problem that arises from these two positions is whether works of art can be both popular and serious. In this study, the elements of a work of art that can be characterised as popular on the one hand, and serious literature on the other have been investigated.
1.3 Justification of the Study

The debate on popular literature dominated the literary scene in the 1980's. Writers like Maillu and Mangua who were labelled popular and in some instances pornographic, engaged critics like Wanjala in press exchanges which did not enlighten either the public, who were the consumers of their works, or the students of literature. Works by these authors were stigmatized to an extent that later works by Maillu that targeted children and were serious, suffered from the same prevailing opinions.

The debate was based on the comparison between the works considered popular and the serious ones, but there was no attempt to analyse the popular works using criteria used on serious literature. The present study, uses a literary approach - New historicism to analyse the content, form and style of Dawood's works. This study sheds light on the different opinions that prevail on popular and serious literature. It articulates the validity of these assertions with regard to the evidence adduced in the works under study. This study focuses on Dawood, at the exclusion of Maillu and Mangua, because the two authors have received considerable critical attention while Dawood has not been studied. The study will make a solid contribution to the existing critical works on Kenyan writers of the 1980's and 1990's. It is hoped that this study will benefit readers, authors and critics by identifying the true nature of the content and style of popular literature. The study tries to establish whether popular and serious
literature are essentially different writings or one and the same, and also whether each
can be studied for its unique vitality and validity.

1.4 Hypotheses of the Study

The study is guided by the following main hypotheses:

1.4.1 The popular and serious aspects in works of art enhance the overall
meaning and aesthetic value of these works.

1.4.2 Dawood's works exhibit a duality of popularity and seriousness

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1.5.1 To investigate whether works of art in general can be both popular and serious,
and whether Dawood's writings in particular exhibit these popular and serious
elements.

1.5.2 To assess the impact and significance of a work that is both popular and
serious, to its whole meaning.

1.5.3 To discuss these unique literary and stylistic devices that Dawood has utilised
in his works so as to achieve a duality of both seriousness and popularity.
The critics' tendency to categorize works as exclusively popular or serious, denies students of literature an opportunity to explore the shared artistic elements present in these works. Thus, it is important to review some literature on the different positions that critics hold on popular and serious literature. The first position discusses popular literature as being diametrically opposed to serious literature while the other holds that no such dichotomy exists. The debate on popular literature in East Africa can be traced back to Chris Wanjala's pronouncements in the late '70s.

In *The Season of Harvest* (1978) and *For Home and Freedom* (1980) Wanjala discusses the popular literature of Charles Mangua and David Maillu at great length. He focuses on the image of the alienated urban character in *Son of Woman* (1971) and *After 4.30* (1974). Wanjala contends that these works are hopelessly incapable of portraying a realistic picture of life in Kenyan urban towns due to their motive and construction. With regard to the motive force behind these works, Wanjala identifies a craving for profits that forces the writers of these works to churn out deficient works to satisfy the gullible nascent readers. He observes:

> We are critical about new profit motive that undermines form in literature. Half fabricated and banal plots are hurried to the public for money (Wanjala, 1980:233).
Wanjala sees popular literature as a misused art form that disregards structure and creativity in order to fulfil a selfish motive. Wanjala and Geoffrey W. Reeves (1978) discuss popular literature as destructive and injurious to its consumers. These critics have concentrated on the choice of the seamy and sensational aspects from urban culture that popular fiction writers have over-exploited. Wanjala for instance, accuses 'pop' fiction writers of throwing trashy material at their readers with no regard to moral development of the society as a whole and adds:

Reading popular literature renders the public insensitive to the truth reflected in literature in general because they are used to trashy and scabrous stuff ... lack of curiosity in readers amounts to a passive acceptance of negative values and stultifying conservatism and conformity and lack of receptiveness to change (Wanjala, 1978:18-19).

It is evident from these sentiments that critics like Wanjala consider popular literature an undesirable phenomenon to the literary and social development of the Kenyan people. Drawing support from Tolstoy's *What is Art?* (1960), the critics who consider popular literature negatively equate it to 'sex literature' emanating from an alienated elite. Tolstoy accuses 'sex literature' writers of possessing a false consciousness and guilt feeling for failing to accomplish their responsibilities to the society. Thus, the stance taken by the critics opposed to this literature betrays lack of balanced analysis of these works because they emphasize on the negative aspects of popular works. The present study investigates the content and style in selected works by Dawood in order to discover possible vitality that a popular approach may bring to an appreciation of
literature. The literary approach chosen for this study is New Historicism which holds that all documents evolving from a given social set-up have their inherent validity. This is because such texts seek to portray, represent and interpret the social contexts of which they form a part. The fact that such texts may use disagreeable approach in their frankness and rendition of social decay does not mean they are misleading the readers. Rather, the works might indicate an urgent need to address social perversion like immorality and corruption.

The second group of critics recognizes and evaluates the popular and serious dimensions of popular fiction. Angus Calder has systematically discussed the works of Meja Mwangi as both popular and serious. While he finds fault with Mwangi's characterization, Calder lauds his capacity to tell a story that seems to derive from the oral traditions; a plain-simple and captivating way of narration. Calder recognizes Mwangi's accomplishment as an entertainer with an edge over celebrated authors like Ngugi and Achebe As he observes:

What they (Mwangi and Maillu) achieve has its own validity and rest on a degree of talent for carrying the reader breathlessly forward from page to page which not even fervent admirers would dare claim for either of these elder writers (In Killam, 1984:180).

The impression created by this critic is that what might be dismissed as popular literature, may have its own strength. While the works of Mwangi are less 'radical' than those of Achebe in their defence of the traditional values and less 'committed' than
Ngugi, they have their own worldview which they present plausibly.

Lindfors (1991) shares similar sentiments with Calder and he goes further to suggest that any discussion of popular literature in Africa is plagued with serious problems of low literacy levels and the level of readership. Lindfors recognizes the centrality of the idiom in which ideas are articulated in determination of what is popular or serious. He contends:

In Africa popular literature is not mass literature because the masses either cannot all read the same languages or else they cannot read at all. A literature's popularity may be as much a function of random circumstances as geography, economics, politics and education as it is a manifestation of a particular group's aesthetic preferences ... Any work that seeks to communicate an African perspective to a large audience in a style that can be readily apprehended and appreciated could legitimately be called a piece of African popular literature (Lindfors, 1991: 1-2).

Lindfors dismantles the dichotomy of 'Ngugism' and 'Mailluism' identified by 'the Wanjala camp' and discusses these authors as being informed and compelled to write by a similar impulse and objective; to communicate to the largest audience possible. Although Lindfors seeks to reconcile these two poles of literature, the random circumstances he identifies are still armorphous perhaps because it is not his objective to establish criteria for assessing popular literature. To enable us specify the qualities and attributes that make a work popular or serious, we need a specified study into the nature of these works. Emmanuel Ngara (1985) while discussing the writings of David Maillu, contends that although Maillu's 'vulgar' language and lighthearted style account for the critics' neglect of his works, yet he has a profound social vision that requires
attention. The conclusion that emerges from the discussion above is, that popular literature requires a critical analysis such an analysis should put into consideration the way in which popular artists present their world view and also the advantages of writing works that entertain and at the same time teach.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

In order to give our selected works of study scholarly attention, two critical approaches to literature i.e Marxism and traditional historical criticism will be summarized. A discussion of new historicism follows showing its tenets and advantages over the first two, thus, justifying its suitability for the study of texts of popular nature.

Marxist criticism borrows from Marxist philosophy. This philosophy is based on historical materialism. The economic relations which constitute material relationships of people is the basic idea. However, it also recognizes an intellectual life which expresses itself in ideas and views about politics, morality, religion, art and science. The intellectual life is called the superstructure and is dependent on the economic base of its society.

Karl Marx concluded that the conditions of living determine man’s ideas and his consciousness. The intellectual aspects of man can only develop according to the dictates of his material well-being. Art (literature) is seen as subordinate to the
economic and material realities of a society. In general literary assessment in Marxist terms is based on;

1.7.1 the criterion of economic determinism, which seeks to discover whether a work represents advanced or regressive development in the economic basis.

1.7.2 the criterion of verisimilitude, which simply means the capacity of literature to reflect the nature of the economic materialism existing at the time of its writing.

Since Marxist critics describe literature as a product of historical and economic realities, it is a rich approach in what it reveals about content and ideology underlying works of art. It does not, however, adequately account for the formal aspects of texts. Its dismissal of works that do not exhibit canonical qualities in Marxist terms, is a serious limitation for the approach to analyse works of a popular nature, as the case is in the present study.

Given the approach adopted for this study, new historicism, it is necessary to summarise traditional historical approach to literature. Put simply, this approach sees a literary work chiefly, if not exclusively, as a reflection of its author's life and times or the life and times of the characters in the work. It has three basic areas of emphasis.

First, traditional historical criticism tries to clarify a text as a document or kind of cultural and material artifact. In so doing, a text is seen as a historical phenomenon
whose date of composition, corresponding known manuscripts and actual historical references have to be accounted for in the text. Allusions to actual people, political events, civic upheavals and economic trends mark a text as a source of history.

Secondly, the approach describes the author/artist as a product of a unique past that predisposes him to write in a given manner. Lastly, since historical critics place history above literature, they read works of art with an aim of retrieving history. On the contrary, new historicism sees history as a product of language. History is not seen as an accurate story of the past but rather as an effort to make that past. New historicists are flexible in their treatment of history and literature because they contend that history cannot be 'purely and objectively known.' The fact that history is conveyed by subjective people with biases, prejudices and predispositions means that history is a product of a whole culture. While literary works are shaped by historical circumstances, these works continually shape the same history.

New historicism, as a term of literary and aesthetic analysis, was used in 1972 by Wesley Morris to designate a mode of criticism derived from German historicists and American historians. The major tenets of this theory that make it the most suitable in the present study can be summarised as follows:

1.7.4 New historicists are opposed to the categorization of writings and their hierarchical arrangement. This approach rejects the dichotomies among texts of
different kinds such as canonical/non canonical, high culture/mass culture; documents/fiction. The new historicists contend that all documents in a culture, be they historical, political pamphlets or literature, share some basic values of their society. New historicism seeks to discover prevailing tendencies shared across a culture and thus shared across all kinds of texts, whatever their class status, literary value, or political aim.

1.7.5 New historicism considers cultural institutions existing in any historical period as basic in shaping the writings that emerge in a given society. Religion (church), state (government), and educational institutions, which regulate society, influence and are in turn influenced by literary writings.

1.7.6 This approach to literature is changing the notion of how we read to what we read. New historicists do not place historical records above fictional texts. Stephen Greenblatt (1980) asserts that ‘history cannot be divorced from that which belongs to the text because the ideas contained in texts are powerful tools of cultural influence. The process of writing literary texts is seen by New historicists as that of making history and not merely recording it.

1.7.7 New historicism borrows from a number of post-structuralist approaches like Marxism, Feminism and deconstruction. Although it shares an interest in investigating how power is distributed and used in different cultures, new
historicism does not have obvious ideological commitments like Marxism and Feminism. From the deconstructors, it borrows a scrupulous close-reading of the text and investigating various thoughts, convictions and contradicting positions that the same text may advance.

From the above fundamental features, it is obvious that New historicism treats all printed, oral or material texts in a culture as representations of different dimensions of the same society. As Bain Carl et. al. (1991) observes:

"Popular literature" often gets major attention in the work of new historicists, who see all texts in a culture as somehow expressive of its values and directions and thus equally useful in determining the larger intellectual, epistemological, and ethical system of which the text is a part (p. 1942).

This new trend of recognizing popular literature as a carrier of knowledge, values and valid worldview emphasizes the importance of various kinds of sources of ideas. What we read may be as important as how we read it. Canonical, loosely understood as serious writings, are neither autonomous representations of societies nor are historical records superior to fiction. Literature is seen by new historicists not as autonomous and separable from its cultural context but rather as part of the social, ideological and material complex in a society. New historicism shares similar concerns with 'cultural materialism', as Greenblatt asserts:
Cultural analysis has much to learn from scrupulous formal analysis of literary texts because those texts are not merely cultural by virtue of reference to the world beyond themselves; they are cultural by virtue of social values and contexts that they have successfully absorbed (1995:22).

Popular literature is an aspect of popular culture which cultural materialism seeks to analyse. Cultural analysis puts the literature chosen by the people at the core of their studies so as to appropriate the thought systems, values and aesthetic preference as far as entertainment is concerned.

Here we are interested in the way texts succeed in recreating the society in which they are produced and consumed. If it can be established that popular literature portrays the conflicts between institutions in society, between generations and within individuals, it means that the author has internalized his social context and is recreating it in his text. The truth (reality), beauty and past that texts recreate are shaped by the circumstances in which they are written.

At this point New-Historicism goes beyond traditional historicism to account for timeliness of texts. In its cultural analysis approach (N-H) seeks to establish links between the text and values, institutions and practices elsewhere in culture. This is because works of art contain directly or indirectly the situation in which they are produced; moreover by absorbing their context these texts survive the collapse of the conditions that led to their production.
Greenblatt continues to argue that "an exploration of a particular culture leads to heightened understanding of a work of art produced within that culture, so too a careful reading of a work of literature will lead to a heightened understanding of the culture" (1995:23). Jeremy Hawthorn shares similar opinions when he asserts:

> It is, for instance, potentially misleading to separate 'literary context' from 'social-historical context', as the former is actually an aspect of the latter and inseparable from it (1992:8).

The 'literary context' contains the themes, the form and language used in the texts. An analysis of these elements will reveal how authors seek to endorse, perpetuate or critique the 'social-historical context'. Scholars like Taban Lo Liyong have demonstrated how the popular culture of a people influences their written and performed arts. It is beneficial to use the cultural analysis approach of New-Historicists to establish links between Dawood's texts and popular culture, popular media and the urban context from which these works draw. Moreover, a New-Historicist approach places Dawood's 'writings in their historical and cultural context, that is, works written in the 1980's and 1990's in Kenya.

