CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN TANZANIA : A LITERARY APPRECIATION OF ITS GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my own original work. It has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

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DEDICATION

for

Abanya

Muhanuzi

Ahiga

for

Tanzanian Children

Past

Present

Future

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ABSTRACT

This study is a critical appraisal of the growth and development of children's literature in Tanzania. It arises from a recognition of the dearth of critical works on this literature and is based on the premise that children's literature requires an evaluative framework for guiding the literary and creative needs of children in Tanzania. The thesis collates the various categories of this literature and establishes a framework for assessing their literary qualities, wholesomeness, suitability for and impact on the child reader. It traces the growth of this literature from its oral beginnings through the colonial written literature to the contemporary works written in English or Kiswahili.

The first sections of the thesis present an analysis of the context, stylistic features and visual presentation of colonial, East African and Tanzanian literature available to the child in Tanzania. The study collaborates this discussion with further analysis and interpretation of children's responses to the subject matter, moral, style and illustrations of the most widely read children's books in Tanzania. From these analyses it isolates and evaluates both the existing literature and its emerging trends. It points out that the best literature for children is always skilfully and carefully written and communicates meaningfully to the child about childhood and experiences relevant to his/her world; that this literature is enjoyed by the child reader and has tremendous significance and influence on him or her. The study concludes that Tanzanian children's literature has gradually emerged as a noticeable branch of literature in its own right, but that writers will in future need to be more conscious of children's interests so that the growth in the future can point more towards a wholesome, meaningful and diverse literature.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. 0. Background

When Taban Lo Liyong [1] declared East Africa a literary desert in 1969, his wrath and lament were caused by the paucity of written literature, for East Africa could not boast, at that time, of more than a handful of literary works. The barrenness that was a reality then applied only to the written works. For prior to colonisation and even as Lo Liyong was writing The Last Word, post colonial East African Communities were enjoying their oral literature. Lo Liyong, a strong proponent of oral literature in Africa, was only pointing out a fact about written literature in East Africa without necessarily overlooking the oral literature which played a major part in the cultural and aesthetic life of the people. In this, he shares the same view with Zirimu and Bukenya who have both put a strong case for the validity of the region's oral literature and even seen it as a tool that could be used in the development of written literature.[2]

As these scholars had foreseen, oral literature has indeed played a major part in the written literature of the region, helping to fire the imagination of writers and providing stylistic models in drama, poetry and the novel. The seventies and eighties for instance, saw the publication of several

books of fiction and volumes of poetry and drama in which oral tradition played an important part either in conceptualising theme or providing a model of style.

The growth of East African Literature has been so significant that today Taban Lo Liyong cannot speak of barrenness in the same way. Books written by East Africans leave the printers year after year, in various genres, subjects, themes, styles and even languages. In Tanzania, for example, Kiswahili has evolved not only as a national language but more important, as a unifying lingua franca which has inspired a whole new body of literature and contributed to the development of oral and written literature in East Africa. To Taban Lo Liyong's comfort, East Africans can be said to have made and to be still making their contribution to African written literature. Children's literature is slowly emerging as a branch of literature which is distinctive in its own way. All this critical activity has tended to elicit theories and evaluative frameworks which have encouraged discussion and facilitated the development of adult literature. But the same critical activity has not been directed to children's literature.

Criticism of children's books has lagged behind not only in Tanzania but also in the rest of Africa. Though children's books are circulating among children in Tanzania, not much has been done by way of review, evaluation and criticism. Yet children's literature needs the same critical and theoretical attention that adult literature is accorded. It deserves even more attention

than adult literature because its consumers are at a more critical period of growth and development, and the literature we give them must take into consideration their cultural lives, their psychological states and their literary development. Children's literature is not less sophisticated than adult literature although it may seem simple to adult readers. Like adult literature it calls for serious, and systematic analysis. Our study thus provides a critical evaluation of on Tanzania children's literature as a start to eliminating the vacuum of critical works.

1. 1. Definition of Terms

This work is a specialised study of a branch of literature that has its own genres and terminology. For this reason, it has been found necessary to offer working definitions of the terminology in order to enhance discussion and avoid contradictions.

1. 1. 1. Children's Literature

In this study, children's literature applies to literary works which are meant for entertainment and enjoyment although we recognise the term is sometimes stretched to include works that are outside the literary field. This body of reading materials includes books that invite the child to read on his own. We concur with Isabelle Jan who advances the view that:

> it is the child's enjoyment of a book which gives it its strongest claim to be considered as "children's literature"...[3]

Such a book comes to life when a child reads it. A good children's book is the one in which the child can enter with only one guide - the author. Other guides are not necessary. The author is able to communicate with the children when he deals with experiences which are familiar to them such as tasks, fears and emotions of childhood. Children's literature therefore stimulates their imagination and helps them interpret their own unique experiences. In other words, Jan is suggesting that books which are too dull for children should not even claim to belong to this body of literature. Our argument is that there are some works which are written ostensibly to delight and entertain children but have failed to do so. Such books are recognised by this thesis as part of children's literature but distinguished in our discussion as mediocre, ineffective or bad literature as opposed to good, appealing literature.

The children's book may appear an inert object but it comes to life when the author is effectively communicating with his young readers. In children's literature, children imaginary characters who help them to enter a world full of optimism and possibilities of growth both in body and mind. Moreover, in their literature they find action, adventure and fun.

Children's literature includes many books that people who have passed childhood read and enjoy even when they are not reading for children. Good children's literature should be appealing to both adults and children.

1. 1. 2. Tanzanian Child

Unless one was thinking of citizenship, the term Tanzanian child is a misnomer. Further reading of this work will show that what makes an individual unique or different from another is the experience he has had and the society in which he has grown. The child is basically universal, easily adapting to fit in new environments. He receives his labels according to his experiences. In this study, however, we have used the term to mean the Tanzanian citizen. We have also been guided by Tanzanian authorities in determining who is a child and who is not. The Ministry of Health regards all persons under fifteen as children. Needless to say, some so categorised may not like to be regarded as children and may shun any literature that is labelled "for children" and avoid children's sections of libraries.

1. 1. 3. Tanzanian Children's Literature

In general, we have taken Tanzanian Children's Literature to mean that literature which is addressed to the Tanzanian child or is a direct result of exposure to the Tanzanian experience. We have included some primers and classroom texts in our analysis and discussion whenever we have judged them to be giving pleasure or purporting to give pleasure to child readers.

While one cannot advocate localisation of literature and avail the Tanzania child with a label "Tanzanian Literature", it is important that they grapple with the familiar material first. The education system of Tanzania is training the Tanzanian child to realise that his freedom as a citizen is inseparably bound up with his acceptance of his cultural heritage. This awareness has been inculcated in him especially as he reads not only literary works but also other books of knowledge. Part of this kind of education process means rejecting literature which may be regarded as destroying the reader's attitude towards his society and himself. The Ministry of National Education has been very vigilant on this point by ensuring that the books recommended for school use are appropriate.

1. 1. 4. Literary Appreciation

In this work "criticism" and "appreciation" have been used interchangeably. Although the term "literary criticism", connotes to some people a notion of praising or blaming, it involves in its strict sense evaluation and judgement. Most scholars see the positive aspect of criticism: they regard interpretation and evaluation as its major and necessary tasks. S. O. Isayere in his review of Larson's The Emergence of African Literature asserts that:

> Good criticism is not an end in itself but a means to great understanding and appreciation of all literary work.[4]

We envisage that our interpretation and evaluation of the literary works which the Tanzanian child is encountering will provide literary education or illumination of the works and not just pass literary judgements. Moreover our evaluation of the corpus of literature available to the Tanzanian child will make important literary links between past and present literature, between oral and written literature, and between literature in English and literature in Kiswahili.

1. 1. 5. Fairy Tale And Fantasy

The term tale is often used with reference to traditional written stories. Nicholas Tucker elaborates that:

> The words "Fairy Tale" must accordingly be taken to include tales in which occurs something "fairy" something extraordinary - fairy giants, dwarfs and speaking animals. It must be taken also to cover tales...[5]

From the above definition it would appear that a great deal of the literature that will be discussed in this thesis could be classified as `fairy tales' simply because they are drawn from folklore and speak of worlds of wonder which are like our world or even surprisingly unlike it. In them, however, are dramatic and exciting incidents presenting the reader with imaginative reality.

Some fairy tales have characters called fairies but not all stories in the genre "fairy tales" have fairies. For this reason, and to avoid a misleading

association with fairies, we have refrained from using the term fairy tales in our particular context. Instead , we have used "traditional stories", "traditional tales" or stories from oral literature.

Another reason for avoiding the terms "fairy tales" is because of their restrictive defination such as what Hollowell offers. We agree with her when she says:

> Strictly speaking, fairy tales are stories about fairies or other supernatural beings.[6]

In this work, we have also discussed what scholars refer to as "literary fairy tales" and employed the term "fantasy". Fantasies have the characteristics of fairy tales except that they are created by one individual. Marion Van Horne says that:

> "fantasy differs from stories of reality, both in the originality of its conception and its dependency upon the use of the imagination.[7]

and continues to explain what constitutes a fantasy that:

> no matter how other-worldly or how fantastic it may be, must be convincing, because it is credible within its incredibility, plausible within its implausibility, rational within its irrationality.[8]

In other words, fantasy bears some relevance to the real world but it is not entirely dependent on it. Logic exists even in this world of imagination but magic is also an ingredient often employed by the author of fantasy. Applebee agrees that:

> fantasy is not so much the fantastical as it is part of a continuum that begins in the world of immediate experience, passes outward toward distant lands, and outward again into purely imaginative realms. [9]

1. 1. 6. Nonsense Literature

The term "nonsense" is relegated to the genre of children's literature created for no other reason but to give pleasure to the reader or listener. The bulk of nonsense literature is in poetry form and is characterised by statements that semantically do not make sense though they may sound pleasant to the ear. Nonsense poetry largely capitalises on the sound of words, rhyme and rhythm which are a delight to the child's ear. The writer of nonsense literature is good at inventing words that are strikingly pleasant.

The use of nonsense literature is really therapeutic rather than didactic. Children do not stop to work out why the farmer's wife cut the tails of "Three Blind Mice" or even where "The Old Woman who lived in the Shoe" got the giant shoe in which she lived with her uncountable children. Instead, children are amused by the ludicrous even when they do not believe it. Their

imagination stretches to the land of fantasy where anything can and does happen. Karl Shapiro explains that nonsense poetry has its use:

> In poetry, successful nonsense is almost always a triumph over seriousness. Nonsense has one virtue which great poetry lacks: It cheers the mind. It deflates.[10]

1. 2. The Purpose of the Study

Our role in this investigation is not only to illuminate Tanzania children's literature but also to evaluate its context, content and development. In this we have seriously evaluated the responses of the target readers in order to understand how this literature captures their imagination. By drawing on the responses of the children, which are often ignored, we have given pre-eminence to the target reader whose feedback is important for both the interested author and the concerned patron of children's literature.

So far, no study has been undertaken to assess Tanzanian children's literature and, more important, to evaluate the responses of child readers. Our decision to study Tanzanian children's literature was influenced by this deficiency and also by the fact that Tanzania has a special heritage of a national language which, it was assumed, would enhance communication through the written word and facilitate the creation and development of literature. The school curriculum in Tanzania has also been hailed by many

educators within and without for being appropriate to enhance the growth of creative literature in post-colonial Tanzania. Ironically, however, the same curriculum has been blamed by teachers and parents for the poor books available to the Tanzanian child. The ambiguities and contradictions in the Tanzanian situation reveal the need for a well researched study that would examine the growth and development of the written literature and assess its impact on the children who read it. We have assumed that they would be most affected or influenced by works that are "home-grown".

Using the framework described in the next section, works addressed to children of up to the age of fifteen and including those written for adults but appropriated by the children, are analysed. The purpose of the research is to understand the works in all their perspectives: the writers behind them, the societies that influenced them and last but most important, their impact on the child reader. To this end, we have investigated:-

a) the development and growth of children's literature in Tanzania.
b) the nature of literature available to the Tanzanian child and whether or not it gives the child the opportunity to encounter all the genres of literature in the written form.
c) the wholesomeness of the literature and its ability to nurture the child's sensibilities and creativity.
d) significant trends in Tanzanian children's literature and what these indicate for the future of children's literature in Tanzania.

1. 3. Basic Assumptions

Underlying this study are four basic assumptions:

1) that writing for children is a challenging activity that requires specialised skills for success.

2) that criticism of the existing children's books would provide an evaluative framework for distingushing good, wholesome books from the mediocre ones and in the process provide proper guidance for determining the literary and creative needs of the child reader.

3) that in Tanzania the general lack of concern for the literary needs of children accounts for the paucity of quality children's books and that a critical appraisal such as this thesis would help to correct the situation.

4) that an appraisal of Tanzanian children's literature which examines its growth and development would reveal the vast gaps that exist in this field and thereby inspire further interest to address the situation.

1. 4. Theoretical Framework

In order to achieve our objective and to meaningfully put the above assumptions to the test, we have used a theoretical framework that takes the child reader's background into consideration. We concur with Barry who says that:

> the history of children's literature is.....a record of childhood.[11]

A true record of childhood tells the children about their experiences in a familiar language. It is therefore necessary to subject this literature to critical analysis to judge how truthfully it spoke of childhood. Literature is not only a record but also a criticism of life which needs to be judged. Criticism is effective in shaping the literary judgement of readers as well as the work of creative writers. A major part of the work of the critic is really to hold up works of value to target readers through careful selection, evaluation and judgement. David Daiches has elaborated the part played by criticism more succinctly:

> The action most often demanded of it (criticism) by the lay reader.....is judgement, discrimination, the placing of a given literary work on a scale of value.[12]

This kind of judgement is most wholesome when it considers the work of art as a totality and examines how it is put together for a particular purpose, in other words, how its material is realised by the form in which it is put. It is

for this reason that we have subjected Tanzanian children's literature to extrinsic and intrinsic criticism, which represent a larger theoretical framework within which we can relate the content of a work to its intrinsic form.

Extrinsic criticism which some critics call the "moral theory" was first formulated by Plato and has, over the years, influenced notable critics such as Tolstoy, Trotsky, Johnson, Arnold and I. A. Richards. This theory posits literature as a contributory part of human activity and suggests that a work of art can only be properly understood in relation to the social milieu that gave birth to it. Critics who support this theory lay emphasis on the social causes and effects of the work of art and seek to answer the question "what is literature for?" by determining the ways in which it reflects or explains social phenomena. Graham Hough, for example, suggests that literature grows directly out of people's experiences:

> The law of perfection for literature is rightly ordered by the same principles as given the rest of man's experience, and it is rightly judged by the degree to which it contributes to the fullness of human activity.[13]

These critics also see the writer himself as being informed and influenced by his society to write for it in order to show or even remind it of the right direction to take. To use Ngugi's words:

> A writer responds, with his total personality, to a social environment which changes all the time. Being a kind of sensitive needle, he registers with varying degrees of accuracy success, the conflicts and tensions in his changing society. [14]

From the above quotation, Ngugi brings out the uniqueness of the writer in his society. He is the "sensitive needle", he has a special endowment as an individual and thus:

> the same writer will produce different types of work, sometimes contradictory in mood, sentiment, degree or optimism and even world-view...[15]

Individual writers informed and shaped by the same society vary in their styles and effectiveness. The reader responds differently to each work and is influenced or affected by each work in a unique way. It is at this point that the critic comes in as part of the reading public, becoming another "sensitive needle". He is sensitive to the work, the society that informed it, and sometimes the author behind it, as he bears the torch for the reading public and the author.

While this framework is useful to our analysis of the social background of literature and its impact on readers, it does not take account of the fact that works of art also have their intrinsic form which contributes to the communication of meaning. Thus by itself extrinsic criticism would be inadequate in dealing with aspects related to form and style and their function in communicating meaning in a text. For this reason Tanzanian children's books have also been subjected to the "formal theory", otherwise called intrinsic criticism, the aspect of criticism that answers the question "what is the nature of literature itself?" The fountainhead of this theory was Aristotle

who insisted that judgement on whether the work is good or bad be based upon its excellence in form. Formalist or intrinsic critics, following Aristotle, argue that each genre fulfils certain generic imperatives and that judgement of a work of art must be determined from its success within its own particular form. On the other hand, the moral theorists object strongly to this exclusive concentration upon the literariness of the work of art.

None of these two theories is adequate on its own as an evaluative framework but a combination of both will recognise that there is an inter-relationship between writer, work, child reader, society and critic. For this particular evaluation of Tanzania children's literature an additional framework is called for.

From time to time we have applied the psychoanalytic theory especially in the analyses of children's responses. This theory not only presupposes the child reader's serious engagement with the works but also necessitates a deeper and lengthier interaction between the child and the researcher. It was not always possible to get to the depth of experience and feelings of individual respondents. Some of the analyses that emerge from the psychoanalytic theory are often adult responses and interpretations.. We have applied this theory but refrained from reading too much into the text beyond what children could understand and interpret. Some of the works we read as children assume new meanings when we reflect upon them as adults, but such adult interpretations do not constitute the burden of this thesis. It was,

however, possible to bring out some features of what constituted good or mediocre literature not only through intrinsic and extrinsic criticism but also from children's responses.

One aspect that is emphasised in this work is that the child should enjoy what he reads. We concur with Aristotle who "saw pleasure as a product of .....excellence".[16] We have therefore taken children's statements serious as to whether they enjoyed or not. Rousseau sees pleasure as a vital ingredient in children's lives:

> Man, be humane! It is the first, the chief of moral duties, to exercise humanity to everything, of what age or condition so ever, that is relative to a man...Have a tender regard for children , indulge them in their diversions, their pleasures, and in everything dictated by their harmless natures... Why will you deprive the little innocents of the enjoyment of a season so short and transient of a blessing so precious, which they cannot abuse? Why will you clog, with bitterness and sorrow, those rapid moments which will return no more for them than for you? Ye fathers, do you know when the stroke of death shall fall on your offspring? Lay not in store, then, for your own sorrow, by depriving them of the enjoyment of the few moments nature has allocated to them.[17]

The life of any children's book is really dependent on how positively or negatively children respond to it.C. S. Lewis goes further to suggest that the best critic of children's books are the children themselves. We reiterate that whatever message the response has is of significance to the society that inspired the work, the writer who wrote it, the patron who put it in the hands

of the reader and the critic who synthesises and interprets the whole experience. Without the work discussion on this subject is impossible and without the child reader the work is fruitless.

Our theory necessitates that the author be sensitive to the child's interests. The author who avidly reads children's works similar to what he intends to write and any criticism on those works is likely to succeed in appealing to the child reader. Through these works he will learn what the child critic and adult critic advise. Such a writer is likely to offer works that depict wholesomeness in form and content.

1. 5. Literature Survey

In Tanzania, four categories of books for children have graced the bookshelves of shops and libraries, and have been available to those who can get them. The first category was introduced by the white man during the colonial period after they were abridged and simplified for African Schools. They are the kind of books that European children had used and enjoyed at home, and the assumption was that African children would not only find them useful but also enjoyable. Books in this category include those discussed in our second chapter. Some of the books were translated into Kiswahili for wider circulation.

The second category comprises adult books whose purpose it was to glorify white superiority such as Karen Blixen's Out of Africa [18] and Elspeth Huxley's, The Flame Trees of Thika,. These were books set in colonial Africa, targeted at adult European readers but still accessible to the curious child reader. Although this category has few books, their effect on the African reader has often been damaging for they tend to project to the reader an African lacking in dignity and having an inferior culture. They were meant to inform the European about Africa and her people. These books were introduced to the African reader because of the dearth of reading materials. A good example is King Solomon's Mines which is analysed in chapter 2 of this thesis.

Developing closely from colonial literature is another category of books written by non-African but specially for African children and distributed by the colonising governments. The most successful of these were based on African tales, many of them employing animal characters that African readers could recognise. Titles in this group would include Animal Palaver, Jungle Doctor's Stories, Old Gold and Other Stories and Talking Woman (Bibi Msemi). This category of books found wide readership in East Africa.

The third category of books focused on the African world as a setting and tended to especially harp on negative aspects of the African environment. In The Talking Woman, for example, the African is presented as a dirty creature surrounded by a filthy environment infested with vile pests. The

African world is revealed, as in the adult books of this period, as needing a "civilising mission". In Talking Woman, the young African child is represented by a small monkey, who gets caught up in the fire of civilisation: he refuses to drink water which is not boiled and eventually dies of thirst. The subtly distorted portrayal of the African characters, we feel, can be misleading to a young reader and consequently damaging to his view of himself and his world.

The fourth category of books emerged from a need to correct some of the misconceptions of the colonial period. Books in this category try to create a world with characters that the African child can recognise. While most of them have been adapted from African tales, others are based on contemporary life experiences. Discussion of this fourth category will comprise the bulk of this thesis.

All these categories of reading material constituted the primary sources of the literature survey. Background and critical material have also helped us to formulate and shape some of the arguments of the study. In connection with the argument on the need to localise children's literature, Ngugi wa Thiong'o provided a good framework and assumption for the study's investigation into children's reading material in the curriculum. He has criticised the education system in Africa in the following words:

> And why do we find it necessary to qualify this literature with the world `African', for what else could it be? A Russian child grows under the influence of his

> native imaginative literature: a Chinese, a Frenchman, a German or an Englishman first imbibes his national literature before attempting to take in other worlds. That the central taproot of his cultural nourishment should lie deep in his native soil is taken for granted. This ABC of education is followed in most societies because it is demanded by the practice and the experience of living and growing. Not so in Africa....[19]

It is a logical and sound system of education that insists on imparting knowledge from the known to the unknown. Although Tanzania has been offering books to children to read, there has not been serious critical assessment of that literature. More interest,especially since the late 1980s, has been directed to creating books for children to read but no effort has been directed to critical analyses of these works. Two scholars, W.D. Kamera and P.O Mlama, have written papers on this subject but they tend offer general remarks on children's literature.

In his paper, Fasihi Simulizi na Uandishi Katika Shule Za Msingi (1978), Kamera stresses the need for children to be grounded in oral literature and nourished with good literature both written and oral. He sees children as capable of not only appreciating but also creating good literature, and he calls upon those who value reading and writing to make their contribution towards creating children's literature.[20]

The implication given by this paper is that there was little good literature available to the Tanzanian children at the time when Kamera was writing. Our study has gone further than this by actually offering guidance to writers, revealing to them what Tanzanian children really like to read. One and

a half decades after Kamera's paper we are at an advantage of having a good collection of children's books to assist us in our discussion.

P. O. Mlama seems to hold a similar opinion with Kamera in her paper entitled: "The Mass Media and Culture Relevant to The Child" (1979) commissioned for a symposium on the International Year of the Child. She identifies the problem of low production of reading materials for children and attributes it to the fact that there are very few publishers in the country and that they are not willing to produce children's books because of the high expenses involved. Mlama suggests that what the publishers need are subsidies to help in the production costs and eventually to bring out books that readers can afford to buy. Another problem which Mlama identifies is that "writing books for children also demands special skills, including a knowledge of child psychology"[22] and that this rules out a lot of potential writers. This thesis takes those points further and suggests what skills are needed in writing for children. In this respect, it approximates the perspective of this study and lays some ground for a theoretical approach to children's literature.

In the same paper, Mlama quotes the First Quarterly Report of the International Year of the child as having identified three problems with regard to children's literature in Tanzania:

i) There are hardly any artists to draw suitable illustrations for children's books.

ii) Children's books are costly to print due to the many illustrations and colour required.

iii) Readers (children) exist but they don't have the buying power. There are very few parents who encourage their children to read outside their school.[22]

Some of the deficiencies that Mlama's paper identifies, especially in relation to illustrators, have been investigated and addressed in our study, though we acknowledge that the financial dimension is beyond the scope of our thesis.

In East Africa, one of the pioneering undertaking in the field of criticism of children's literature was championed by Odaga in her B. A. dissertation entitled Literature for Children and Young People in Kenya (1985) and later published under the same title. The main thrust of this work is "to find out how valuable this literature is to the youth of Kenya".[23] Odaga not only examines the validity of colonial and post colonial written literature for children but also the oral literature. Her work is complemented by Mwanzi's M. A. thesis on "Children's Literature in Kenya" whose focal point is a discussion of imagery in children's written prose. Mwanzi goes further

> It can be dangerous to assume that the way the critic understands and sees the children's literature is the way children themselves see it. [24]

Although this is a view we totally agree with, we recognise that it is possible to offer a framework that helps the critics in the business of appraising literature for children. In this work, the framework has been developed with the help of children themselves as they encounter and respond to literature.

In the developed countries, the subject has received more serious attention. Many critical studies have been undertaken to match with the large production of books for children. Critics have been ready to review and evaluate them in order to offer guidance to the reading public. Some of the studies examine the development of children's literature in specific countries. A good example is M. H. Arbuthnot's Children and Books (1957) which traces the development of children's books in England right from the time William Caxton started writing for the child reader to the time when Lewis Carroll wrote his fantasies. We have found her approach useful as it describes the growth of children's literature. Our investigation considers not only the growth but also the form of Tanzanian Children's literature.

As she writes about American children's books, Lois Watt (1976) demonstrates that a good knowledge of social history is vital. She examines the period 1776 - 1976 and gives an overview of American Children's

Literature from the time children depended on the English heritage through to the time that Americans saw the need to deliberately create a repertoire of literature for their own children . The work ends on a note of celebration as America can boast of having her own children's literature. The writer reveals some of the changing values towards children and literature and maintains that the creation of children's literature is the conscious effort of a nation and beyond the scope of an individual writer. She acknowledges the many American writers of children's books who through their commitment, have moulded the literature to what it is today. Her appraisal offers a link between "colonial" literature and American children's literature. We concede that to fully appreciate written Tanzanian literature for children it is not only desirable but also necessary to appreciate oral literature and the colonial literature that informed colonised children and continues to be read by today's children.

Arbuthnot's and Watt's social and historical treatises see children and their literature as part of a society that is not static but continually growing and developing. Since Tanzanian society has gone through changes that have impacted on the literature, the study serves as a useful framework for examining the changing nature of Tanzanian children's literature.

Some of the criticism on children's literature has tended to focus on specific genres. Such is the case for instance, in G. B. Siks' and H. B. Dunnington's Children's Theatre and Creative Dramatics (1963) which explores theatre and drama, Marcus Crouch's Treasure Seekers and Borrowers (1962) which considers the prose

form and Nancy Larrick's (ed.) Somebody Turned a Tap In these Kids (1971) which recognises and indicates the qualities basic to good writing and serves as a valuable manual for writers and a guide for critics of children's literature. The latter's guidance on the craft of writing poetry for children was, for instance, useful to our own examination of the impact of this genre in Tanzania.

In another manual, Write The Vision, Marion Van Horne (1970a) devotes one article to "Writing for Children and Young People" where she asserts that writing for children requires stricter standards than writing for adults. She then proceeds to offer those standards in a manual for writers of children's books entitled Give Children Wings (1970b). We concur with Horne that writing for children is dificult. It is also easier to criticise such literature than to offer guidance on how to write a good book for children. George Trease (1964) is one of the scholars who assess the problem of the children's book writer and points out what the writer ought to bear in mind in order to be effective. Like Horne, Trease examines aspects of style and illustrates how they should be treated. These two critics support their arguments with examples of works that have proved popular with children. They demonstrate that works which are popular with children are also written skilfully.

Another useful manual is Lee Wyndham's Writing For Children and The Teenager (1968) which offers valuable discussion on such technical aspects of writing as characterisation, point of view, problem, titles and conflict. This

book targets the writer and offers "lessons" on needed skills in writing for the young. As such, it forms part of the background material that has helped to crystallise the theoretical and critical framework for our particular study.

There are still other scholars who have subjected selected children's books to literary criticism and offered standards for judging children's literature. Lilian H. Smith in The Unreluctant Years (1953) has suggested that most principles of criticism are applicable to children's literature and she has gone further to consider their application in judging the merit of children's books. Like Wyndham, Smith recognises qualities which makes creative writing effective. These tenets are adopted in our analyses.

Most researchers in the subject have investigated the literary needs of children and given their value judgements on which books they consider best for children. The majority are of the opinion that the best judge of children's books is the child himself. Margery Fisher in Intent Upon Reading (1961) takes this point further by reiterating C. S. Lewis' assertion that a children's story which is enjoyed only by children is a bad children's book. Fisher's perspective on children's responses is reflected in this thesis. We also concur with Wolfgang Iser (1978) on the importance of the readers' interpretations and judgement of the texts. Iser suggests that each writer should consider that his work has an implied reader and so his energies be directed to communicating with the implied reader. Although we have not attempted to classify the works by age groups we however select the appropriate reader for responses on specific texts.

Studies of children's books have useful insights into the world of children and have given direction to writers, educators, parents and critics. This study has greatly benefited from works of criticism in general and studies on children's literature in particular. Our study envisages an investigation which would elicit statements on general evaluative inclinations of the Tanzanian child.

1. 6. Research Sources and Methodology

The study involved both archival and field research.