1.9 Methodology

In this study Yusuf Dawood's four texts have been selected for analysis. Dawood
has been chosen mainly because his published works have developed alongside his contribution of articles in the print media. Most of his short stories have previously been serialized in the 'Daily Nation' under the title 'Surgeon's Diary.'

Anthologies of short stories 'Yesterday Today and Tomorrow and Off My Chest' have been chosen because the latter is a sequel to the former. This is important in the way these collections establish a motif of travelling which is one aspect of form that strings all the anecdotes narrated together.

Secondly, these anthologies are autobiographical in nature. Dawood tells his story, the challenges, the successes and the failures of his profession and the myriad relationships he has had in the course of his studies. *The Price of Living* has been chosen for the powerful way in which it captures a very poignant political period of Kenyan history. A time when business had become extremely competitive forcing some unscrupulous people to use unacceptable means so as to overwhelm their opponents. *Water Under the Bridge* is Dawood’s most comprehensive novel and portrays Dawood at his best. It covers the three decades in the development of Kenya from 1960s to 1980s and examines three racial groups and their coexistence during this formative period of the country.

This, being a textual study, entails three phases of research;
1.9.1 The selected texts by Dawood have been critically read, alongside all other published works by the author. This has provided a proper grounding on the general thematic concerns that Dawood treats. The selected texts have been arrived at by purposive sampling defined by C.B Peter as "when a researcher uses his own judgement and purpose to decide whom to select into his sampling frame" (1994:75).

1.9.2 The second phase included reading and reviewing material on popular literature and serious literature; highlighting the similarities and differences.

1.9.3 Thirdly, using the criterion offered by new-historicism i.e by rejecting privileging of any kind of writing and considering literature as integral in shaping and reflecting a peoples' culture, we have explored Dawood's use of language and style to establish whether he has strictly conformed to the conventions of the western elite novel or the traditional oral forms.

1.9.4 Significant strengths that a popular writer utilises to comment on his society have been accounted for. Thus, we have assessed the effectiveness of Dawood's works in reflecting and shaping the culture in which his works are situated.
1.10 Scope and Limitations

The texts selected in this study are few compared to the available published works of Dawood, but in order for us to make an exhaustive study, we have narrowed the study to four texts.

To conclude this chapter, it is fruitful to reiterate that art is generally concerned with a special and individual perception and new ways of experiencing the world. Popular arts on their part usually present the known and accepted ways of looking at the world around us. Our shared myths are explored and explained, and through them readers get a chance to assess these myths against present realities. The popular attitudes and perceptions that people hold are revisited through works of art which become part of the popular culture. People borrow cliches and phrases from them for their day-to-day conversations. The task of discussing how these works appropriate the common body of shared experiences is imperative in our study.
CHAPTER TWO

2.0 POPULAR TEXT AND CONTEXT IN DAWOOD'S FICTION

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter and subsequent ones, Dawood’s texts will be referred using the acronyms given at the bottom of this page [YTAT]*

This chapter attempts to understand and describe the link between Dawood's literary texts and their socio-cultural contexts, as advocated by New Historicism. Bain et al. note that:

new historicism wishes to isolate fundamental values in texts and culture and it regards texts both as evidence of basic cultural patterns and as forces in cultural change (Bain et al.1991:1942).

This link is particularly immediate with popular arts because of their capacity to communicate their ideas directly and simply. Barber(1987) observes that popular arts influence the political, economic and religious institutions of the societies in which they take root. Yet, these sociological entities also shape the way popular arts are

Acronyms

invented and communicated. As such, it is important to understand and characterise this link before analysing specific aspects of Dawood's works. A brief discussion of the relationship between the unwritten popular art of the people and their written novels, short stories and mass media material is a productive way of placing Dawood's fiction in its social context. The particular social circumstances that promote the evolution and development of popular literature have been explored. The emphasis here is on the way our culture determines the literature we read and the ways in which this experience affects us.

2.2 Characteristics and Strategies of Popular Literature.

Popular arts are characterised by their inclusiveness, fluidity, indefiniteness and elasticity. These terms refer to the apparent potential of popular literature to borrow literary elements from both the oral forms of literature and the Western canons. The capacity to accommodate, internalize and combine different strands of techniques is what is meant by 'inclusiveness', 'fluidity', elasticity etc. Because of its syncretic nature, popular literature presents some difficulties to people who want to define it rigidly. Popular literature cannot be identified either as elite or traditional. However, popular arts borrow from elite literature while they remain grounded in traditional forms of expression (Barber, 1987). Elasticity seems to form the backbone of Barber's definition of popular arts. Perhaps this very nature is responsible for the negative
connotations that are associated with popular literature. One reason why popular literature is difficult to define is because it contains elements associated with the canons and others found in traditional forms. But a closer look reveals that these qualities provide the accessibility and comprehension possessed by popular literature.

Popular literature has been used in this study to refer to those literary works that are innovative, direct, charming, accessible and comprehensible to a wide range of people. These works accommodate both the elitist and traditional elements of form and style. But they do not rigidly adhere to the defining characteristics of either. Lastly, popular literature modifies these elements and invents new ones altogether. Barber summarizes these characteristics as follows:

Unofficial arts..., seem to rejoice in their freedom from constraints of the official systems of conventions, while at the same time exploiting the possibilities of elements from both elite and traditional forms (Barber, 1987:35).

Dawood's fiction exhibits an innovativeness in regard to its formal and stylistic aspects. He uses autobiography as a literary form in his short stories to establish authority of his content. These short stories are selected according to their uniqueness in plot and relationships of events. The twist in the story lines appears contrived and invented. These stories are narrated as independent incidents in his life to give them credibility. Dawood employs journalistic strategies to give charm and delight to his stories. This is
his style of modifying a canonical form (autobiography) to render themes of love, deceit, hate and compassion. In addition, Dawood borrows the traditional narrative technique of telling a single episode in each of his stories. This makes his works comprehensible and more memorable. Dawood carefully selects his heroes and heroines and foregrounds only one or two thereby incorporating the folktale style.

Autobiography has conventionally been written in the form of full-length novels. Dawood modifies his autobiography into the short story genre and isolates episodes of his experiences instead of chronologically narrating them. This element in his fiction enhances compactness and readability of these pieces. Given that the urban population for which Dawood writes is marked by disparities in educational backgrounds, this flexibility plays an important role. While the language he uses remains polished, the genre chosen ensures easy reading by his target audience. This is further illustrated by exploring various socio-cultural contexts of Dawood's works.

2.3 Historical Context.

Dawood came to Kenya in 1961. The period between 1960 and 1963 was a crucial time because the country was preparing for its independence from Britain. Racial tensions at this period were very high. The Europeans found it hard to contemplate a situation where their former servants would take leadership positions. The Africans on their part
were anxious to gain their freedom and control of their lives. The Asian community was in an even more difficult situation because the Africans regarded them as economic exploiters. The atmosphere was filled with suspicion, betrayal and mistrust. These realities shaped Dawood's works to a great extent. *Water Under the Bridge* (1991) exploits these historical contexts in the first part of the novel. Book one: 'The Sixties', renders the theme of racial interactions with both understanding and sensitivity. History is creatively incorporated into the story of characters from three racial backgrounds: one Asian, one European and one African. History shapes this novel. As the history changes after Kenya's independence, the mood of the novel changes into a general feeling of goodwill and co-operation. Dawood explores this scene in both Book Two of *WUTB* and in the novel, *TPOL*. In this latter novel, Dawood recreates Kenya's history at a time when Africans have taken over business and commercial concerns because of Africanization. The general goodwill intensified earlier on had started bearing fruits and the economy was growing. However, unscrupulous businessmen took advantage of this process to engage in corruption. Kenya's historical context provides Dawood with the resources for these two novels. Yet, he does not restrict himself to Kenya's history. The political happenings in Uganda have a bearing on Dawood's work as well. The political regime presided over by Idi Amin was brutal and inhuman. A good example is the three-week notice given to all Asians living in Uganda to leave the country. Dawood artfully recreates these sad moments in *WUTB*. As a Kenyan of Asian descent, these realities must have caused
him considerable anxiety and the tone he uses reveals his personal feelings. The narrator says:

The world was aware of the human tragedy unfolding as a result of the whims of a mad dictator, who had compared the Asians of Uganda to the Jews of Hitler's Germany and had claimed credit for meting out a kinder sentence. Instead of sending them to the gas chambers, he had said, he had decided to deport them as destitutes [WUTB:135]

These are the geo-historical contexts in which Dawood writes and effectively incorporates these extra-textual realities.

Themes, as well, are determined by the historical context of literature. Dawood deals with issues of human concern that are in line with modern times. For instance, stories that explore people's lifestyles and their health status in a developing economy dominate Dawood's works. The economic boom that Kenya enjoyed soon after independence changed people's eating and living styles, and diseases that manifest themselves in affluent societies started to occur. The narrator identifies these diseases as cancer, high blood pressure and other coronary ailments. Population control, use of contraceptives and abortion are thematic concerns that show a shift from traditional themes of colonialism to more contemporary dilemmas. Dawood observes this shift as follows:

Like all materialistic progress, this increased affluence took its toll in human values, when it percolated imperceptibly into the fabric of Kenyan society. Early corruption, dereliction of duty by those who were meant to set an example, a fluttering of class struggle, mild breakdown of discipline and
lowering of human values, all started to rear ugly heads [YAT:121]

These are signs of a society in transition. Social concerns become more urgent than political issues, and the struggle for upward mobility brings vices like corruption in its wake.

2.4 Socio-economic Context

Written popular literature is closer to elite literature than to traditional art. Traditional art forms like the Gicandi poetry of the Gikuyu and Taarabu music of the coast people are distinct because the producers are the consumers as well. Written popular literature, on the contrary, merely borrows from traditional art and does not necessarily internalise the process of consumption. They can be produced by an elite yet consumed by the relatively unlearned people. This is caused by the nature of their target audiences. Dawood's works fall in this group of 'elitist popular' literature. The duality introduced by these two terms perhaps accounts for the vitality of Dawood's works. The urban population which forms Dawood's first target group is heterogenous. There are big educational, class and social-economic disparities. Dawood's style of presentation which is humorous and witty makes these works accessible to the 'lowest common denominator'. Their kind of accessibility appears to me an art in itself because these same works appeal to a completely different category of readers. For instance, readers with medical training will read Dawood's works first
and foremost as sources of medical case histories. They will be attracted by the clinical
dimension before responding to the literary aesthetics. Those with a background in
reading creative works will appreciate Dawood's ability to select, order and present his
anecdotes. A third group will simply be captivated by an entertaining story that is well
written. This example aptly summarises the multifarious nature of popularity of
Dawood's works. The newspaper media which Dawood uses suggests mass readership
and simplicity of its content. Yet while Dawood's autobiographical anecdotes appear
first in 'Surgeon's Diary', their language and the characters used target the upper
middle class. These are mostly professionals and people with considerable levels of
education. This is evident in Dawood's use of polished English, idioms and very subtle
euphemisms. In both autobiographical stories and novels, Dawood selectively uses
extremely affluent or upper class characters. These are people Dawood has interacted
with in the course of his professional duties. He knows their mannerisms and
appropriately captures their parlance. While describing the launching of one of his
titles, Dawood writes:

On Friday the 3rd March 1978, 'No Strings Attached' was launched at a
glamorous party to which diplomats and the cream of the business and
professional society was invited. [YTAT:110]

Readers from the identified high socio-economic class would read Dawood's works
because they identify with the social activities held by the characters. The low class
people would possibly read these same works out of the curiosity to discover what goes
The issue of urbanization at this point is crucial in determining the kind of works that are written. The rise and proliferation of popular literature in Kenya has been attributed to rising levels of literacy, development of a local publishing industry and urbanization (Odaga, 1978 & Gikandi, 1979). These realities are interrelated in a way that influences the literature written in the urban setting. Urbanization has resulted in an increase in the population that consumes printed material either in the form of newspapers or fictional works. Since this population consists mainly of secondary school and college leavers, the need to meet their reading requirements has prompted the development of publishing industry. This spiral influence governs the style and content of Dawood’s literature.

Roger Kurtz (1994), describes the link between Kenyan popular literature and the city as unusually close. The link explores the nature of the urban population. He goes further to observe:

The city is most important because of its role as the primary locus for the basic conflicts and contradictions in contemporary African society. The resulting conflicts have been described in various ways: as meeting of South and North, of literate and oral cultures, or of tradition and modernity (Kurtz, 1984: 5).

These are the kind of conflicts that Dawood analyses and interprets in his works. Such
conflicts are associated with the shift in class, socio-economic and moral values of the urban population since the population has moved from a tranquil traditional set up to a turbulent modern one. Dawood takes up the theme of the meeting between three cultures in [WUTB]. In the novel, he charts out an acceptable way of coexistence among peoples of different racial backgrounds. The question of socio-economic differences left behind by colonial stratification is, therefore, an important one to Dawood. The co-operation forged by African and Asian businessmen in the novel is Dawood's attempt to remove the schisms that independent Kenya inherited. He has demonstrated his faith in the capacity of people to heal their wounds and emerge more enriched persons in life.

Another major conflict of the emerging classes is the antagonism between the old and the young generation. In [TPOL] Maina Karanja finds himself in a serious crisis when he attempts to influence his daughter's choice of her boyfriend. In another instance, Muhoho differs with his father about his (Muhoho's) decision not to join the family business empire. According to the son, the business is simply a machinery of the exploitative capitalist system. In these conflicts, Dawood creatively records and interprets the tensions, dilemmas and aspirations of a society struggling to modernize. In his short anecdotes, Dawood has rendered topics such as the conflicting perspectives of love, romance, family units and the contradiction of individual versus community responsibilities. These topics are revealing because they highlight the popular
understandings of modernity and its challenges in Kenya today. To underscore the
dramatic changes in the lifestyles of Kenyans, Dawood writes:

People who lived in rented flats moved over to magnificent houses situated in
the elite residential areas of Nairobi. One solitary second hand car for the
family was replaced by a Mercedes, Volvo or BMW for the man in the house
and a small family saloon for the wife. People who had lived on a tight budget
found themselves riddled with excess money, both white and black and used it
lavishly to buy ostentatious furniture, rich Persian carpets and crystal
chandeliers to hang from richly panelled ceilings [YTAT:121]

These are socio-economic indicators of upward mobility. The best examples of this
process are Dawood's patients and acquaintances who exhibit signs of recently-got
wealth and status. There is a conscious effort by most characters to gain acceptance
into the high socio-economic circles. Entertaining plots are discovered and modified
from such circumstances by the author.

2.5 Mass Media Communication Context

The mass media (popular press) forms an important element of the writing and reading
context. "Mass Media" is a term that has been used much in the same way as popular
literature, to contrast it with the quality and objective media. It is perceived as working
deliberately to win favour from readers and is not seen as being objective. In spite of
this fact, most popular products find their expression through the mass media.

Dawood's writing career is intimately linked with the ‘Nation Newspapers’ as earlier
indicated. He has been contributing a popular column "Surgeon's Diary" in the weekly Sunday Nation since 1980. This newspaper claimed a circulation of approximately 1 million copies in 1983. With this kind of readership, the newspaper is a popular source of information, current debates in world news and fashion. It is also an excellent avenue to capture the reading population in Kenya. Even though not all buyers of 'Nation' read Dawood's column, chances are that a proportion of them read 'Surgeon's Diary' as part of their entertainment. The fact that he has been contributing this same column for almost 18 years is evidence that the 'Diary' is popular with the readers. In Dawood's own admission, the column has gained popularity with time as he notes:

The 'Surgeon's Diary' made its first appearance as a newspaper column on Sunday 25th May 1980. It met with instant success. By 1983, it had become compulsive reading for about a million readers of the Sunday Nation. It was then suggested that I compile a book from the "Diary" as it was rightly felt that a newspaper column, however popular, is ephemeral. To attain some sort of permanency, it should seek a literary sanctuary in the form of a book. So in 1986 the first volume of selected stories was published by Longman Kenya under the title Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow [BTM:1]

The mass media as a consumer industry seeks to capture the fancies of the readers. The editors are always looking out for interesting and easy-to-read stories. These are exactly the circumstances that brought Dawood's talent into the 'Sunday Nation'. Joe Rodrigues, the then Editor-in-Chief of the Nation Group, invited Dawood to contribute a regular column in the Sunday edition. This was after listening to a story Dawood gave to the Rotary club members. Dawood recalls Rodrigues' reaction:
Joe came close and asked "Could you put this in writing?"
"Why?" I enquired, not understanding the significance of the question.
"For years I have been looking for something like this to go as a regular column in the Sunday Nation," he said. [OMC:162].

Dawood's stories contain elements vital to the popular press. The stories hinge on the vulnerability of human nature. They also explore human feelings and emotions like failure, triumph, desperation and happiness. These topics convey an immediacy that appeals to readers of the newspapers. This element continues to influence Dawood's works even when they are compiled into anthologies. The novels exploit the topicality of themes discussed, a fact which enhances their appeal to people seeking for leisure in reading entertaining books.

The capacity of the mass media to reach a wide majority is another factor that fosters Dawood's popularity. The fact that newspapers are published either daily or weekly means that Dawood's serial units gain a wide accessibility through this mode of dissemination. Kenyans have not developed a good reading culture partly because of our economic constraints. Therefore, newspapers remain the only reading material for a large number of people. This makes them advantageous media for Dawood to reach the reading population. The media context shapes the form and structure of Dawood's literature as well. The newspaper policy compels Dawood to condense his material into a single episode and usually with one plot.
Dawood's anthologies of short stories and his novels are also limited to manageable sizes. It appears that Dawood uses the same tools for his journalistic and literary pieces. Kabaji (1991) observes that in the novel [WUTB], Dawood is in a hurry to put the novel into a quick and neat closure even though the plot is not yet exhausted. This should not be seen as a setback but rather as one strategy of the popular arts. The authors of popular literature usually keep their novels within manageable sizes that do not tax their readers.

2.6 Professional Context

In concluding this chapter, we briefly examine Dawood's profession as a special context that determines the way he writes. Dawood observes that the practice of surgery by itself is a humbling vocation filled with great tension, and trepidations, moments of total triumph and dismal failure. He observes:

To this onerous task I had added the tension of administering a hospital, a combination which lead to further strain on both the mind and the heart. Putting these episodes in black ink seemed to dissolve clots in my red blood [OMC:110].

Thus, to Dawood, writing is a sort of escapism. It is a carthatic way of dealing with the stress of his profession. In fact, in Dawood's own words, his first novel and a number
of his anecdotes were written to avenge himself against colleagues who were maligning him. These stories assuaged Dawood's injured feelings at the time. Dawood's concerns in his literary field have been human nature. The setting has almost always been in the hospitals and operation theatres. About his first book, Dawood reveals why he used this setting:

To be authentic, I decided that it must be based on a hospital background. I knew that if I did so, my first hand knowledge of the setting would not be faulted [OMC: 109-110].

And, thus, Dawood has continued to exploit these familiar areas of medicine, surgery and hospitals. These stories have given a true reflection of conflicting human emotions of treachery compassion, love and hate, and failure and success. These are emotions felt by both the patients and Dawood as their surgeon. He has harnessed this corpus of experience into entertaining educational reading material.

On several occasions, Dawood has ventured outside the domain of medicine. For instance, in his novels, Dawood explores the world of big business and diplomacy. But still, he guides these stories back into the hospital settings. Either some of his characters are involved in accidents or they fall sick, both situations which require medical attention. When this happens, Dawood displays total control of his material and content, language and atmosphere. His profession influences his works almost to an extent of being predictable.
To an extent, Dawood is a realistic author. Historical and professional instances that are verifiable can be isolated in his fiction. When Dawood invents a fictional Safari to the Kenyan coast or her various game parks, the reader can immediately recognise that these are the same journeys recounted in his autobiography. There is a strong relationship between the works that are fictional and events in his real life.

The discussion of these socio-cultural and historical contexts provide evidence that Dawood responds to reality around him when he writes. Both in terms of when the books are written and when they are read, the presence of the world around them is strong. Finally, the characteristics of popular literature identified earlier in the chapter have been exhibited in Dawood's fiction. Definition of popular literature as a syncretic and inclusive art appropriately describes the nature of these works. Their capacity to accommodate business demands of the mass media underscores their elasticity. In addition, it is clear that Dawood has brought new elements such as adapting the autobiography into the short story and managing the lengths of his works to suit the reading styles of a heterogenous society.

The next chapter investigates the specific elements of form and style because these aspects exhibit a duality of borrowing from both elitist and traditional forms. The resultant literature is direct, accessible and entertaining.
CHAPTER THREE

3.0 THE POPULAR IN DAWOOD’S CONTENT AND FORM

3.1 Introduction

The relationship between content and form in Dawood’s works has been established in the previous chapter. In particular, this relationship appears to have a bearing on the way Dawood writes his fiction. Dawood’s fiction largely targets the urban, upper middle class which possesses a considerable level of education and of multiple racial backgrounds. However, we hasten to add that in practical terms these are not the only people who read Dawood’s fiction. Other groups of people like the rural people read his works. These are few compared to the group identified above.

In this chapter we shall illustrate how Dawood orientates his fiction to a particular group of readers. The purposes of this reader orientation will also be discussed. In order to target this group, Dawood chooses suitable content and form in which to deliver his message. The fact that Dawood’s fiction appears to be tailored for the urban reader does not contradict our assertion that his fiction is popular. These works are popular because majority of the Kenyan population who are likely to read artistic works are either urban, upper middle class, educated or possess some of these qualities. Our task is to show how Dawood orientates the content and form of his fiction to this reading group.
3.2 Concepts of Form and Content

The terms 'form' and 'content' can be traced back to the times of Aristotle. These concepts have changed in their meanings over time but their centrality in literary discussions has remained considerable. The concept of form in Aristotle's Poetics "dynamis" is a Greek word which means the particular "working" or "emotional" power that the work is designed to effect and that functions as its "shaping principle". Accordingly, this formal aspect controls and combines the component materials and parts into "a beautiful and effective whole of a determinate kind" (Abrams, 1981:68).

Thus, in Aristotelian terms, the form of a work of art determines the order, the emphasis and the manner of presentation that an author chooses in any given text. It is a very basic component that shapes the 'parts' of a bigger 'whole' to produce an aesthetic effect. Coleridge has developed the concept of form by distinguishing between mechanical form and organic form (Balick, 1992). Mechanical form involves the success of an author in putting his materials in a definite kind or type of writing, in a sense, a given genre. The organic form refers to the innate and the internal properties that shape themselves into unity of the whole piece of art. These properties are the thoughts and theme(s) of the work.

Abrams observes that "all critics agree that 'form' is not simply a fixed container, like a
bottle, into which the 'content' or 'subject matter' of a work is poured" (Abrams, 1981: 68). Form can be seen as the 'glue' that binds the individual components and aspects of a work into a special literary product.

In this chapter, "form will refer either to a generic category 'the novel' form, 'the sonnet form' or to a work's organizing principle and mode of presentation" (Hawthorn, 1992: 44). Form will also refer to the genre and "to the manner in which the ingredients of the story have been ordered so as to give the narrative a distinguishable shape" (McKenzie, 1969: 27).

Content refers to what is said in a literary work. It is opposed to how it is used. Baldick (1992) contrasts content and form as follows:

Distinctions between form and content are necessarily abstractions made for the sake of analysis, since in any actual work there can be no content that has not in some way been formed, and no purely empty form (Baldick, 1992: 44).

This observation underscores the importance of considering content and form as dependent elements of a work of art. However, as Baldick points out, and for the purposes of analysis, content will refer to the subject matter of Dawood's works. This subject matter will be discussed as themes and ideas the author seeks to communicate.

To effectively explore the notion of reader orientation, Gans (1983) offers us a suitable
basis of understanding the issue of targeting the readers. He identifies two types of art. First there is the creator-oriented art. This refers to works written by authors who simply predict and contemplate the aesthetic needs of a very small population of readers. They give little attention to peoples' socio-economic status, education levels, or even the myths that shape the way they interpret their world.

The form and content of the creator-oriented art are not given equal emphasis. Form is stressed at the expense of substance and the aesthetic standards of a work are formulated by the creators and critics not the consumers. Gans observes that the consumers of this kind of art are few. He says:

Since the culture serves a small public that prides itself on exclusiveness, its products are not intended for distribution by the major media (Gans, 1983: 269).

Secondly, there is the consumer-oriented art. In this art, form serves to make substance (content) accessible and gratifying to its readers. The heroes of this art are ordinary people and the anecdotes explored in this art utilise ordinary folk. Our thesis is that Dawood's works are consumer/reader oriented. For this reason, his anecdotes are disseminated through the mass media. Dawood's choice of form is shaped by the audience he seeks to reach. Content also determines the form adopted by Dawood in his fiction. Thus, Dawood's aim is to communicate his ideas instantly and in an
interesting way. To do this, he uses his patients as heroes in his anecdotes and the acquaintances from his social network as characters in the novels.

This strategy of reader-orientation, in terms of form and content, is likely to be a central element that accounts for the accessibility of his works to an urban population. We shall show that in this strategy form is not chosen for its own sake but for the sake of facilitating communication. This choice is a serious literary endeavour for Dawood while his success in maintaining the attention of his target group is evidence of his artistic accomplishment.

3.3 Strategies of Content in Dawood’s Fiction

Several aspects of Dawood's works help to illustrate the strategies he adopts to communicate his feelings and world view. These are the characters, the incidents, the setting and themes.

The characters that Dawood chooses are the people he meets daily either in his line of duty or in his social activities. For instance in the short autobiographical stories, the heroes and the heroines are almost invariably drawn from Dawood's professional environment. Another characteristic that can define these characters is that they are multiracial. Given that Dawood was born in India, trained in Britain and came to work
in Kenya, he is used to a multiracial population. He very well understands the characters’ world-view and parlance. Therefore when he writes about any racial group, he gives the reader insights into the socio-cultural values of the characters. In addition, these three racial groups viz; Asian, European and African compose almost the entire Kenyan population. This is the population for whom he writes.

Dawood’s characters are urban upper middle class. They are ambitious and keen on their upward mobility. In The Price of Living - Chapter Five, Dawood describes the people who are present at the launching dinner for ‘Packlunch’. ‘Packlunch’ is an industrial product by Kenya Foods Limited, whose chairman is Maina Karanja. The narrator observes:

As he walked amongst his guests, Maina Karanja felt happy, proud that under one roof he had managed to have the cream of the Kenyan society [TPOL: 37].

The cream of the Kenyan society comprises the ministers, permanent secretaries, ambassadors, industrialists, executive secretaries, professionals of different specialties and business people. Most of these characters are aged between twenty five and fifty years. Both the social economic standing of these characters and their ages represent a population similar to the ardent readers of 'The Daily Nation'. Bearing in mind that 'Nation' is the first medium in which Dawood’s short stories find their life, it is easy to associate his choice of characters and his target group.
The second element is the choice of incidents. Dawood presents to his readers happenings typical of an urban environment. The case-histories almost always centre on the family relationships and how spouses, siblings, friends and relatives are affected by the sickness of a loved one. The patients who are the heroes/heroines of Dawood's autobiographical anecdotes are presented at a time of crisis. They are wrestling with disease, frustrations or death. These are common incidents to the targeted readers. They read these anecdotes to discover both the fate of the victims and also to gain enlightenment about various aspects of various diseases.

Monetary power struggles also form another source of Dawood's incidents. Such incidents are enriched by the complexity of family life of the characters involved and love affairs characteristic of the upper middle class we identified earlier. These people have money to spend and can afford expensive hotels and resorts while their private lives are full of intrigues of extra-marital affairs and sex.

In (TPOL), Mr. Karanja's family (son and daughter) is inevitably brought into the picture even though the incidents are exclusively business and power struggle. Mr. Karanja's 'private' relationship with Valerie Collins assumes some importance as a side-show because it plays a complimentary role to the major plot. An upper middle class audience is likely to appreciate the intrigues of love affairs and the twists and
turns of business competition because they (themselves) are part of it. Dawood succeeds in the choice of incidents that would interest his target readers.