1. 6. 1. Library and Field Research

During the course of this study major libraries especially in Dar es Salaam, Bukoba, Dodoma and Arusha have been consulted for primary and secondary sources. We have also collected data from the archives of The Ministry of National Education and the Institute of Education on the objectives behind recommending certain books for children. We have gathered data on the background of the Tanzania literary field in general and also tried to relate each work to this background.

The field research reveals the active participation of children as they receive, read and respond to books. Part of the response involves creating

new stories, poems and plays. We have noted that the life of any book is really dependent on how positively or negatively the children respond to it. The thesis supports scholars of children's literature who suggest that the best critics of children's books are the children themselves especially before they learn the stock responses that the adult world teaches. Children's responses provide the basis for the analysis on the use of style and its effects. The study reveals that children are capable of providing critical judgements on the form and content of the works they read.

1. 6. 2 Collection of Material

Most of the material for the study has been collected through:

(a) Questionnaires and interviews with children to assess interests in and attitudes to various books.

(b) Questionnaires and interviews with librarians in children's departments to discover popular children's books.

(c) Observation schedules of children during their reading activities in the library.

(d) Questionnaire and interviews with publishers, book sellers and writers to investigate existing criteria for judging or choosing children's books.

(e) Interviews with teachers and parents to find out which books are popular with children.

1. 6. 3. Child Respondents

We have gathered the material by using specifically designed questionaires which are used to elicit information from the children after they have read the books. Interviews are then conducted to derive more information from the questionaire responses. On the whole research reveals that interviews elicit more genuine responses than the questionaires so we have used them as much as possible.

Respondents have ranged from Standard 1 to 7 pupils but only up to the 15 years old . Boys and girls from different parts of the country and with varying backgrounds have been consulted. In addition, we have used a control group from Bukoba where availability of books is a problem. This group was provided with selected books and responses on these solicited. The enquiry through interviews, questionnaires, observation schedules and discussions has involved more than 200 children.

1. 7. Scope of Study

In the analytical survey of the growth and nature of written literature for Tanzanian children, books have been selected whose circulation is

widespread and available to many children. Magazines are left out of the discussion because there has not been any that has enjoyed significant national attention in the history of Tanzania children's literature.

Responses have been sought from both urban and rural children. Research reveals that children in towns have more books available to them in school, at home and public libraries whereas children in rural areas generally have no books to read. The study might therefore seem to divide the children along class lines but the task is not to assess who is more advantaged of the two groups. The major thrust is to discover the impact of and opinion on the books which are either written for children or appropriated by them. Thus the survey concentrates on those children who can read, especially pupils between standards five and seven. Avid readers have proved particularly helpful in this study.

The work does not analyse oral literature per se even though it takes note of the fact that oral literature has always played a great role in the literary development in Tanzania and has continued to inform the children in its changing forms as it employs different media. In Tanzania mainland for example, a lot of stories, riddles and proverbs are transmitted through the radio. More important to our study is the fact that oral literature has been a major source of written literature for children.

After considering the Tanzania literary background, the development and growth of children's literature is then traced from the colonial, to the post independence period. Books are subjected to literary analyses largely to find out what tenets of form and content children responded to either positively or negatively. Aspects of style such as narrative style, story-line, viewpoint and characterisation are balanced with analyses of suitability of content. Grading books, however, is not a preoccupation of the study although indications on which books are popular among older or younger children is sometimes given.

The general appearance of children's books including the quality of artwork, the paper and type of print all go a long way in influencing the young reader. The study offers some general concerns based on the children's experience with the visual aspect of the books. Lastly, this work excludes all literature which is not in Kiswahili or English.

1. 8. Outline of The Study

The work is organised into seven chapters which explore the various aspects of the study. The second chapter examines the literature of the colonial period to show the different genres of literature, their impact on the child and their connections with oral literature on one hand and written literature, on the other . Responses of today's children indicate whether the

literature affects them with the same intensity and whether colonial literature has any connection with present day literature or indeed with the growth of Tanzanian children's literature as a whole. The post - colonial child has enjoyed some of the literature of the colonial period but the bulk of this literature is safely in the archives and out of reach of the children. Our emphasis is more on the literature that has survived three decades to reach the post colonial child of today. This body of literature is important in that apart from surviving to be read by today's child it has influenced many of the writers whose works are discussed in chapters three and four.

Chapter three recognises Tanzania as part of East Africa, sharing with Kenya and Uganda a historical, cultural, economic and linguistic heritage. In this respect we analyse books designed for the East African market and available to children in the entire region. The work then proceeds to engage in a detailed discussion of Kiswahili and English works specifically written for Tanzanian Children.

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Chapter four elicits children's responses to selected texts through questionnaires, interviews and discussions, evaluates them and analyses their implications. While chapter four deals with responses to stylistic aspects of the books studied, chapter five is concerned with children's responses to illustrations and offers basic guidelines on what illustrations appeal to Tanzanian children.

Chapter six "Salient Features and Trends of Tanzanian Children's Literature" gleans through the previous chapters to highlight some of the outstanding features that emerge from the literature especially with regard to the content and form of Tanzanian children's literature. The trends that have been established by the development and growth of Tanzanian children's literature are highlighted. Future trends as indicated by children's interests. Chapter seven summarises the findings of the research and its contribution to children's literature. This last chapter also projects future directions as indicated by children's interests and current trends.

1.9 Translation From Kiswahili to English

The bulk of the texts studied in this work are in Kiswahili language. We have endeavoured to make summaries so that the contexts of the works are understood by non-Kiswahili speakers. We have also translated quotations from these texts as well as the respondents' statements. However, we have left all the stories written by the children (in Chapter 4) untranslated but adequately summarised them.

NOTES

1. Taban Lo Liyong, "Can We Correct The Literary Barrenness in East Africa?" in The Last Word, (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1969) pp. 22-42.

2. Pio Zirimu and Austin Bukenya, "Oracy As A Skill And A Tool For African Development." (Makerere: FESTAC 77 Colloquium Papers). The entire discussion was relevant to our argument.

3. Isabelle Jan, On Children's Literature, (New York: Allen Lane, 1973) p. 5

4. O. Isayere, In E. D. Jones (ed.). African Literature Today No. 7: Focus on Criticism, (London: Heinemann, 1975) p. 50.

5. Nicholas Tucker, The Child And The Book: A Psychological and Literary Exploration, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,1981) p. 71.

6. Lilian Hollowell, (ed.). A Book of Children's Literature, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1966. First Pub. 1939) p. 35.

7. Marion Van Horne, Write The Vision, A Manual for Writers, (New York: The Committee of World Literacy, 1946) p. 49.

8. Ibid.

9. Arthur N. Applebee, The Child's Concept of Story, (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1989) p. 74.

10. Karl Shapiro, To Abolish Children And Other Essays, (Chicago: Quandrangle Books, 1968) p.232.

11. Florence Valentine Barry, A Century Of Children's Books, (New York: Singing Tree Press, 1968) p 5.

12. David Daiches', "Literary Evaluation" in Joseph Stelka's Problems of Literary Evaluation (Pennysylvania: Pennsylvania State University, 1969) p. 34.

13. Graham Hough, An Essay on Criticism, (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co. Ltd., 1966) p.26.

14. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Homecoming, (London: Heinemann, 1972) p. 26.

15. Ibid.

16. Aristotle, as referred to by Hazard Adams in The Interests of Criticism: An Introduction to Literary Theory, (Harcourt: Brace and World Inc., 1969) p. 6.

17. Rousseau, as quoted in R. Gross, The Teacher and The Taught,.(New York; Dell Publishing Co., 1963) 25.

18. Full reference of this and all primary texts referred to in this section 1.4 is in Appendix A: Primary Texts. Critical works cited in this section 1.4 have the publication dates but full references are in the biliography.

19. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Writers in Politics, (Nairobi: Heinemann, 1982) p. 3.

20. W. D. Kamera, "Fasihi Simulizi na Uandishi Katika Shule Za Msingi." (Mimeo, Dar es Salaam: University of DSM, Institute of Kiswahili Research, 1978).

21. P. O. Mlama, "The Mass Media and Culture Relevant to the Child." In Early Childhood And Education, a report on the International Year of the Child, (Dar es Salaam, 1979) p. 8.

22. Quoted in P.O. Mlama, ibid.

23. A. B. Odaga, Literature For Children And Young People in Kenya, (Nairobi, Kenya Literature Bureau, 1985) p. 2.

24. H. O. A. Mwanzi, "Children's Literature in Kenya". M. A. thesis, University of Nairobi, 198) p. 51

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE OF THE COLONIAL PERIOD

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter we shall consider the nature of children's literature during the colonial period including its impact on the child of today. Colonial literature was shared by Asian and African countries colonised by Europeans. Some of the books are still available in Tanzania and it is on this basis that they are explored in this chapter. Since the study is concerned with the development of children's literature in Tanzania, it is only logical to include an exploration of oral literature before considering colonial literature.

2.1 Children's Literature and Society

Scholars, especially those who support the moral theory, see literature as a mirror of the society that produces it. In other words it uses the medium of words to express society's experiences thereby offering ethical and intellectual guidance to the reader as well as satisfying his emotional and spiritual needs. One could even go further to assert that the nature of any national literature is determined by the society behind it and that it reflects the

character of the people and the era they live in. Ngugi sums up this relationship between literature and society most succinctly when he defines literature as:

> a product of men's intellectual and imaginative activity, embodied in words and images, the tensions, conflicts, contradictions at the heart of a community's being and process of becoming. It is a reflection at the aesthetic and imaginative plane, of a community's wrestling with its social environment to produce the basic means of life, food, clothing, shelter, and in the process creating and recreating itself in history![1]

W.H. Hudson also reiterates the importance of this relationship when he observes that:

> behind the literature of any period lie the combined forces -personal and impersonal which made the life of that period as a whole what it was...:[2]

The study of any national literature, therefore involves a widening of perspectives on all aspects of a national life and must be looked at from the point of view of various personal and group experiences and from various disciplines of knowledge. Such personal and group experiences are what add up to form a national literature since literature does not spring from or exist in a vacuum. A study of Tanzanian literature would therefore open doors to understanding the life and the culture of Tanzanians as well as their social, political and religious aspects. It follows too that Tanzanian children's literature would be a vital record of what is most relevant and most inspiring to the Tanzanian child. The national literature that informs the child is a vital record of what men and women have seen in life and want to impart to their young. It is a record of their experiences, good or bad, their thoughts and feelings, their wishes for the future, in other words, their national literary heritage.

More than a record of social reality, this body of literature is also a tool for socialisation. The children's writer, therefore, has the power and responsibility of creating a literature to which the Tanzanian child can subscribe.

The artist who tells a story, the writer who writes a poem or a novel is dealing with a fragile listener/reader who can easily be influenced and changed by what reaches him. What reaches him is often the adult choice reflecting their interests and the social attitudes to which they subscribe. Nevertheless since the work comes from the society the reader finds his bearing because he is able to identify the characters he is encountering. This is why it is so vital to have a corpus of national literature which children can read. American writers for children recognised this necessity when, as part of the Americanisation of their children's literature, they shelved English literature and cultivated a unique literature relevant to the circumstances and needs of American children. As the American scholar, Karl Shapiro, declares:

> English literature is a dead literature in America, a memory. The English language is practically a memory. Only a few professors in America pretend that English and its great literature are continuous with ours.[3]

It is from his experience of the colonial background of American literature that Shapiro proceeds to suggest what all former colonies should do for their literature:

> Those nations have a culture to go back to. They go back to where they began when history interrupted their life.[4]

Shapiro's argument does not imply a complete rejection of English or indeed other European literatures. What it does is to insist that the unique circumstances and situations of the American experience become the prior focus of the writer of children's literature. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o takes a similar position on children's literature in Africa when he reiterates the importance of the national literature as a base or foundation for other literatures and advocates that children be nourished on local literature. At the gathering of East African teachers who in 1974 discussed the problem of the literature informing the children, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o came up with several recommendations on national literature and in relation to other literatures of the world:

> Where we import literature from the outside, it should be relevant to our situation. It should be the literature that treats historical situations, historical struggles, similar to our own. It should be the kind of literature that rejects apprehensive social economic systems, that rejects all those forces that dwarf the creative development of man.[5]

An imported literature, Ngugi implies, can be a brick on top of national literature but it should never form part of the cornerstone or the foundation.

Even before Ngugi's statement, the Tanzanian Ministry of National Education had acknowledged the importance of a national literature which would be relevant to the children. After independence, the Ministry shifted its focus to national literature and some African literature. It acknowledged the value of literature as a discipline by formulating a

syllabus that exposed the Tanzanian child to the value of literature. As the syllabus clearly stated:

> Fasihi inamsaidia mtoto kutumia lugha,kupanua mawazo na kufurahia maandishi.[6]
>
> (Literature helps the child to use language properly, to expand his ideas and to enjoy different forms of writing.)[7]

This focus did not completely rule out foreign books although their importation was no longer a national priority. The fact that these foreign books were not used in the classroom meant that their impact on the children was not as critical as had been previously experienced. This change of emphasis was not received positively by all patrons of the child. As W. D. Kamera has observed:

> Baadhi ya watu wamesemea kuhusu kile walichodhani ni kushuka kwa kiwango cha elimu hiyo ikilinganishwa na ilivyokuwa kabla ya kupatikana uhuru na hasa kabla ya mwongozo wa Elimu ya kujitegemea kuathiri fikra za elimu hapa nchini. Siasa ya elimu ya kujitegemea imefaulu kutangua, kubadilisha na kubadili elimu iliyokusudiwa na serikali ya kikoloni. Imefaulu kumrudishia Mwafrika uhuru na fikra na kumfanya athamini utu na utamaduni wake..... Sauti za ulalamishi ambazo yapasa tuzisikilize na kuzitafakari ni za wale wanaozungumza kuhusu uwezo na ujuzi wa kusoma na kuandika katika shule za msingi.[8]
>
> (Some people have talked about what they consider to be the fall of standards of education as compared to the level before independence after ushering in education for self-reliance. Political Education for self-reliance has succeeded in changing the mentality which was imported by colonial rule and returned to the African freedom of thought and pride in his culture..... The laments, which

> have to be heeded, are from those who consider the ability (or inability) of primary school children to read and write.)

The loudest complainers may well be those who think that colonial education was superior to the present. They have gone as far as hunting out the old readers which they read as children and offered them to today's children. The bitterest complainers have even blamed the education system for the limited supply of literature and what they consider to be the mediocrity of contemporary children's books. While criticism of this nature can have good results, forcing the same Ministry of National Education to re-examine the situation and see where improvements need to be made, we support R. E. Porter when he says:

> It does not follow that because you one day found a handsomely bound set of the complete works of Dickens in your grandmother's library and read all of them as a child, that children of today will be equally satisfied. In fact, it is more than romanticizing, perhaps, that you did.[9]

Porter suggests that the children of today may respond differently to what their parents and grandparents so thoroughly enjoyed yesterday as children. The differences are not in their sensibilities but in the socialisation processes they have gone through. For literature to have an impact on them it must communicate to them in a language and in symbols that are familiar. It must be a literature existing and operating in the present, not in the past.

For this reason some literature that informed the child of yesterday may have to be discarded if it does not continue to nourish the child of today. On the other hand some

works have outlived the epochs for which they were created. A lot of oral literature falls in this category. Some of these have become classics, and as J. Rockwell says:

> ..... it may be contended, the masterpieces of literature have a universal validity for making at all times[10]

It is the society, the readers who assign value to a book and decide whether it is a classic or not. Tanzanian children keep selecting their literature, and it is from this literature that we can discover the historical relationship between oral, colonial and national written literatures, examine the thrust of present day literature and point a way to the future of children's literature in Tanzania.

2.2 Oral Literature

The Tanzanian child, whether rural or urban, is aware of and is informed by oral literature much more than he is informed by written literature. We could stretch the point further to suggest that this is true not only of Tanzania whose experience with the written word does not go beyond the colonial period, but indeed to all countries of the world. Schoffeleers and Roscoe recognise the place and value of oral literature and justify their task of recording it in Malawi.

> .... it can be argued that no literary student's formation is complete without considering this vast body of material, comprising the largest part of all literary work available to him.[11]

Our consideration, since the field is so vast, shall be of oral literature as a background and source for written literature for children. Oral literature has influenced both the nature of the written literature and the response to it. It not only accommodates written literature but also complements it in nurturing the child and helping him to grow in awareness of what is happening in his society.

2.3 Colonial Literature In Tanzania

The colonial period ushered in a shift from oral to written literature which is characterised, at a more general level, by political, social, cultural conflicts. Some of these conflicts are depicted in both oral and written literature. It is a period that has inspired many criticisms, initiated debates on many subjects and caused enemities between warring ideological camps. On this significant period of the history of Africa Eddah Gachukia comments:

> Looking back over the last one hundred years or so, one can hardly see any other single phenomenon which has had so much impact on the life of the African.[12]

The impact was on the African, his literature and indeed his entire life for the coloniser attacked the culture of the colonised people and imposed a foreign culture. Ngugi sums up this colonisation process in the following words:

> the attack was to annihilate a people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities, and ultimately in themselves. It makes

> them see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement and it makes them want to distance themselves from that wasteland.[13]

The method was through systematic mental conditioning in which the African was made to believe the myth that his system of education and, by extension, his literature, could not match those of the coloniser. Not only did the African accept what he was told but sometimes he went ahead to create new myths to justify the superiority that the white man assumed. A good example is the tale from the Kikuyu of Kenya, about the rain that fell one day and "created" the three different races, white, brown and black:

> Apparently all people were black. One day there was very heavy rain. Those who were caught up in the rain at midday became white because the rain was very heavy at that time. In the evening more people were caught up in the rain and because the rain was light they became brown. Those who remained black are those who did not defy nature by walking out in the rain. They retained the original colour.[14]

A more popular version says that the black man got caught up in the night rain because he was late going home while another version suggests that people were 'colourless' before this colour-decisive rain: the white man was rained on at midday, the brown man at dusk and the black man at night.

Perhaps such a story would not suggest so much if it had not been for statements made by Africans to suggest that anything "Kizungu" or European is of good quality while anything "Kienyeji", native or local, is of poor quality. The result of colonisation was that

Africans gradually lost touch with the strengths of their culture, and this gave the coloniser a stronger foothold. The majority of Europeans were ignorant of the depth of the literature, albeit in oral form, that had informed the African from time immemorial. When the Europeans encountered African literature they dismissed its value as literature and used it only to enlighten themselves on the culture of the colonised. The few who came to some acquaintance with African literature were quick to compare it with European literature and equally quick to dismiss it as inferior. A good example is T.C. Hodgkin who puts the African and his creativity under examination and comes to this conclusion:

> Yes we agree that Africans are not eternal children. We know there is no reason to suppose that pigmentation has anything to do with intelligence - we recognise that, given adequate opportunities, Africans are likely to produce as many capable doctors, engineers, historians, physicists as any branch of humanity - indeed, they have already begun to produce them. Yet the fact remains that Africans have not so far bred a Shakespeare, a Dante, or an Aristotle. They have never built a Parthenon or a Chartres. Surely therefore, there is some justification for regarding Africans as - in a sense on probation - until they have shown that they can match our standards of achievement.[15]

Having negated the creativity of the African, Hodgkin proceeds to perpetuate the myth of Africa as:

> a region that is inert, brutal, uncivilised - in a word, savage.[16]

In a similar vein August Seidel's foreword to a collection of African oral literature expresses the same reservations about the African's humanity and creativity. It must have pained him to have to acknowledge that the African is human. In his foreword, the

underlying racial overtones are obvious, and his own sense of the white man's superiority clear:

> A wild African! A black beast! Fancy him actually thinking and feeling, his imagination proving creative! More than that even fancy him having a sense of appreciation of poetic form, of rhyme! It sounds quite incredible, yet it is true. Missionaries should have the credit of, first outlining a correct picture of Negroes' natural talents. Philologists, with a more accurate knowledge of native languages, were able to amend this outline. And everyone was surprised to think that the Negro thinks and feels as we ourselves think and feel.[17]

Even the majority of the Europeans could not accord such "generous" compliments as Seidel attributes to African creativity. In their view the African had no civilisation, no culture and in the words of one of the leading colonialists:

> There is only one civilisation and one culture to which we are fitted to lead the peoples of these countries - our own.[18]

The methods used to "civilise" the Africans were sometimes irritating. For example, Mugo Wa Gatheru has said that colonial instructions regarding dances and social activities were often patronising and belittling, making him feel that:

> These instructions made me feel that the Africans were being regarded as small children.[19]

The European justified colonialism by showing how much the African needed the "civilising mission". In this mission he gave the African a package including a language and a literature. In primary schools, for example, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and his agemates found that the kind of literature they had to grow on had been imported from Europe. Ngugi recalls that he

> now read simplified Dickens and Stevenson alongside Rider Haggard. Jim Hawkins, Oliver Twist, Tom Brown - not Hare and Lion - were now my daily companions in the world of imagination.[20]

The psychological effect this literature had on the African child was devastating. He now looked down upon the literature that had hitherto nurtured his sensibilities as he accepted the new heroes he was offered to emulate. The African child tried to understand these distant, mysterious heroes some of whom lived in the land of white snow.

The African child was thus transported to settings he could only experience with his imagination. The unfamiliar features, characters and actions sometimes made him feel an outsider rather than a participant in the adventure. In his own eyes he was a miniature against the heroes he encountered and he learnt to feel ashamed of himself, his folklore and his entire culture.

Within the context of the colonial times some of the literature was used incorrectly to inculcate the wrong notions. The idea of reading the literature of a distant world,

however, would not in itself have created a sense of inferiority and shame about the African's own culture had it not been for the whole colonial ethos within which the African was educated. The distancing and subjugation of the African was one part of the colonial principle while the exaltation of Europe and its literature was the other part. Civilisation western style was the key word during this period.

In school the children learnt 'ustaarabu', civilisation. With time they were ahead of their elders and parents in this regard. No longer were elders the wise but the children now taught them the 'new knowledge' in health and hygiene, language and manners. It was accepted that the educated were more advantaged with their newly acquired wisdom. In Arrow of God, Ezeulu rationalises his own action of sending his son to join the church. He says to Oduche his son:

> The world is changing,' he told him. 'I do not like it. But I am like the bird Eneke-nti-oba. When his friends asked him why he was always on wing he replied: Men of today have learnt to shoot without missing and so I have learnt to fly without perching. I want one of my sons to join these people and be my eye there. If there is nothing in it he will come back. But if there is something there you will bring home my share. The world is like a mask dancing. If you want to see it well you do not stand in one place. My spirit tells me that those who do not befriend the white man today will be saying, had we known, tomorrow.'[21]

This is a situation whose ambivalence has been explored over and over again in contemporary African adult literature. In the above quotation Ezeulu thinks that he can eat his cake and have it, unaware of the paradoxes and pitfalls that follow. Ngugi's character,

Chege, in The River Between uses the same argument to rationalise his decision to send his son to school. As a prophet he saw his son saving the people from the white man only after going through the white man's education:

> "Arise, Heed the prophecy. Go to the mission place. Learn all the wisdom and all the secrets of the white man. But do not follow his vices. Be true to your people and the ancient rites."[22]

It appears, therefore, that Ezeulu and Chege, knew only in part what they were doing when sending their children to school. They were uncertain of the future but they took no chances. Taban Lo Liyong suggests that even the whiteman did not have the exact idea what "The final product of the chaotic transformation through school would look like."[23] While Taban Lo Liyong's statement is debatable, we find Nyerere's suggestion more tenable. He has said that colonial education in Tanzania

> was not designed to prepare young people for the service of their own country; instead it was motivated by a desire to inculcate the values of the colonial society and to train individuals for the service of the colonial state.[24]

It was therefore:

> not transmitting the values and knowledge of Tanzanian society from one generation to the next; it was a deliberate attempt to change those values and to replace traditional knowledge by the knowledge from a different society.[25]

Nyerere's view is that the education brought to his country by the coloniser was not the most suitable for his people in Tanzania. As a head of state, he had an opportunity to try his ideas on education in Tanzania and to initiate programmes within whose framework a more meaningful and relevant literature could be created for children.

Although we have argued that some of the western literature was alienating and sometimes destructive to the children's sensibilities, it is also true to say that some of the children's literature was well written and had a power to fire the imagination and even delight the colonial child. Some of these books are available today and continue to be a source of delight to children.

The background of colonial literature is nevertheless a necessary beginning to an appraisal of children's literature in Tanzania especially since some of it has survived to be read by today's child. This chapter will explore the reasons for the staying power of these books and their capacity to appeal to generations of children. Also since most of today's writers for children in Tanzania read and were influenced by western children's literature, it is logical to give it space in a thesis that traces growth and development in Tanzanian children's literature.

2.3.0 Categories of Colonial Literature in Tanzania

This literature is classified roughly into the following categories for ease of discussion:

- Education and Health
- Travelogues with Adventures
- Fantasy
- Adventure
- European Traditional Tales
- Religious Stories
- Poetry
- Encounter with Asian Literature
- African Literature

2.3.1 Educational Literature

Educational fictional documentaries were part of the colonial literature that was used in the classrooms deliberately to teach Africans matters pertaining to health and hygiene. This body of children's literature is of interest to us because it still exists today in schools, public libraries and bookshops. Among the books that are available and which enjoyed

wide readership in East Africa during the colonial days were Doctor Kalulu and Talking Woman whose Kiswahili titles, Tabibu Kalulu and Bibi Msemi respectively, continue to inform the Tanzanian child of today.

Capitalising on but not expanding the already known stereotype of the hare as a trickster, Wingate in Tabibu Kalulu provides another dimension that succeeds in presenting this character as clever and informed without the malice, revenge and trickery of the traditional hare. Hyena on the other hand is more stereotypical except on one occasion when he surprises the reader by voicing his doubts about the hare:

> "Lakini Kalulu hafanyi mambo ili awapendeze watu, hasa. Katika maisha yangu yote nimesikia visa vya ujanja wako, nawe sikuzote unakuwa mshindi, na mwingine ndiye anayeshindwa." (p.2)
>
> ("But Kalulu does not do things necessarily to please people. Throughout my life I have heard stories about your trickery and how you win all the time while another person is defeated.")

Wingate's reference to the characterisation of the hare in traditional tales was important to the colonial reader who was well versed with his folklore which he used as a reference point.

The mission of the principal character in Tabibu Kalulu is to inform other animals of the dangers of having an unhygienic environment. Kalulu is the helpful member of the society who is saddened by the misfortunes of others unlike the hare in traditional stories. Kalulu is always ready to provide solutions to the problems he sees others face including

those that do not affect him directly. He is not necessarily of a different race but a clever individual among the leopards, the elephants, the buffaloes, the wilderbeests and his perpetual dupe, the hyena. In these stories, hyena is the only one who maintains the stereotype that traditional tales have given him.

The success of this book was achieved through careful consideration of the target reader. It was designed for the young literates of the colonial period and capitalised on the use of animal characters with which the young literates were familiar. An interesting reversal of roles emerged during this period: the young readers were expected to pass on the knowledge to their parents and elders. Seen in this context, Tabibu Kalulu could be viewed as the white man among the Africans, struggling to teach them better and healthier ways of life. The people who read it as children (now adults) when it first came out say that they always associated the hare with the white man whereas children reading the book today in Tanzania only see the human effort to civilise real animals .It is clear that the colonial child received a message that is different from what the book conveys to the child of today. One reader said:

"It would be fun to see animals living like people." (Age 7).

Another child said of the stories:

"Zinatukumbusha tu, wala hazizungumzii wanyama. Ukweli ni kwamba wanyama hawawezi kuishi kama wanadamu." (Age 14).

(They just remind us, they don't talk about animals. The truth is that animals cannot live like human beings.)

From the comments of the readers it is evident that the use of animal characters has greatly enhanced the lasting appeal of the book. The child reader recognises the animal characters as types, passing on the messages about human life. The fourteen year old feels the book is teaching him how to maintain clean habits. The story element also sustains the didactic purpose so that the lessons are learnt and remembered effortlessly. Even the colonial child in spite of feeling inferior, must have appreciated the characterisation and the story line for him to remember the book more than thirty years later.

Children reading the stories today do not associate the white man with Dr. Kalulu at all. To them he is a mere character used to impart knowledge. The readers of the colonial period interpreted the stories differently. To them the stories emphasized the inferiority of the Africans and how much they had to learn from the knowledgeable European. They recognised themselves as being deficient in terms of health, hygiene and aesthetics.

Written in the same vein is Talking Woman in which stories are told by a lady called Asala, otherwise nicknamed 'Talking Woman' who employs animal characters and gives them human attributes. She allows the reader to see situations from the viewpoint of insects which are dangerous to man but which are now moaning against the cleanliness wave that has overtaken mankind and put the insects in danger. The louse is no longer a danger to the

humans because she is killed as soon as she is found; cockroaches are only safe in the residence of Nyangoni, the only woman who does not keep her house clean.