The setting of these incidents shed more light on the strategy of reader-orientation that Dawood is engaged in. Geographically, Dawood's basic settings are the Asian continent (India and Pakistan), Britain and Kenya. Kenya's population is largely composed of people from these racial groups, therefore the readers of `Nation' which forms the first target group of the author are likely to be Asians, British settlers and the "newly educated" Africans. Historically, Dawood's works are set in the immediate post-independence period. Both the short stories and his novels depend on historical records. They maintain a realistic approach by using known history as their general frames. It is within these frames that the author can innovate and modify situations and characters.

With regard to the specific setting, Dawood has utilised the hospital environment. Theatres and recovery wards are familiar and almost predictable setting for Dawood's incidents. Even when Dawood writes fictive prose in his novels he always shifts the stage of the actions either from the business offices or the homes into hospital settings. He does this through contriving incidents of motor vehicle accidents or fatal heartattacks for some characters in his fiction. In the case of the anecdotes no contrivance is involved since naturally hospitals and operating theatres are the settings
Dawood uses. As we noted earlier, incidents of sickness and accidents arouse emotional reaction from the readers. In much the same way, hospital settings create an atmosphere of emergency and seriousness. This is an effective way of arousing interest and maintaining it.

An illustration would suffice at this point. In (WUTB), the narrator describes such a scene:

"We need more blood" Mr. Duncan said as he watched the suction bottle filling rapidly with blood sucked from Diana's abdomen. "The spleen is in pieces and I have taken it out, the ruptured liver is also fragmented and I just do not think I can repair it". He tilted his head to one side to examine the tears going across the dome of the liver. "Give me lots and lots of surgicel," he told the sister, asking for a coagulative foam used to stop haemorrhage. He slotted large pieces of the white fluffy material into the various crevices caused by the rupture and set about repairing the lacerations. As he saw blood spurting from various spots which he had sutured, he said, Give me a big pack. I have to pack this liver to stop hemorrhage." As the sister handed him a long sterile gauze roll he started systematically packing the tears in the liver. "This is her only chance," he said "If this does not do it, I don't know what else will." [WUTB: 196-197].

Such description and invocation of atmosphere hold the readers spell-bound due to the intensity they add to the story. Thus, setting becomes a strategy of arresting the readers' interest and maintaining it.
Themes in Dawood's works are tailored to the readers' reality. The topics Dawood chooses are contemporary. Indeed, they are issues and events in the readers' immediate context. The theme of racial relations during the eve of Kenya's independence and soon after independence is given a lot of emphasis by Dawood. In (WUTB), Dawood is particularly interested in exploring race relations and attempting to show how "the prejudices of the sixties and seventies had disappeared" (327), giving way to a tolerant, multi-racial society.

This theme bears a relationship with the target group we identified because it is multiracial in composition. The social economic status of the upper middle class puts them in a precarious position if racial tension were to degenerate into social chaos. Since Dawood's target group are important stakeholders in the country's continued prosperity, this theme has an immediacy when presented to this elite group. It is easy, therefore, to see why Dawood consistently extols racial harmony. He has a stake in the socio-political environment which the racial groups in Kenya create and maintain. But some critics are uncomfortable with this celebratory treatment of the racial issue in Kenya.
Kurtz (1990) asserts that:

Although the presentation ultimately fails to convince, in large part because the text's emphasis on racial harmony is undermined by the same class biases that inform Dawood's other works, it is most interesting because of its exploration of the development of the new Kenyan elite (Kurtz, 1990: 165).

While Kurtz (1990) is skeptical about the success of Dawood's portrayal of racial situation in his novel, he acknowledges the importance of such treatment of racial relations to the elite group. This is our point. That Dawood's target readers would readily accept an optimistic interpretation of existing racial relation because they would be the greatest losers should racial animosity break out.

We can see that the racial question is a crucial one by the prominence Dawood gives it in this novel. In addition all his short stories feature characters (patients and others) of different racial backgrounds. This emphasizes the centrality of this issue in Kenya. Given the crucial role that Kenyatta, the first president of Kenya, played to restore trust between the different racial groups, this theme emerges as a serious one. Furthermore, the way Dawood explores it reveals that he is at pains to reassure the upper middle class of all races that all will be well in the 80's and 90's. This reassurance makes the novel appealing and popular with its target group.
The theme of political and historical change also enjoys relative emphasis in Dawood's works. In the same novel (WUTB), historical time frame is both a theme and a structural element. The novel explores three families over three decades; the sixties, the seventies and the eighties. Each decade has its characteristic features that can be explained historically. During the early sixties Africans are clamouring for freedom and the environment is tense and uninviting to non-Africans. This tension eases after independence. In spite of the assurances by the political establishment, the general mood remains uncertain at least in the eyes of the foreigners.

The seventies, however, bring prosperity in the economy and all the people are ready to relate and do business with their erstwhile enemies. A good example is when Mr. Oloo gets into business ventures with the Desai family. The last decade which Dawood deals with is marked by more flexibility both culturally and socially. People from different races intermarry with less inhibitions; this is a phenomenon these people would obviously not have given a chance in the '60s' and '70s'.

On Kenya's politics, Dawood describes the impressive rise of Mr. Oloo's political career. This is coupled with economic benefits such as soft loans and appointment to directorship position in Desai family businesses. Soon, Mr. Oloo falls from grace and power and his former allies and friends turn against him. Such intrigues are very topical in Kenya where politics are capable of transforming one overnight from rags-to-riches.
and vice versa.

These are very interesting issues to read about and Dawood packages these themes to correspond with the target group's reality and taste. Corruption, financial and business power are other issues of topical appeal that Dawood examines. In (TPOL), the story revolves around rich people's business concerns, their lifestyle, sex life and family relationships. Kurtz (1990) observes that there is a fascination with the lives of the rich by most popular writers. On one hand, this fascination may simply reflect a writer's own class background while on the other it may also suggest a similar fascination among the readers. This latter reason needs illustration.

The middle class is composed of people who take keen interest in their upward mobility. As such, they are always looking out for success stories in literary works or magazines. Therefore, Dawood's emphasis on middle class lifestyles, the hotels and resorts they go to, as well as the business tours they take, is tailored to arouse the curiosity of the middle class who identify with this kind of life.

The middle class grapevine is full of stories about the dilemma of family responsibility vis-a-vis illicit sexual scandals and extra-marital love relationships. Dawood's stories contain numerous escapades of this nature although his presentation is extremely guarded. He gives enough information to arouse the interest of the readers but not
anything embarrassing. [TPOL, pp. 18-21 and pp. 32-33] contain thinly veiled sexual episodes that would arouse interest in Dawood’s target group. Mr. Karanja, on a business tour to Britain almost had sex with Cynthia while still carrying on a relationship with Valerie [TPOL: 86-87]. In the anthologies these topical issues of multiple sex partners and love relationship occur with predictable regularity. Almost all these anecdotes touch on family matters as well. The way Dawood resolves these crises usually leaves his readers in hillarious fits of laughter. By choosing a humorous way of revealing the moral decadence of this class of people, Dawood is utilizing a socially accepted technique of attacking these vices and seeking to correct the errant people.

The fact that these issues are explored through an urban middle class does not suggest that these are the only people to whom they occur. They happen with equal, if not more among other people in different social-economic strata. Perhaps this accounts for the popularity of Dawood’s stories both in the newspapers and after they are put into anthologies. Yet, these are serious moral issues in a changing society, like Kenya. The mode of presentation illustrated earlier does not make them trivial or peripheral issues. This is one way in which we can identify the duality of the subject matter that Dawood deals with.

Lastly, the subject of medicine and the intrigues and wonders that are associated with it can be identified as themes. To emphasize the seriousness of this subject, it is
important to reiterate that the autobiographical anecdotes are medical case histories. Consequently, wherever the intrigues and wonder of this discipline seem to suggest that the subject is merely of simple stories, readers should keep it in mind that Dawood is exploring a speciality of utmost seriousness. Having noted this, we should add that all the stories that centre on diseases and their treatment represent Dawood's test and struggle to restore health and save lives.

To many readers, medicine is a strange area of speciality. It is one that is characterized by peril, danger and risk and the triumph when the doctor/surgeon succeeds to cure a patient. Stories that shed light on this 'mysterious' area are therefore bound to generate interest among the readers. This is so with Dawood's fiction. While the autobiographical accounts are exclusively medical in their subject matter, the novels contain a lot of this same topic as well. The readers of these accounts seek to understand some basic issues in medicine such as the symptoms, causes, diagnosis, and more importantly preventive measures of particular diseases.

Diseases like cancer, high blood pressure, infertility, heart attack, burns and many more concern most people. If an individual is not sick, either a friend, relative, spouse or colleague suffers from one of these maladies. In real life situations, the target group is naturally receptive to the painful experiences of illness or infirmity. As such, the issue of diseases becomes everybody's business and concern. Dawood, as a surgeon, sets out
In [YTAT:7-8] Dawood crafts a lesson on reproductive health and population control in the same breath. The narrator’s professor, named Professor De-sa, goes through the methods available for family planning. At the end, he recommends "the rhythm" or "safe days" method for impoverished rural Indians. He says:

"Condoms, pessaries, pills and loops all cost money and all need some management. I therefore propose that in our rural programme, we concentrate on the rhythm method or safe days. There are six reasons for my choice" ... "No expense, no longterm complications, no gadgets to use, does not hurt anybody's religious idiosyncracies and no interruption in love flow, as occurs with condoms. Finally it has a halo of abstinence during unsafe days which gives a righteous feeling of deprivation for those who indulge in this method [YTAT: 8]."

Adequate reasons are enumerated to assist an average reader to consider the merits of using the rhythm method against other available ways of birth control. Readers who are interested in informative but less taxing reading than the one in medical journals would find Dawood’s works the right literature. This same reason makes Dawood’s work popular while still dealing with serious and crucial concerns of the contemporary Kenyan society.

In his novels, Dawood still manages to chip in some lessons. The character in the episode below is a famous professor of medicine. He is a ‘darling’ of his students for
his humour and simplicity. The professor says:

I have fifteen minutes left, let us talk about the causative factors connected with breast cancer... Heredity, early menarche, late pregnancy. Yes, early first pregnancy seems to confer some protection... High fat content in the diet, benign tumours of the breast, high oestrogen-containing contraceptive pills which fortunately have been discontinued. "Now let us talk about the treatment". Professor Kawala brought the class back to a serious mood. He asked questions of various students on the operative treatment, use of deep x-rays, chemotherapeutic drugs and the advent of new hormone therapy. "Of course, as you know, the earlier a woman comes to us with this disease the better her prognosis. For that reason we urge women to learn how to examine their breasts." [WUTB: 222-223].

This lengthy lecture by the professor is very educative both to the fictive characters and the reader. It even overshadows the major plot of the story momentarily because the reader is carried away by this simplified lesson of the causes, treatment and preventive measures for breast cancer. Such clear and self-explanatory 'lessons' on diseases and their cures are numerous in Dawood's fiction. They hinge on very sensitive health problems which all would benefit from knowing. Consequently, the readers who come across such episodes would seek more informative literature in other works by Dawood.

This makes his works popular while dealing with the serious themes of medical nature. Heroic surgeries done by the narrator and other colleagues also provide entertaining and informative reading material. One such case is recorded in [YTAT:93-96].
(themes and topics) that he discusses in each genre imposes some demands. Some themes can suitably be explored through the brief and episodic short stories while others require enough length in order to develop them through various stages. In the short stories, Dawood basically deals with the wonders and intrigues of medicine. These themes require the selection of one type of ailment or a single episode that illustrates the nature and curative measures of the ailment. To make his message powerful, Dawood's concern in the short stories is to choose a poignant period in the lives of his characters. Such a period assists the author to involve the feelings and emotions of his readers.

The story of Miss Scott [YTAT:183-191], is one among numerous others which picks on a revealing moment in this woman's life. Miss Scott is set to get married to Bill within a period of two weeks when the surgeon discovers she has malignant cancer cells in her breast. Miss Scott categorically rejects the idea of being operated on before her wedding day. Sadly enough, she succumbs to the disease only three years after her marriage.

In contrast, the novels deal with subjects that require to be developed over a period of time. This gives the author an opportunity to create motivations and circumstances that produce a given state of affairs. For instance, the theme of power and money struggles in [TPOL] runs through the whole novel. Likewise, the theme of racial interactions,
and the stages these relations go through, is rendered in the whole length of [WUTB]. The novels, due to their expansive nature, offer Dawood the opportunity to explore in detail the complexities of such subjects.

The second consideration for the choice of the genre Dawood makes is the medium that he utilises. The short stories first appear as 'Surgeon's Diary.' This constrains their length to a single newspaper page. The novels, on the contrary, are not subjected to any constraints of length and newspaper policies. This means that Dawood takes time to develop the major plot and sub-plots for a full-length novel. The short stories usually have a single linear plot.

Finally, while the short stories are autobiographical in nature the novels are fictive prose. For pure fiction Dawood requires to invent and develop both characters and situations. This requires enough space so as to offer credible characters who have their own identities, and situations that enable events to proceed logically and convincingly.

Technically speaking, these considerations are important ingredients of fiction writing on the one hand. Dawood takes enough time to consider which themes, media and the nature of story to include in each genre. On the other hand, these genres are intended to be readable and acceptable to their targeted readers.
The other element of form is plot. Plot is here used to refer to the organisation of incidents/action and their development in a story. The plots of the short stories are easy straightforward, linear and usually contain a single plot.

There is what I can call a 'typical Dawood plot.' The events of almost all his autobiographical accounts follow this general framework. This is a general background (usually humorous) - clinical case - diagnosis - a twist in the story - revelation - and resolution. After resolution, most stories have the explanation regarding the aftermath of the incident.