This portrayal of the battle between humans and insects that are parasitic to man is dramatically presented using an appropriate narrative method. A good example is the story in which a little monkey refuses to drink water which has not been boiled. The seriousness with which cleanliness is taken is evidenced by the result of the little monkey's refusal to drink unboiled water: he dies of thirst to the consternation of his mother who cannot understand this foolishness that has come over her son. Interpreted in a different way the small monkey can be said to represent the young literates of the colonial period who imbibed the European notions faster than the older members of the community.

The human race's endeavour to exterminate its enemies does not go unnoticed. The enemies all meet to discuss their plight only to discover that they are in real danger because human beings are making efforts to maintain cleanliness and are merciless in their killing of lice, fleas, jiggers, rats, cockroaches, flies and mosquitoes with fire, hot water and starvation.

These fictional documentaries succeed in presenting their messages because they employ the narrative method familiar to the readers and capitalise on familiar characterisations. Their lasting value is in their reminding readers of today that good health and hygiene are always important.

2.3.2 Travelogues and Adventure in the Colonies

Travelogues were mostly the European adventure stories about travels in the colonies. Some, for example King Solomon's Mines, were written for European readers while others like the Barker stories were designed for the local readers

King Solomon's Mines ranks among the earliest and most widely read books written in the colonial period. It is set in the South Africa of the 19th Century. First published in 1885 the book has been abridged and simplified for the purpose of readers of all levels. The unabridged text states clearly for whom the book is written:

> This faithful but unpretending record of remarkable adventure is hereby respectively dedicated to the narrator ALLAN QUATERMAIN to all the big and little boys who read it. (Puffin, Dedication.)[26]

Young boys and adult men in Europe read it as did the women and girls. They had heard stories of the strange things that happened in the colonies and were not at all surprised to encounter the same adventures in King Solomon's Mines. Although Rider Haggard uses travel adventures in King Solomon's Mines, he does more than give his own and other people's travel memoirs. The quest motif helps to link these adventures into a sustained and interesting story that is both an adventure and fantasy. Through a powerful style the author appeals to many in his original target group and succeeding generations of children including Tanzanians.

One of the ways through which Haggard appeals to the reader is the use of descriptions that point to specific places the reader can visualise with his mind's eye. For example the opening of Solomon's treasure room is described in the following vivid terms:

> She gave me the lamp, and went and leaned against the side of the cave. At first I could only see the solid wall. But when I raised the lamp, we saw that a mass of stone was rising slowly from the floor, and dispearing into the roof above. The opening was a doorway about three hundred centimetres high, and not less than a hundred and fifty centimetres thick (Collins, p.75)

The details of the description of the rock are important here because this opening is later focused on when Gagool tries to disappear and is crushed by it. The white captives in the treasure room cannot make this rock budge to free themselves. Other descriptions help to create appropriate atmosphere and mood. The dying Foulata's words are not only touching bu they also hint on the predicament of the three white men:

> She turned her eyes to me. "Master, be my tongue for a moment." I promised that I would translate her words to Good. "Say to him that I love him," she said. "Since I saw him, there has been a happy bird in my breast.
>
> "Now I cannot lift my hand, and my brain goes cold. But I do not feel as if my heart is dying. It is so full of love that I could live ten thousand years, and still be young.
>
> "If I live again, perhaps I shall see him in the stars - tell him that. Say that I....." (Collins, p. 78)

Sometimes the reader is plunged into moments of fear through the exposure to unusual places. Moods vary from joy and hope to sadness and even depression all achieved through effective descriptions.

Haggard is also very good at describing action. King Solomon's Mines takes the reader for an adventure that is full of the kind of action that young readers enjoy. The author never reminiscenes or even reflects. All action and thoughts are experienced through the characters. The battle for example, is so involving that the reader feels present as part of the action and is manipulated into taking the side of the white men as they fight against King Twala.

Another devise which the author uses to appeal to his reader is characterisation which he uses to skilfully reach his target audience.Yet this skill seems to be employed mostly in a horrific and negative presentation of the African.

In King Solomon's Mines the African is presented as barbaric. King Twala, for example, orders his soldiers to butcher his own people for very trivial mistakes, an action that portrays him as inhuman and blood thirsty. His action is later on juxtaposed with the white man's reaction when asked to kill one of the Kukuanas with the gun just to prove that guns are lethal. The white man protests against such unwarranted death. For example:

> 'Have they not told thee how we strike with death from afar?' I went on.

'They have told me, but I believe them not. Let me see you kill. Kill a man among those who stand yonder - and he pointed to the opposite side of the Kraal - and I will believe.'

'Nay,' I answered, 'we shed no blood of man except in just punishment but if thou wilt see, bid thy servants drive in an ox through the Kraal gates, and before he has run twenty paces I will strike him dead.'

'Nay,' laughed the king, 'kill me a man, and I will believe.' (Puffin, p.119).

While we agree that some African despots were blood thirsty as other tyrants all over the world, we nevertheless witness the juxtaposition of good and evil in King Solomon's Mines. In Rider Haggard's view blood thirsty Twala could only have been succeeded by the mercilessly inhuman Scragga. The African people are suffering until Rider Haggard brings in the white men to save the Africans and to usher in just rule and peace. The white men play the vital role in establishing this peace through warfare even after their declaring, "we are strangers, and come in peace." (Collins, p.33)

In this and other travelogues, the gun is a big marvel, a magic object that kills from a distance and one that instils fear and awe in the hearts of the Africans. In the case of King Solomon's Mines the gun, the half shaved face of Good, his eye-glass, his movable teeth and his bare legs make him look like a god before the Africans.

The Africans believe that the three white men are gods for in Haggard's view Africans are so stupid that they would not know when a person is half-way through his shaving; it is

shaving; it is assumed that they never shaved; they would not imagine that white men would have white legs.

Haggard presents the character Good in such a way that he does indeed look peculiar but he does not succeed in elevating him to supernatural stature and fails to convince the reader that the African does not know what an eclipse is. The only person who remains skeptical about the credibility of the white man is Gagool the witch, and Haggard is careful to discredit her from her looks right through to the final action before the end of her scary life when she dies, defeated by the white man. Other Kukuanas view the white people as gods. Foulata, for example, as she is about to be killed for being the most beautiful girl, pleads:

> "Oh white father from the stars," she cried, "help me. Let me come into the shadow of your strength and be saved. Oh keep me from these cruel men, and the mercies of Gagool" (Collins p.55).

What is most surprising is the strength of the white men in King Solomon's Mines. Before the story begins two white men had died: Jose Da Silvesta in 1590 and his descendant relative Jose Silvestra. Their deaths were caused by hunger, thirst and hard travel rather than fights with Africans. After the story opens Africans are allowed by the author to die but not the white people: Khiva the Zulu dies defending Good from the elephant; Ventogel dies of cold: the Twala-Scragga-Gagool triumvirate kill only their subjects. It is unbelievable that Henry Curtis turns out to be so miraculously good at using

the battle axe that he kills the warrior-king, Twala. What is clear from the narrative is that the white man does not place himself on an equal footing with the African. The whites are simply superior as depicted by the attitude of Haggard's character:

> I asked him sharply what he meant by addressing his master in that familiar way. It is very well for natives to have a name for one among themselves, but it is not decent that they should call one by their heathenish appellations to one's face (Puffin, p.57)

Ignosi already knows this superiority having lived in the cities and seen the behaviour of the white man. He tells the three white men to their faces,

> "the white man loves not to live on the level of the black." (Puffin, p.245).

Henry Curtis' brother, George, who has been lame and completely dependent on his servant, Jim, for his life now views the two years they have lived together as years of domination and dependence or 'like a second Robinson Crusoe and his man Friday.' (Puffin p.313). The insinuation as to who is superior is still there in spite of who has been dependent on who. Africans in King Solomon's Mines respond to this superiority the way the white men would like them to. The only exception is Ignosi who understands the nature of the white man. He, however, acknowledges the help that his white friends have given him at the point when he is saying farewell to the white men who have helped him regain his kingdom. Even as he is grateful, his generosity cannot stretch beyond the three white men

who have assisted him and his people. Although Curtis, Good and Quartermain are always welcome, Igonsi declares:

> "I will see no traders with their guns and run. My people shall fight with the spear, and drink water, like their forefathers before them. I will have no praying-men to put fear into men's hearts, to stir them up against the king, and make a path for the white men, who follow to run on." (Puffin p.253)

Having lived in cities Ignosi has seen the white people and knows their ways. It is unlikely that his "friends", as they claim to be, will be different from other white people he ha seen.

Foulata's attitude is that of servitude to the white men who have saved her life. She views herself as being a level lower than the white men and sees no meeting point between th black and white. Rider Haggard gives her these words to say:

> " Say to my lord, Bougwan, that - I love him, and that I am glad to die because I know that he cannot clumber his life with such as me, for the sun cannot mate with darkness nor the white with the black." (Puffin pp 227-228)

The imagery that Haggard uses here completes the picture he has been painting all along of the white man as good and the black man as evil. Now by using the dualistic image of light and darkness, he is going further than dealing with moral issues. One could argue th Haggard is revealing his own racialist beliefs. The African is both evil and lacking

in creativity. Part of Haggard's racialist attitude is conceiving the story in such a way that the noble part of African's history is attributed to outsiders. The gold coin in the treasure chambe has Hebrew characters; the chain jackets' origin is not known although they have been passed on from one generation of the royalty to the other. Rider Haggard vaguely suggests that another race is responsible for having made them although now they belong to the royal family Even the giant diamond that has been the royal insignia for the last three hundred years was actually brought out of the treasure chamber by Jose da Silvestra. It is significant that in the narrative the insignia is given to Ignosi by Henry Curtis. The noble part of African history is linked with people from other lands including Palestine, Phoenicia and Britain. Wherever white people visit and occupy, names have to change: Da Silvestra, for example, named two mountains Sheba's Breasts but did not consider the local names for them and the legends surrounding them to have been of any significance, and the narrative of the story is manipulated in such a way that the reader does not always recognise this sin of omission.

It has been stated before that the white man saw the African not only as primitive but also as subhuman. The descriptions we get in King Solomon's Mines of the Africans and their actions illustrate this point. Ventvogel is described as follows:

> Meanwhile Ventvogel was lifting his snub nose, and sniffing the hot air for all the world like an old impala ram who scents danger. Presently he spoke again. 'I smell water' he said. (Puffin. p.73)

It turns out that water is indeed found but Ventvogel's nose remains in the mind of the reader. In another description, Twala is not only presented as an evil person but also a and monstrous:

> He had the most unpleasant face I had ever seen. His lips were thick, the nose was flat, and he had only one shining black eye - the other was lacking. His whole expression was one of great cruelty. (Collins, p. 43).

The earlier version (Puffin) does not mince words but goes straight to reinforce stereotypes that the white people have for the black man. Having described Twala as ' far, Haggard proceeds to describe 'the most entirely repulsive countenance' his white characters had ever seen, 'The lips were as thick as a Negro's, the nose was flat ' (Puffi 115). The ugliness is coupled with the brutality of this feared tyrant.

The most repulsive creature is Gagool, a woman who has defied time and has more than three hundred years. Perhaps the description of her appearance is meant to her age for she is:

> something like a dried-up monkey, wearing an animal skin. The monkey ran into the shade of the hut, and sat on the ground (Collins pp. 41-42).

The full description of Gagool is that of an ogre rather than an old African wom

> I observed the wizened monkey-like figure creeping up from the shadow of the hut. It crept on all fours, but when it reached the place where the king sat, it rose upon its feet, and thowing ith furry

> covering off its face, revealed a most extraordinaryy and weird countenance. It was (apparently) that of a woman of great age, so shrunken that it was no larger than that of a year-old child, and was made up of a collection of deep yellow wrinkles. Set in the wrinkles was a sunken slit, that represented the mouth beneath which the chin curved outwards to a point. There was no nose to speak of, indeed, the whole countenance might have been taken for that of a sun-dried corpse had it not been for a pair of large black eyes, still full of fire and intelligence, which gleamed and played under the snow-white eyebrows, and the projecting parchment-coloured skull, like jewels in a charnel-house. As for the skull itself, it was perfectly bare, and yellow in hue, while its wrinkled scalp moved and contracted like the hood of a cobra..... and then suddenly projected a skinny claw armed with nails nearly an inch long. (Puffin, p.121)

Collins and Ladybird make up for this lengthy description with illustrations. In Puffin, more metaphors are used. For example, she is an "old bundle" (Puffin p. 203) 'heap of rags' (Puffin p.204) and vulture-headed old creature'. (Puffin p.134). Despite her frail size, everybody, including the white men fears her paradoxical inner strength. She has the power to read the minds of people including strangers. Her memory is clear even when she has to recall what happened three hundred years ago and her long experience has taught her not to trust strangers. Gagool is the one person who is apprehensive about showing hospitality to the white men. She is for instance not afraid of their ability to put out the light of the moon for she has seen many eclipses before. Instead her suspicion of the white men develops into prophesy:

> Ye know not, but I know. It was a white people who were before ye (Kukuanas) are, who shall be when ye are not, who shall eat ye up, and destroy ye. Yea! Yea! Yea! (Puffin p,122).

Gagool is the leader of a coven of witches who look terrible and frightening:

> As they drew near we saw that they were those of women, most of them aged, for their white hair, ornamented with small bladders taken from fish, streamed out behind them. Their faces were painted in stripes of white and yellow; down their backs hung snake-skins, and round their waists rattled circlets of human bones, while each held in her shrivelled hand a small forked wand. In all there were ten of them. (Puffin, p.132).

In these descriptions the author evokes fear for Gagool and her coven of witches. Thus Haggard was able to confirm to the target readers in Europe some of the notions and myths they had about Africa.

The young African readers are also affected by the vivid descriptions. Some were reminded of other witches they had read about in books such as Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs and Sleeping Beauty. Asked whether Gagool reminded them of any African that she had seen, one reader ejaculated:

> "No, never! She is so ugly I can't remember anybody like her."

Other readers who tended to look at the picture before reading the book thought that Gagool is a man. One reader kept referring to Gagool as 'he' even after finishing the book. Some readers have said of her, "he looks like the devil!"

Thus the image cast by Gagool in Rider Haggard's powerful descriptions effectively achieve the effect of instilling fear in the readers to the extent that they remember this character long after reading the book. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o has noted that the description of Gagool haunted Graham Greene all his life.[27] Micere Mugo also reminiscenes her response to Gagool's characterisation when she read King Solomon's Mines as a child:

> Rider Haggard has a go at another western- imagined aspect of the African image, and perhaps the most popular on the whole: that of the African as a dealer in sorcery, witchcraft and treachery. I can never forget King Solomon's Mines nor the weird portrait of Gagool which for a long time epitomized in my childish mind the figure of an African woman in old age. It is only recently that I have got over my dread and fear of old black women.[28]

It is interesting that most of the Tanzanian children who read King Solomon's Mines during this investigation point out that the book does not do what it says in the dedication, that is, present a "faithful but unpretending record." Here are some of the revealing responses of the young readers:

> *Question*: How do you find the people in the book?
>
> *Response*:"The Kukuanas are wicked and cruel in the book. I don't think this is true." (Age 12)

> *Response*:"Whites cheated the Zulus (sic meaning the Kukuanas) too much. If it was not a story they would not have believed all those things." (Age 12).

Notwithstanding the mispresentation of the African characters most young readers found the story captivating:

Response: The writer has exaggerated a lot in the descriptions. I also find the story hard to keep down. (Age 13).

In answer to whether the readers found in the book anything which was hard to believe, most respondents talked about Gagool. For instance, one respondent said of her:

> I don't think people would have stayed with wicked Gagool for all those years. They would have killed him (sic) because after all he (sic) was not God. (Age 11).

In spite of the exaggeration and sometimes because of it, most readers enjoyed the story of King Solomon's Mines. The spirit of adventure that the characters in King Solomon's Mines have endear the book to readers. J.R. Townsend, a scholar of children's literature has this to say about the book:

> King Solomon's Mines is a vivid and powerful story. The secrets of its success I think, are first the idea of the quest, secondly the lost country, another theme that always stirs the imagination, thirdly, the heroic crossing of desert and mountain barriers of the old witch Gagool, a living embodiment of evil.... King Solomon's Mines is a triumph for the highly original, exotic setting.... the sense of rich unknown and mysterious possibilities.[29]

Over and above the quest motif and the spirit of adventure, the work also succeeds in its purpose of showing the European readers something exotic from Africa. It is powerful because Haggard has done his best to convince the reader but devastating because it does not offer the African child reader a healthy picture of the African.

The Kiswahili translation has suprisingly not been well circulated in Tanzania. Responses to the translation correspond with those of the original English version. It is likel that one reason why the translation is not so captivating is because of illustrations. Our view that King Solomon's Mines surpasses other travelogues that were written on Africa which ar being read by the Tanzanian child because it has a strong story well told.

Whereas Haggard may be viewed as biased against Africans, R. De la Barker declare his friendship and close association with Africans of the Rufiji area of Tanzania. The latter t his stories purposely to entertain his African friends unlike Haggard who wrote stories for th European readership. Haggard's success as an imaginative writer contrasts with Barker's les successful narratives in the Kiswahili language.

Barker, porpularly known as "Mzee Rufiji", wrote five books in which he narrated hi experiences and those of his close associates. Barker claims that they are written, as he state in each of them:

> Kwa kutaka kuwafurahisha vijana. Vijana wa kimji na wa mashambani hamkosi mtakipenda sana kitabu hiki (preface)
>
> (to delight young readers, you young people from the urban and rural areas will no doubt like this book)

Barker is in fact anticipating that the reader will love the books though he hopes:

> Hakuna atakayeanguka kutoka juu ya pikipiki kama alivyoanguka Mzungu mmoja rafiki yangu aliyezikumbuka hadithi zangu nilizomhadithia akiendesha pikipiki na kucheka akaanguka. (preface).
>
> (No one will fall from a motorbike like one European friend of mine who remembered the stories I had told him. He was still riding on his bike when he remembered and laughed until he fell.)

Barker's books were first published in 1962 and last reprinted in 1963 in post-colonial Tanganyika. As a writer for children Barker considers himself different from his fellow Europeans of the time. He records:

> "Huku takanywa nao chai bila ubaguzi, kwa sababu mimi nilikuwa Mzungu wakati mtengano kati ya Waafrika na Wazungu ulikuwa ni lazima -nilikuwa peke yangu kati ya maelfu ya Warufiji walionifanya ni mwenzao kabisa." (Book 5 pp. 11-12)
>
> (Although Africans and Europeans did not interact socially in those days, Mzee Rufiji turned out to be different. He drank tea with them and socialised with them and became one with the Warufiji people who accepted him as one of them.)

Barker was a hunter and his interest was mainly in tusks, horns and butter. His daily activities provided him with material for his books and thus his stories or incidents centre around the forests of Rufiji area, and on killings of and escapades from the wild animals. He is a well known hunter and a good story-teller as one can judge from the nickname, Jitu Masoga,which he has received from those around him.

As a story writer Jitu Masoga, or "the genii of stories", fails to carry the young readers' interest right through. A major weakness of the author is in his plotting where he packs in too many incidents in one short story. Sometimes even the incidents are not connected by a central theme or motif. A good example is the story "Chuoni Kwa Mwalimu Rashid" which several children claimed was their favourite from the five books. After reading the first paragraph, some children expected a story about the monkeys and imagined them going to attack the teacher. The readers get disappointed to read a story whose basic structure in terms of incidents is as follows:-

Paragraph 1	-Monkeys and the woman
Paragraph 2	-The jar of water
Paragraph 3	-Teacher's house
Paragraph 4	-The teacher and his students
Paragraph 5	-More about the teacher
Paragraph 6 & 7	-Teacher gives them food
Paragraph 7	-About Kasimu

Thus the story lacks cohesion or central focus and the only thing that holds the interest of the child is the illustration. It is a good example of plotless incidents that do not hold together. Barker treats all his stories in the same manner, including another of the children's selection of the better stories. In "Ndovu Mwenye Ukorofi" (The Quarrelsome Elephant) the reader is treated to the following incidents:

Paragraph 1	-Elephants have killed in the past
Paragraph 2	-The women talk about elephants
Paragraph 3 & 4	-Baba Korogea was killed by an elephant
Paragraph 5	- Author and Bwana Shauri inspect the canoes
Paragraph 6	- The safari
Paragraph 7	- Minor accident of the canoes
Paragraph 8	- The happiness of the people in the canoe
Paragraph 9	- They row near the mouth of a river

The poor plotting is not compensated by a good narrative style. Barker fails in his appeal to children because he tells them what happened instead of letting them feel and experience what happened. None of his characters is presented in such a way as to appeal to the reader.

The children who were interviewed said they did not find the "stories" interesting. This is not surprising because the narratives can hardly be described as stories. At best they pass for narratives of incidents that lack logical development from beginning to end.

Thus although the books were meant for young Tanzanians, the five travelogues do not succeed in communicating with and entertaining children. It is no wonder that these books have not suffered wear and tear in the libraries. They are simply quiet monuments of the travels of 'Mzee Rufiji' the famous Jitu Masoga who probably was a good oral narrator.

Both the tavelogues and adventure stories serve to portray the exciting adventures white people had in Africa. The writers succeed when they are able to convey the excitement and wonder that were replete in a new environment. Their lasting effect lies in their ability to appeal to today's child.

2.3.3 Fantasy

As with adventure stories and travelogues, European fantasies also found their way into schools as part of the literature for children of colonial Tanzania. Fantasy was included in chapter one in our broad definition of fairy tales. In this section we shall explore Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland as an illustration of a literary fairy tale or fantasy.

Among English children Alice in Wonderland is a household title, so it is no wonder that it found its way to the colonies. We have chosen Alice in Wonderland for our discussion because of its impact in Tanzania and especially f or four reasons:

a) it was one of the children's books which was translated into Kiswahili for East African use.

b) it is still found in its Kiswahili translation in Tanzanian bookshops, schools and libraries.

c) it is one of the least loved foreign classics in Tanzania.

Alice in Wonderland and its sequel Through The Looking Glass were written by the Oxford University don, Reverend Lutwidge Dogson who was unable to lecture in his subject, mathematics, because of his stammering. The shy lecturer was quite at home with story-telling where he employed his intellectual discipline of mathematics and logic to create a strange world as setting for his stories.[30] His niece, Alice Liddel, not only accompanied this fun-loving fantasy writer on boat rides but also listened as he read the story to her. One assumes that the writer was sensitive to the responses and the reactions of his listeners and that these responses contributed to the widely acknowledged greatness of the books, especially Alice in Wonderland. It can be safely theorised too that Lewis Carroll dealt with a subject that was of Alice Liddle's interest, to be lost in fun and adventures.

In Alice in Wonderland, Dogson, using the pseudonym Lewis Carroll, has created th kind of setting, characters, incident and timing that demand that the reader suspends disbelie and enter the "never-never-land" of fantasy. He has re-organised the known world and set logic, order, authority and accepted standards of behaviour so that they are out of the ordinary Even the familiar landscape is given a fantastic perspective. It is not that one forgets the tru world as one reads Alice in Wonderland, but that one remembers it all the time and juxtapose it with Wonderland. The real world is there as at the start, before Alice falls asleep. I becomes a springboard from which Alice, now asleep, can disappear into

wonderland. When she is in Wonderland, Alice recourses to the real world for reference and interpretation of her strange experiences. Not only does Wonderland contrast with the real world but it also paradoxically comments on the real world and brings it more clearly into focus. For example, through the grotesque Cheshire Cat the reader is reminded that rats can never be safe in the presence of cats. Every time Alice sees this strange cat, she is homesick and longs to see and talk to her own cat at home. She finds wonderland creatures especially frustrating as they will not stop for a moment to hear about her cat.

Alice Liddle as she read Alice in Wonderland for the first time must have been quite happy to go through the Wonderland of Carroll's creation as evidenced by the book's sequel, Through The Looking Glass. Like generations of children after her, Alice Liddell was persuaded to abandon the familiar world for a time and go through the land of fantasy, keep its laws, logic, time and dimensions.

Carroll presents a situation that is appropriate for a dream story to start. Alice, the protagonist is both tired and bored. Her sister, on the contrary, is enjoying reading a book which Alice does not find interesting:

> Once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no picture or conversations in it. "And what is the use of a book" thought Alice, "without pictures or conversations?" (P. 1)

She would rather make a daisy chain but the heat makes her feel 'very sleepy and stupid'.

With this opening, Carroll opens the door to Wonderland. Alice falls asleep with one wish - to make a daisy chain and so as she journeys through Wonderland her quest is really for the flowers. As it turns out, Wonderland does not give her the chance to fulfil her wish. Whenever she tries to get to the garden, there is something stopping her and she has to deal with one obstacle after another. The details of the fantasy remain consistent except that in the end Alice does not get herself the daisy chain. After exciting adventures in Wonderland she is eventually beaten up by the pack of cards for upsetting the order in Wonderland. This is what wakes her up, and Lewis Carroll concludes his story as Alice exits into the real world.

Having known how much Alice in Wonderland had delighted English Children, Conan-Davies took the task of translating the book into Kiswahili. He was convinced that East African children would love the story as much as it had been loved by European readers. He presents his objective in a poetic introduction:

Zamani sana Mzungu mmoja
na watoto,
Aliwahadithia kwa umoja
Aliyependwa Habari tamu sana ya ndoto

Na mimi basi ninapenda
Watoto Waafrika pia,
Nimefikiria watapenda sana
Kwa lugha yao nzuri kusikia.

Habari za mtoto yule
Katika Nchi ya Ajabu

Tafsiri yake naam ni kazi kubwa
Furaha yao kwangu ni thawabu.
Njoni watoto na kaeni,
Tutafurahi sana sisi!
Sikilizeni nitakaposoma
Maneno na matendo ya Elisi.

Ingawa mimi Mzungu
Mniridhie si mgeni
Mna bahati nami bila shaka
Sikilizeni sana, nyamazeni. (p.ix)

Like Lewis Carroll who entertained children with the story of Alice in Wonderland, Conan-Davies aimed at using the Kiswahili language to tell the same dream story to African children. It was in 1940 when Conan-Davies' translation of Alice in Wonderland reached the children as Elisi Katika Nchi ya Ajabu and the book has been in circulation since. Conan-Davies has faithfully translated the story but he has, however, left out those details which he thought would confuse the readers and has creatively adapted certain areas which would alienate the child. This, unfortunately, constitutes the major weakness of the book. The translator has taken the liberty to set the story on the East African Coast but does not go all the way to give consistent details the way Lewis Carroll would have done.

The Kiswahili translation starts when Alice is in the shade of the mango tree. The original does not mention a tree, the two sisters are sitting on a river bank. The artist who illustrates Elisi Katika Nchi ya Ajabu faithfully presents an African Alice and dresses some of the characters like the Africans found on the East African Coast.

The actual translation suffers and therefore becomes less appealing because the translator stumbles over words and expressions as he tries to keep as much to the original as possible.

One aspect which is lost in the translation is the humour because Carroll capitalised very much on the sound of words for the humour in Alice in Wonderland. The whole of Chapter 3, for example, loses its effect in translation because the play with words 'tale' and 'tail' is absent. The reference to the British and French history is also missing in the Kiswahili translation. No doubt Conan-Davis found it clumsy to present this, but we miss the humour that these references carry. He, however, creatively presents the geographical details

English: "Ma'am, is this New Zealand or Australia?" p.11

Kiswahili: "Au labda hakuna mwisho, na kisima hiki kitatokea upande wa pili wa dunia." p.13.

There is also the striking innovation in the translation of Cheshire Cat who laughs or grins all the time. Conan-Davies' translation has "Paka Mcheshi" which reminds one of the place name Cheshire and the character trait of the Cat.

On the whole Conan-Davis has a good command of both languages but at times overdoes his description and makes statements like:

English: The White Rabbit returning, splendidly dressed, with a pair of kid gloves in one hand and a large fan in the other p.16

Kiswahili: Kumbe sungura mweupe aliyekuwa akirudi, amevaa nguo za umalidadi wa kizungu, ameshika mkononi mwake upepeo na kofia, p .20.

Kiswahili: Akaona kuwa ilikuwa nyumba ya Kizungu, safi kabisa. p.55

The two references to "kizungu" or European dress and house are unnecessary here. It is not clear what purpose Conan-Davies meant them to serve. It is even more unfortunate given the fact that the story had wider circulation in its Kiswahili translation than in the English original. Most of the responses on the book have been based on the translation Elisi Katika Nchi Ya Ajabu.

Having started with the basic assumption that most young children love fantasy, we are faced with a serious question: What is it that has made Elisi Katika Nchi Ya Ajabu unpopular with children in Tanzania? We have noted, too, that most children who have read it in English have not liked it very much. Even though young children in Tanzania are fascinated by fantasy in general, the readers of Alice in Wonderland have limited linguistic competence with which to handle the level of English language in this work. The Kiswahili translation does not excite them because it is poorly written. The older children who could cope with the language level of Alice in Wonderland found the fantasy childish.

Nicholas Tucker seems to question the very essence of the fantasy in Alice in Wonderland and without which the story does not hold together. He suggests that

> One reason, perhaps, why younger children readers often find Alice in Wonderland rather frightening could be because of its moral anarchy,[31] where events are always so arbitrary and unpredictable.