The story of Mrs. Wanjiru, a woman who would not sign a consent form, will illustrate this plot. This story is in [YTAT:130-136]. The narrator is suffering from an attack of migraine and had taken tablets that put him into deep sleep. It is in the small hours of the night and Dawood is irritated by the sound of the ringing phone. His registrar, Dr. Thakkar, informs him of a woman of forty-nine who is having severe pain below her ribs. The narrator is on the end of his nerves and gets impatient when his assistant rumbles on and on about the patient's history. That is the general and humorous portion of the story.

Dr. Thakkar presents the clinical case on the phone as follows:
"On examination, she is obese and is almost writhing in pain. She is slightly jaundiced. Her pulse is around hundred per minute with a low volume and her blood pressure is 110/70. On examination of her abdomen she is so tender you can hardly touch her. When I did manage to put my hand gently on her tummy, it felt like a board [YTAT: 130].

The narrator immediately offers the suitable diagnosis for her ailment. This is the next phase of the typical plot identified. He observes:

"All that data you have given me can amount to only one thing. The woman has an acutely inflamed gall bladder. I need not remind you of the often repeated book description of women likely to get this disease, fat, fertile, female of forty." [YTAT: 131]

The twist in the story comes when Dr. Thakkar informs the narrator that the woman is a Kikuyu and as a rule the tribe does not get gall stones. The narrator argues that diseases of affluence are now replacing those of deprivation and poverty. He decides on an operation. To complicate the story further, the woman refuses to sign the consent form. The surgeon cannot operate on her without the consent because it is a medical-legal condition that must be met.

After lengthy but futile persuasions the narrator decides to give her the second line of treatment. This is in the form of pain killing drugs which cannot cure but simply reduce discomfort and pain.
Later, Dr. Thakkar calls the narrator to inform him that the woman has accepted to sign the consent form. In that case, the patient is operated on, she survives and goes home cured. That is the resolution of the story but Dr. Thakkar has a secret part in this resolution. When his turn to leave the hospital comes he reveals to the narrator that the consent form was not signed by the patient but by himself.

On humanitarian grounds, the narrator "acquits" him. He says, "May God forgive you on the basis that the end justifies the means!" (YTAT: 136). This is the closure and the aftermath of the story as well. Dawood uses very humorous closing formulas in form of a caustic or a pithy statement.

Such plots are very easy to follow because they are linear, straight-forward and simple. This does not in any way suggest they are not well-thought-out. On the contrary, they are well constructed to concentrate the impact of the story. They are very effective in the way they heighten the suspense and intensity of these short stories.

Regarding the novels, their plots are multiple and complex. The story lines are more than one contrary to the case of the short stories. However, the reader can still discern a chronological development of the multiple story lines. For instance, in [WUTB] the story lines are convoluted and winding. Dawood explores the lives of three major characters and their families. These are Mr. Oloo, Mr. Desai and Mr. Judson. Their
stories are developed concurrently over three decades viz: the 1960's, 1970's and 1980's.

The involvement of three families over such a long period of time means that the novel introduces very many characters. This is so since all the acquaintances of these characters must be involved and their personalities developed. However, Dawood remains in control of his plot and does not include extraneous plots unless they are directly linked with the major plot.

In the novels, Dawood does not seek to attain one single impact by his story. In fact, he attempts to take the readers along in a journey of discovery. The discovery is in terms of the character traits and personalities, the themes being explored and the changes occurring in the period covered by the novel. This plot structure is suitable because of the insights it offers on the content of the novel. It is also likely to appeal to the readers because it gives enough entertainment by introducing several complications and solving them at every stage.

Dawood's anthologies are made up of short stories chosen from the bulk that Dawood has serialized in the 'Daily Nation' since 1980. The serial units that Dawood writes are taken from his medical diary. In content, they are case histories that summarise the clinical case, the diagnosis, prognosis and sometimes post-operative notes about the patients. As an element of form, these case histories are serious in terms of their
content but fairly lighthearted in the way they are presented.

The case histories contain subjects such as the human nature, crucial social or political incidents and how they impact on Dawood as a surgeon. Topics like love, hate and frustrations, pity and death are also typical of these serial units. Commenting on the experience with these emotions, Dawood observes:

... practice let me into the body, mind and heart of people from various origins, religious denominations, social cultural backgrounds, providing me with a fascinating study of human nature. They all had the same aspirations and desires, similar reactions to triumphs and failures, they all carried in them qualities of cruelty and kindness, selfishness and altruism, betrayal and charity. The consistency and predictability of human nature makes sure that the wrapper is no indicator of the contents [OMC:216].

The serial units that Dawood uses focus on a particular incident or emotion. This focusing is an excellent method of briefly revealing the character traits of a patient. The successful portrayal of a character who is malicious, for instance, does not require more than one incident. In fact, for greater impact, Dawood is particularly concerned with a single lesson for each of his story that appears as a serial unit.

In addition, each of these units are 'self-sustaining.' In other words, one story does not necessarily form a sequel to any other. It is a whole episode complete with an introduction, development and resolution of a problem. Serialization of case histories
becomes an effective way of writing these truthful accounts because most of them are unrelated. Thus, the nature of these episodes renders itself suitable for serialization.

Our contention, then, is that since serialization offers the readers information in small doses, this makes Dawood's serial units both in the 'Newspapers' and in the anthologies popular. Most readers prefer stories that communicate their message in an instant without taxing their patience. On the other hand, the business consideration of the 'Newspapers' also determines the way Dawood treats his stories. We know, for example, that the newspaper policy would require contributors of features to package their stories in a manner that establishes and maintains readers.

Having looked at serialization, we need to comment on the flexibility of these serial anecdotes. In the previous chapter, we isolated the characteristics of popular art as flexibility and inclusiveness. This flexibility is illustrated in the topics that Dawood anecdotes deal with. Almost all kinds of diseases like AIDS, cancer, infertility, burns heart diseases, brain injuries are discussed. All imaginable types of surgery ranging from circumcision to brain surgery have also been explored in these stories.

In the anthology [OMC] Dawood narrates his stay at Aga Khan Hospital and the trials, challenges and frustrations he underwent. He uses the political incidents in Kenya at the time to illustrate his story. For example, he cites 1978 as a particularly sad year for
Kenya and for him as a person. This was due to the death of the founding father of the nation, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, which coincided with Dawood's dismissal from the position of a director which he held at Aga Khan. He seizes this opportunity to explore his relationship with the late president and his family. I see this flexibility as a result of the factual nature of the subject that Dawood is dealing with. It would be difficult, for instance, for Dawood to include such information in his novels which are fictive in nature.

What we are underlining is the ease with which Dawood shifts from one incident to another. In fact, he shifts so dramatically that a reader will encounter one story which is set in Nairobi while the next one is set in Blacknotley, Britain. The author is also able to explore issues of political, medical, social, cultural and religious nature without the reader feeling that these stories are incomplete or shallow.

The selective nature of Dawood's writings is significant in the way it highlights very topical concerns. In the novel [WUTB], the conservative and old-fashioned Hugh Judson gets infected with HIV and got full-blown AIDS which eventually killed him. Curiously enough, he had been treated for other venereal diseases and also warned about his sexual behaviour but did not heed the advice. The facility to pick on topical concerns, inherent in Dawood's works, underscores the adaptive and flexible nature of popular arts.
The way these qualities impact the popular and serious nature of Dawood's works becomes clear when we examine the scope that they embrace. The adaptability of the anecdotal accounts makes it easy for the readers to gain information on the continents of Asia, Africa and Europe in one breath. There are no constraints of geographical distance to be surmounted in the stories. On flexibility, issues of extra-marital relations have been treated in the same story that discusses serious issues of breast cancer or even death.

The issues of serialization and anecdotes bring us to the discussion of how the apparent complete entities (serial units) are strung together in an anthology. Butt (1982) points out that while each story must maintain its own identity, there is also need to retain the design and the purpose of a whole work.

Dawood addresses these needs by employing unifying threads in his stories. First, the anthologies take the form of travelogues. All the stories are related by a strong sense of movement. This movement is Dawood's personal travels from India to Pakistan, then to Britain and finally to Kenya. All the stories in his anthologies can be related to one of these three countries. [YTAT] opens with a graphic description of the topography of rural India. This is Dawood's place of birth called Bantwa. Through his accounts of this environment, the reader learns about the poverty and deprivation of the rural India at the time of Dawood's childhood.
Other stories are set during the skirmishes that were engendered by the partition of India. At this time, Dawood, with his brothers and sister, moved to Pakistan which was relatively peaceful. In Britain, where Dawood went to study surgery, new experiences and strange places form the bulk of Dawood's accounts. Accounts set in Kenya complete the travelogue.

This journey becomes a literary element that creates unity of events and experiences. Dawood utilises the strength of travelogue whose continuity depends on the road which the hero travels, and not the interrelatedness of the actions. On the other hand, Dawood emphasizes the underlying newness of every place he goes. In so doing, he reveals the way in which those places enrich his experiences while also appreciating the uniqueness of each of them.

One major difference between Dawood's use of the journey motif and the traditional travelogues is the lack of chronology in the way he narrates them. Dawood keeps taking his readers from one of these countries to another. In fact, there are numerous stories set in other cities and countries apart from the ones identified. These accounts relate to the rest because they are either tours or seminars the author attends while stationed in Nairobi, London or Bombay.

The second element of unity is the presence of the narrator in all the short stories. Dawood is both an inventor and narrator of the accounts which maintain a strong sense
of cohesion in these stories. The narrator "I" in the stories reminds the readers that the experiences being narrated happened to the person recounting them regardless of the setting of each individual story. It is correct to argue that in all the stories the narrator is a character in fact, in a few of them he becomes the hero after achieving a difficult surgical feat. In the concluding chapter of the book (OMC) the narrator summarises his life in surgery:

It has been a fascinating safari with scalpel in one hand and pen in the other. The years have been long and arduous, challenging and exciting, satisfying and rewarding ... When I look back, the world seems to have buckled in for me. Born and brought up in India and Pakistan, trained as a surgeon in England and having settled in Kenya, I have truly imbibed the three main cultures of the world, Asian by birth and upbringing, European by marriage and training and African by adoption [OMC: 215].

In his own admission, the narrator has taken active, if not central, part in all the accounts he gives. As a surgeon, the distress of his patients affects him but he also rejoices in the recovery of those who get well. This has a strong bearing on the popularity of his works. This is because the narrator is not neutral. He sympathizes and empathizes with the conditions of the characters he recounts about.

Thirdly, both the anecdotes and the novels are set in similar medical environments. In the short stories Dawood has utilized the hospital environment throughout. In addition, even in the novels significant portions of the settings are medical. In [TPOL] Mr. Karanja is portrayed as a health-conscious industrialist who remembers his monthly
visits to his health clinic almost religiously. A considerable part of the novel recounts what goes on in this clinic.

In addition, this character and his son are admitted in hospital at the same time and operated on. This gives the novel the same setting as the short stories. [WUTB] has several leading characters as doctors. Scenes that are set in the hospital or medical classes are numerous. These are familiar settings to readers of Dawood; moreover familiarity is also an important component in determining the readership of Dawood's work. The medical setting acts almost as a constant element in both autobiographical accounts and the fictive prose. It is also an organizing element in the short stories over and above being a unifying thread.

A significant similarity between Dawood's autobiographical accounts and novels is their dependence on a historical framework. This is another unifying element. The novels especially, maintain a realistic approach by using known history as their general frames within which the author can innovate and modify situations and characters. While inventing his characters Dawood falls back onto some factual background. He uses recognizable data as beacons that guide the development of his stories. In [WUTB: 37], Dawood has incorporated Uganda's story of the sad times when Idi Amin presided over a brutal regime and decreed that Asians were persona non grata in the country.
The events of this novel proceed along a historical structure designated as Book One: The sixties, Book Two: The seventies and Book Three, The eighties. All the actions and character development are based on these three decades. And, it would be true to argue that this historical framework furnishes the continuity of the events of the novel. Each decade is characterised by some indices which are either social, economic or cultural.

For instance, Book One reveals that the Africans are socially and economically deprived. The example of Mr. Oloo illustrates this contention. Culturally, the three races are rather conservative in their traditional values. On issues of marriage and business, the individual tribes prefer to relate with their own members. Book Two, on the contrary, presents a society that is steadily changing. Since this is after Kenya's independence, this is hardly surprising. The racial groups have started seeking out for one another in an attempt to improve their lot. Finally, in Book Three, the picture is one marked by a very high level of social interaction. The target group we identified at the beginning is likely to be keen on the history of Kenya's development. Most particularly, the foreigners would find this novel particularly informative.

The final element of unity is the use of "binary opposites." This element is common in oral narratives. Here, the plot is structured on the binary opposition of good versus evil.
or victims against villains. On his part, Dawood constructs the story of Mr. Karanja and Mr. Wahome [TPOL] on this structure. Mr. Karanja is portrayed as a good character while Mr. Wahome is his detractor. The other instance of these binary opposites is evident through the old generation versus the youths. These are developed as two opposing camps whose world views, tastes and academic orientations are based on different value systems. While the young are idealistic, radical and theoretical in their approach to life, the old people are practical and conservative.

Such a structure is an easy one for the readers to follow. They simply need to identify the two opposing entities and they will easily discern the moral the author is expressing. This 'formulaic structure' is characteristic of both serious and popular literature. Dawood uses it in the novels as well as in the short stories. In the latter, his account of his detractors at Aga Khan Hospital helps to illustrate these binary opposites even better [OMC : 138-146].

Several points emerge from our discussion of the content and form in the works of Dawood. First among them is the fact that Dawood's works are reader-oriented in the form they adopt and the content they deliver. These works are designed mainly for an urban, multiracial and upper middle class. However, other groups that do not fall strictly under these characteristics also find Dawood's works appealing. This can be borne out by the fact that Dawood's serialization enables his accounts to be read by
many more people. Moreover, the people who read Dawood's accounts in the 'Nation' are likely to follow up by reading his anthologies.

Secondly, Dawood's works are serious and popular at the same time in terms of form and content. The themes that Dawood deals with are crucial and contemporary. These are racial relations, issues of medical concern like AIDS and cancer, power and money struggles among others. These are issues that concern the average Kenyan reader. Dawood's success, therefore, in capturing a reading clientele lies in his ability to orientate his works to the tastes of the readers.