This unpredictability is what keeps Alice moving in Wonderland. The dream element carries the story to the point where Alice is woken up by leaves falling on her and identified in her dreams as cards. The responses of Tanzanian children on the book are interesting. Of those questioned, the older ones do not like the dream element:

"It is a silly story"	Age 12
"Nothing happens in it"	Age 10
"It is only a dream"	Age 8
"Dream stories are for girls"	Age 13 (Boy)

The younger children find the book hard to follow. One of the children suggests that the ending is " very sad. Why did they beat up Alice?" Age 7

> "You see, leaves were falling on her in her sleep.
>
> It was a dream." answered an older brother. Age 11

After consideration of comments from several readers of the book we are of the opinion that the translation would have to be redone to clear all the misprinted words which shocked one young reader so much that she said:

"The person who wrote this did not learn his spelling well."

More important the translation of Alice in Wonderland should be as consistent as the author intended it. In the meantime the child has only the option of reading Carroll's work in its original language.

The book that is better liked than Alice in Wonderland, though not as widely circulated and popularised, is Swift's Gulliver's Travels. The story is retold by R.D.K. Storer and carefully illustrated by Joan B. Williams. The book presents two adventures: 'A voyage to Lilliput' and 'A voyage to Brobdingnag' in which Gulliver encounters worlds similar to his except for the size of the people. Among Lilliputians Gulliver is a giant in size whereas he is a miniature among the Brobdingnagians. The element of fantasy is thus enhanced by the contras between Gulliver and each of these groups of people. The reader knows that Gulliver's size does not change, and can recognise that Lilliput and Brobdingnag only exist in the author's imagination. The contrast of the size enhances the fantasy without worrying Gulliver. One could argue that Gulliver is more calm because the changes are external and do not affect his body. As for Alice the changes in her body frighten not only her but also the readers.

In the original Gulliver's Travels which is written for adults, the author capitalises on irony as he criticises one society after the other represented by Lilliputians, Borbdingnagians and Blefuscans. In the simplified children's version used for this study the irony comes through the visual impressions that the juxtaposition of sizes suggest. The child can clearly imagine the sizes of the Lilliputians and Borbdingnagians. The child's own world becomes his reference ground and Gulliver the chief and only representative.

Children questioned about the book are amused that a watch has to be carried on a pole by two Lilliputian officers; Gulliver's bed in Lilliput is made up of six hundred Lilliputian little beds, his hat had to be pulled by five Lilliputian horses. In Brobdingnag, the situation is the reverse. Gulliver's size in comparison with Brobdingnagians reminds readers of Tom Thumb among other ordinary human beings. What amuses children most in this story is the cause of the fight between the Lilliputians and the people who lived in Blefuscu. One of the children after the reading that:

> 'Because the people in Blefuscu break their eggs at the big end, and we break our eggs at the small end', he replied. 'The emperor of Blefuscu wants to make us break them at the big end, and we don't want to.(p. 38)

The respondent says that these little people fight over small things like children. It may well be that the appeal of Gulliver's Travels to the child readers who appropriated it, in the first place, from its adult readers was because of its focus on size.

The children identify with Gulliver when he is among the giants of Brobdingnag for he is like a child among adults. On the other hand, Gulliver in Lilliput is presented as the adult who invades the land of the young. Here the children identify with the Lilliputians having Gulliver at their mercy. On both presentations the adult is to be pitied for his helplessness and awkwardness. The child who reads the story thus identifies with Gulliver for he is not an adult but one like them as he suffers the kind of disadvantages they too would suffer in an adult world. At another level, Swift is making fun of some of the causes of war among real people even without being specific on which people he is satirising. The children are not aware that they are enjoying Swift's irony which is at the very heart of Gulliver's Travels. More so in this book than in Alice in Wonderland, they are persuaded to suspend disbelief and watch with wonder this world of Swift's creation. The children like the happy note at the end of the two books however, where Gulliver goes back to England and Alice is back to the known world at the river bank. The never-never lands of Gulliver's Travel are more logical, more predictable and less frightening to the young reader than the wonderland of Alice in Wonderland.

The aspect that appeals to children in fantasy is not necessarily the creation of different worlds where things happen in an unearthly way. The life-blood for fantasy is the action in the story. The characters experience real adventure which they in turn share with the reader thus appealing to the child's imagination. Through fantasy both Carroll and Swift have satisfied and developed some of the literary needs of children.

Our next section deals with the kind of adventure that is more realistic and not as otherworldly as fantasy.

2.3.4 Adventure

The aspect that appeals to children most in literature is the adventure it accords to them. Many of the books that children read including those which we shall discuss in this thesis can safely be described as adventure stories. Adventure stories feature unusual, daring, risky and exciting actions in narrative. We have discussed other categories of fiction in which adventure is an important ingredient. Travelogues are reminiscenes of adventurous, dangerous or leisurely travel. King Solomon's Mines and Gulliver's Travels are stories of great adventures. Even Alice in Wonderland which in some versions is entitled Alice's Adventures in Wonderland begins realistically with Alice's wish to make a daisy chain but as she falls asleep Alice is transported through adventures which are strange, astonishing and dreamlike. In this section we will examine the adventures of Robinson Crusoe and Treasure Island.

Of the adventure stories for children that found their way into colonial Tanzania, Robinsoe Crusoe and Treasure Island were among the most widely read and are still in circulation for the present-day reader.

Robinson Crusoe was first published in its Kiswahili translation in 1933 and its 1965 edition is still in circulation today as Hadithi Ya Robinson Kruso. The translation is a mere sixty - four page book compared with its original which was initially written for adult readers.

The translation skips many details while carefully maintaining a smooth and interesting story that holds the attention of the reader. For example the details about the cannibalising Africans have been cut out. The part of the story depiciting the Africans about to kill Friday is also played down making the experience less gruesome. The translator was careful not to offend the African reader and in any case the book had to be approved for publication and circulation by Inter-Territorial Dependencies, so certainly it did receive enough scrutiny. The story concentrates on Crusoe's struggles for survival in an unspecified Island, and his eventual return home after being away for over thirty years.

The target reader for Robinson Crusoe was initially not the child but the adult. That the European children appropriated Robinson Crusoe shows that it communicated to them with the interest which the Kiswahili translator was sure would be conveyed in Hadithi Ya Robinson Kruso.

Tanzanian children have read the book largely in English as the Kiswahili one is not so widely circulated. However those who read Hadithi Ya Robinson Kruso like it so much that some demand to re-read it. The readers like the idea of Kruso finding himself isolated from all known people after the shipwreck. Like Gulliver he has to learn to survive but he is more

disadvantaged than Gulliver. It takes him many years before he is restored to civilisation. Of greater importance to the child is the experience of fear of isolation. They can identify with Crusoe for they too would be at a loss if they found themselves in a similar predicament, away from friends and family. They are therefore intrigued at the one man's effort to survive through a hostile environment. What keeps them reading is their spirit of adventure as they experience with Crusoe the kind of adventure they may never experience in real life.

One of the girls aged fourteen has read the entire story aloud to her two brothers and one sister. On the whole the story is more popular with boys than with girls but the most useful comment on the Kiswahili translation, however, comes from a girl who has read the English Robinson Crusoe about five times. She says that the Kiswahili version is less boring than the English. On further investigation we have concluded that the boredom is as a result of the familiarity with the story in English. Nevertheless it is evident that Robinson Crusoe is so powerful a story as to inspire anybody to re-read many times outside the class and without compulsion.

Many adults from the formerly colonised parts of the world, have objected to Crusoe's colonising the island and Anglicising the man Friday. While he had no choice with regard to colonising the island, Crusoe's attitude to Friday is very much like that of the colonisers in the colonies. The impression one gets is that Friday or Juma as he is

called in Hadithi Ya Robinson Kruso is helpless without Crusoe. He is made to receive more than he gives to his saviour and master, Robinson Crusoe.

The master gives him a name, assuming that up until then he was nameless; he, Crusoe, teaches him English and makes no effort to discover what language Friday (Juma) used let alone learn it. Indeed Crusoe and Friday are not equals. The superior attitude of the white man which we noted in King Solomon's Mines and Mzee Rufiji's stories is also here in Robinson Crusoe. The white man is a benevolent, paternal figure who even in spite of disadvantages always emerges a victor. The post colonial child reading Robinson Crusoe glossed over the relationship between Crusoe and Friday. The subtle implications in an exciting story (one that was read five times) get recorded in the subconscious mind of the child and are likely to contribute to his having certain perceptions about real life situations.

Whereas Crusoe in Robinson Crusoe plans his sea voyage, Jim Hawkins in Treasure Island finds himself drawn in through sheer curiosity. Louis Stevenson's Treasure Island starts with a quiet and slow introduction of characters as they come to Benbow Inn. Mystery shrouds some of the characters and the narrator, Jim Hawkins, senses that some of these people cannot be trusted and so he is on his guard right from the start.

Having thus put the reader in suspense, the author proceeds to develop a quest motif. The main character soon finds himself in a group of people ready to set off in search of hidden treasure in a distant island. The exact location of this island is not revealed but it could be somewhere in the west Atlantic and may be not far away from the Brazilian Coast as that is the only other country mentioned after England. This lack of specificity does not adversely affect the story for there are enough descriptions, especially with Flint's map, to help the reader visualise the island. Like Robinson Crusoe's island, Treasure Island is uninhabited and has neither the dwarfs nor the giants that Gulliver encounters. Its conflicts do not centre on natural disasters of a sea voyage; they hinge around the differences between characters in a ship. The battle is between the seemingly harmless but evil pirates led by Long John Silver and the good characters with whom Jim identifies. The battle is engineered to eliminate some of the people so that only a few of the pirates remain to share the treasure. In this battle between the good and evil characters many people are injured and a lot of lives lost but eventually the good and the repentant get the treasure.

The strongest appeals of Treasure Island to Tanzanian children especially the older group are the long journey and quest motifs which immediately plunge them into the adventure. The reader's horizon is widened by the exposure to travel, danger and uncertainties that are expected. The conflict that ensues during the adventurous

travel is sparked off by the positing of good and evil characters together in one ship and motivated by one quest. Stevenson brings out his moral point without preaching because he is able to utilise the conflict well.

The defeat of evil also appeals to the moral sense of the child reader. His sense of justice demands that good is rewarded and evil punished. However, Stevenson subtly brings in the element of repentance and change of heart which remind the reader that there is always the possibility for change and growth.

Interestingly, Treasure Island is not a popular book with Tanzanian children. The few children who like the simplified version find it appealing especially because the main character, Jim, is a boy, and also because of the strong story line. The readers comment:

> "I liked the story, I did not feel like keeping the book down."
>
> "I wonder why Jim did not go to school. But he had exciting things to do. He enjoyed looking for the treasure."
>
> "The sea journey was exciting although there was no shipwreck. If there was a shipwreck perhaps Jim would have died at sea."
>
> "I did not like the pirates. There was too much fighting. It is good that Jim was not harmed."
>
> "I have read the book three times. I just like the story so much."

"There should have been at least one girl in the story. I like stories with girls. Of course there was Jim's mother."

"I wondered about many things. I wondered how Long John Silver lost one of his legs. Oh, I wondered about so many things. I liked the story."

Several points emerge from these responses: the story itself is interesting to the child reader to the extent that one of children has read it three times and this is one sure indication that the story is appealing as a narrative. The conflict, for example, is so fierce that the reader instinctively wants to protect Jim from any danger.

Jim gets involved in an adventure which is, to a young boy, more exciting than school. The readers nevertheless realise that school has its place as part of the reality of every child. The children who read the story like and identify with Jim Hawkins. Eventually the reader gets to know that Jim is no ordinary boy since his courage leads him to become the saviour of the good characters against the evil ones while he himself remains honest throughout the conflict.

The girl who wished there were girl characters in the story is making a serious statement that goes beyond individual taste. Unless the author wants to exclude one sex from reading a book, some blend of male and female is natural and realistic in life. This child would have been consoled if the female character was not a mother but a young girl with whom the reader could identify. One hastens to add that Treasure Island was conceived and written as an adult story which explains the dominance of the adult characters. Child readers are not aware

of this fact and are justified in their longing for other child characters, apart from Jim, with whom they can identify. It is possible that the absence of female characters reduces the appeal to girl readers while the dominance of adult characters reduces the number of children who would like to read the book.

The few who read the book may be intrigued by Stevenson's unclear division between good and evil characters coupled with the slow but skilful unfolding of the characters. Stevenson manages to not only keep the reader in suspense and therefore "wondering" about many things but also holds his interest all the time. The author surprises the reader by making characters do unexpected things. A good example is the portrayal of Long John Silver of whom Jim is suspicious right from the start at Benbow Inn. The author gives only enough details so that Silver is recognisable by the reader.

Stevenson has the ability to satisfy the reader with few details while at the same time maintaining suspense in the story. The young readers, like Jim, enjoy the adventures especially away from home and they are not content to just sit and wait when there is a whole world to explore. Treasure Island, like Robinson Crusoe opens windows for the child to escape into adventure, to explore the sea, to get into danger, to experience real fear of the mysterious and the unknown, to learn to survive, to suffer pain, to lose hope and gain it again, to eventually go back to the safety of home. Adventure offers the child the opportunity to grow in experience without even moving out of the safety of the walls

of his house. It enables him to explore certain things that his own reality is unable to offer him.

2.3.5 European Traditional Tales

European traditional tales are more popularly known as fairy tales. These are stories that existed in traditional European societies and are recaptured in fiction for European children. These stories are therefore different from stories that were put together for African children by colonial writers operating within the colonial ethos.

Many of the traditional European tales which were introduced to the Tanzanian child with the coming of school education have survived to the present period. In this section we have selected the most popular of stories that are being read by today's child. The editions examined for this research may not necessarily be the same as those read during the colonial period but the basic story remains the same.

In structure these stories are very much like the traditional tales the Tanzanian child is so familiar with. They have the characteristic simple plot which opens with a brief introduction to characters and the basic problem of the story. Only bare details are given, for example few characters' names are given: the main character in The Princess and the Pea is Princess and she gets married to a Prince; in The Elves and The Shoemaker we encounter a shoemaker, his wife and Elves: Hansel and Gretel are the children of a wood-

cutter; and Cinderella is the only proper name in the story, Cinderella. The story however leads the reader through exciting experiences that are full of action until the story builds to a climax and a brief denouement.

The magical element in some of these stories hold the young reader's attention. He is willing to suspend disbelief and encounter magic objects as in The Golden Goose; magic plants as in Jack and the Beanstalk; magic deeds and magic creatures. These help to stretch his imagination and open doors for his curosity to be satisfied with the marvellous happenings of the never-never-land where enchantment is the order of the day and adventure has vast possibilities. In the Gingerbread Man the gingerbread comes to life when it is ready for eating. It declares to the woman who bakes it, the little old man who sees it run along, the children who want to eat it, the horse, the cow, the dog, and the cat that "No one will have me for tea." Fox saves the bread from getting soaked but eventually "saves" it by eating the gingerbread man up. Pinocchio, like the Gingerbread Man, is man-made but comes to life through the magic of folktales. Pinocchio is a wooden doll which develops into a naughty, cheeky toy that does not listen to his father (or carver?) but causes him a lot of trouble. He is forced to learn a bitter lesson in the land of fairies, that hard work pays. Moreover he learns to be kind to his father and is forgiven by a fairy and changed into a "real live boy". (p. 51)

As in other stories in which inanimate objects become living beings, stories like The Golden Goose and Jack and The Beanstalk operate within the workings of good magic. The golden goose is given as a reward for kindness to Simpleton for being kind to a little man in the woods. The golden goose becomes a source of good fortune through the operation of good magic. In the same way magic brings good luck in Jack and the Beanstalk to Jack who is seemingly as stupid as Pinocchio.

His action is justified in the ladybird version of the story that a fairy has been helping Jack to regain what the ogre stole from the family after killing Jack's father. The fairy tells the rest of the story:

> she told them that she was really a fairy, but that she had lost her magic power and been unable to prevent the ogre killing Jack's father. It was she who had made Jack take the magic beans in exchange for the cow. She had wanted him to climb the beanstalk, and she had led him to the ogre's castle and helped him there. (pp. 45-50)

Magic brings good luck in this story in which the main character is a boy with whom the readers sympathise. A different type of magic visits the rat-infested dirty city of Hamelin. A pied piper appears to the town claiming that he can drive all the rats out of Hamelin at a fee to which the desperate mayor blurts out:

> "I will give you all the money you want if you can make the rats go away." (p. 18)

The mayor does not keep his promise after the pied piper's job is done. Instead he chases piper out of the city whereupon the piper plays the different tune that attracts the children of Hamelin.

In the same way bad magic, mostly caused by witches, work for the forces of evil. The witches in Hansel and Gretel, Rapunzel, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, and Sleeping Beauty contrast sharply with the fairies, the source of the good magic. Thus from an early age, children are exposed to forces of good and evil through literature. They learn to identify with the good and condemn the evil in the works they read. Children also learn that these forces exist in societies and they begin to differentiate good and evil.

Magic in tales does not go on for ever since stories have to come to an end. Spells have to end and Sleeping Beauty be restored and even the Elves disappear when the shoemaker does not need them anymore. This withdrawal of magic not only brings the story to an end but also the reader back to reality where he belongs.

What the child encounters in this genre of children's literature are stories in which moral aspects are presented without preaching but clearly enough to be understood by young readers. These tales do not condone behaviour that is contrary to ethical principles.

There is a strong sense of justice in the stories to the extent that nobility and virtue may go unrecognised for a while only to be rescued towards the end. This consistent

moral stance of the tales appeals to the children who are happy to witness Cinderella's marriage to the prince and the happy life thereafter; the Big Billy Goat Gruff defeating the troll; Pinocchio changing into a real boy; Hansel and Gretel coming back home and Jack and his mother now happy having everything they need. The hard work of the shoemaker is rewarded but the Pied Piper's good deed is ignored and he has to take justice in his own hands by leading the children away: the child readers questioned about the book readers blamed the mayor for the meanness and for being so unfaithful at keeping promises.

As they read these stories the children recognise the fact that the characters represent different types of people. The witches, giants and stepmothers are mean, unkind and sometimes thoroughly evil. The victims of these evil characters are often represented as good, kind, and obedient and are rewarded like Cinderella, Hansel and Gretel.

Some characters go out for adventures, some stay at home, some are weak while others are strong, some are stupid while others are intelligent. The characters are nevertheless familiar to the reader and that is why he enjoys them. Even unfamiliar animals pose no problems to the Tanzaninian children, for their behaviour is not different from human beings that they know. In Goldilocks and the Three Bears the children identify with the inquisitive, adventurous Goldilocks but sympathise with the small bear who comes home to find disaster everywhere; his porridge eaten, his chair broken, and Goldilocks sleeping on his bed. The reader finds The Lion and The Mouse, Town Mouse and Country Mouse, The Billy Goat Gruff, and even The Ugly Duckling quite familiar

since in their reference to the world of animals and their appeal to universal human instincts and values they remind him of traditional African tales.

The tales in their originally oral form were told to adults and children alike. As a res many of the characters are adults as in Cinderella. However, some tales utilise principal characters who are children as in Heidi, or miniature characters as in The Elves and The Shoemaker and Tom Thumb.

The stories appeal to the reader to identify with the principal character adult, child, midget or animal. Effective characterisation, helps to attract the child and sustain his interes in the story. The identification with a character also helps him to make judgements, extend sympathies and keep him involved with the entire aesthetic and literary experience.

Another stylistic device that enhances the appeal of the traditional tales, especially to the younger child, is repetition. Repetition of action in The Enormous Turnip is effective in depicting the team work required to uproot the giant turnip:

> The mouse pulls
> the cat
> and the cat pulls
> the dog
> and the dog pulls
> the girl
> and the girls pulls
> the boy
> and the boy pulls

the old woman
and the old woman pulls
the old man
and the old man
pulls the turnip.
They pull and pull
and.....
Up comes
the enormous turnip!

Similar repetition in "The Old Woman and Her Pig" attracts the attention of the reader as he witnesses threats motivating action:

The cat began to kill the rat,
The rat began to bite the rope,
The rope began to hang the butcher,
The butcher began to kill the ox,
The ox began to drink the water,
The water began to put out the fire,
The fire began to burn the stick,
The stick began to beat the dog,
The dog began to bite the pig,
AND THE PIG JUMPED OVER THE GATE !
So the old woman got home that night
And this is the end of the story.

The threat on life of the rat moves it to action. Even the rope, an inanimate object comes to life and becomes an active character in the chain of action and reaction that build to the pig jumping over the gate and getting home.

The child reader is familiar with the idea of coercion motivating action for he too finds himself doing things he did not plan to do. The adult often pushes the child, through threats, to do certain things he finds unpleasant. The same child does not have a choice sometimes. A similar story where repetition plays a major role in emphasising action, is The Gingerbread Man where the characters assist to chase after the Gingerbread Man but only the fox catches the runaway biscuit and eats it up. Here the child identifies with the Gingerbread man.

In some of the tales humans make demands which seem odd, if not foolish. The prince in The Princess and The Pea demands to marry a girl who proves to be a "real princess". With amusement the reader is involved in this ridiculous search until a real princess brings herself to the prince. She is proved to be the real princess when she is able to feel the discomfort of a single pea on the bed she is offered for the night. She is sleepless with the discomfort of sleeping on the pea which is covered under twenty mattresses and many feather beds. Even the Tanzanian child who reads these stories from another tradition is not surprised by the strange demands and magical elements because he is familiar with them from his own traditional repertoire. Where differences arise, for example with regard to the concept of fairies, the child understands them within the contexts of the stories.

Popular in the colonial period and widely read to-date are Aesop's Fables. The children are at home with these stories because they are similar to fables which have been

orally narrated to them. Some of the characters may be different but the basic motifs and the morals drawn at the end are quite familiar.

In structure, Aesop's fables are short and to the point. Each story has few characters, often two contrasting ones, for example, the wolf and the lamb. The basic point of the fables is the juxtaposition of good and evil, the cunning and the innocent, the boastful and the humble. It is not always that the positive character wins: Sometimes the good character may even be destroyed as happened to the lamb in "The Wolf and the Lamb" where the wolf kills and eats an innocent lamb. A fable like this one reminds children that there is unfairness in the world and the good are not always rewarded and "live happily ever after".

The main characters in Aesop's Fables often get into trouble and end up in some form of disgrace or are challenged to their shame by other characters. The boastful traveller claims how well he used to jump and is made to shut up when he is told to "jump Now! " The boy who cries "wolf" is eventually killed by a wolf, and the crow is outwitted by the fox and loses the cheese. The moral at the end of each story reinforces the theme. It is often presented as a succinct proverb which is simple enough for young readers to understand. The values are conveyed without preaching.

The reason why Aesop's Fables have endured the passage of years is because they are short, simple, vivid and dramatic. Some of the works we shall discuss in chapters

three and four have been influenced by Aesop's Fables significantly enough to be noticeable. It could, however be argued that East African authors are not necessarily borrowing from Aesop, who is said to have been an African, but that they are drawing from the African source.

2.3.6 Religious Stories

Part of colonial literature was used to teach certain religious truths to readers. A few of these stories were brought wholesale from Europe, for example Pilgrim's Progress which was translated into Kiswahili for East African readership as Safari Ya Msafiri. Other works were designed for the African market as was the case of the "Jungle Doctor's Stories." Paul White, alias Jungle Doctor, wrote several fables "for the young at least from six to sixty."[32] Presented in comic strips the stories are delightful to children of all ages.

Like Aesop's Fables they convey age-old wisdom: a goat cannot change into a lion even if he were to do, eat and say like a lion or even wear a label "Lion" around his neck. Although

> He roars and claims "I'm a Lion watch, see how my tail goes. I eat bones." The lions in amusement sang among themselves, "A visitor for dinner."
>
> Giraffe is the one who concludes the story by saying: "You can't become a lion by imitating lions."

as White reinforces with a biblical message that invites readers to consider:

> So it's not what you
> Do,
> Say,
> Eat or
> Where you
> Go.
> It is what he did
> when he died on the
> Cross and When He came
> To life. That can make
> all the difference in your Life.

This is the format he uses in all his jungle fables and tales which were drawn from African folklore. The children who read Paul White's stories liked them because they were presented in comic strips which were humorous. The stories were also quite familiar since they were drawn from an African environment.

On the whole The Jungle Doctor's stories were well circulated, for example, twenty three readers in Dodoma out of twenty five said they had either heard or read the stories: The Great Wall, The Monkey who did Not Believe in Crocodiles, Monkey in a Lion Skin, Monkey in the Bog and Safe as Poison.

Paul White's success in these stories, which are still being reprinted and circulated among Tanzanian children, lies in his teaching without preaching. He uses interesting

stories that are appealing to the children and then draws the moral or the lesson towards the end.

John Bunyan's presentation of Pilgrims Progress is allegorical in form. The narrative is also too complex for the child reader who is more interested in action rather than reflection on morals and virtues. The presentation of abstract ideas through a dream story makes Pilgrim's Progress unappealing to the children.

Although Bunyan's and White's stories point to the same destination -heaven, White is more interesting to the Tanzanian child who is at home with setting, characterisation, conflicts and resolutions in the jungle stories. Bunyan on the other hand strikes the child reader as too solemn and preachy. White's presentation reveals that although it is difficult to present religious issues without preaching, a story teller who is conscious of what appeals to the reader can succeed in passing his message on.

2.3.7 Poetry

Children's response to written poetry of the colonial period is different from their response to stories of the same period. Whereas response to fiction involves consideration to the story line, meaning and often aspects of style related to the message of the story, response to poetry is often through rhythm, rhyme and music. Thus it is possible to enjoy a poem even though it does not make much sense semantically. Such poetry includes

poems that are accompanied by music, for example, such as "Baa baa Black Sheep", "Jack and Jill", "The Calendar", "Hey Diddle Diddle", "Hickory Dickory Dock", "London is Burning", "Old Macdonald Had a Farm" and "Three Blind Mice". Thus the children enjoy the rhyme, the rhythm and the musical aspects of these poems even though the words themselves may not always make sense to them and the poetry can best be described as nonsense poetry. Such poems invite children to suspend their knowledge of reality and try to imagine what it would be like if things were different as for example in

> Hey! diddle, diddle,
> The cat and the fiddle,
> The cow jumped over the moon;
> The little dog laughed to see such sport,
> And the dish ran away with the spoon.[33]

This poem makes poetic sense to the child who enjoys the sound of words "diddle diddle" and the end rhymes. The child is attracted by the rythym and music. Even when the reader does not know a set tune he is inspired to make up a tune and sing to accompany the strong rhythmic sounds. The little story behind the poem is completely oveshadowed by the poetic elements.

Some children, however, do try to understand the meaning of these poems. One respondent puzzled over "Baba Black Sheep" and wondered what had happened to mama black sheep. This was long after he had learnt and enjoyed the song with his classmates. The elements of fantasy in poetry also appeal to children. In many of the poems there is a mixture of the familiar with the exotic. The encounter with fantasy sometimes makes

children imagine that they have the power to control natural events by the force of their wishes. Four children break into a song as soon as it starts drizzling:

Rain, rain go away,
Come again another day
Little children want to play.

The rain does not stop but this does not change anything. They will repeat this song another day as if they believe that their words can change the course of nature. Children are down to earth and acknowledge reality. The poems that appeal to them describe ordinary things which they see around them. Through these poems the children witness what it means to have or to own a pet or something that brings fun as in "Mary had a Little Lamb."

In other poems they meet with cruel people who punish others for nothing in particular. Sometimes the punishment is so severe that it can be described as savagery as in "Three Blind Mice" :

Three blind mice
Three blind mice
See how they run
See how they run
They all run after the farmer's wife
Who cuts their tails with a carving knife
Have you ever seen such a thing in your life
As three blind mice.

or "The Old Woman Who lived in A Shoe" :

There was an old woman who lived in a shoe

She had so many children she didn't know what to do;
She gave them some broth without any bread;
She whipped them all soundly and put them to bed.

The children who read or sung these poems were not shocked by the meaning of the poems. They took the incidents for granted as if cutting the tails of mice and whipping hungry children happen every day.

The poetry that children seem to remember most clearly is the poetry that they have used in the classroom situations or what is connected with their activities. Good examples are "The Calendar" :

Thirty days hath September,
April, June and November,
All the rest have thirty-one
February twenty-eight alone, -
Except in Leap-year, at which time
February's days are twenty-nine.

and "Days of the Week" :

Monday's child is fair of face,
Tuesday's child is full of grace,
Wednesday's child is full of woe,
Thursday's child has far to go,
Friday's child is loving and giving,
Saturday's child works hard for his living,
And the child that's born on the Sabbath day
Is bony and lithe and good and gay.

both of which serve a utilitarian purpose over and above entertaining the children. One poem teaches them the number of days in each month while the other gives them the sequence of the days in the week.

Generally children also prefer poetry which creates pictures in their minds or tells stories as in "This Little Pig" :

This little pig went to the market,
This little pig stayed at home,
This little pig had roast beef,
This little pig had none,
And this little pig cried,
wee -
wee -
wee -
wee -
I can't find my way home.

The young child is immediately familiar with a family situation where different children are given different treatment by their parents. It may even be seen as *protest* against preferential treatment but the very young children who are happily singing or chanting this poem hardly think beyond the surface meaning of the words. In the same manner they enjoy "London's Burning" and "Old Macdolnald Had a Farm":

London's Burning, London's Burning,
Look Yonder, Look Yonder;
Fire! Fire!
Fire! Fire!
Pour on water; Pour on water.

Old Macdonald had a farm
Ei ei o
And on that farm he had some ducks
Ei ei o
With a quack, quack there
And a quack, quack there
Here quack, there quack
Old Macdonald had a farm
Ei ei o.

and even sing them as rounds without questioning the meaning. "Old Macdonald Had a Farm" is sometimes found useful in the classroom situation where the teacher uses it to teach the young children various sounds that animals make:

cow -moo
cat -miaow
donkey-hee hoo

Thus, the sounds that animals make, the story element and musical aspects all combine to make "Old Macdonald Had a Farm" memorable to the child.

Play is a major preoccupation of the very young child and that is why the cat and cow of "Hey! Diddle Diddle" delights him. Some of the poems are particularly useful as play songs for example "Hickory Dickory, Dock":

Hickory, dickory, dock,
The mouse ran up the clock;
The clock struck one,
The mouse ran down,
Hickory, dickory, dock.

which is sustained largely by the strong rhythm, rhyme and sound of words. Similarly, the children are intrigued by the story of "Jack and Jill". They find it unusual that Jack and Jill would look for water in the wrong place:

> Jack and Jill went up the hill,
> to fetch a pail of water;
> Jack fell down and broke his crown,
> and Jill came tumbling after.
>
> Up Jack got and home did trot
> As fast as he could caper;
> Went to bed to mend his head
> with vinegar and brown paper.

The following comments suggest that the child is not totally unaware of the semantic meaning of the words of the poem. Even nonsense needs logic:

> "You look for water in the river down the valley."(Age 10)
>
> "If the water was on the hill where did Jack and Jill live ?" (Age 9)
>
> "I think they were just playing with buckets. (Age 8)
>
> "They were pretending to play with pails." (Age 9)

Interestingly enough none of the children contacted knew the second stanza or were interested in hearing it.

Poetry of the colonial period, though written, underwent some changes after it was learnt and memorised. Names of places and people were changed to render them more familiar. Some were translated in performance and new poems emerged out of new experiences. One such experience involved poetry used in advertising school education, a situation which preoccupied educators of this period. Some of these poems survive and are sung by today's children. The investigator heard a young boy sing the following poem whose appeal seems to have been in both the sound of words and the meaning:

Kengele yalia
Kengele yalia
Kengele yalia
Tusikie
Inagongagonga
Boom baam boom
Ni wajinga sana
Wasiopenda shule
Watakuwa watu wapagazi.

Bell rings
Bell rings
Bell rings
So that we hear
It's ring-a-ringing
Boom baam boom
They are very foolish
Who don't like school
They will be porters.

From the articulation of "Boom baam boom" it was clear that the singer was enjoying himself so much that he did not question the peculiar sound of the school bell. What is more important is to heed the call to go to school.

A similar poem written for the colonial child by A. Loogman asks the question "Utaweza kazi gani ?" (What job can you do ?) without the ability to read. The answer Loogman gives is plainly put in the following poem:

Usipojua kusoma,
U mjinga, U mjinga,
Usipojua kusoma,
U mjinga mkubwa mno.

Mwalimu wetu mwema,
Mwenyewe amesema
Usipojua kusoma
U mjinga mjinga mno.

Utaweza kazi gani?
Muhunzi au karani ?
Usipojua kusoma
U mjinga mjinga mno.

Utavuna pesa wapi?
Kuandika barua ngapi?
Usipojua kusoma
Hufai. Mjinga mno!

Mabundi watacheka:
Kerem Kerem Kereka!
Asiyejua kusoma
Yu mjinga. Mjinga mno.[34]

Although Loogman's question was pertinent during the colonial period, it is nevertheless not taken for granted by today's child who knows the situation of those who do not have school education. He may not like school work all the time as depicted by their response to the last bell of the day which is often followed by screams, shouts and songs of joy. But the child of today knows that school is part of his reality.

Some scholars have questioned the relevance of the society of the colonial period to the child of today in Africa. For example, Okot p' Bitek tries to get into the mind of the child who sings or reads the poem "Baa Baa Black Sheep":

> Baa Baa black sheep,
> Have you any wool?
> Yes sir, yes sir,
> Three bags full,
> One for the master,
> One for the Dame
> One for the little boy
> Who lives down the lane.

on which he comments:

> He must wonder what this song is all about! Sheep in his village are reared for eating, for the sacrifices when a woman has broken a taboo, and for payment of bride wealth; and they do not have bags of wool! The Master - that must be the class teacher, but what does he want with a bag of wool for? What could she possibly do with a bag of wool! He probably does not think about the song, repeating it meaninglessly.....[35]

Here p' Bitek is questioning the ability to comprehend the context of the poem to fully understand and relate to experience presented by the poem. While we agree with this necessity, we appreciate that it takes imagination on the part of the child to encounter, interpret and enjoy unfamiliar experiences. Recognising the experience as different from the familiar may limit full understanding but does not necessarily render the poem completely obsure to child in form and content.

While we do not advocate wholesale importation of foreign poetry, we nevertheless recognise the strengths in these poems that have made them endure to date. The poet who writes for the Tanzania child could learn from the children what elements they find delightful in poetry. The kind of poetry we have considered suggest that children enjoy folk poetry.

2.3.8 Drama

Written dramatic literature for children did not feature in the colonial period although children were constantly dramatising the stories they heard during oral performance of traditional stories or after reading stories in class. Today's child is not any luckier with this genre for there is still a dearth of written plays for the young. The exception is Hyslop's Mgeni Karibu which was first published in 1957. This play is still in circulation today and was used during the research quite extensively. At one time it passed from hand to hand in one neighbourhood, and the next thing that happened was a dramatisation of the whole story without adult suggestion or prompting. What may have moved the four children to action was the strong story line which must have appealed to them.

The play centres around a popular motif: The Sultan's only son is reported to have drowned and there is no immediate heir to the throne. When Suleman the Sultan dies

therefore, Saidi, his nephew becomes king. Suleman's son did not die but was sent to Pemba when he was only two years old. His uncle bribed a man from Pemba and pleaded with him to take the boy away and help keep the secret. Shabani's foster father keeps the secret until he is at the death bed when he is only able to tell his forster son that his birth place was Kwale but was unable to tell him his parentage. It is when he is serving Sheikh Rajabu of Kwale that he learns that he is a Prince and as events would have it, he is made the Sultan. Saidi loses the throne to his cousin Shabani but the latter commands the people not to hurt him.

Asked what they liked best in this play the children respond:

> "Sheikh Rajabu was a good man. He loved Shabani although he did not know much about him".
>
> "It is good that the evil that Saidi's father did was discovered".
>
> "Shabani was well-behaved. That is why he became king". (Sultan)
>
> "I like the way the secret was kept until the last minute".
>
> "The story teaches that even though we are poor today, we might become big tomorrow."

A few readers of the play have suggested that Saidi should have been killed but the majority feel that the play ended well. In any case, some argue, even Saidi's father did not kill his brother's son. It would have been bad for Shabani's rule to start with killings. On the whole the readers of Mgeni Karibu were responding favourably to the familiar setting of the East African Coast which they could recognise. The form of presentation as a play may have encouraged the dramatisation which the investigator witnessed among children who had read through the book in class. They proceeded to act out part of the play at break time. The children were responding to the story as a dramatic story as they tried to interpret the various characters, their interactions, their dialogues and even, at one point, the change of scenes. The play form made the acting out a most natural thing even without the script. They remembered the characters and the story and for them this was the most important thing.

Although all the characters in the play are adults the children do identify with Shabani and give him their sympathies. One said that it was "a shame to treat a young child like that". The truth of the matter is that Shabani can hardly be described as a child in this play although he is certainly the youngest. The identification between our respondent and this character was based on the fact that Shabani was unfairly treated and yet he was the youngest character. It is because of the child's identification that the retribution is satisfying to the young reader who expects the good to be rewarded and evil punished.

The colonial period did not offer many plays but stories, some of which could be dramatised, circulated in Tanzania not only from Europe but also from Asia and the rest of Africa.

2.3.9 Encounter With Asian Literature

East Africa's contact with Asia, and especially Arabia and India is longer than her contact with Europe and the interraction in this area of literature is also deeper. An obvious explanation for the similarities between Asian and African stories spring from the fact that European colonisers capitalised on some of the common aspects in their civilising and education missions in Asia and Africa. Books written for Asian children to use in school were also circulated in Africa and vice versa. A good example is Isabella Fremont's Our Friend Manis which was written for pupils between seven and nine years old and circulated both in Asia and Africa. Although published in 1959 the book is still available in some bookshops and libraries.

Our experience with this sixteen-page book showed it was one of the most likeable stories our readers encountered. Both rural and urban children easily identified with the characters. The story itself is simple: On their way from school, three children rescue the

kid of a goat that has fallen into a trap. At home the kid is fed, washed and treated and eventually it becomes part of the family and is friendly to the children especially the youngest who is too young to go to school. The young goat, now named Manis saves Zaharah, the adventurous, three-year-old girl, from a snake and on another incident pulls her out of the muddy river and saves her from drowning.

The story is simply told and incidents emerge naturally, focusing on children characters who take control of the situation. The parents are not allowed to take over the story at any moment but children characters have a chance to rescue and to patronise the little animal. Children readers identify with the children characters who, like them, are used to being lorded over and patronised by adults.

In another book aimed at older children, C.G. Thorney's Old Gold and Other Stories the reader is transported to Ceylon to witness for himself the legend surrounding Sigiriya, a high, formerly unclimbable hill which is shaped like a box. The story tries to give explanation regarding the worn steps up the hill and the ruins at the top and bottom of this hill. The story deals with family conflicts familiar to the child reader although he may not have grown up in a royal household. The royal setting does not hinder the enjoyment of the story; if anything it enhances it because the reader is given a chance to witness to the fact that even kings and princes do have filial discord and their conflicts have far-reaching consequences. As they engage in rivalry trying to outdo one another

they involve the populace and sometimes lives of the common people are lost in the process.

This book fascinated many who were asked to read it. One reader said that he had never seen a hill shaped like a box and he would very much like to go to Malaya to see Sigiriya and climb up to its top.

E.F. Dodd's The Magic Ring and Other Stories from India presents a similar Asian setting and background in a careful selection of seven stories from Indian folklore. In this book gods and men interact; the devout are rewarded, the disobedient are punished and sometimes humans outwit even gods. For the Tanzanian child this book gives insight into the religion and culture of the Indian people. The relevance of such a book is not just to make him wordly-wise but to make him get to know Indians better. Moreover there are a good number of Indians who form part of the Tanzanian nation and who would have special interest in these stories.

Copies of this book were found in two homes of Indian origin and the children who read the book said they found the stories:

> "Very good. They remind me of my grandfather but he died in India."
>
> "My aunt used to tell me such stories before she went back to India."

"You see, I want to go to India. I long to see the country.
These stories make me want to go very quickly."

The three Indian children are expressing a yearning for the country and people that created these stories but only because they find the stories captivating. They also remind any investigator that the Tanzanian population is not homogenous, but made up of many ethnic groups with differences in culture and repertoire.

Better and more widely circulated from the Asian communities are two stories which are very much in circulation not only in Tanzania but throughout the world.

"Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves" in spite of its shocking morals is as popular as "Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp". The interest the former story generates perhaps accounts for a recent translation into Kiswahili. The Kiswahili title is quickly gaining popularity among children readers at home and in school.

Ali Baba, a poor wood cutter, discovers where forty thieves store their treasures. He learns the formula for opening the magic cave and takes away a lot of treasure. Soon he is a rich man living in a big house. The thieves discover that someone has been stealing their treasure and soon find out that Ali Baba is responsible. They plot to kill him in a cunning way but Ali Baba's servant, Morgiana, as she is helping herself to (or stealing?) the thieves' oil discovers the plot and burns the thieves with oil. The thieves are not killed but:

"What a dreadful noise there was! All the robbers were howling in pain and shouting for mercy. Ali Baba's servants rushed to the cellar to find out what was wrong. When they saw the robbers, they at once attacked and captured them. Some of the servants ran back upstairs, and captured the robber chief before he could escape. A few minutes later, the robbers were taken away to prison...[36]

It would appear that Ali Baba lived happily ever after but some of the children especially the older readers were not altogether impressed by Ali Baba:

"The story is about thieves. The forty thieves. Even Ali Baba stole from the thieves and Morgiana stole the thieves' oil. All are thieves."

"Ali Baba should have reported the thieves to the police. I'm sure he would have been given his share."

"Ali Baba na yeye ni jizi."

(Even Ali Baba is a big thief.)

The younger children do not seem to worry about the moral aspect of Ali Baba's life but take sides with Ali Baba. The version for the younger children published by Ladybird ends with:

So Morgiana and Ali Baba's son were married. When they needed money, they went to the cave and used the robbers' treasure. But, they made sure that most of it was given to the poor so everything ended well for everyone but the robbers![37]

The younger children's response were less condemnatory:

"Ali Baba aliwaweza hao wezi"

(Ali Baba really managed those thieves)

"The thieves should have been killed"

"I liked the secret language. I wonder who Sesame was."

It is apparent that whether the children like or dislike the "lesson" behind the story, many love it. They are spellbound by the magic of the story that made a sultan postpone the killing of the wife he had condemned to death for her wickedness for at least one night:

For a thousand and one nights Sheherazade (Sultan's wife's sister) kept the sultan spellbound with the stories.

In the same way, the young readers were enthralled by the story of "Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp" which combines magic and adventure both of which children delight in. Some, especially the younger ones were pleasurably frightened by the Genii, and none declared that they did not like the story. Some read it in the Kiswahili collection entitled Alfu Lela Ulela but all seemed to enjoy the story.

Popularised in the colonial period from the orient and still enjoying wide circulation in Tanzania is Alfu Lela Ulela in three volumes which present Sindbad's accounts of other people with whom he associated. The great strength in these stories is the suspense which holds the child who reads them.

Sindbad's stories are patterned or arranged to build to a climax at the last story. When the children were asked whether they knew what kind of story would follow the one they have just read, their response were as follows:

> "Each time I expected something more fantastic."

> "At first I thought they were all stories on shipwreck."

> "I wonder where Sindbad found all those horrible places. I don't think they exist."

Whereas many of the readers liked the stories, a few avid readers found the similarities of the motifs boring. The dominant motifs are: shipwreck, dangerous creatures and getting lost, and although the stories are skilfully told it is easy to get tired of them. Ironically some liked the stories for this very fact that the stories repeated motifs that interested them. The differences in the responses may be attributed to differences in tastes. For example boys enjoyed the stories more than girls did.

Sindbad's seeming invulnerability disturbed some readers who thought such a man could not have existed while others liked it for this very reason. His surviving danger after danger for instance, depicted him as a superhuman being whom the children, especially those who watch videos, could recognise. Sindbad,himself however, attributed his survival to luck, declaring he was just born lucky.

Though not clearly articulated by the readers, it seems another weakness of the book is the creation of unrecognisable places and. The child readers respond to what they are familiar with and what they love. They naturally select the aspects of a story which relate to them in a certain way. Sindbad's world is not always clearly presented unlike the setting of Treasure Island which is more convincing because children can recognise its setting and scenery. The child readers are more at home with the concrete or what can call up certain pictures from the real world.

Like Book 1, the second and third Books of Alfu Lela Ulela touch on magic and witchcraft. In the stories the evil are punished, the good rewarded albeit after a lot of suffering. The methods of rescue are often crude, involving killing, bewitching and retaliation. The motifs and how they are handled however will only shock those who are not familiar with traditional tales in which brutal deaths meted out to the evil are all too common.

Written in the same period as the translation Elisi Katika Nchi Ya Ajabu and Hadithi Za Robinson Kruso are Sultan Zuwera Na Hadithi Nyingine and Uza Ghali. The settings of these two books are oriental except for the first story in Sultan Zuwera Na Hadithi Nyingine which is similar to the Cinderella story in the European folk tradition. It is hard to tell whether this is Hellier's rendering of the Cinderella story to make it more "Swahili" or whether it is an original oriental story that is only similar to "Cinderella". The name of the main character, Siyalela, sounds like a Kiswahili rendering of Cinderella, and the details are just as close. Children who read this story knew they were reading about Cinderella and they questioned why the story had changed some of the details:

> "I like the one where Cinderella has a stepmother."
>
> "It is not true that the two girls are Cinderella's real sisters."

In fact the children who gave their comments in English insisted on calling the main character Cinderella rather than Siyalela. One reader, an eleven-year-old girl, was shocked by two statements in the book:

> "Yule shangazi yake akamshika mkono Siyalela, akawa na mavazi kama mzungu na uso wake mweupe kabisa." (p.3)

> "Her aunt held Siyalela's hand,and Siyalela's clothes became like a European's and her face became completely white (like a European's)."

Akavaa tena kile cha pili, na nguo zake zile zile, nzuri zaidi kuliko zile za kwanza, shangazi yake akatokea akamshika mkono, akawa kama mzungu, akatiwa garini na askari. (p.4)

(She wore the clothes again and they became more beautiful than the first time, her aunt appeared and held her hand, and she (Siyalela) became like a European, and was helped by the guards into the vehicle.)

and had asked

"I thought Cinderella was a Mzungu (European).

Hii siyo hadithi ya kizungu?"

Is this not a European story?

The two statements however harp on the racial superiority of the European colonisers. It seems as if for Siyalela to be really beautiful she has to dress up like a 'mzungu' and be light in colour. Hellier's adaptation of the Cinderella story by just changing the background details without a corresponding change in ethos and orientation weakens the story. This story, unlike others in the book does not seem to have been drawn from the Asian continent and even the readers recognised it as the Cinderella of the western tradition but one that was badly retold.

The reader also enjoyed the three stories "Vipofu Watatu", "Mkewe Mwalimu", and "Chungu Za Dhahabu" for in spite of the fact that they draw their material from the Arabian setting, use adult characters and are fairly didactic, they nevertheless employ familiar motifs and themes. They teach against stealing and greed for property; they remind readers that through revenge the evil are taught their lessons. It is therefore true to say that even though the background is different, a story that has a good story line, is well narrated and presents problems and conflicts that children can identify with, will always appeal to children. The title story, "Sultan Zuwera", on the other hand did not endear itself to the readers because it had for instance too many stories in one. The reader found it hard to connect the stories in spite of the refrain of the main theme which Sultan Zuwera, a snake, keeps repeating:

"Basi ninyi wanadamu hamna jema." (p.3)

"Then you humans do not possess goodness."

One child said there was no story in "Mtu aliyeshika Usia la Baba Yake." A man faithfully keeps the words of his late father and is rewarded for this but not without suffering. He and his family are shipwrecked but later united when the man is already a sultan and very rich.

To the child reader, the conflicts that face the main character can be interpreted as foolishness, since people come and tell him:

"Usiape kwa kweli wala kwa uwongo!" (p.5)

("Don't ever swear!")

The reader does not see the link between the late father's words and the neighbours' behaviour. One child declares that the young man was foolish to go away. If he stayed in his village something would have happened. He would have been rewarded and then:

"Waliomdhlumu wangeadhirika" (p.5)

("Those who dispossessed him would have been put to shame.")

Like Sultan Zuwera Uza Ghali is out of print now and is only available in few bookshops as old stock. In the libraries both books are frequently read by children.

Uza Ghali's strength lies in the title story whose plot is quite simple. Ali's father, a prime minister, dies leaving his son with a lot of riches.

Ali is however a reckless young man who, within a short time squanders his inheritance and reduces himself to poverty much to people's surprise. When asked why he has become poor his answer is always the same:

"Asiyejua maana haambiwi maana." (p.7)

(He who does not know the meaning is not told the meaning.)

When news reaches the Sultan and he questions Ali about his response Ali tells the Sultan:

> "Naam, Bwana mali hii naliipiga mafungu manne,fungu moja nalitia baharini, fungu moja nalipiga moto, fungu moja nalikopesha wala sitalipwa, na fungu moja nimelipa deni wala sijaisha kulipa." (p.14)
>
> ("Yes, Sir, I divided my riches into four groups, the first group I put it in the sea, another group I set fire on it, another group I lent away and I'll never be repaid, and the other group has paid a debt and I have not finished paying.")

On hearing this riddle Sultan's response to Ali was:

> "Ali, uza ghali, usiuze rahisi." (p.14)
>
> ("Ali, sell dearly, don't sell cheaply.")

When Ali leaves, the minister pretends to know the meaning of Ali's words but the Sultan is not convinced. Thereupon Sultan promises him everything he has if he can work out the meaning of Ali's words without asking Ali.

The minister, however secretly gets the meaning of the words from Ali himself at a great price. The Sultan vacates his throne for his minister only to discover later that he

has been cheated. Eventually Ali tells the truth. Ali is promoted to be a minister and the former minister becomes a mere commoner.

In the story our sympathies are directed to Ali the erstwhile reckless young man who finds himself rich. Since we are not told how Ali squandered his riches, we withhold our judgement. The story does not depict Ali as an angel but on the other hand he learns his lesson. His experience has made him wiser and now he has to apply his intelligence to survive. In the end the reader also admits that it is more profitable to have intelligence than to be rich.

This story holds the reader's attention through the use of suspense that is heightened by the strange responses which Ali gives to people. More suspense is added by the riddle which Ali, heeding Sultan's words, sells expensively to the minister. Another aspect that sustains the reader's attention are the subtle reversals of fortune that are set in motion when Ali's father dies. The security of having a father is shaken and no doubt Ali learns that a father is more precious than all the riches. How he loses the money is a riddle that has facilitated his own growth. The changes he goes through and the wisdom which Ali gets from experience is more valuable than his rise, once more, to the higher ranks of the society.

The children who were given the book to read chose "Uza Ghali" as their most favourite story in the collection. It interested them especially on account of its suspense

which is sustained in the riddle Ali sets. Ali's character is also depicted as down-to-earth for he is a man who makes mistakes and learns from them, falls and rises again. As a hero, this ability to come out of defeat and succeed by his own effort not through the riches of his father, is most appealing.

Another character who seems to set problems, not necessarily riddles, is Abunuwasi in Hekaya Za Abunuwasi. Abunuwasi impresses the reader with his wisdom in handling difficult social problems. He is similar to the hare, a familiar figure in folklore, in his wit and humour but on the other hand he is not a trickster per se. Abunuwasi rises above the level of the trickster in his social concern especially for the disadvantaged. He is not fighting selfish battles and avenging himself like the hare nor does he leave his antagonists in shame, rather he rises all the time to be a kind of legal advisor, a society's conscience in a world that can be unfair for some. Viewed within the stratified social structure Abunuwasi is just and teaches other people to maintain fairness in their dealings and foster good relationships. He has a high standing among the nobility but he does not support them when they start taking advantage of their subjects. He leads the evil to punishment and the just to be rewarded.

Abunuwasi's character is widely known among adults and children. In adult circles, a person who is a trickster may be referred to as 'Abunuwasi' especially if he is also good at setting stories to support his arguments.

Hekaya Za Abunuwasi Na Hadithi Nyingine is a book of stories purportedly told and written down by Africans. To give a stamp to this statement the book opens with the Kiswahili opening formula for folktales.

Mwanzo wa kila hadithi anayesimulia hunena:

Paukwa

Wanaosililiza hunena:

Pakawa

Anayesimulia

Kaondokea chenjagaa
Kujenga nyumba kakaa
Mwanangu mwana siti
Kijino kama chikichi
Cha kujengea kikuta
Na vilango vya kupita

Although the above poem is not the current opening formula to stories in Tanzania, the children who read the book enjoyed the rhythm and rhyme in the formula. Many read it aloud even when they were not instructed to do so and some commented that even though they liked it, it did not mean anything. As a collection, Hekaya Za Abunuwasi is very oriental in flavour. All the stories are set in Bagdad and Ajemi and even the few that do not have a specified locale tend to reflect the Arabian culture. The book presents a social hierarchy in which the Sultan and his family lead in a gradation that moved down in order of seniority from Sultan's attendants to the respectable Moslem populace occupying the

bottom ranks of the social ladder. In this structure the Waswahili of the Coast are presented as superior to the inland people.

The Wadigo are for example put in a very poor light:

> ... palikuwa na Wadigo waliokuwa wakija Mvita kutembea au kuja kuuza vitakataka vyao. (p.77)
>
> (.... there were some Wadigo who used to come to Mvita to visit or to sell their rubbish.)

When they decide to become moslems, it is without proper teaching, and their new religion is meaningless. It is clear that whoever wrote the story was a Moslem.

Since its publication in 1935 children have responded positively to Hekaya Za Abunuwasi for the simple plot and straightforward narratives that deliver the message without preaching. The stories themselves are short and to the point. Time is not wasted on unnecessary details. Tanzanian children over the years have enjoyed and relived these stories and might continue to derive pleasure from them for many years to come.

Like the stories from the European tradition, these oriental stories continue to circulate among and inform the Tanzanian child especially those who live in Zanzibar, Pemba and on the coast. In most cases the children do not recognise them as foreign stories. They respond to them as if they are African stories set at the coast with characters whose origin is Islam.

2.3.10 African Literature

In addition to Asian literature, Tanzanian children were also exposed to literature from both eastern and western Africa though a lot of this literature was written by Europeans using African material and with the aim of appealing to the children. It was in this spirit that D.W. Grieve's Adventure Into Poetry For African Schools, reached the readers, largely secondary school students. Apart from the appealing word African in the title, this book which is now being read by some primary school children, has hardly any material drawn from the African world. Commenting on the book's shortcomings, A.B. Odaga says that

> The poems are mostly by English poets, and an African child is at a loss as to the meaning.and what the poems are about. These are poems which the editor himself must have read while he was at school as a child.[38]

Odaga implies that only English children can enjoy English poets but the editor of the book is of a different opinion. As he argues, some of the poems were tried out on children

> first to discover what kind of poetry really appealed to African children.[39]

The editor hoped that these poems would bring pleasure to African children. The methods he used to decide that the African child enjoys the poems were not given but Grieve used them in the classroom to lead the children to "enjoy poetry as it should be enjoyed." First

published in 1952, the book by 1977 had 19 reprints and is still in circulation in Tanzanian libraries and gathering dust in some school archives.

It did not take long for even the coloniser to realise that the African child responded differently to European literature, and out of the effort to reach the African reader, books we written based on his lore and on his day to day experiences. These books were circulated no only in the African continent but also in other colonies of Asia. As well as meeting literary needs they were also intended to impart knowledge to the children about what was happenin in other parts of the world.

A good example is I.M. Travis' Jasper's Book of Rhymes, (first published in 1955) which ope the eye of the reader to the activities of various people. The reader encounters the potter, th seller, the weaver, the hunter, the seamstress and the driver as they are introduced to him in simple rhymes so that as he learns the experience of rhyme in poetry he also learns new knowledge. The rhyme, rhythm and the recitation enhance memory and therefore retention o new knowledge.

Many children have loved the poems especially 'Pots', 'Market Day' and 'Dancing'. Th writer captures the interest of the little children in this simply written book combining some narrative with the poetry. We heard one of the readers reciting 'Pots' about three days after reading it. When asked what made her like it she said it is the idea of having so many pots:

"Naona chungu chungu nzima."

She said as she remembered

Black pots, brown pots,
Turned out of clay.
Big pots, small pots,

Made in a day. (p.6)

In addition, the reader identifies with Jasper, Yaw, Babah and Ama as they encounter people in the various professions discussed in this book. Though there are others who do not like the book, especially the older children, who say that it has no story, others are quite content with the poetry and they just skip the prose as they sing with the author:

I'am as happy as a king,
When I dance and when I sing.
I move my feet
To the drum's quick beat.
I stamp and sway
As the drummers play,
And I laugh aloud
And join in the crowd.
For I'am as happy as a king,,
When I dance and when I sing. (p.16)

The children learn about the cultures presented by the books and note the differences. Some children comment on the strange belief of Patois of the West Coast of Africa. 'Dead Man's Chalk' of which even the writer says in the introduction:

> Of all the tales handed down verbally from generation to generation that I have listened to about man's departure into the great unknown none has captured my fancy so much as the one concerning 'dead man chalk', this combines fantasy humour and legendary superstition with the elements of modern science research. Moreover, it is based on fact and has become a twentieth century legend in West Africa, for the unfortunate diabetic lived in Murrytown in 1920's and was a patient in well-known local hospital. (p.iii)

The preamble, however informative pre-empts the story's magic, and the reader is just left wit the information. Consequently the story is not as well liked as it should have been. Such a story needs to be left to speak for itself.