Lastly, this chapter reveals various formal elements that facilitate the accessibility and readability of Dawood's works. Easy plots, selective and flexible accounts of his life, medical settings and use of binary opposites all aid communication. In line with this, the genres that Dawood use (short stories and novels) share remarkably elements such as setting, characters and historical framework. One could conclude that the shared elements are Dawood's strategies that enable him to maintain his readers.
4.1 Introduction

Indeed, some popular art is more artful than we suspect, and sometimes it sees with a clarity that is hidden to more sophisticated eyes (Edward M. White, 1972)

This statement helps to focus the argument of this chapter. Our contention in this study is that the style and technique adopted by Dawood serve two functions. First, they are crucial literary choices just like content or the structure that Dawood makes in order to enhance the overall meaning and aesthetic impact of his fiction. In this regard, stylistic devices such as the 'I' narrator, the medical language and the pattern of travel are chosen because they are suitable for the autobiographical accounts.

Second, the style and technique used by Dawood are part of his strategy to captivate and entertain his readers. Here, devices such as humour and wit are utilised to give the thoughts and themes the flavour of language that appeals to the readers. We therefore
argue that since Dawood has successfully used these devices to capture his readers, the devices become a strategy just like the structure and subject matter in his works. Our task is to show how the devices of humour and wit, the 'I' narrator, dialogue, medical language and the stream of consciousness serve the two functions identified. And by so doing, show how style and technique enhance the meaning of Dawood's works so that they become easy and entertaining to his readers.

4.2 The Language of Humour as a Popular and Serious Choice

Humour refers to laugh or smile – provoking stimuli of goo-natured sort that is likely to be minimally offensive to the object of act of the laughter. Wit is a form of verbal cleverness which has the potential for amusing. Humour and wit stand out as Dawood's most formidable assets in his works. Laughter and suspense that result from his language captivate and entertain his readers. A publisher's blurb on the back-cover of one of Dawood's anthologies sums up the skill and effects of this language resource:

He (Dawood) can reduce us to tears one moment with the pain and suffering of his patients and make us jubilantly happy on the next page with his humour and wit. (Emphasis mine).

The Chapter demonstrate how humour is used for serious purposes yet itself remaining light-hearted. Walter Nash (1985) has defended the study of wit when he says, 'I can
never think that seriousness of purpose is proved by banishment of laughter, I would a
thousand times rather my books were packed with jokes, alive - alive - oh, than
jammed with jargon” (preface xiii). Nash shows that humour is a serious business.
Jargon taxes the readers' minds. Medical terms, anatomical descriptions and scientific
discourse in Dawood's works would put off his would-be-readers. To overcome this
constraint, he uses a language which is humorous and witty. The analysis of humour
and wit as style aims at linking the content of humour with its function in these works.
Since Dawood's art is based on his experiences with patients, most of his stories have a
psychological or emotional element. This is because the general backdrop to them all is
pain, suffering and anguish shared by both the surgeon and the patients. The stories,
especially the autobiographical ones highlight all human emotions from triumph to
failure and despair when death appears certain. The operation theatres have a somber,
eerie and tense atmosphere. For Dawood to make such stories entertaining and not
distressing, he resorts to wit and laughter. In one instance, he describes how one of his
professors used to lighten up the gloomy atmosphere of an operation. He says:

In the operation theatre, he showed deep respect for his patient's anatomy. "Just
because the patient is under anaesthesia and cannot protest, it is no license to
macerate his muscles, catch chunks of his flesh with horrid instruments and
finally give him wide ugly stitches, the scar of which would be unacceptable to
cows and dogs if they would speak", he often said as he came to close the
operative wound. "This is your permanent monogram on the patient by which
you will be judged." Don't give the best scars only to Elizabeth Tylor and
Marilyn Monroe. The lowliest patient is somebody's sweet heart, perhaps
more lasting and permanent than the other two. No one is low enough to
deserve an unsightly scar [YTAT: 32-33].
Such humour and lightheartedness momentarily distract the surgeon and relieves the anxiety and tension created by the risky nature of the operation being carried out. The readers also are carried through this uncomfortable and intricate operation without being given the opportunity to get sorrowful about the experience. The author has utilised humour for purposes that are very serious. He couches a serious topic, the delicate operation, in a very agreeable and humorous style. Humour at this point does not diminish the seriousness of the subject but simply clothes the ideas to make them much more readable. Instances like this abound in Dawood's stories especially in moments of imminent tragedy or during the period of hollowness created by death.

The story of two ladies admitted in the same ward with similar hip-dislocation illustrates this point further. One, a woman of forty-five, is at the peak of her life, while the other, seventy-nine, is living in a home for the old. The old woman happens to occupy the bed number thirteen*. They are admitted on Christmas and the narrator happens to be in charge of the ward. After some treatment, the younger woman unfortunately dies. The mood is heavy and moves readers almost to tears. The surviving lady learns of the death of her ward-mate and in a shocked state she quips:

* Most Europeans are superstitious about this number, they believe it is a bad omen and even omit numbering floor number (13) in their storey buildings.
"I think there is something wrong up there. It looks as if they were as drunk as some of you young ones were after the party last night! ..."
She looked at all the Christmas decoration around the ward and added. "If they hadn't been so bleary-eyed they would have seen my number (13) and known that I was the one to be picked up."

[YTAT: 22].

This kind of self humour by the old woman is based on the shared knowledge of the British tradition. As Christians, most Britons celebrate Christmas day with very elaborate activities. On Christmas eve they usually hold parties where wine flows freely. At the same time, Christians have a popular belief that when God wants to 'recall' a human being from this world, he sends his angel to pick the victim from this world. The woman insinuates that the angels were so drunk they didn't see her superstitious number. At the same time they failed to see that she was too old for any use in the world. In her opinion, therefore, she is the one who should have died to leave the younger one to enjoy her days! Mindless (1976) accounts for this kind of humour when he observes that by attaining some ironic detachment, people can solve many conflicts. A humorous assessment of life and its contradictions (an expose hidden truths and articulate philosophical positions. For instance, it is logical to argue that the younger woman should not have died. Rather, it is the old one who should because in practical terms has finished her work in the world. The old woman is unconsciously bringing up the philosophical questions about death. By choosing this episode the narrator must have discovered the ironic nature of life, and death, and may have wanted
to broach it in an amusing manner which is therefore entertaining.

The reaction of the elderly woman is humorous even though the circumstance is a sorrowful and sad one. The reader forgets the enormity of the disaster, albeit momentarily, and delights in the way Dawood weaves his way out of a distressing episode. In other words, Dawood manages, through humour, to shift the emphasis from the serious and gloomy subject of death to the character's manner of speaking. A second instance of self-humour is artfully presented in [OMC]. The narrator, together with other surgeons are involved in a plane-crash but are lucky to survive. The plane develops engine failure and crashes on the edge of Kariba Dam in Zambia. While undergoing medical examination to establish whether there are any injuries, some surgeons start reviewing the incident they have just gone through. Imre, the pilot-cum-surgeon, begins by apologizing for the accident. Wilson, another survivor, startles everyone when he reminds them that there would have appeared six obituaries in their Journal of Surgeon's Association. More surprising, Bill goes to visit the hospital mortuary and comes back to report that he wanted to ascertain if the morgue was big enough to accommodate six bodies. And to crown this humorous chat the pilot congratulates himself for his punctuality; he says they crashed on time!

Giles and Oxford (1970) identify several types of humorous situations. One type which they refer to as 'anxiety laughter' will enable us to examine the humorous
reactions of the surgeons. These psychologists observe that anxiety laughter is an automatic response which occurs as a consequence of a stressful experience. It accompanies feelings of relief after a sudden ding of a period acute tension. In our case, the readers experience a moment of tension when the narrator is describing the state of things before the plane crashed. Therefore, the humorous exchanges which follow the lucky escape work to relieve the tension accumulated earlier on.

These instances of humour function to propitiate the grief and shock respectively. The characters try to dissociate themselves from the cruel reality they have encountered. However, through this humour Dawood is not indifferent towards the serious nature of these tragedies. He treats them seriously and sympathetically because the characters manage to drown their real emotion, or at least, direct them away from themselves.

The other element of humour is Dawood's use of wit of a sexual nature. It is important to examine this element because works traditionally considered to be 'popular' usually have numerous crude sexual escapades and highly promiscuous characters. Dawood treats sexual matters in a professional and sympathetic manner. In [YTAT], Dawood recounts a moving story of his native rural India. He dramatically describes the problems doctors face when dealing with family planning. While handling a population that doesn't know what causes pregnancy, a character, Professor De-sa describes the results of yearly visits by husbands to their wives in rural India. The families have very
many children whose age differences are a year each. This age difference corresponds with the annual visits of the husbands who are usually away from home for a whole year. De-sa recounts how he prescribed an "oral contraception" of "a no from a woman" but soon realised that women said no even when they meant yes; their men knew this and made capital out of it. When he devises a method of using a rosary-like instrument, these are the results:

We made individual rosaries, starting with a week of green beads to coincide with the safe period, followed by about ten red beads to signify unsafe days then finished with another week of safe days before bleeding commenced

[YTAT : 9]

Every day the woman was required to move one bead up clockwise. This method failed miserably because irate husbands would snap the rosaries while others ignorantly moved the green beads to the top believing that it is the beads that controlled the possibility of pregnancy! One husband confesses:

When the urge is on, I even get out of my bed and carefully move the red beads down until the green bead occupies the top position. I couldn't do any more than that! [YTAT : 10].

The reader understands the hopelessness of the situation brought about by unplanned families and ignorance, yet Dawood's presentation leaves one in fits of laughter. In this
way, Dawood doesn't allow his readers to go into a brooding reflection. He allows them to grasp the seriousness of these social problems 'laughingly'. In a story entitled 'Down But Not Out' in [BTM], Dawood narrates a story of a barmaid who would not stop 'servicing' her customers even when she broke her legs. She is put in a traction which is a kind of treatment where the leg is slung up with the use of a splint, beams, pulleys, strings and weights. On discharging the patient, Dawood realises she was pregnant and asks her how it happened. She says;

"Happened in the usual way', she said with a disarming smile. Then the defiant look was back. 'You hung me on that terrible device and thought that you had caged the bird. But I could still flap my wings ', she said mockingly ... with a naughty dimple appearing on her cheeks she continued, 'they were not deterred by the splint and the pulleys. In fact the terrible contraption posed a challenge they could not resist. It was intriguing experience learning to circumvent it', [BTM : 12].

This is obviously a sexual episode, yet it cleverly avoids a lurid description of titillating detail; it is suggestive enough but not embarrassing. The episode is sexual in a modest manner. Dawood's use of these sexual episodes is not a confession of his readers' moral depravity; it is a sign of sharing respectable jokes that he encounters in the course of duty. Given the African context, where sexual matters are not discussed openly, such snatches of sexual humour tickles the readers in a hilarious manner. They are not meant to arouse sexual feelings like does the pornographic pulp literature of the West. This is a well formed stylistic device that is pleasant and not scandalizing on the reader's part.
While still on this kind of humour, it is important to briefly mention how humour operates in otherwise serious circumstances. Mindless a psychotherapist, observes in all our life experiences:

while some are unrelievedly tragic and others unquestioningly comic, the majority happenings and relationships, achievements, failures, fantasies and actions that occupy our time on earth contain elements of both modes of being. We may choose to focus on the dark or the light, the disheartening or enlivening aspects of our experiences (Mindless, 1967:335)

The insight which Mindless shares with us is that humour is a defence mechanism that helps us to establish a flexible state of being. Humour allows us to laugh through our tears, to see the funny side of life even as we transfer its bitterness. Dawood is, therefore, using the serious to enlighten as well as entertain. Humour, used in this sense, releases the readers from the troubles they encounter and rekindles their awareness of laughing off their tribulations. Dawood, through humour, exposes the follies of mankind and invites his readers to view themselves acting foolish, admit the stupidities and hypocrisies of which they are often guilty.

It is important to note that before the effect of humour and wit can be discovered and appreciated, there must be shared cultural, social facts, beliefs and attitudes. In order to share and enjoy a joke the reader must appreciate the superiority of the author's insight to choose and order the language in that text. We share our humour with those who have shared our history and who understand our way of interpreting experience.
Finally, there is a fund of common knowledge and recollection upon which all jokes draw and Dawood's art appeals to the readers' interest by discovering this knowledge. This means, therefore, that Dawood's 'jokes' work because he directs them to a specific (middle class) audience which he knows shares his middle class values. Thus, they find amusement in Dawood's works.

4.3 Point of view

Point of view at its most fundamental level is the physical vantage point occupied by the narrator in a story or novel and the device by which he establishes the 'authority' for his fiction. McKenzie (1969) explains it as the position taken by the narrator with regard to the story. There are basically two positions open to the author, the internal and external points of view. These two positions have many variations within them but this study uses these terms to refer either to the internal or external point of view. As a literary device, point of view is the means of ordering and unifying the material of the text.

In the short stories, Dawood uses the first-person narrative 'I'. The most obvious advantage of this point of view is the immediate authority it conveys. Somerset Maugham, while explaining his liking for the first person singular noted:

Its object is of course to achieve credibility, for when someone tells
you what he states happened to himself you are more likely to believe that he is telling you the facts as they occurred than when he tells you what happened to someone else ... But the 'I' who writes is just as much a character in the story as the other persons with whom he is concerned. He may be the hero or he may be the onlooker or confidant. But he is a character (Shaw, 1985: 114).

This assertion helps us to link the choice made by the author as his point of view, and the kind of content such a choice communicates best. Dawood's autobiographical accounts state unambiguously that the narrator is the author as well. In such a case, where the 'I' is known to be the author, it gives even more urgency and credibility. This is the most appropriate position to take given the nature of the subject matter that Dawood deals with in his autobiographical accounts. He explores very intimate issues as he admits:

As a surgeon I was interested in surgical pathology. As a writer I was fascinated by the intricacies of the human mind and heart. In sickness my patients and people around them showed heroic courage and also human vanity, compassion and cruelty, revenge and sacrifice. They filled my case notes with humour and suspense, scheming and deception; betrayal and vindication, love and hate [YTAT: 203].