2. 4 Conclusion

In this chapter we have examined the written literature of the colonial period that has survived to the present day and tested it on the children of today to discover the reasons for it lasting impact. Our appraisal of the literature has revealed its great variety, its appeal, its drawbacks, its paradoxes and its contribution to the literary needs of children especially enhancing their linguistic ability and firing their imagination. The chapter has enabled

us to elicit response on the literature of the colonial period even though some of it may seem outdated to the Tanzanian child of today.

The books discussed in this chapter are not seen as mere survivals of an interesting though irrelevant literature. They are viewed as influencing the writer of children's books while at the same time informing the readers who come across them. The interaction between the various categories and sources of literature circulating in Tanzania creates a rich background for a uniquely Tanzania literature to develop.

NOTES

1. Ngugi Wa Thiongo, "Literature and Society" in Gachukia and Akivaga's Teaching of African Literature in Schools, (Nairobi, Kenya Literature Bureau, 1978) p.3.

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3. Karl Shapiro, To Abolish Children and Other Essays, (Chicago, Quandrangle Books, Chicago, 1968) p. 29.

4. op.cit.

5. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Ibid, p.26.

6. Tanzanian Primary School Syllabus, 1977 (Dar-es-salaam: Institute of Education, 1977) p. 21

7. Our translation. All other translations into English will be similarly presented following the original language and in brackets. Such translations will not always be word for word.

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10. Rockwell, Fact in Fiction, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974) 4.

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12. Eddah Gachukia, "Cultural Conflict in the East African Literature," (Unpublished PhD. Thesis of University of Nairobi, 1978) p. 37.

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18. Quoted from a speech by H. E. Sir Philip Mitchell, Governor of Uganda, by A. V. Elliot and P. Gurrey, Language Teaching in African Schools, (London: Longmans, 1940) p. 77.

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20. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Decolonising The Mind, (Nairobi: Heinemann, 1986) p. 12.

21. Chinua Achebe, Arrow of God, (London: Heinemann, 1964) p. 55.

22. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, The River Between, (Nairobi: Heinemann, 1965) p. 24.

23. Taban Lo Liyong, Popular Culture of East Africa, (Nairobi: East African Publishing House,) p. xii.

24. Julius K. Nyerere, Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism, (Dar-es-salaam: Oxford University Press, 1968) p. 46.

25. Ibid.

26. Subsequent quotations from King Solomon's Mines will be indicated by publisher and page number. Quotations from other texts studied will be indicated by page numbers.

27. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o: Writers in Politics (Nairobi, Heinemann, 1981, p.28 note 18 and p.33 note 19.)

28. Micere Mugo in Eddah Gachukia and S. K. Akivaga: Teaching of African Literature in Schools, (Nairobi, K.L.B., 1978) p. 34

29. R. Townsend, Written For Children, (London, Garnet Miller, 1965) p. 53

30. Edna Johnson, Evelyn R. Sickles & Frances Clarke Sayers, Anthology of Children's Literature (Cambridge Massachusets: The Riverside Press, 1959 [3rd Edition]) pp. 41-42.

31. Nicholas Tucker, The Child and The Book: A Psychological and Literary Exploration, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) p. 9.

32. Paul White, The Goat Who Wanted to Become a Lion, (Lindfield Australia: Paul White Productions, 1981) back cover.

33. Full texts of this and other poems referred to in this section are drawn from Burma Burris, Mother Goose Rhymes, (London: Purnell Publishers Ltd.) collection except those which are indicated otherwise.

34. A. Loogman, Someni Kwa Furaha: Kitabu Cha Tatu, (Nairobi: Nelson, East Africa, 1978) p. 1.

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38. B. Odaga, Literature for Children and Young People in Kenya, (Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau, 1985) p. 24.

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CHAPTER 3

TANZANIAN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AFTER INDEPENDENCE

3. O. Introduction

Our analysis of children's literature in the colonial period has revealed the rich interaction between oral and written literature, between literature in English and literature in Kiswahili, and between literature with European, Asian, and African backgrounds. It has shown how this interaction has created a uniquely East African literature that has provided a background to the Tanzanian literature.

The literature available to children after independence should be seen both in the context of the ideals of independence and the new perspectives on education. The most distinctive characteristic of this literature is the new relationship between oral and written literature. In the East African region to which Tanzania was intricately linked, the 'pioneer'[1] literature merged oral and written literature by committing folktales to the written form. Some people, especially nationalist politicians and educators felt that

committing folktales to writing would connect what the children knew in an oral form to the new written culture which they were beginning to consolidate.

Many writers for children have drawn from this rich oral literary source. Nyerere urges that it be utilised to inform the reading public in a changing, literate Tanzania. The best thing to do, he argues, is to commit it to writing:

> Jifunzeni kwa wazee wenu na babu zenu hadithi, mashairi na historia ya watu wetu maana mambo mengi sana hayo hayajaandikwa vitabuni, na kama hamkuyajua basi yatapotea. Hadithi hizi ni sehemu ya urithi, wetu. Ni lazima mzijue na kuwafundisha wengine, zisijasahaulika baada ya kizazi hata kizazi.[2]
>
> (Learn from your ancestors and elders stories, poems and the history of your people for a lot of those things have not been written in books for if you do not learn them they will disappear. You must know them and teach them to others so that they are not forgotten with the passing of generations)

Here Nyerere is not being sentimental or nostalgic about his people's oral literature but simply recognising its value not only in reflecting their culture,but also in entertaining and teaching. W. D. Kamera expresses the same view:

> "Urithi wetu wa jadi kwa hakika ni kisima chenye rutuba ya kutosheleza haja zetu zote za utunzi na uandishi.[3]
>
> (Our traditional heritage for sure is a well that is rich enough to satisfy all our literary needs.)

What gives written traditional literature strength is not the medium of writing but the society that anchors it as representing its culture and art. Mbonde attests to oral literature's aesthetic and didactic values as he states that:

> ni mali ya Bia.
> Yahuisha, yadumisha;
> Yastaajabisha, Yaburudisha;
> Yazoeza, Yahekimisha,
> Yaelimisha.[4]
>
> (it is the wealth of co-operation
> It enlivens, it gives continuity,
> It surprises, it refreshes,
> it accustoms
> It gives wisdom, it teaches.

Further Mbonde recognises the value of oral literature and its strength in influencing future generations. This oral literature is paradoxically dependent on the written form for survival. The point is that although there is a significant decline in communicating literature orally the same material, if properly presented in the written form, can continue to benefit the children of Tanzania. This view is held by many other scholars who see written literature as developing from oral literature. Discussing the form of the Ewe poetry, Adali-Mortty states that there is a link between oral and written literature with regard to form:

> It is out of those materials that modern creative writing can be built, if it is to be distinctly original and West African. There is a form of West African poetry- we must find it out.[5]

The writer for Tanzanian children can also benefit from and build upon this oral literary foundation. Taban Lo Liyong observes that there is a uniqueness in the materials and techniques used which could be exploited in writing. He goes further to suggest how this can be done:

> We can dress these tales for classroom and fireside consumption by the use of modern speech and colour. Since ours is a world where past and present, East and West, exist side by side, our tales are bound to bear the brand of this anomaly. We are not children of two worlds; to acculturate us, ingredients had to be borrowed from Moslems, Jews, Christians, Caucasians, Asians, Red Indians, to add to our African base. One hundred percent African is polycoloured; both the writer and the reader. Hence more appropriate to the readers if they reflect the sophistication of the readers.[6]

What Taban Lo Liyong is suggesting is something beyond mere utilisation of a nation's oral literature, however rich. He is asserting that the reality of the life of the African has a multiplicity which should be reflected in the literature that is produced. The colonial experience and its heritage of children's literature is one such fact which our study explores.

The Tanzanian writer of children's books has heeded these calls and is in fact tapping from the oral literary well. The result is that many of the works that are

available to the Tanzanian child, though written, can safely be termed traditional literature.

Tanzania is not alone in this use of oral literature. It is a venture that she and her East African sisters, Kenya and Uganda, got into as a team. Any attempt to trace the growth of Tanzanian children's literature therefore, must recognise it as being part of a regional literature.

East Africa as we know it today with its specific geographical boundaries was really a colonial creation. Although the three countries that make up East Africa proper, that is Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania have a lot in common the commonality of their experiences increased after they were put under one ruler, the British. Common services between the three countries were introduced to help the administration and these continued operating after independence only to break up in 1977. Among the common services established during this period included education, publishing and distribution of literature. The East African Literature Bureau, for example, was founded to stimulate the production and distribution of literature for African use. The Bureau published textbooks and readers which were distributed by each of the three countries. The success of the Bureau may have inspired the creation of other publishing houses, notably East African Publishing House, with similar interests.

Oxford University Press and Longman had already established themselves as distributors of literature for children.

The widespread use of Kiswahili, especially in Tanzania and Kenya, was a major advantage that promoted the writing of books in Kiswahili. Some titles were written in English and translated into Kiswahili. The writing traditions established by writers of the East African region have survived to the extent that one cannot discuss development and growth of Tanzanian literature without reference to significant works from other parts of East Africa.

3. 1. East African Literature

One major characteristic of the pioneer children's literature from the East African region was the way it committed folktales to writing. Publishers launched series of books targeting various levels of the educational system and thus encouraging the use of these books in the classroom. Serious efforts to standardise the language was not a major preoccupation so eventually the books were read by those children who could understand them. What happened was that books written for the lower primary school were not read by that age group alone. The better reader in upper primary appropriated some of the lower secondary school books, like Barbara Kimenye's "Moses Series". A good representative of these early East African books

and one that is widely read in Tanzania is Anne Matindi's The Sun and The Wind and its Kiswahili translation, Jua Na Upepo.

In The Sun and The wind Matindi presents five stories which are different in subject matter and representing adaptations of traditional narratives or simple stories with moral lessons. The first story is a dramatic contest between the sun and the wind in which the sun is acclaimed stronger than the wind for making man take off his coat. The second story, like the first, reminds one of Aesop's fables: the character is a girl who, like the boy who cried "wolf!" in Aesop's story, enjoys teasing her parents at night. On the first night she cried and said that her bed was full of the ferocious ants. The second time she claimed a dog had found its way to her room and on the third night there was, according to her, somebody in her room. When real danger came she received no help from her parents. A snake found its way to her bed, bit her on the leg and "In the morning Njoki was very ill and a within few hours she was dead."

The third story is about a lazy, cruel woman who does not like to hear the barking of the dog because it keeps waking her at night. She learns a lesson when thieves break into her house and steal everything. In the fourth story domestic and wild animals meet to "find out which had the greater troubles, the wild animals or the domestic ones." The last one is an aetiological story explaining why the zebra has the

beautiful black and white stripes while the donkey has two black stripes down his neck and across his shoulders.

It is the first of these stories that the children enjoyed most although they said they recognised the settings of all the other stories. They knew the stories' basic motifs and were therefore on very familiar ground but The Sun And The Wind" was a favourite because of the action involved. The children said they could imagine the strength of the wind as it threatened to take off the man's coat. No doubt in their minds they could feel the wind, see the havoc it causes, and hear it blow, over and above sympathising with the man struggling to keep his coat on. They also would imagine the sun's effect, its brightness dazzling the eyes and its heat burning their bodies as it scorched the poor man until he removed the coat.

Matindi is aware that she is writing for the very young children so she keeps her language simple. The plot is also kept simple and the number of characters reduced to a minimum. Since she is recounting traditional stories she maintains the same pattern of crisis and resolution. A good example is when Kanti's wife is beaten up by the thieves. Her husband forgives her. She learns a lesson and the reader expects the situation to change after that. The child reader recognises Kanti's wife's problem as a negative attitude towards the dog that is guarding her home. In traditional tales neglect or ill treatment of some creatures is usually followed by some kind of crisis, or a

punishment. The child is quite at home with the punishment meted out but also relieved by the amicable solution to the problem where everything returns to normal.

In "Animal Troubles" Matindi starts off with straight narrative, then changes and presents the conversations in form of a play. She loses the impact and appeal of the story when she mixes the prose narrative of the story with the play form without demonstrating the skills of a playwright to keep up the interest of the children. Her experience with the play form renders the entire story boring to the children.

Another series launched by East African Publishing House for middle primary school classes are the books in "Elementary English Readers Series". Two titles, namely The Fly Whisk and The Magic Stone were found to be widely read by Tanzanian children. The ten stories in The Fly Whisk are drawn from the Maasai community and depict its community's environment and culture without alienating the reader who does not come from that culture. The general appeal is achieved through the employment of familiar motifs and good plots.

The most popular story in The Fly Whisk is the title story which starts like the oral tale and on a note of suspense:

> Once upon a time, there was a hare who set out to have an adventure." (P.39)

We are not told what kind of adventure he is seeking but as he is crossing a river "the water was flowing so strongly it held him back." He manages to swim across to the other side but discovers that "his tail had come off".(p.39) Events unfold that make him forget the loss of his tail as he gets caught up in unplanned adventure:

1. He looked round, saw a well-made earthenware pot so he picked it up and went on his way.
2. Found warriors cooking cow meat in broken pots, and gravy was running out. Offered them his pot telling them, "But look after it well."
3. In return the warriors gave him a large piece of uncooked fat.
4. Gave the fat to girls to smear themselves and in return the girls gave him a beautiful necklace.
5. Gave his necklace to women who were making necklaces with wild fruits. The women gave him some cow-dung.
6. He gave the cow-dung to some old men to plaster houses and in return he was given a fly-whisk

7. When he lends the buck his flywhisk to dance with trouble starts. The buck will not give back the flywhisk.
8. The warriors will not kill the buck.
9. The tree will not fall on the warriors.
10. The fire will not burn the tree.
11. The water will not put out the fire.
12. The cow will not drink the water.

When hare enlisted the help of the lion asking him to eat the cow, lion obliged for he was hungry and:

The cow started drinking the water.
The water started to put out the fire.
The fire started to burn the tree.
The tree started to fall on the warriors.
The warriors came to kill the buck and the
buck gave back the hare's fly whisk. (.. 46-47)

In the end hare had adventure and so had the children. Events unfold in this story but not illogically. Considering the setting of the story nothing that happens is

out of place. Apart from the interaction between living and non-living things there is no magic involved. The urgency of getting the fly-whisk is emphasised by repetition and appeal to the characters mentioned above. The children loved the hare's cummulative song, and some were heard chanting the song aloud during the observation schedules. Repetition flavours the story and makes the events memorable. This story lends itself favourably for reading aloud and actually invites readers to read aloud.

The beginning of the story is particularly interesting because it presents hare as having no particular plan for the day. He is representative of many children who allow the day to just roll on. The child readers were therefore not at all surprised by hare's seeming aimlessness for they identified with him. Hare's experience reminded them that they too get caught up in unexpected things happening around them.

The title story of The Magic Stone contrasts two brothers: one Metusera, is rich but unkind, the other Joseph, is very poor but kind. For being kind to an old man, Joseph is rewarded with a magic stone from which he gets anything he asks for. He not only asks for things for his own family but he also considers people of his own village too. When his brother, Metusera, is spying on him he is actually wishing for a new school for his village.

Metusera steals the magic stone and wishes for salt when he is still in his boat crossing the lake to his island. "I wish for all the salt in the world. " The salt seller's wish came true and:

> ...salt came pouring down from the sky as if it were rain. It fell on to the boat in a heavy mess and soon the boat was filled with salt but still it continued to rain down. "Stop!" But it was too late. The boat sank to the bottom of the lake and no more was heard of the greedy Metusera. p.11

The reader is made to visualise the salt raining down into the boat and witness Metusera's frustration. In the eyes of the children, Metusera got the punishment he deserved for, to use the words of some readers:

> "He was too selfish. He had no thought for his brothers."
>
> "He was a thief."
>
> "His heart was like stone."

The readers' sympathies were with Joseph who upon getting good fortune shares it with his family and fellow villagers. They passed a moral judgment on Metusera, suggesting that they would behave more like the good brother Joseph.

These stories in which traditional material is reproduced in a written form take advantage of the familiar setting, situations and even characters. Nevertheless, even though the material is familiar the presentation in a written medium means that its imaginative appeal is different and dependent on the choice of stylistic devices employed such as repetition, suspense, characterisation and dramatisation. This is more pronounced in the stories which borrow from oral narratives but are not strict reproductions of the plots of the latter. Such is the case of Hadithi Zetu. Ndungu's title, Hadithi Zetu was no doubt a very marketable one when the book had just been published in 1967. Although the book suggests that the five stories presented are traditional stories, the actual narratives give a different presentation. For instance the book starts with an amusing story, "Mjinga", which is very similar to one of the stories of Abunuwas, a character well remembered since colonial days. A young boy known in the story as Mjinga- a name he was given by his brothers- manages to find his way to the king's presence to present a gift to him. He has an egg for which he paid two shillings to the farmer. Two of the king's guards severally bargain for half of what Mjinga will get from the king before they can allow him to present his egg to the king. As it turns out, the "foolish" boy asks to be beaten. The king is surprised and asks.

> "Mbona Mjinga wewe. Kwa nini unaomba kupigwa?"(p.11.)
>
> (What a fool you are. Why are you asking to be beaten?"

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> (What a fool you are. Why are you asking to be beaten?"

The boy insists and the king obliges. Before he is beaten he discloses that the two guards should share the "gift". It is amusing for the reader to witness the two guards receiving their thrashing. The king thinks the boy is really clever; he says:

> Mimi sikubaliani na ndugu zako. Nafikiri wewe ni kijana mwenye akili sana. Sasa nitakupa zawadi nzuri kuishi katika nyumba yangu maisha yako yote, na utakuwa msimamizi wa watumishi wangu wote. (p.11.)
>
> (I don't agree with your brothers. I think you are a very clever boy. Now I will give you a nice gift: You will live in my house all your life and you will oversee all my servants.)

Many children, identifying and sympathising with the boy, thought the brothers were cruel. Some wondered why the brothers should think such a clever boy was foolish. We are not given good reason to consider the boy foolish and the boy does not accept this judgment about himself. He goes out to prove to the world, even before the king, that he is clever.

This story is like the traditional story in dismissing characters who are no longer useful to the plot. The brothers' contribution is in the nickname they give to the boy after which they do not appear in the story. As in the traditional story the reader is presented with mere stock characters such as the king who acts as the overall judge and the guards who take advantage of their privileged positions. The one deviation from the traditional mode is that the boy goes beyond trying to prove to the brothers

that he is not foolish, he tries to hold them in a poor light. His mission is to prove that he is clever, not to the general populace but to the king himself. The child reader is likely to identify with the boy in that he too cannot justify himself or argue his case with his older brothers and sisters or parents and elders who label him wrongly at times. Manipulation of the narrative in this way has helped the child to identify with the boy on the one hand but weakens the story on the other. A traditional tale would have created a conflict around the wrong nickname and the main character would have tried to justify his position to his brothers.

In the same vein but using a different kind of story, Ndungu creates an exciting story of suspense and also suggests, at a very low metaphysical level, the existence of good and evil spirits who come to reward and disturb the living. Whereas "Mjinga" is not a fitting nickname for the boy in the first story, "Matambara" (rags) fits the character of "Matambara Na Wezi wa Usiku." Even the reader is in agreement when he is given the reasons that:

> Jina hili "Matambara Kamau" halikuwa jina lake halisi. Mwenyewe hasa alikuwa akiitwa Peter Kamau, lakini kila mtu alimwita "Matambara" kwa sababu ya koti lake ambalo wakati mmoja lilikuwa rangi ya kijani kibichi, lakini sasa limekuwa mchanganyiko wa vitambaa vya rangi mbali mbali. (p.12)
>
> (The name "Matambara Kamau" was not his real name. His name was Peter Kamau, but everybody called him "Matambara" because his jacket that was once green in

colour now was a patchwork of cloths of different colours.)

Although the name "Matambara" unlike "Mjinga", does not carry a moral judgment, it is however not a positive name. Even Penina, Kamau's bride-to-be, does not want to live with the shame of Kamau's poverty and be associated with the name Matambara. This is why she wants him to get himself another coat although this is a difficult task because some powers seem to be working against him. At Penina's suggestion he goes to a diviner who helps him and he not only gets himself a good coat but also:

> kofia maridadi na pete ya thamani ya kumvisha Penina....maisha ya raha mstarehe. Penina alishona nguo za mumewe vizuri na kila mtu akaacha kumwita mumewe "Matambara Kamau". (p.19)
>
> (a beautiful hat and a valuable ring to give to Penina.... lived a happy life. Penina made good clothes for her husband and people stopped calling him "Matambara Kamau.)

In the story Ndung'u is dealing with a subject that children in the East African region and especially those who live at the coast have had to battle with. Many children have asked themselves whether or not there are good and evil spirits. Others have wondered whether there are genii and whether humans can combat these powers. Ndung'u is telling the children that such powers exist and they can be subdued by special people. He does not attempt to go into metaphysics but he manages to convince the child reader that all was well with Kamau and his wife thereafter. Perhaps

realising that he could be misconstrued to be advocating for witchcraft Ndung'u has given another view of the subject in "Paka Mwanga". Here two young girls hear strange cat-like noises at night and suspect Mama Asha of being a witch that turns herself into a cat. They have evidence: whenever they look at her window late at night her light is always on.

In this story Ndung'u employs suspense that makes the reader expect something weird to happen. Events unfold and we discover indeed that Mama Asha, ugly and mysterious as she might look, is a harmless woman who sleeps late after making herself tea in the middle of the night. The cat-like sound that the girls have been hearing are real but they are none other than the whistling of the kettle with which Mama Asha boils water for her tea.

The traditional material is used here to build up the story and to create an atmosphere that generates fear of the weird noise. The narrative suspense, humour and excitement are very useful devices here which should combine to make the reader interested in reading more. However, the story depends too much on the children's knowledge of kettle that whistles. Our research experience revealed that only those who had heard of such a kettle saw the sense and enjoyed the humorous ending of the story. Here Ndung'u would have been better off introducing this whistling kettle to the children perhaps by allowing the children to see Mama Asha boiling the water in it.

This way it would have been something for the children to learn, and a mystery that had been building up in the story would have been resolved. The readers interviewed found the story confusing, and the resolution unclear because it was outside their experience. The humour was therefore lost on many children.

Very few children liked the last two stories. Many were however amused by giraffe's thoughts and actions in the fourth story. They specifically pointed out such passages as:

> Ingawa lilikuwa wazo zuri, lakini ilikuwa rahisi kufikiri kuliko kutenda. Alijaribu sana kupindua pindua, juu, chini kushoto, na kulia huku akijisemea mwenyewe; " Kushoto juu ya kulia, kulia juu ya kushoto, " hata karibu ashikwe kichaa. Mwisho alijaribu kufanya duara kwa shingo hiyo. Kwa bahati nzuri aliweza kutengeneza fundo. (p.29)
>
> (Although it was a good ideal, it was easier to think than act. He tried to twist and turn, up down, left, right as he said to himself," Left over right, right over left," until he almost ran mad. In the end he tried another method, that is he bent his head and then made a circle with his neck. By luck he was able to make a knot.)

Giraffe is trying to solve his problems of rejection as he shortens his neck so that other animals do not laugh at him and think him ugly. It was an uncomfortable experience to feel rejected, and no doubt children can identify with the giraffe and share his pain as he attempts to shorten his neck:

> Alipokuwa anaanza kutembea, alishtushwa na kitu alichosikia kimempiga. Kutupa macho alijiona amelala chini. Kumbe amegongana na mti, jambo lililomshangaza mno kwa sababu hakuwa ameouna. Ndipo alipogundua kilichotukia. Alishangaa akasema, "Fundo hili kumbe limepindua kichwa changu kikawa kinaangalia nyuma badala ya mbele. Ninaweza kuona nitokako bali sioni niendako." (pp.30-31)
>
> (As he started to walk he was surprised by something that hit him. When he looked properly he found he had fallen down. He realised that he had bumped against a tree and was surprised that he had not seen it. Then he discovered what had happened. He said, "So this now has made my head face backwards instead of forward. I can see where I am coming from, but I cannot see where I am going.")

Apart from a few humorous statements and actions the story itself did not appeal to the children. The beginning, for example weakens it. Ndung'u tries to explain why the giraffe is not happy and he offers a psychological treatise which the child reader does not worry about. Young readers are more interested in the action. They are quite content to experience what giraffe is going through rather than be informed what other animals do not like about giraffe's neck. A single viewpoint should have enhanced the effect of the story.

In "Hofu Ya Mutua " the author is attempting to present a realistic story and wants to hammer home to the children that even the educated should respect farmers and farming. While Ndung'u makes a good point, he fails in the presentation. He is so patronising that he puts the reader off.

Faithfulness to the traditional story is not necessarily a weakness. In his Hadithi Za Wahenga Amir's six stories written specifically for primary school children explore various human weakness but the common factors seem to be revenge and justice. In the first story an ogre who has been assuming various forms and eating children is discovered by none other than his human wife, surrounded by the whole community, killed and burnt to ashes. To make sure that he does not return in any other form, the ashes are thrown into the river. Evil is exterminated and peace is restored. Mize, the ogre's former wife is rewarded for her bravery and goodness: she is married to a good human husband. The story explores the step-mother step-daughter motif whereby the father is away most of the time when his daughter is mistreated by his wife and her children. The resolution of the conflict that ensues is archetypal; the step-mother is divorced and she goes away with her own two daughters; the father and child are happy together and later on the daughter is married to a rich shopkeeper from Tobora (sic).

The story of " Majaliwa Na Ng'ombe Wake" is more complex than the first two stories and it does not give very clear distinction of good and evil. It tells the story of a strange cow that keeps breaking its rope to destroy the neighbours' property. The punishment that the cow's owner eventually gets for the destruction that the cow

causes becomes his good fortune. As he cannot pay the damage his cow stays in his neighbour's kraal for four years. All the calves born during this period become his.

The third, fourth and sixth stories deal with irresponsible and unfair treatment from friends. Mwewe is left to take care of Mramba's children but she eats them; the rat steals cat's food although cat does most of the work; a woman cooks crocodile eggs for her guests- the very eggs that her friend crocodile entrusted to her care. Justice is meted out and the evil are punished.

The stories explore popular themes in oral tales which children could recognise from other narratives they had read or heard. They appeal to the reader because of their very familiarity and especially because of their immediacy of context.

Even in his title Hadithi Za Wahenga Amir does not apologize for drawing from traditional lore. His style too reminds the reader of the traditional form of the tale. We shall examine two of the children's favourite stories to explore Amir's style.

Both stories are set during the unspecified time, similar to "a long time ago.."

Mize na Zimwi: Miaka mingi iliyopita (p.1)

(Many years ago)

Mama Wa Kambo: Siku nyingi zilizopita (p.9)

(Many days ago)

Very spare details of the setting where actions take place are given:

Mize na Zimwi: Karibu na ziwa mmoja kubwa katika kijiji cha mivindeni (p.1)

(Near a big lake close to Mivindeni village.)

Mama Wa Kambo: Katika kijiji cha Ng'ombeni. (p.9)

(In Ng'ombeni village.)

Even the descriptions of the characters are spare. The two main characters are described as follows:

Mize na Zimwi: Siku hizo binti huyo alikuwa mdogo (p.1)

(In those days the girl was small.)

Mama Wa Kambo: Binti huyo aliishi na wazazi wake na alipata malezi mazuri mle nyumbani mwao. Tabia yake ilikuwa nzuri na akipendeza kwa watu wote wa kijiji cha Ng'ombeni. (p.1)

(The girl lived with her parents and was brought up well by them. She was well behaved and liked by all the people in Ng'ombeni.)

Amir employs very simply constructed sentences to tell his story. He unabashedly repeats some words but without marring the beauty of the story. Some of the words that recur in the stories show the passage of time. Here are some examples from " Mize na Zimwi":

Siku nyingine Mize alichelewa (p.1)

(On the same day Mize was late)

Siku nyingi zilipita (p.1)

(Many days passed)

Siku hizo jua lilikuwa kali (p.10

(In those days the sun was hot)

Siku za mavuno zilipofika (p.2)

(When the time for harvest came)

Siku nyingi zilipita baadaye (p.3)

(Many days passed)

Baada ya miaka miwili kupita (p.4)

(After two years had passed)

... siku moja usiku mkubwa (p.5)

(On one very dark night)

In "Mize na Zimwi" we watch the development of the plant that grows by the lake. It is not unusual for a plant by the waterside to flourish so Mize takes this plant as we would-a natural plant. As she picks the largest vegetable, she is doing the most obvious and logical thing. Her mother too is not surprised by the size and she prepares it in the normal way. The vegetable is so sweet that Mize's mother does the most logical thing: plant the seeds. Again the monstrosity does not appear until the plants have reached the time of bearing fruits:

> Siku za mavuno zilipofika mama na binti yake walivuna kwenye mibaazi, mikunde, mihindi na mihogo. Lakini mitango ilikuwa ikinawiri na haikuwa na matunda isipokuwa moja tu. Tango hili lilikuwa kwa nguvu na likawa kubwa kuliko la kwanza. Baada ya kupevuka, Mize alilikata na akalipeleka nyumbani kwao. (p.2)
>
> (When the time of harvest came, the mother and her daughter harvested peas, maize and cassava but the pumpkin plants were just lush and had only one fruit. This pumpkin was strong and became bigger than the

first one. When it was mature, Mize cut it and took it home.)

The vegetable is treated in the normal manner until it starts boiling in the pot:

> "Haukuchukua muda mrefu chungu kilianza kutokota na kufurika ...." (p. 3)
>
> (It did not take a long time for the pot to boil and start spilling over.).

When Mize calls her mother informing her, "Chungu chafurika." The pot repeated, "Chungu chafurika." Mother and child are so alarmed that they leave the pot on the fire and migrate to another place.

So far the development has been gradual but from now on the events take a dramatic turn until the ogre is killled. The resolution of the crisis is typical of the oral tale. All is well and they live happily ever after:

> Watu wa miji hiyo waliondokewa and hofu wakawa wakiishi mwao kwa salama na amani kama hapo zamani. Mize alipendeza sana kwa watu wa miji hiyo kwa ushujaa wake na namna alivyokuwa akimpeleleza zimwi na kuujua undani wake. Msichana huyu aliunusuru umma mkubwa wa mchi hiyo aliwaondelea misiba yao ya kila siku. Mara hii Mize aliolewa na mume mwengine mwadilifu na mwenye sifa za kibinaadamu. Waliishi pamoja hadi kufa kwao.(p.6).
>
> (Fear left people's homes and they lived safely and peacefully as before. Mize was loved by the people of

> the village for her heroic deed of investigating about the ogre. This girl saved the whole community from many deaths. Mize was then married to a true human being with whom she lived until her death.)

The ending of "Mama wa Kambo" like the ending of all the other stories in this book, reminds the reader of oral tales where evil is punished and goodness is rewarded.

Having explored the different types of stories available to the Tanzanian child from East Africa, we can deduce that most of these works are based on traditional oral tales and even influenced by the traditional style of story telling. While remaining faithful to the traditional tale can be a strength in itself when skilfully handled, there is still limited variety of other types of fiction.

Authors were bold in the use of oral material and experimenting with narrative styles to create written literature in East Africa. This boldness or interest does not seem to apply to poetry and drama of the period. There is no evidence that any poetry was written to be read by children. With regard to drama we have the lone case by Anne Matindi and Cynthia Hunter, The Sunmen And Other Plays which presents four plays for primary school children. Each play is preceded by an illustrative picture suggesting how it could be presented in a school situation. The authors give a synopsis of each play in one page entitled "what the play is about."

The first story is about the men (emphasis ours) who live on the sun and who call themselves Sun-men. Matindi and Hunter tell us that the Sun-men " have heard many stories about the earth and the Earth-men. They have heard that Earth-men suffer a great deal when the sun makes the earth very hot for a long time". They are curious to visit the earth but they must make the earth hotter so that it is just barely comfortable for them. When they visit the earth they discover that people are really suffering from the heat. The Sun-men become a good contrast with the Earth-men: the former are cold and the latter are sweating and cursing the heat. This contrast nearly gives the Sun-men away. The Sun-men " feel guilty because they have caused so much suffering" (p.24) to the earth people.

The major conflict in the play is the Sun-men's disagreement whether to go home or not. Marriot (a girl!), Dallas and Tumo want to go back but their leader, Balake, wants to stay. He says:

> You won't kill me with your cold. I'll be the first Sun-man to live as the earthlings do. One day I will tell them our secrets. (p. 30)

The other sun-men and woman depart for home leaving Balake to warm himself with his "warming-up spray" only to discover that the tin is empty. He walks "sadly away shivering as he goes "(p.30). Although we are not told what happened to Balake,

we can guess that he may not have survived the cold without the spray. It is possible that he died as the Earth people get rain and are happy.

The story in this play belongs to the science fiction genre and derives its action and meaning from fantasy. The story left a few questions unanswered. Children wished they were told more about the spaceship and the characters for example:

> "Marriot was a girl, wasn't she?".

This question whose answer is obvious is not as silly as it sounds. It was asked by a girl who was questioning the title The Sun-men. Even the Earth-men are not all men. Another reader suggested:

> "I would have liked to see what would have happened if the Earth-men discovered that the Sun-men were not real people."

Here lies the major weakness of the play: that there is no real conflict between Sun-men and Earth-men. In fact the ending disappointed most readers. They would have liked to see Balake joining the humans and they helping him to survive. The story ends on a note of suspense that suggests doom to Balake. Balake does not get sympathy from his brothers and sister. They do not attempt to take him home by force, and on earth he will not get Earth-men's sympathy because no positive relationship had

developed before. Balake is a man to be pitied; his brothers and sister are cruel and unloving.

Matindi and Hunter in "The Sun-men" have treated an interesting subject rather simplistically. They have failed to create convincing characters within a convincing setting. For example the reader and the actor will wonder what differences there are between Earth people and Sun people other than their responses to heat and cold. The authors' failure to rise above the abstract renders this play uninteresting.

The second play features domestic animals who choose the donkey to be their king "because he is very kind" but he is also very lazy and sleeps a lot. He does not want any of the animals to wake him up for any reason. The donkey misses his wedding when he oversleeps. The animals try to help but it is too late.

Many readers found the story amusing especially the idea of a donkey being a king. The authors, having departed from the traditional stereotypical characterisation should have filled in the gaps so that donkey comes out as a convincing character. More interactions with the other animals would have been necessary to effectively create a credible character. The stock characterisation of the donkey as a foolish animal in traditional tales seems to emerge in this play notwithstanding the fact that he is a king. There is a contradiction here that makes the donkey look awkward-kings

should not be foolish. Even children readers questioned the way the story ended for donkey:

> "How could donkey have been late for the wedding when it was still morning?"
>
> "We did not see the bride leave when donkey was late."
>
> "Surely a bridegroom should have a bestman."

Such comments suggest that the ending was not satisfying to the children even though the basic story was interesting.

Matindi and Hunter are at their best when they present the "The Dowries for a Daughter". The conflict is well presented as can be evidenced in the summary that precedes the play:

> Tumbo has a very beautiful daughter. Three young men want to marry her. Tumbo accepts dowry from each young man in turn. He says they must wait until the daughter is ready for marriage. He takes the money and disappears. The young men discover they have been tricked and they all go to Tumbo's house. When they find Tumbo has gone, they demand their money back. Tumbo's wife says he has taken it with him.. the daughter has run off with a man from another village! (p.43)

The children enjoyed following crafty Tumbo to the end and wondered what happened when he came back home. The children pitied the three young men because they had been cheated but questioned the manners of the young men. For example, child respondents said:

> "Why do they call Tumbo 'old man'? Don't they know how to address grown ups?"
>
> "Imagine shaking their mother-in-law to-be like that! It is a shame."

The play manages to present a convincing cultural setting which the children used to judge the characters. They recognised what was respectful and what was uncultural. The point they raised was important for any writer for children: conversations and actions of characters should ring true by adhering to the cultural setting created.

Like Matindi's previous stories there was need to develop characters more fully. Many of the readers, especially girls, wished the bride-to-be was presented in the drama. There is also a technical flaw in this play. In the synopsis the author promises a fight between three young men but we do not witness it in the action of the play. It is not even reported in speeches to have taken place. This technical flaw weakens the presentation of this play.

The least loved in Matindi's and Hunter's collection is the last play entitled "The Independent Village". Some children did not even read the whole play. The very synopsis promises some preaching and that is exactly what the reader gets:

> All the villages in a certain district decide to accept the advice given by Teachers, Doctors and Agricultural Instructors. They want to improve their living conditions so that their children will be healthy and well educated. But there is one village which refuses to join in with the others. The people there like to follow their own ways and they elect a leader whom they admire more than the Chief of the District. The leader tells them that they should be independent.
>
> The Chief calls a meeting and tries to persuade the villages to alter their ways. They refuse. Illness and Death come to the Village, and in the end the leader himself persuades the people to accept the Chief's advice. (p.12)

The play was accused of being boring. This could be because of its many adult speeches some of which are preachy and tend to repeat truths that the children already know. It lacks action, the conflict and the dramatic interaction which are essential in any drama.

The early East African books for children reflect a recapitulation of the history, culture and education as viewed in the early 1960s. There is a lot of borrowing and adapting from the oral literature. From our analysis it is evident that generally the authors of these works are primarily interested in preserving the story. Imparting

stories creatively for children's enjoyment does not appear to be their major concern. While some writers continued in this tradition, others explored new avenues, as we shall see in our next two chapters. For example part of the body of Tanzanian children's literature includes adapted translations specifically for Tanzanian use which are few but widely read. It is evident that the Tanzanian writer is not only influenced by his oral literary background but also what he reads from other parts of the world. The result is a literature for children that is diverse.

3.2 Tanzanian Children's Literature Today

The discussion in the previous section has seen the pioneer period of children's literature within an East African literary context. Not many books written for the East African market were available to the Tanzanian child but they do have a significant contribution to our discussion on the development of Tanzanian children's literature Our next eight sections will investigate the nature of Tanzanian Children's literature and present analyses of its contexts, material and form.

3. 2. 1 Traditional Stories

As in the other parts of East Africa, Tanzania's oral tradition not only has survived but has also been the rich source of many adopted written stories for children. Some of the authors present a faithful reproduction of the folkstory as in Mjema's Bi Kizee Wa Msituni na Hadithi Nyingine while others are adventurous as the authors of the stories in Parapanda; some are detailed in their narratives while others like B. Kitambi in Hadithi Zetu have written stories with only bare outlines. Some have targeted older children, for example Mayowa in Burudiko La Hadithi while others are written for younger children, for example in Hadithi Njoo , Sungura Kisimani, Kisa Cha Paka Kupenda Jikoni and Shukrani Za Simba.

Gabriel Rwechungura in his Hadithi Za Mapokeo admits in the introduction that the dozen stories in his book are based on traditional African tales. The opening formula, borrowed from the Swahili tradition gives stamp to the fact that Rwechungura is not claiming originality in text or form. After his

> Paukwa!
> Pakawa!

he proceeds to tell the story using the traditional format but he is not always bound by it. He has for example given names to not only his principal characters but the minor

ones as well. Moreover some of these names are intended to be symbolic. King Takabari's country is given the name Subiri (meaning 'wait') as it is anxiously waiting for a just ruler to come. The president who takes over from Takabari is the long awaited Adili who is both just and wise as his name suggests; Majonzi is the name of the girl who reminds her father of the death of his wife and the suffering he goes through thereafter; there is Mfalme Taabu who put to death many of his daughter's suitors; his daughter Uhuru is sought for by suitors rich and poor, from near and far; and Jazatumbo's main preoccupation is to fill his stomach. It is clear that Rwechungura has taken liberty to give some of his key characters names that are meaningful and symbolic. He however limits his own freedom by his choice of names. We found it interesting that Rwechungura used the following names for places and people:

Story 1: *Ikirahi* na *Ikitisadi*- main characters in the story: brothers

Story 3: *Subiri*: the name of the country

Story 5: *Istiska:* a town

Story 9: *Saburi:* the prince who marries Uhuru

Story 10: *Istawai*: a queen

In a book which is only fifty-eight pages names that are so similar in spelling or sound are far from desirable because children tend to mix them up and get frustrated when they cannot get them right or tell them apart.

It is clear from the stories that Rwechungura is not just telling the stories for sheer enjoyment but to reinforce certain truths which are pertinent to Tanzania today. A good example is the story of " Mfalme Takabari na Ndege Wa Ajabu" where we are presented with two different kinds of rules: King Tabakari was cruel and killed a lot of his subjects. The people of Subiri were tired of his rule and many went out of the country but king Tabakari made it more and more difficult for people to get out of the country and become more merciless.

There is some kind of divine intervention and king Tabakari dies a strange death which is seen as just punishment for having been so inhuman. Rwechungura informs us that when the king died the style of administration changed in Subiri:

> ----Mpaka sasa hivi nchi hiyo haina mfalme tena. Ni jamhuri chini wa uongozi wa Rais wao Adili. Rais Adili anajitahidi sana kuleta usawa, umoja na ujamaa miongoni mwa Wasubiri. Rais Adili anahimiza Wasubiri wote kutupilia mbali na kusahau kabisa ubaguzi, ukupe,ubwanyenye ubepari, ukabila na udhalimu wa kila aina aliouacha mfalme takabari (p.12)
>
> (even today the country of Subiri does not have a king. It is a republic under the leadership of President Adili. President Adili is trying hard to bring equality, unity and socialism among the Wasubiri. President Adili is encouraging all Wasubiri to put aside and completely forget discrimination)

Even the young readers could interpret the parallel between Subiri and Tanzania. Tabakari was the colonialist but since his "death" President Adili is now ruling and his ideology for Subiri is clearly stated as socialism.

Similarly in "Mama wa Kambo" we have the happy ending of Majonzi, her father, stepmother and half-sister all united:

> Wakaishi maisha yaliyofuata kwa raha mstarehe katika kijiji chao cha ujamaa: wakifanya kazi kwa maarifa na juhudi kubwa sana mpaka siku ile kila mmoja alipoitwa na BWANA (p.20)
>
> (They lived the rest of their lives happily and in comfort in their ujamaa village, doing their work with skill and strength until the day each one was called by the LORD.)

Rwechungura readily uses hackneyed cliches such as "fanya kazi kwa maarifa na juhudi" as long as they help him underline the point he is making and commmunicate to the readers using the terminology they are used to. At the end of each story he again summarises the main lesson of the story by quoting popular sayings and proverbs, a feature that many Tanzanian writers enjoy.

The language level of these stories, including the use of symbolism, is more appealing to the older child than the readers in lower primary schools. For example, while the story about king Takabari was a favourite of the older readers, the young

children found the words difficult in spite of the fact that there was a glossary at the end of the book. Our investigation revealed that children prefer words to be explained on the same page and not tucked away at the end of the story or at the end of the book.

Rwechungura's style has appealed to the older children who read his work. The story about King Takabari was a favourite of many. One of the strengths of the book are the descriptions of characters which are detailed and vivid to the extent that the child reader savours the images in the mind. The person that appeared to Takabari for example, is described as follows:

> ... mtu ambaye kusema mtu au mnyama au zimwi haiwezekani kukubalika katika mawazo ya wanadamu kwa jinsi alivyokuwa anatisha. Vidole vyake virefu na vilivyopindika vilichukua kucha zilizoweza kuonekana kabla ya kuona mwisho wa mwili wa vidole hivyo. Nyayo zake zilikuwa mithili ya nyayo za bata. Miguu yake mirefu kama ile ya twiga ilichukua kiuno kipana chenye kuwa na mkia mrefu kama vile miiba ya nungunungu. Tumbo, kifua na shingo yake vilikuwa vinatisha kwa mavunga ya nywele. Uso wake ulikuwa na kidefu kirefu na kipana. Pua ndefu yenye matundu manne, macho matatu makubwa na mekundu yaliyonawiri wakati wote. (p.36)
>
> Ajabu yake moja ni kwamba, kichwa chake kilichokuwa mviringo mithili ya tufe kubwa hakikuwa na unywele hata moja. Utosi ilisimama nundu ndefu iliyofuka moshi mfano wa volkeno. Kinywani yalitokeza meno mawili kama pembe za mbogo. Masikio yake yalikuwa marefu na yaliweza kukutana katikati ya kichwa chake na kusetiri utosi wake wote. Mikono yake iliota kifuani

badala ya mabegani. Alikuwa kiumbe wa kutisha katika maisha ya wanadamu. (p.36)

(... a person whose description does not fit that of a human being, an animal or an ogre and is highly unimaginable to the human mind and very frightening. His long, curved fingers had excessively long nails. His feet were like the feet of a duck. His legs were as long as a giraffe's. The waist was big and the tail was long. The abdomen, the chest and the neck had frightening clusters of hair. The face had a long wide chin. The nose had four nostrils above which were three big, red eyes which shone all the time.)

One surprising thing was that his head which was as round as a big ball did not have a single hair on it. On the middle of the head stood a big hump which let off smoke like a volcano. Out of the mouth protruded two teeth as large as the horns of a buffalo. His ears were long and met at the middle of the head as if holding the hump in place. His arms grew from the chest not from the shoulders. He was a truly frightening creature to any human being.

The child reader may not necessarily absorb all these details at once but whichever way one looks at the creature it truly is frightening. The reader is not surprised that King Tabakari was also frightened. The creature that Saburi meets and who later becomes one of his three helpers is more simply described but still the picture that emerges frightens the child reader.

....Jitu la kutisha. Jitu hilo lilifanana na jini kwa maumbile. Lilikuwa refu kweli, nene na kichwa chake kikubwa. Katika uso wa jitu hilo ilisimama pua

> nyekundu, ndefu na kubwa mno. Jitu hilo lilisimama katikati ya njia likichekacheka huku pua yake imeelekezwa juu, likinusanusa. (p. 37)
>
> (... a frightening ogre. The ogre looked like a genii It was really tall, huge and its head was also huge. On its face stood a long, huge red nose. The ogre stood on the road giggling as the nose faced upwards sniffing about.)

The action of the ogre in the above quotation enhances the element of the grotesque in the creature and creates fear for the reader.

Descriptions such as these create images in the mind of the reader and leave a lasting effect. We cannot easily forget the beauty of Uhuru after all the praise songs we have heard from the suitors and Rwechungura's own description of her. Her beauty is simply out of this world. Rwechungura sums up her beauty with the following statement:

> Hakuna mwanadamu ye yote wa kisasa angeweza kupumua kama angalimtupia macho mwanamwali Uhuru, (p. 34).
>
> (Her looks were simply breathtaking.)

In some of the stories Rwechungura incorporates songs whose effect is to break the monotony of narrative as well as advance the story. The bird in " Mfalme Takabari Na Ndege wa Ajabu " repeats a song instructing the king what to do. The ominous atmosphere created by the strange singing bird pervades the story and portends happenings as the threat is repeated:

Leo mambo utajuta;
Ukatili wako utalazimu kukoma katika dunia; (p. 11)

(Today you will regret;
Your cruelty will take you out of this world)

Repetition, a device commonly used in oral tales to enhance concentration and participation of the listeners is quite effective in this story although some of the oral song elements are lost to the reader. Although he is using traditional tales, Rwechungura creatively improvises in his narrative to give to the reader enjoyable stories for reading.

Like Rwechungura, C. K. Omari looks back on his childhood with nostalgia especially when he remembers the stories he heard as a child in the evenings from his grandmother. It is because of the value he puts on such stories that he was inspired to commit them to the written form in the two volumes entilted Hadithi Za Bibi. Omari is not simply fulfilling a duty, rather he is sharing something he enjoyed and still enjoys.

Both books have variety in subject matter and all the stories selected are within the child's sphere of interest. They range from animal stories to stories about human beings; from aetiological to sheer adventure stories. As they give the child a chance to

enjoy himself he is also left with something to think about. Each of Omari's tales ends with a proverb or popular saying meant to reinforce the lesson that the tale offers.

The strength of Omari's stories is in his manner of presentation. He is didactic but not preachy and he uses a simple clear language characterised by short sentences and paragraphs. He employs humour even when dealing with serious issues.

In his second book, Omari is aware that he is addressing not just readers from the Pare community but any reader who knows Kiswahili. He therefore explains to the reader some of the cultural references but without patronising or preaching.

The conversation in these books are fresh and memorable. In " Kisa Cha Nguruwe na Ng'ombe " for instance, we can read mischief in the voice of Sungura and know just how highly he thinks of himself:

> " Haya semeni mashauri yenu maana ninayo mashauri mengine yananingojea. " p. 2
>
> (Right. Say what your problems are for I have other problems that need my attention)

The reader is amused by this self-importance that the little animal has when he stands as judge before the big Cow and fat Pig. It is however a serious question that has been

put before him and puts on seriousness before judgement. The reader watches Sungura in his mind:

> Sungura alisimama na kukikuna kichwa chake halafu aliwaambia Ng'ombe na Nguruwe.. p.3
>
> (Hare stood up and scratched his head then told the cow and the pig...)

Cow and Pig are told to pull one another by the tails. Sungura prompts the action as he acts as the referee :

> " Moja, mbili, tatu, anza kuvuta: vuta, vuta, vuta," Sungura akakaza sauti yake huku akisisitiza nguvu zaidi kwa kila mmoja. p. 4
>
> (One, two, three: start pulling; pull, pull, pull, " Hare exclaimed to each of the two animals)

In this three and half page story Omari appeals to the reader's sense of hearing, sight and touch. By the time the reader has finished all the stories he has not only involved the five senses but also the kinetic sense.

Omari's use of short sentences and paragraphs also encourage the child to read. The first book has twelve short stories in forty six pages while book two has seven stories in fifty two pages. Both books are popular especially because of the simplicity in which they are presented:

Walipokuwa wanazungumza, watoto wao wakawa nao wanazungumza. Mtoto wa simba akawa anamnusa na kumrambaramba mwana wa ng'ombe. Ikaonekana kuwa wanapendana. (p. 19. Bk. 1)

(As they talked, their children were also engaged in a conversation. The child of the lion was sniffing at and licking the cow's child. It was clear they loved one another.)

The author is aware that some readers have heard this or a similar story so he concludes with a popular saying:

Jambo uwezalo kulifanya leo lifanye, usingoje kesho. Kesho huenda isije. Nao umoja ni nguvu na utengano ni udhaifu. (p.34. Bk . 1)

(What you can do today, do it and don't wait for tomorrow. Tomorrow may not come. Unity is strength and disunity is weakness.)

Omari's conversations are short, precise and appropriate. They not only advance the story but also help to characterise Simba and Sungura:

'Asante sana. Nisawa tu. Tafadhari nipatie hicho kipande cha nyama.' Simba alijibu huku akitasamu.
'Nitakupatia kipande hicho kwa masharti fulani' Sungura alisisitiza.
'Masharti gani? Simba aliuliza.
'Unajua, ni kawaida yangu kuwalisha wageni...
(p.21 Bk 1)

('Thank you very much. It is alright. Please give me the piece of meat.' Simba answered, smiling.
'I will give you the piece with conditions,' emphasised Sungura.
' What conditions ? ' Simba asked.
'You know it is my duty to feed the visitors..')

The two volumes of Hadithi za Bibi were found to be popular with children of various ages except those among the younger readers who were put off by what some described as "ugly cover picture." Using simple language like C.K. Omari's Mwanga, addresses himself to the needs of the Tanzanian children in the classroom as they study the foreign language, English. In the series he has entitled Readers for Primary English, Mwanga states that the books:

> have been written with the view of providing children at the primary level with reading material for pleasure. (Bk.1: p. iii)

The stories are therefore meant to serve two purposes: to delight the children as well as improve their English. To enhance the practical use of these books, Mwanga provides the meanings of the difficult words and asks questions on comprehension and grammar. The stories are kept simple because of the assumed low level of competence in the language. The best loved books in the series are Book 4, Yiluselekwilanga and Book 5, Parkipuny.

Book 4: Yiluselekwilanga contains thirty one pages of which seventeen have either questions or what the author calls 'reading preparation' at the beginning of the book. This presentation tended to put off some children from reading the story while others simply skipped the section on "reading preparation". Since the books were read outside the classroom none of the children who were consulted either tried to learn the new words or answer the questions. In other words, the writer's first objective, to enhance language learning, was not met.

In Yiluselekwilanga old women feature very prominently. In the first story 'Yiluselekwilanga' the old woman is the narrator of an incident whereby thieves came to her house when her husband was away. We are convinced she is a good story teller for even as she relives this incident the voice of her husband, Mwakyusa, is so vivid that the thieves run away. The only flaw is that she addresses her husband in a very un-African way:

"Mr. Mwakyusa! There is someone outside the house."

Some of the readers worried over the reasons for Yiluselekwilanga and Mwakyusa sleeping in different bedrooms. Such readers were relating the story to their own realities where married couples sleep in the same rooms.

The second story in Yiluselekwilanga, like the first, has an old woman as a character. She helps Nzagi, the youngest son of the chief to take home the needed rain. Nzagi succeeds where her older brothers fail because rain is a reward for his helping the old woman carry her bundle of firewood. In this story, "Nzagi Brings Rain", what is important is not the age of the character but what he does. Nzagi becomes a chief after the death of his father because he has brought rain and therefore life to the people.

In 'Nzagi Brings Rain' the age of the youngest son is not given but the child reader identifies with him particularly because he is the youngest. Another appeal of this story is its strong moral that we should help the weak and the aged as Nzagi did. Moral judgement is passed on his two elder brothers who emerge as selfish and uncaring. The children do not question where rain comes from. The magical element prevalent in so many oral tales works even in this written tale.

In "The Greedy Chief" an old woman in the strange country where there were wizards helped a poor man get rich. She gave him some beads that would give him anything he wanted. The poor man was happy and "wanted to show the chief his wonderful beads." The chief took the beads from the poor man and the latter was forced to seek the old woman's help again. This time she gave him a stick that taught the chief a lesson and he had no choice but to return the beads to the poor man.

Two stories in Parkipuny were chosen as their favourite. Only one child chose "Buhwahwa and the Bad Oranges for a favourite and she gave the reasons:

> "It teaches you not to eat rotten things".

In the story, Buhwahwa an adult falls ill for eating rotten oranges out of hunger. He is visiting relatives who seem to be lacking in African hospitality. He finds that they have already eaten their supper and they offer him nothing to eat. He is so hungry that he eats the rotten oranges that he had. Perhaps it is of no significance that the mother of the girl who chose this story as a favourite is a nurse but it is significant that this story did not endear itself to children. It lacks real conflict. The reader is tempted to say that it served Buhwahwa right for calling upon his relative at night. In fact Buhwahwa does not complain for not being offered food. Indeed he:

> "Knew that his relative had already eaten and that it was too late to start cooking food".

When he discovers that his oranges are all rotten, he switches off the lamp eats them and suffers consequences. Many children found Buhwahwa's action amusing. No doubt they identified with Buhwahwa but others thought him a silly adult who thinks that putting out the lamp would change the oranges. Mwanga does not mention the oranges having worms but the story created vivid pictures in the child's mind. One said:

"I'm sure he could still see the worms in his mind."

Interesting comments were made on "Parkipuny and the Rhino". Some children who had read "Sleeping Beauty" drew some points of comparison but none suggested that it was the same story. None said they preferred "Sleeping Beauty" to "Parkipuny and the Rhino" although they wished Parkipuny did not have to die just a day before the sixteenth birthday.

It is Parkipuny's fate to be killed by a rhino but none thought that it would be the horn of a dead rhino that would kill him . The tragic moment comes when Parkipuny, having escaped death rejoices as others rejoice, but unfortunately he steps on the blood of the rhino, slips and falls on the rhino's horn. "Parkipuny died there and then." (p.10.) Unlike the Sleeping Beauty, Mwanga's "Parkipuny" does not bring the protagonist back to life. Death in reality, is seen as final. No magic is conjured up to bring the boy, Parkipuny, to life. The child reader is saddened by the death but the experience reminds him that reality is sometimes very painful. The author leaves reality as it is and no magic is conjured up to bring Parkipuny back to life. Mwanga is faithful to the traditional mode to the extent that one does not change the sad ending of the story. This story helps the child to remember that there are tragedies in life which cannot be avoided.

In the same book is a popular story, "The Tree That Talked" in which a tree is presented as not only casting a big shadow over three girls but actually walks and then runs after them. It follows one of the girls who had wished the shade could follow them.

From Yiluselekwilanga and Parkipuny it is clear that Mwanga is a good story teller and has a way of capturing the child's interest with his strong story line, language and characterisation:

Another instance in which traditional material is adapted in a written story is in Kukopa Arusi Kulipa Matanga (To borrow is Wedding, to Pay is Death). The title is a proverb, and Sangija's purpose in the story is to illustrate the truth of the adage. He presents the story in such a way that in the end the reader knows the proverb and its meaning.

Choosing two people with symbolic names, Sangija presents the battle of wits between two opposites for Silipideni never pays debts while Siachideni never lets anyone get away with debt. Even death does not prevent Siachideni from making Silipideni pay. Both men are buried by people who believe Silipideni to be dead and Siachideni to be alive. Later Silipideni and Siachideni both agree to dig themselves out

of the grave. Silipideni pays the debt and no doubt learns his lesson. The lesson to be learnt is underlined in the last sentence:

> FUNDISHO: Ukikopa mali ya mtu rejesha katika muda wa MKATABA (p.30)
>
> (LESSON: When you borrow, remember to repay within the period of the agreement.)

The plot is interesting enough to attract young readers but the story narrative is ruined by Sangija's style. In a whole book of thirty pages, for example, only Siachideni and Silipideni are allowed to speak, and their conversations are all speeches which sound preachy and patronising to the child reader. Even when Siachideni and Silipideni meet what we have is a pure business transaction. Sangija does not develop these two characters well enough and this is because he fails to make use of his conversations well. Witness the following conversation between the two opposites:

> Silipideni alijibu. "Naam iwapo nitazipata sasa hivi nitazirejesha mwisho wa mwezi Desemba saa sita za mchana."
> "Je una hakika? Siachideni aliuliza.
> "Naam .. bila wasiwasi. " Silipideni alijibu
> "Unaweza kuniandikia hati?"
> "Twahibu!" Silipideni alijibu tena kwa kimkato.
> "Basi iwapo tutakubaliana..." (p.22)
>
> (Silipideni answered,"yes, if I get the money now, I will repay at the end of December at noon"

"Are you sure? asked Siachideni
"Yes.. don't worry," Siachideni answered
"Can you write an agreement?"
"Certainly!" Silipideni answered in short.
"Then if we are in agreement..)