These are emotions that can be effectively delivered with the involvement of the narrator. In this position, the narrator sympathises and empathises with the other characters and their conditions. The case of Paul Kamau [YTAT: 154-161], a small boy whose mother's religious convictions prohibited any blood transfusion, illustrates the narrator’s involvement with his characters. The mother happens to be the narrator’s
secretary and there is a special bond which is a bit different from that of the surgeon and other patients. Sentimental feelings are clear when the narrator makes the promise that he would try to operate without any blood transfusion:

We were now inside the abdomen and I could see the ruptured spleen pumping out blood. "His blood pressure is falling, do you mind if I lower his head?" Dr. Awale asked and without waiting for my reply, turned the handle to adjust the table to the required angle ... "His blood pressure has dropped further and I am connecting the blood." "Give me one minute", I begged ... I heard Awale mumble behind the mask. The man is a madder lunatic than I thought."[YTAT:160-161]

His anxiety is obvious to the reader when he wrestles to keep his promise. The first person singular conveys Dawood's emotions urgently and truthfully. This reveals that the narrator makes serious stylistic considerations and choices when he adopts a narrative voice. In contrast, when Dawood uses the first person singular in his novels, the readers are keenly aware that the author is not the narrator; the narrator in this case is fictitious.

On the whole, Dawood uses the omniscient voice in the novels. His ability to show and present us with a situation so that we perceive it immediately and directly rather than _tell_ us about this same set of circumstances gives his stories immediacy. Dawood's novels and short stories are episodic in nature and, therefore, depend a lot on showing and use of graphic descriptions in order to evoke emotions of sorrow and
sympathy in the readers. In one case of Hodgkins disease, which had no cure at the time of writing of his accounts, the narrator tries a new drug and describes its side effects thus:

During this period Shehnaz (one of his characters) was reduced to a pale, depressed, hairless, wrinkled caricature of herself ... her parents could not bear to see her plight. She lost her appetite, had constant nausea and retching. [OMC: 158-159].

In the novel [JPOL] Dawood cinematically shows the details of the brain surgery through the omniscient narrator. The narrator observes:

He nestled it (surgical saw) under the skull from one burr-hole and guided it out through the other. He then put the handle at each end of the flexible saw and started cutting through the skull bone with a to-and-fro movement. He did the same through the other burr-holes and raised the bone flap ... Having put stay statures, Ahmed slit the dura and blood clots spurted out as the liquid blood walled out with them. The brain underneath showed signs of pressure, looked bruised and was not throbbing. [Italics mine, TPOL: 150-151].

These episodes are examples of "scenically" depicted incidents that appeal directly to our senses of sight, touch and smell. Through either the first person narrator or the omniscient one, Dawood moves the readers to tears by involving their feeling in the operation theatre and the wards. The mood and atmosphere around the reader assumes the tension and heaviness which Dawood is describing.
4.4 Dialogue

Dialogue in literature gains instant response from the readers because of its double-edged nature; the originator and the recipient. Dialogue is a form of recorded conversation with the ability to establish rapport between the author and the readers. Dawood's use of dialogue puts the language of daily conversations in his texts for the purposes of communicating ideas and opinions. Dawood gives us an insight into the way he uses dialogue:

"I cannot pretend that the conversations I have used can be regarded as verbatim reports; for although I have always made detailed notes, I have never kept transcripts of private conversations" [BTM: 3].

Most African traditional forms of art utilise the power of the conversational language. For instance, the form of the riddle involves the executor and the respondent. Likewise, oral narratives use the context of participation by the artist and the audience for its amusement. Yet the use of dialogue, popular as it is, is a serious choice of communication.

Dawood extensively uses dialogue by creating scenes from his diary of case histories. In the case of his novels dialogue creates the mood of the moment and helps to reveal traits of given characters. In his line of work, Dawood uses dialogue to elicit medical
information for prognostic purposes. As a result, he has perfected the art of making
conversations. Dialogue in Dawood's works flows freely and changes with the
characters involved. When he records a conversation between surgeons or from a
surgeon to his students, his dialogue assumes an academic nature. Dialogue is used as a
discriminating index in regard to educational background and social standing of
characters.

In a dialogue between Dawood and characters who are medics, [OMC: 27-30] the
register adopted reflects the training orientation of the characters. They are all
specialists in different medical areas. This choice of register succeeds in highlighting
the characteristics of a particular group of characters. However, when Dawood
recounts the dialogue with one of his patients, it is straightforward and clear. It would
be disastrous for the surgeon and the patient if the register adopted in their
conversations did not facilitate communication. Dialogue is used to elicit very crucial
details when the narrator talks with his patients. Therefore, this choice enables Dawood
to explore the nature of diseases, their symptoms and finally to arrive at a clinical
decision. The appropriateness of this device is illustrated here:

I asked her the usual questions
'Any similar episodes before?'
'No, never.'
'Periods regular?'
'Yes', she said and bashfully dropped her eyes.
'Married?'
'Yes and widowed.'
"Any children?"
"Two! [BTM : 117]."

This dialogue illuminates the characters' background even without any effort to do so by the narrator. The patient is a Swahili woman and a petty tailor on Bazzar street in Nairobi. These details fit very well with the choice of simple questions that the narrator uses to elicit the required medical information. Dialogue establishes and defines the traits of a character better than any other stylistic devices. In other words, other narrative voices, for example the omniscient narrator, do not convey an immediate connection between the words and the person who utters them. In Dawood's works, dialogue is the quickest and most effective way of involving the reader more completely than any other single device.

In [TPOL:4-9] the omniscient narrator is used to enhance the dialogue that takes place in a board meeting. But it is the dialogue which gives the reader an insight into the psyche and disposition of the characters. The narrator simply adds some details and fills the flesh on the skeleton provided by dialogue.

Our conclusion with regard to dialogue is that in its simplicity, it appeals more directly to the readers than reported narration. However, this device explores serious themes such as unravelling mysterious diseases and also enhancing character development in Dawood's works.
4.5 Reader-oriented Language

Any piece of art spoken or written presupposes a reader. Writers therefore, pay a lot of attention to their perceived readers. Dawood as a journalist, among other things, gives much consideration to the language he uses to communicate ideas that are not easy for everyone to understand. In the prologue to the anthology [BTM] Dawood comments about his language and readers:

In my narration I wrote about the surgical problems not only from a scientific angle but also as seen from a human eye and put it in a layman's language which my readers could understand ... After all a writer wants to be read. Therefore, I needed to make my work readable without giving my readers frequent and uncomfortable jolts [BTM : 2-3].

Being a surgeon, Dawood's language is scientific and has a lot of medical jargon. His position as a writer is made more difficult when he recounts real life experiences of his practice because these are purely professional episodes. However, Dawood controls his language in such a way that it remains understandable to readers with no medical knowledge at all. It is a great skill to reduce the elevated and scientific language into a layman's language.

The case of Mr. and Mrs. Mathu, an old couple from Meru, illustrates Dawood's skill in language manipulation:

The case of Mr. and Mrs. Mathu, an old couple from Meru, illustrates Dawood's skill in
After examining Mrs. Mathu and seeing the x-rays which the doctor had sent with her, I told Mr. Mathu that his wife had astero-arthritis of her right knee, something her doctor had suspected. "Wear and tear of the joints which we all get as we grow old", I explained ..."As you know the tyres of a car get worn out after a certain mileage, similarly our knee joints suffer from wear and tear after supporting and propelling the body for half a century." I had gathered in my earlier conversation that Mr. Mathu was in transport business and I thought he would understand my analogy ... "We need to grease these joints from time to time and I will put an injection in Mrs. Mathu's knee which will have the same effect." [OMC: 14-15].

Dawood displays a keen sensitivity to his patients' disadvantage with regard to medical concepts. This sensitivity is, in literary terms, directed to his readers who, ideally speaking, are equally handicapped as regards the medical jargon. The language used above brings a familiar concept of a vehicle's tyre which is easily accessible to the readers. Since Dawood's readers seek to know something new about diseases, human anatomy and their treatment, either by drugs or through operations, it is important that the narrator communicates his ideas simply and clearly. The readers seek to be enlightened on these issues in a language they can easily understand. The appeal of this down-to-earth language makes Dawood's works popular with the readers. To illustrate the contrast between the actual notes Dawood takes for his medical records and the simple language used for narration, a patient's file notes read as follows:

metastatic disease from breast cancer. Prognosis: Very poor. Conclusion: Dilemma: Between the devil and the deep blue sea. [BTM: 140-141].

Although the use of actual case notes can be discussed on its own as a stylistic device for what it provides the readers with in terms of authenticity, it is used here to assess the difference between the actual medical jargon and the simplified layman's language. While the notes above would make sense to a medic, they would totally fail to communicate to readers without any medical knowledge. The terms used in these file notes are scientific and would require definitions for ordinary readers to grasp them. However, Dawood avoids such jargon in his narration, a fact which enables the readers to understand unfamiliar medical concepts.

4.6 The stream of consciousness as a closing formula

In the previous chapter, we acknowledged Dawood's use of binary opposites in building contrasting characters as well as in developing his themes. The stylistic device that reconciles these opposites is the stream of consciousness. Wales (1989) defines this technique as:

...rendering the flow of thoughts that in actuality are only partly verbalized; and if verbalized, only partly formulated. (Wales, 1989: 431)
This technique tries to capture the thoughts that are closest to the unconscious. This description of the character’s thoughts highlights the feelings that are unhindered to be known by the readers. Dawood uses this device in [TPOL]. In this novel, Muhoho and his father, Karanja, represent two opposite ideological camps. While Karanja is conservative and holds firmly to a capitalistic system, Muhoho is an idealist and a humanist who believes in the well being of all people.

At the close of the novel, Muhoho has a stormy argument with his father. This exchange results in his father’s heart attack. As the father is undergoing treatment, Muhoho is involved in a car accident in which he sustains a brain injury. Dawood seizes this moment, when both characters are unconscious, to reconcile their viewpoints. Through a stream of consciousness, the thoughts of each character are registered through the omniscient narrative voice. Both characters listen to a voice that is quiet, calm, controlled and preaches reconciliation. At various points each character questions the voice because it seems to demand that each one makes concessions so as to embrace the ideals of the other.

This device surmounts the limitation of time and space because the schism that exists between these characters had introduced a new complication in the story line. To avoid a lengthy attempt to develop a plausible resolution, Dawood uses the extra-textual device of stream of consciousness. This method allows the reader to follow different characters over the period of
device of a voice which preaches a very spiritual and neutral message. It says, for instance:

'...The upward and the downward paths are one and the same. A sloping road goes both up and down, depending on which way you go'...Good and evil are one. They are not one and the same thing. On the contrary, just as one could not conceive of the upward path without a downward path, so one would not understand the notion of good without at the same time understanding the notion of evil. In fact, if you destroy the way up you also abolish the way down. Likewise with good and evil.' It was the voice again. [TPOL: 154].

In addition to avoiding a long narration, this device 'reconciles' the binary opposition between father and son. This is important because the price to be paid by these characters is that of sacrificing their rigid ideals and embracing each other's point of view. The lesson would not have come out clearly without such a reconciliation.

Moreover, popular works thrive on brevity and the stream of consciousness is a device that compresses and summarizes an otherwise long-winded sub-plot in search of a denouement.

As such, this device functions as a serious literary choice that concludes the novel as well as a popular strategy that ensures a manageable size of the text.

4.7 The pattern of travel and the metaphor of change

The autobiographical accounts set in three different continents have the pattern of
travel as a technique that assists in the development of these anthologies. Evocation of
place which Dawood uses, shares some characteristics with travel writings. The
narrator in these accounts establishes a sense of place either by naming the country,
city, village or even part of a town. The locality of actions and characters marks the
numerous shifts of events from one country to that of another. In order to provide the
sense of place, Dawood utilises contrast by describing the natural characteristics of
different places and the habits of the people who live there. Details about place and
people are added as the story proceeds and the author takes his readers on a journey of
discovery. Strange places are made familiar and unknown people introduced to the
reader. Describing the native rural town of Bantwa Dawood observes:

There was no electricity where we lived and the narrow mud road
which took us to the part of the town where the doctor resided was
littered with stones, potholes, ditches and open drains. My brother
carried a lantern in one hand and held my little hand in the other, as we
trudged in silence. The fear of darkness, ghosts and robbers precluded
any conversation between us and we walked with our heads bowed
hoping that in this posture, we would go unscathed. In any case the
howling pyre-dogs made everything else inaudible [YTAT: 2-3].

Rural India has been evoked through the description of the natural environment. A shift
from rural India to Pakistan is brought dramatically and violently to the reader:

While I was a medical student in Miraj, the partition of India took place
and the communal riots which followed in our village drove the family
out of India to become refugees in Karachi, Pakistan...very year,
however, I went to Karachi to see the family during the summer
vacation [YTAT: 13].

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Dawood describes how he remained in Miraj, which was relatively peaceful, then went to Bombay to finish his studies. As soon as he finished he expressed his wish to go to London:

I simply said that I wanted to go to London to study for my membership in Medicine [YTAT: 13]

The transit is now for London and the narrator describes it thus:

It was middle of February and as the aircraft made its descent I could see London covered with snow. I was both excited and depressed. I was excited because I was seeing snow for the first time ... Viewed from inside the warm and cosy aircraft it was beautiful. I felt low because I was not looking forward to the idea of entering a strange cold city, where I did not know a soul, at that hour of the night with precisely three British pounds in my purse as my total capital [YTAT: 12].

Travel continues to form the backbone of Dawood's story as he moves from one part of England to another describing in minute detail the place and its people. The stories trace the author's movement towards more knowledge in medicine, more people and towards more understanding of the human nature and society. He started in Blacknotley, to Southampton, to Maidenland which is a lovely little town near London. His travels in search of a job took him to Leeds in the "north where the weather is colder, but the people are warm hearted" and back to London in Banbury. The pattern continues into Dawood's days back in Pakistan and finally to Kenya. This pattern is
much more than a stylistic technique because it acts as a backbone on which details are attached. In this way it acts as a means of developing both ideas and themes. Related to this is the metaphor of change especially in Dawood's novels. The transformation of characters and the socio-political environment are evident on reading Dawood's works and they are manipulated as literary devices to facilitate the treatment of the subject matter.

[WUTB] uses the metaphor of change right from its title which suggests passage of time. The external structure of the novel is divided into three books. Change, as a theme and as a stylistic device, is interwoven and developed throughout these books. Characters from three different racial communities are introduced at different stages of their lives. Mrs. Fraser comes to Kenya as an expatriate teacher, Olooloo is a young Luo boy in Kisumu and old man Desai and his sons are beginning to establish themselves in business. The author works at developing these characters which he achieves by using parameters like their economic well being, their expanding social perception and the characters' capacity to abandon restricting stereotypes so as to embrace values formerly viewed as unacceptable.

The author develops inter-racial harmony through the metaphor of change. He succeeds in portraying the modifications and adjustments which characters make through his reliance of historical time-frame. For instance, inter-tribal and inter-racial
marriages mark an important departure, by the characters, from their rigid social outlook to a more flexible situation. This happens over three decades. Time, therefore, becomes a central element in the metaphor of change adopted by Dawood. In addition, readers are likely to identify the passage of time as presented by Dawood. In so doing, the metaphor of change becomes a powerful device of developing both the themes and characters.

It is for this reason that we consider the choice of this metaphor particularly apt considering its simplicity and flexibility in exploring changing circumstances.

At another level, Dawood weaves the metaphor of change in the characters with the changing circumstances in Kenya as a country. Just like in Oludhe Macgoye's novel Coming to Birth (1987), Dawood uses Kenya's historical events to mark the stages of change and development in his characters. He transforms them from naivety to maturity. In the same way, Dawood invokes the history of this country. In Book One of [WUTB], Mr. Judson sums up the general mood amongst the Europeans living in Nairobi:

"The situation in the Congo has clearly shown what can happen. It will be worse here. There will be rivers of blood in the streets of Nairobi. The Congo in comparison, will look like a Sunday afternoon picnic." [WUTB: 9].
There was a strong sense of despondency and panic as soon as Kenya gained independence, and different races looked at others with a lot of suspicion. These sentiments melt down as Kenya's economy flourishes and there is enough for all to enjoy. 'The wind of change' is evident when in the seventies (book two of the novel) Judson who prophesied rivers of blood purchases a house in Muthaiga. The narrator comments on this character:

In fact, Hugh Judson's dictum for his customers who wanted to buy a house in Muthaiga was, "you can't get a house in Muthaiga for love or money". This was a "far cry from his old cliche" about the Congo and the rivers of blood flowing in the streets of Nairobi [WUTB:141].

In the seventies Kenya had become a haven of peace and prosperity and foreigners were flowing back from the South and elsewhere. This change shapes the personalities of characters and their interactions as well. In Book Three, the eighties, the narrator succinctly summarises the general feeling in Kenya at the time:

The prejudices of the 'sixties' and 'seventies' had disappeared. Instead, there was good-natured banter and friendly atmosphere [WUTB: 327].

The metaphor of change is aimed at the resolution of the crises of the country, between characters and within individual characters. Dawood manipulates change from a situation of 'lack' to that of 'lack liquidated' to borrow Propp's structural development of the oral narrative. Dawood has a lot of confidence in his characters. Unlike other
popular authors, who paint characters who have resigned to fate and are not in control of their lives, Dawood is very optimistic about the capacity of his characters to redeem themselves. This change therefore is a literary technique and a process through which his characters attain maturity.

The pattern of travel and the metaphor of change are similar in the goals they achieve. They suggest some progression. The underlying development reflects the development of Dawood in the case of the autobiographies and that of his fictional characters in the novels. In the African context within which Dawood's works are interpreted, these metaphors are familiar. In the oral narratives, the artists introduce their heroes and take them through a journey which involves these characters gaining more experience and knowledge. The readers therefore appreciate being part of this journey because it means that they gain knowledge as they go along.

While on the issue of Dawood utilising the traditional oral forms, the author has used the Indian mythologies. Being a native of India, Dawood is conversant with the Hindu and Buddha mythologies. In the story of Rama, the Hindu god called Ramayana, three main characters feature. These are Rama, Sita and Rakshman. These are usually grouped as the righteous ones while the evil one Hanuman is on the opposing side. Dawood uses this mythology to explore the struggle between good and evil and the final triumph of good. In other words, 'good' in the novel [WUTB] is the peaceful co-
existence of all racial groups in Kenya. Evil which manifests itself in racialism, tribalism and corruption is presented as a force which undermines peace and development. Dawood invokes the Hindu mythology to justify optimism and his vision of Kenya as a great nation which the best from all the races living within her borders.

Rajoo and Sheila the youngest of the Desai's family are sent to India to give offerings to god Shiva* and seek advice from the Swami** on the issue of Sheila's marriage. The journey is undertaken in accordance with the Hindu traditions and Desai, the head of the family, gives his children the guiding details on how to conduct these ceremonies.

Again, African readers are very receptive to myths owing to the prevalence of myth in their traditional repertoire. Most traditional African religions were informed by popular myths and Dawood seems to appeal to a very responsive audience when he tells the Hindu stories. The newness and intensity in the Hindu myths are qualities that endear themselves to the readers. In effect, Dawood manages to apply his Indian mythology to a Kenyan situation where the forces of evil are at war with 'good'.

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*Shiva is a Hindu god.

** Swami is a Hindu priest.
The choice of this traditional form further shows Dawood's success in orientating his stylistic devices to his readers' needs.

4.8 Other Stylistic Devices

A number of other devices have been utilized by Dawood to enhance accessibility of his ideas to his readers. First, in the anthology [BTM] (1993) Dawood includes an epilogue at the end of his stories. In the epilogue, he gives a factual follow-up of the case-histories which he has serialized. This is a new phenomenon in literary terms where the author gives a natural closure to all his episodes by providing an up-dated record of how characters in the stories are living after their encounter with the narrator.

The narrator points out about the epilogue:

Like a miser counting his pennies, however, I often recall my patients, nostalgically, and my follow-up system helps the retrieval. In doing so now, I may be able to tie up any loose ends [BTM: 312].

It is evident the narrator considers this epilogue a crucial stylistic device of concluding his anecdotes. This follow-up is appropriate especially because the stories narrated are collections of episodes that are not necessarily related, either in time or space. Some are set in England, others in India and most in Kenya. Therefore, by giving the factual follow-up of his characters (who are his patients), Dawood succeeds in rounding off his
episodic narratives.

While the fact of tying up loose ends accounts for the unity of the episodes, this epilogue has another function. It underscores the innovative and adaptive nature of popular literature. The author exploits the inclusive nature of his stories by firmly rooting his stories in the factual circumstances that surround him and his readers. Thus, again, Dawood succeed in utilizing one stylistic device for serious literary function as well as for entertainment.

The second device is suspense. This device is sometimes an imposition of the kind of content Dawood narrates in his stories. Where the narrator is engaged in an operation that is risky, the reader is kept in suspense until he learns of the outcome of the operation. These episodes abound especially in the short stories. However, Dawood also makes choices to utilize suspense even when there is no imposition of the subject matter. For instance, when the narrator makes a diagnosis of a terminal disease, he keeps this information from the patients. This sometimes takes a long time before the next-of-kin arrives. At this time the suspense created by Dawood is palpable by the reader.

Such suspense thrills the reader and holds them spell-bound until the disclosure is made to the patient. The reader is put into a guessing situation where he is trying to
predict how the patients will react to the sad news. Dawood utilizes suspense to entertain and captivate his readers to keep turning the pages. This is a strategy that popular literature exploits very well as illustrated by Dawood’s works.

Lastly, Dawood has used very subtle euphemistic language. An extremely humorous story illustrates this. Mr. Khan, a man of sixty, had gone to his surgeon to get some aphrodisiacs. He got enough but the dosage prescribed by the surgeon did not seem to work. He decide to swallow all the tablets for some effect. The drama that unfolds is appropriately couched by Dawood in euphemistic language. The surgeon refers to the resultant state of the patient’s manhood as an "irreversible blow-up". Dawood, the narrator, decides that the only therapy that can heal the old man is inviting his wife into the hospital ward. The narrator refers to this as "lecherous natural therapy"! He concludes this story with a piece of advice given by a visiting British professor:

"The cold weather in my country will shrink the megalophallus," he replied, as he put his arm around my shoulder. To complete this true story, Mr. Khan did in fact fly to London with amusing stealthy 'I know your problems' looks from the air hostesses on board. He underwent an operation with irreversible result that he is now permanently at half-mast [YTAT: 167].

This device arouses the curiosity of the reader and amuses them. It should be noted that the clinical problem presented here is very serious and embarrassing, yet, the
euphemistic language transforms the episode into an amusing anecdote. In fact, since the readers know what Dawood is trying to veil, this irony makes it even more hilarious.

Coupled with humour and wit, the euphemistic language succeeds in drawing the reader to Dawood's works. For readers looking out for entertainment as a way of gaining knowledge and experience, Dawood's stylistic devices are strategies that achieve exactly this function.
Several observations emerge from this study:

Firstly, the definition of popular literature that had gained currency in the 1970's, and which critics like Wanjala used to justify the dichotomy of popular and serious literature, was found inadequate to describe some characteristics that are manifest in Dawood's works. This definition portrays popular literature as 'incapable' of serious and critical evaluation of the subject matter it purported to explore. Likewise, this literature is seen as primarily aimed for entertainment and nothing more. However, Dawood's works cannot be described in these terms. His works reveal a definite understanding of the issues they raise. The author's assessment of themes like corruption is sometimes disturbing in its criticism of society. His works are informative, insightful and reader-oriented. In addition, these works respond to the contemporary demands of a heterogeneous, urban and multiracial population as well as to the mass media (journalistic) policies. Therefore, the definition of popular literature that embraces such a readership is one that emphasizes the inclusiveness, flexibility and dynamism of popular literature. This is the definition our study adopted.

Secondly, the study reveals a close relationship between Dawood's works of art and their immediate socio-cultural contexts. Specifically, Dawood's works appear to be
influenced by geo-political context in Kenya prevailing during the time of their writing. Other contexts such as Dawood's professional context, media considerations, and socio-cultural changes play a central role in shaping Dawood's works. For instance, [WUTB], a novel written in 1991, records the social, cultural as well as historical adjustments that Kenya went through between 1960 and 1990. Themes like the improving racial relations, the emergence of an elite class in Kenya, corruption and diseases associated with affluence form Dawood's subject-matter.

These themes are contemporary and easily recognizable by the readers. However, Dawood's works seem to target the middle class readers more specifically. The author's strategy to orientate his content to his readers target this heterogeneous group through the characters in his works and a reality known to the readers. Given that Kenya is a society struggling with the forces of modernization, urbanization and an emerging elite class, these are serious issues to our society. Dawood is attesting to their urgency and importance when he explores them in his works. On the other hand, Dawood's works are popular in the way they explore the stereotypes that justify certain attitudes among the people.

Our third observation is that the form and style that Dawood adopts make his works serious and popular at the same time. The plot and structure of the works is easy and serve to facilitate communication of ideas, thoughts and opinions to the readers. It is this fact that makes these choices serious. For Dawood to identify the plot and
structure that will appeal to his readers, he must have made a crucial literary assessment of the gamut available for utilization. He must have contemplated his audience and made choices of plot and structure that suit his perceived readers.

The stylistic devices that Dawood uses have a twin function. They enhance the overall meaning and aesthetic impact of his fiction, on the one hand, and are also a strategy to captivate and entertain his readers on the other. Thus, these devices serve as serious literary elements as well as popular choices suited to a specific target group of readers.

For instance, the humour and wit that Dawood utilizes involves a very intelligent handling of both language and the shared knowledge between the author and the readers. This is a very delicate literary process because misplaced humour could ruin a good work of art. Yet, when it is well thought out it achieves a popular function. The readers are made hilariously happy throughout Dawood's works.

Finally, several choices made by Dawood are new trends at least in the Kenyan literary scene. Serialization of anecdotes in the 'Newspapers' before compiling them in anthologies is one. It assists Dawood to establish readers through a medium of mass circulation. Another element is the inclusion of an epilogue in one of his anthologies which is an actual follow-up of the characters Dawood has narrated about in his works. This lends more credence to the narrative that Dawood has been telling.

In the light of this conclusion, our contention is that works can be both popular and...
serious. Dawood's themes, language and style are free from ostentation and
unnecessary ornamentation. This does not mean, of course, that these works express
naive or commonplace ideas. It does mean that they express their ideas as directly as
possible. For works to be both serious and popular, their presentation should not be
more complicated than their subject matter demands. This is the art that Dawood has
perfectly polished.

The evidence adduced from the examination of content, form and style confirms our
thesis: that Dawood's works of art are both popular and serious in their nature. In
addition, the resources of language and subject matter form a common fund and
therefore, it is indefensible to label some works exclusively serious and others entirely
popular. What makes the works of one author popular, and therefore accessible to the
readers than another's, is their capacity to orientate their content and form towards the
realities of their readers.

5.1 Recommendations for further study

This study could be replicated using other artists who have been labelled popular
authors and have as a result been ignored in literary criticism. This would be necessary
so as to either corroborate or find differences between those other authors and Dawood.

Our study used New-Historicism, a theory that does not privilege any kind of writing
and does not recognize any dichotomy in literature, it would be productive to study Dawood's work using other theoretical approaches for comparative purposes. In this study, we have been compelled to extract some relevant details from psychoanalysis. For instance, psychologists such as Mindless, Giles and Oxford gave us useful ideas on the way humour works on the persons who use it and those who read humorous literature. In addition, we used psychoanalysis to account for the sexual humour that Dawood uses so consistently.

However, the resources of this literary approach have not been exhausted in this study. For comparative studies this study recommends further exploration in this direction for works that are considered popular.
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