The conversation is undramatic because Sangija does not exploit it fully. He could have brought out the difference between Siachideni and Silipideni through the use of dialogue. Another feature in Sangija's conversations is the use of unnecessary brackets which tend to slow down the speech and weaken the narrative. The following speech illustrates our point:

> "Naam.." Silipideni aliitika bila kuchelewa, huku akiwasha sigara,"Ni kazi bure kwangu kukueleza kwa kirefu jinsi nilivyofika hapa. Isipokuwa ninawajibika kukuambia moja kwa moja kwamba; huko pwani" alisogeza kitini apate kisimulia uongo wake vyema, "ni mtu maarufu sana, (ambalo lilikuwa ni neno la uongo mwingi na ukweli kidogo ndani yake) kutokana na maisha yangu bora na ya kushirikiana na jirani zangu. Hali kadhalika wananipenda kwa sababu mimi huwasaidia mara kwa mara katika shida zao mbali mbali (huo ulikuwa ni uongo tena) zinazowakabili. Lakini kuanzia mwezi jana nimekuwa katika tatizo moja kubwa ambalo limenishinda kulikabili. Nalo ni kobomolewa orofa yangu (huo ndiyo ulikuwa uongo wa hali ya juu) na nimeshindwa kuijenga mpya kwa kukosa pesa shilingi elfu shirini" Silipideni alimaliza kisha akamwangalia mwenyeji wake usoni kwa macho ya kung'aa. (p.21)

> ("Yes.." Silipideni quickly answered, as he lit his cigarette, "it is useless for me to narrate to you fully how I came here. But I am forced to tell you directly that at the coast," he pulled his chair so that he could narrate his lies properly, "I am a very famous person, (which was a big lie with little truth in it) and all people respect me very much (lies; in fact they despised him) because of

> my respectable life and the way I work together with my neighbours. They love me because I often help them out of their problems (that was also a lie) that trouble them But since last month I've had a big problem whose solution has been difficult for me. My storied house collapsed (this was the top quality lie) and I've not been able to build a new one because I'm short of money, so I need twenty thousand shillings," Silipideni said as he looked at the face of his host with shining eyes.)

One reader found Silipideni's narration of his problems to Siachideni " funny". When asked what she meant by what she said, "The writer keeps using brackets." We asked what was wrong with using brackets and received the following answers:

> "You don't find them in other books."
>
> "But is there anything wrong with them? We asked.
>
> "But he should not be saying those things in brackets.
>
> We know that Silipideni was saying lies."

Sangija in his authorial intrusions through the parentheses passes moral judgements on Silipideni instead of allowing the reader to deduce what kind of person he is. Often the words in parentheses are simply useless repetition of what the reader already knows. This speech also assumes that Siachideni is a rich fool who lends money to anybody who comes along. Silipideni's speech as it stands cannot convince a fool to part with his money.

As stated earlier, Sangijia uses the story to illustrate or reinforce the proverb. He succeeds very well in the main objective of teaching his readers the meaning of the proverb but he does so at the expense of the story and its realisation. In the introduction Sangijia admits that he is withholding some details of the story and giving us a short version of it but this is not an excuse for giving to readers undeveloped characters and a story that does not carry enough interest. Sangijia is quite happy to give the reader the chance to read other books:

> Nimeonelea litakuwa si jambo zuri kusimulia kwa kirefu sana hadithi hii, hivyo nimeifupisha lakini inaeleweka yaliyotokea ili kukupa msomaji nafasi ya kusoma vitabu vingine baada ya hiki ili kuendeleza lugha yetu ya taifa ya Kiswahili. (p.8)
>
> (I have decided it is not a good thing to tell the story at length. So I have shortened it but what happened is clear enough (I would like) to give the reader a chance to read other books after this one in order to promote our national language, Kiswahili.)

Many of the child readers have done exactly that: abandoned the book long before the end. Some complain that it was boring, others just did not like it.

Another writer who has combined the proverbs and the story is Semkiwa in Mazungumzo ya Babu Zetu. Like most of the East African writers who wrote in the 1960s and 1970s, the author is first and foremost concerned with perpetuating African

culture, education and virtues. The second purpose for writing this book is, to use the words of the editor:

> Pia ni kumfanya mwanafunzi, kwa kujibu maswali yaliyomo mwisho wa kila hadithi, agundue umuhimu wa mila na maarifa yaliyomo katika hadithi zenyewe. (Blurb)
>
> (It is also to make the student, by answering the questions at the end of every story, to learn the importance of culture and the moral within the story.)

Semkiwa has indeed gone out of his way to employ the use of various stylistic devices to achieve these two major purposes. It is obvious that he is not writing for children to read his book for sheer pleasure. The book has to serve a purpose and it is a carefully planned classroom text.

Each story deals with a universal truth which is reinforced by several proverbs within the story and with comprehension questions at the end. Semkiwa has not suggested which level of pupils should employ this book for classroom use. The discretion is left to the reader or the Ministry of National Education to go through the nine stories and grade the book. In our study we ignored the questions at the end of each story when we realised that the children were not interested in answering questions. We asked the children of various ages to read and give opinions on the stories especially with regard to what they liked best or least. We have chosen the best loved and the least loved stories by most of the readers of Semkiwa's book.

"Kikulacho ki Nguoni Mwako" was the best loved story. Semkiwa takes the reader right into the story. In the first sentence alone we know the main character, her parents and where she lives. By the end of the first paragraph we can recognise her as:

> .. msichana mrembo kwele kweli. Alikuwa mrefu, mwenye macho ya gololi na nywele za kipilipili. Uzuri wa Mzigwa uliambatana na tabia yake. Alikuwa mwenye heshima, adabu na tabia njema mbele za watu wote, wakubwa kwa wadogo;'Kizuri chajiuza kibaya chajitembeza;' Kwa sababu hii mzigwa alipendwa sana na wazazi wake na watu wengi pale kijijini. (p.22)
>
> (.. a really beautiful girl. She was tall, with eyes like marbles and smooth hair. Mzigwa's beauty matched with her behaviour. She was respectful, well behaved before everybody big or small; 'The good sells itself, the bad walks away;' and because of this Mzigwa was greatly loved by her parents and a lot of other people in the village.)

The way the writer plunges the reader into the action is significant in creating more interest in the story. We soon learn that Mzigwa's beauty and goodness arouses jealousy in four of her agemates and as dramatic events unfold, these four girls push her into a pit. The writer elicits our sympathies by juxtaposing the goodness of Mzigwa with the cruelty and evil deed of the girls. We wish we could help her out of the pit and are relieved when she is saved. We cry out for justice and wish, with the child readers that the girls would be thoroughly punished.

In this story however, Mzigwa is a rather passive character. She has been brought up by parents who correctly prefer love to hate, unity to divisive jealousies.

Semkiwa gives us an innocent Mzigwa, almost naive, who has inherited goodness. She is saved by her husband-to-be; the proposal for peace with the playmates is the father's idea and Mzigwa is swept along. The father and the husband-to-be are more memorable than Mzigwa who is supposed to be the main character. The fact that Mzigwa is not an active character reduces the excitement in the story making it the kind of story that a young reader does not revisit unless he has to answer the questions that follow.

"Chabai na Kilemba Cha Ukoka" is different from "Kikulacho Ki Nguoni Mwako" even in the way it opens. The beginning two and a third pages present the reader with a long introduction on the setting of the story and the method of election among the people who live by River Mkomazi. Later we meet Chabai, a poor orphan boy who is brought up by Mzee Chegogwe and grows up to be a man of the people. He is chosen to be the leader but after some time he misuses power and accepts the hollow praises from his enemies whose intention is to make him fall as a leader. He falls out of favour with his people and is dethroned. The lesson to be learnt is that people should not misuse authority.

Here Semkiwa's story is weakened by the long introduction and historical treatise. Many readers complained that the story was boring and they did not want to finish it. For a child who reads for pleasure and not to answer the questions, the story is

not exciting enough. Those who endured it to the end admitted that they still did not understand the main proverb which is also the title of the story. There are other proverbs used in this seven-page story which slow down its pace because the reader stops to ponder over them. The writer assumes that the reader understands the meaning and the use of these proverbs but they serve as a superfluous distraction, standing between the child reader and his encounter with enjoyment of the story. It is obvious that the author is looking for a chance to teach his students four more proverbs which are so important that he has put them in inverted commas for emphasis. He does not succeed with all the readers because some do not read this story after the long introduction. Mazungumzo Ya Babu Zetu might succeed as a classroom text to help students with comprehension lessons but as a book to be read for pleasure it certainly does not succeed to attract itself to the reader.

A more successful story for young readers is Sungura Kisimani which explores the popular myth of the drought and the waterhole, and capitalises on the positing of hare, the trickster with his dupes. As in the traditional story hare uses food to trick the big animals and ends up drinking the water and even having a bath. The child reader identifies with the small animal, hare, who is able to trick the big animals.

In another book the hare saves lion but lion is so hungry that he would like to eat hare up. Hare is saved by the wise tortoise. Shukrani Za Simba is a tale that has

been consciously adapted for effective readership purposes. The writer appeals to the senses of the reader who is made to see the animals as they walk about on two legs: lion as he walks, his posture as he holds the stone which is about to crush him, the hare bringing the pole to prop the stone, and the comic looking tortoise in spectacles as he reads his books of wisdom. The reader also hears lion's happy whistling after a good meal, the rumbling of the stone, the voice of the hare, the rumbling of lion's empty stomach, the angry argument of the two animals and its lull when tortoise coughs to attract their attention. The hunger of lion is sharper when it is contrasted with the satisfaction of hare. The reader feels the tiredness, pain and thirst of lion as these feelings are described vividly by the author.

This is a skilfully written book and it is no wonder that its readers love to read it more than once. The author employs brief but vivid descriptions often coupled with repetition which the young readers enjoy. The passage of time is described as follows:

> Muda ulianza kupita. Saa moja ilipita, saa mbili saa tatu hadi kufika saa nne. p.2
>
> (Time started passing. Seven o'clock passed, eight o'clock, nine o'clock until it was ten o'clock.)

The passage of time is skilfully linked to the growing tiredness and pain of lion. By four o'clock:

> Njaa ilizidi. Alihisi mwili umechoka sana.Alifumba macho na kuanza kusali sala yake ya mwisho. p.5
>
> (He was very hungry. He felt the tiredness in every part of his body. He closed his eyes and started to say his last prayers.)

Eventually the reader can almost feel what lion is going through. Repetition is also effectively used in another title Kuku Mweusi Na Kanga which is targeted at the young readers. Hen's friends show their surprise in conversation as they admire the egg hen has laid:

> "Njoo Bata na Sungura. Njoo Paka na Ng'ombe. Njooni wote rafiki zangu wapenzi mlione yai langu."
> "Mmmh; yai zuri hili, " alisema Bata.
> "Yai kubwa sana hili, " Sungura alisema.
> " Ooh, oh, la mviringo;" alitamka Paka.
> " Tena ni rangi nzuri ya kahawia. " Ng'ombe akaongezea akistaajabia uzuri wa lile yai. p. 3
>
> ("Come Duck and Hare. Come Cat and Cow. Come, all of you my dear friends and see my egg."
> "Mmmh; It is a good egg, " said Duck
> " A very big egg, " Hare said.
> " Ooh, oh, it is a round one; " declared Cat.
> " And it has a beautiful coffee colour. " Added Cow as he admired the beauty ot the egg.)

Each of the conversation helps to paint the picture of the egg. The friends are happy about the egg with the exception of the alligator.

The author also makes use of onomatopoeia as he describes action for example

" Kap " and " Pusuh "

as the alligator is eating the egg;

"Puuh, Puuh "

as the alligator is being beaten; and

" Kopoh ", " Fyuu " and " Dufuh "

describing the movement of the stone.

The author suggests the story is aetiological and explains why the alligator still eats eggs. Another aetiological story explains why cat loves the kitchen. The reader follows cat as he moves from one strong animal to another seeking protection. How he discovers that the woman is the strongest creature on earth is the most humorous argument that amuses the child reader.

These stories explore the traditional source with varying degrees of success. Some of the stories are skilfully treated while others merely present story-lines without serious consideration and dramatisation.

3. 2. 2 Riddles

The Kiswahili syllabus for primary school level stipulates that children be exposed to riddles right from standard one so that they are familiar with the variety of

material available in Tanzania. Here they are not being introduced to a new subject for they already have had exposure to riddles in their homes. But whereas it is easy to teach riddles from their own community, the problem arises when presenting riddles to children drawn from various communities as happens especially in the urban schools. Even in schools where children are drawn from one community, riddles from other languages have to be presented in the Kiswahili language. The tendency has therefore been to translate riddles from other languages into Kiswahili to give them a wider currency.

T. G. P. Landulira's Vitendawili Vyetu has put together riddles from various communities in Tanzania but does not specify which riddles come from which community. He seems to have avoided those riddles that obviously suggest the area from which they were collected. The exceptions are:

1. Athumani Kaputu hupanda gari la bure.
   (Athumani Kaputu rides on a vehicle free of charge.)

2. Athumani mfupi kasimama mlangoni.
   (Short Athumani stands at the door.)

3. Tembo wa Ndago lakini hatumezi.

(Ndago's Elephant does not swallow us.)

4. Nyoka Msukuma hali.

(The Msukuma snake does not eat.)

5. Mlima Mkulanga napandia vidole.

(I climb Mount Mkulanga with fingers.)

6. Mbuzi wa kimakonde hula udongo tu.

(The goat of the Makonde eat only soil.)

7. Kilele cha Kibo Uarabuni.

(The top of Kibo is in Arabia.)

Even these do not hamper the children in their enjoyment of the riddles. Landulila's translation tries to preserve the economy of riddles and maintain their poetic aspect, for example:

Fuu funua, fuu funuo

is onomatopoeic, imitating the movement of feet. The following riddle whose answer is 'fire' employs alliteration:

Kiti hiki cha kaki hakikaliwi hata na hakimu.

(This seat of justice is not sat upon even by a judge.)

Landulila's book is not the kind that a child borrows to read on his own. Lent to one child in a classroom situation, observers have noted the child nudges another one and together they start exchanging riddles. This is as it should be for riddles are meant to be enjoyed by groups. It was not possible to work out which riddles were better liked than others but in general Landulila's riddles have interested children who read Vitendawili Vyetu.

Better presented, though not as well circulated in Tanzania as Landulila's book, is Vitendawili co-authored by E. L. Meena, G. V. Mmari and H .H. Sangiwa and first published in 1960. This book brings together riddles from more than fifteen communities of Tanzania. The authors translated the riddles into Kiswahili for wider readership.

The riddles in their Kiswahili translation are numbered and arranged alphabetically with the answers printed in the last pages of the book. Our observation showed that children can spend a long time perusing this book in riddling exercise. One of them takes the book, sets the riddles and checks for the answers. We noted that they

take turns in this exercise. One group had a method of recording points of those who got the answers correct.

The children did not seem to worry too much about the logic of the riddles nor did they waste their time trying to work out the meaning of words which they did not know. They swiftly moved on to more and more riddles. It was obvious that the prime purpose of their get-together with Vitendawili among them was for sheer delight. We noticed that they deliberated more on the highly poetic ones such as:

11. Aliwa yuala, ala, aliwa.

40. Baki, bandika, bak bandua.

54. Drrrrrh! Ng'ambo.

or the problem riddles such as:

102. Kanipa ngozi nikapikia, kanipa nyama nikala,
Kanipa mchuzi, nkanywa, kanipa mfupa
nikautumia.
(He gave me a skin, I cooked it, gave me meat
I ate,
Gave me soup, I drank, gave me a bone I
used.)

230. Nilipoingia Rumi, alitoka mtu na wake kumi, kila mke na tundu kumi, kila tundu na kuku kumi; kila kuku na mayai kumi. Mayai, kuku, tundu, wake, kumi kumi kumi. Wangapi walikwenda Rumi?

(When I entered Rome I saw a man with his ten wives, each wife had ten chicken pens, each pen had ten hens, each hen had ten eggs. Eggs, hens, pens, wives, ten ten ten, How many went to Rome.)

285. Palikuweko watu watatu walivuka mto. Mmoja alivuka pasipo kukanyaga maji wala hakuyaona; wa pili aliyeaona maji lakini alivuka bila kukanyaga; wa tatu aliyaona na kuyakanyaga alipovuka. Ni nani hawa?

Three people crossed a river. One crossed without stepping on the water or even seeing it; The second one saw the water but he

crossed without stepping on it; the third saw the water and stepped on it as he crossed. Who are these?

349. Watu ishirini walipanda juu ya mti, wawili wakaona chungwa, watano wakalichuma, kumi wakalimenya, wote wakaridhika mtu mmoja alile. Je ni watu gani hao?

Twenty people climbed up the tree, two saw the orange, five picked it , ten pealed it , ten were satisfied that one person eats it. Who are these people?

It was sad to note that such a delightful book is not readily available to Tanzanian children. Some old copies remain in libraries and in some schools but the title was not available in bookshops.

S. S. Farsi's Swahili Sayings: 2 contains riddles and superstitions from Zanzibar recorded before they are completely forgotten in the rapid change affecting the transmission of oral literature. Many of these riddles have their equivalents in other communities but these enjoy more currency because they are in a language that is used by many people in Tanzania. When the children were asked which were their favourite riddles the following were mentioned:

10. Nilikuwa nikienda njiani nilipomsikia mtu akiniita Wifi! Wifi! lakini nilipogeuka sikumwona mtu.
(MBAAZI KAVU)

I was going along the road when I heard a person calling me 'Sister-in-law!" but when I turned round there was no one in sight. (DRY PIGEON-PEAS IN THEIR PODS)

61. Nimemwona bikizee amejtwika machicha...(MVI)
I met an old woman carrying on her head dry shreds of coconut meat,
(GREY HAIR).

85. Mwalimu amelala, ndevu zake zimechomoza juu
(KMADI)

The teacher is asleep with his beard sticking up outside. (THE THORN OF A WILD SCREW-PINE).

Riddle No. 10 endears itself because of the onomatopoeia in "Wifi! Wifi". It becomes amusing when a boy is setting the riddle. Whereas Riddle No. 10 appeals mainly to the ear, Riddle No. 61 and 85 appeal to the eyes. One of the children said that she thought of her own 'Kali' teacher when she read Riddle No. 85. She obviously linked the thorn with the teacher in their being 'kali' or fierce.

Many of the riddles in Vitendawili Vyetu, Vitendawili, and Swahili Sayings: 2 are still circulated in oral form in classrooms and popularised on radio programmes for children.

3. 2. 3. Proverbs

Like riddles, proverbs are introduced to the school child right from primary school level. There has been a crying need for books presenting proverbs especially in Kiswahili. Concerned writers have tried to meet this need with varying degrees of success. Achebe, one of the pioneering West African novelists, has demostrated the value of proverbs in his memorable statement regarding proverbs:

> Among the Ibo the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palmoil with which words are eaten.[7]

Proverbs are meant to be enjoyed when they are orally presented. They are most enjoyable when they are applied in situations or when they are used to summarise stories.

S. S. Farsi in his collection of Zanzibar Proverbs in Swahili Sayings: 1 says that:

> "proverbs are very useful for inculating moral lessons; it is therefore imperative for teachers to know as many proverbs as possible, and to make the best use of them in teaching." (Preface)

He recognises the fact that proverbs need to the applied to situations in order to be enjoyed. It is clear that his collection of proverbs is not written directly for children. For this reason we did not circulate it to children but observed only a few. The few children lent the book flipped through, read a few proverbs and laid the book aside.

J. P. Mbonde in Hadithi Za Kiboko Hugo, has tried to make use of proverbs but not with the success of Achebe in Things Fall Apart. We noted how Mbonde packed as many as eight proverbs in one page but these were neither fully understood nor enjoyed by the children.

Yusuf Halimoja in his series of Methali Zatufundisha consciously presents and illustrates proverbs to children through stories. Each story is given a proverb title

which is mentioned at least one more time in the text especially towards the end. Almost all stories end with the refrain 'Methali Zatufundisha' perhaps to remind the reader of the main purpose of these books.

Although the combination of two genres should do no harm to a text, Yusuf Halimoja's books suffer from the use of proverbs as titles. Children found them dry and uninteresting. His method is superseded by C. K. Omari's Hadithi Za Bibi whereby the author tells the story and concludes with a proverb that both summarises and reinforces the story. In Halimoja's stories the proverbs are presented in a preachy manner for example in Methali Zatufundisha: 2 we get the following ending of the story entitled: "Akutendaye mtende...mche asiyekutenda":

> Huyu Nyani alikuwa mbaya sana. Alimtendea vibaya huyu mama. Naye mama ikaja zamu yake ya kumtendea vibaya huyu nyani. Yote yamekwenda sawa maana akutendaye mtende mche asiyekutenda. Yaani akutendaye vibaya nawe mtende vibaya. Ila mwogope asiyekuendea vibaya. Hapana shaka unaweza kuilewa methali hii ukikumbuka kisa cha Idi Amin. Yeye aliwapiga Watanzania ambao hawakumkosea. Nao watanzania wakampiga Idi Amin vibaya zaidi mpaka akakimbia (p.14)

> (This monkey was very bad. He was cruel to this woman. Then the turn for the woman came to teach the monkey a lesson. Everything is alright because what he does to you also do the same to him and respect the one who does no wrong to you. That is whoever wrongs you, wrong him too. No doubt you can understand this proverb if you remember Idi Amin. He beat Tanzanians who had done him no wrong. The Tanzanians also beat him up until he ran away).

Although repetition is often an effective device in children's literature, it serves no purpose here because it simply emphasises a moral lesson that is presented as a sermon. The most unfortunate thing is that even the lesson is not the positive type that should be passed on to children.

C. K. Omari adopts Aesop's style of ending the stories with brief proverbs or sayings without hammering them in for example:

> Hii ndiyo asili ya nguruwe kuwa na pua bapa na kukoroma ovyo ovyo tu. Na ndiyo asili ya ng'ombe kuwa mkokota jembe la kulimia hata leo. Ubishi mwingi mwishowe hasara. (Book 1, p.4)
>
> (This is how the pig got a flat nose and plough. And this is how the cow started pulling the plough and has continued to this day. A lot of arguments in the end bring loss.)

Even when he explains the proverbs, Omari does so without appearing to patronise, for example:

> Kazi ya kujenga nyumba kama ile ya binadamu ikawa inawekwa kuwa kazi ya kesho mpaka leo. Hii ndiyo asili ya msemo usemao 'kesho kesho ni manyani' mpaka leo hawana nyumba.
>
> Jambo uwezalo kulifanya leo lifanye, usingoje kesho. Kesho huenda isije.
>
> Nao umoja ni nguvu na utengano ni udhaifu. (Book 2, p.34)

(The task of building a house like the human beings was postponed to tomorrow and has not been done even today. This is where the saying originated 'Tomorrow is tomorrow for the monkeys', even today they have no house.

What you can do today do it, don't wait until tomorrow. Tomorrow may never come. Unity is strength and separation is weakness.)

The responses revealed that children on the whole are delighted when they encounter proverbs in stories well told.

3. 2. 4. Political Literature.

What we have designated political literature as literature that is related to the school subject "political education", a compulsory subject for Tanzanian school children from primary level to secondary level. This kind of literature has the general purpose of creating political awareness by presenting ideals in literary works. It is thus, on a general level, deliberately didactic.

The Darubini series written under the direction of TANU and later Chama Cha Mapinduzi (C.C.M.) explore the various areas of weakness in Tanzania. We shall discuss two books in these series: Darubini 3: Ujinga Wa Mwafrika and Darubini 5: Kipimo Cha Utu. The former castigates those who live under the fear of witchcraft and portrays them as foolish. Darubini 5: Kipimo Cha Utu is guided by the party statement:

" Kazi ndiyo kipimo cha utu wako na utu wangu."

(Work is the measure of your humanness and

mine).(Book 5,p.10)

The two books employ mainly adult characters and address themselves to adult issues and like all the books in the Darubini series, the texts are widely used in Political Education classes. Children are heard re-telling the stories outside class or simply referring to characters mentioned in these narratives. A teacher overheard two boys in his school arguing about something. He did not quite get the nature of the discussion that led to the serious argument but clearly heard one of them conclude the battle of words as follows:

"Haya bwana, Hayo yamekwisha. Hatutaki kuwa Kumbi na Kumbinga"

"Okay, that is finished. Let us not become like Kumbi and Kumbinga"

Kumbi and Kumbinga are two characters in Darubini 3. They are both blind. One day they came across a dead elephant and they started exploring the animal in order to discover what it looked like. Kumbi explored the side and Kumbinga's hands found the ear. When they had explored enough they started sharing their experiences:

Kumbi: Sasa nafahamu kwamba kumbe ndovu anafanana sana na ukuta,
Kumbinga: Ndovu hafanani na ukuta, sasa nafahamu kuwa ndovu anafanana na ungo mkubwa!

> Kumbi: Now I know that an elephant is like a wall
> Kumbinga: An elephant is not like a wall. I know the elephant is like a winnowing tray.

Eventually there was no agreement between Kumbi and Kumbinga even after the sighted villagers tried to intervene. The two boys who made reference to these characters, however, were wise. They ended their argument amicably and found humour in reference to the two blind men. This experience helps to illustrate the impact that these stories have after they have been used in class.

The readers of the Darubini series have turned out to be school texts although the target readers seems to have been more general and especially adults. The purpose of the whole series is stated on the blurb of Darubini 3:

> Vitabu hivi vinavyokusidiwa kumulika mwendo wa jamii yetu, kufafanua tutokako, kuonyesha tulipo na pia kumulika tuendako katika lugha ya kuchekesha, na wakati ule ule kutoa mafunzo kwa wananchi wote. (Preface.)
>
> (These books are meant to light up the paths of our society, to interpret where we are coming from, to show where we are and to enlighten where we are going. They use a humorous language as they teach all the nationals.)

The style employed is therefore intended to enhance the enjoyment of these stories which are meant to be didactic. The same method is used in the text-books entitled

Elimu Ya Siasa prepared by the Ministry of National Education for use in Political educational classes.

Efforts have been made to draw the names of characters from various parts of Tanzania but most of them are the less common ones. We have a few animal characters too but these are kept to a minimum. When they were asked what they found most memorable in the Darubini books, children had various responses:

> "Majina yenyewe yanachekesha kama vile Mtimbwikilo, Kigulunyembe, Kautipe na Kibibi"
>
> (The names are amusing for example Mtimbwikilo, Kigulunyembe, Kautipe and Kibibi).

One could also include Kumbi and Kumbinga, discussed above, as being striking to the reader. Although the children could not name what really affected them, they did not miss the alliteration, assonance, associations and connotations of these names. Some readers observed the individual idiosyncrancies and manners of characters like Mzee Mikidadi. The way he is characterised is so vivid that one reader remembered Mikidadi in the following terms:

> "Yule mzee Mikidadi alikuwa mlaji. Alipendelea hasa kula kitoweo. Niliwahurumia sana watoto wake. Lakini

> kilichonichekesha zaidi ni kule kusema kwake "Kuleni wanangu, sikukuu yenu hii."
>
> (That Mzee Mikidadi was an eater. He enjoyed eating especially the stew. I really pitied his children. What amused me most was his saying, "eat, my children, this is your feast.")

Not all characters emerge clearly because the stories are short and concentrate more on the teaching of morals rather than understanding of characters and their actions. As a result the characters are mere sketches, and aside from the traits they illustrate, the reader does not get to know them. In as far as they are effective in communicating the issues being discussed most are convincing, but some leave questions unanswered. Many children for example said "Mchawi" (witch; wizard) and "Mganga" (medicineman) are different. They argue that Ujinga Wa Mwafrika does not bring out the good qualities of the "Mganga".

In the Darubini series, the authors impart political understanding and awareness but compromise the literary appeal. Stylistic aspects that can help to enhance enjoyment are subordinated to the didacticism of the political lessons.

The Elimu Ya Siasa text books are even more explicit in their political messages. Politisation such as is offered in these books has helped Tanzanian children know their country's history including slavery, colonialism and their vices. Moreover they become aware of the direction that the nation is taking. This deliberate teaching of history and politics has been effective especially because of the story as medium of communication.

It is also true to say that the political education has influenced writers and readers alike. Certain phrases or statements, now cliches, often find their way in writing. In one of M. P. Nyagwaswa's stories entitled 'Kuku', he repeats almost verbatim Nyerere's statement about the suffering of Tanzanians. In 'Kuku' a boy has been mistreated by a cook for a reason which will be explained later. The boy tells the cook:

> Laiti ningekuwa ningemwendea siku ile ile nilipokosa! usingekuwa umepata nguvu ya kunitesa na kunitumikisha kama hivi ulivyofanya miezi hii yote. Umenitesa sana! umenionea sana! ama kweli umenionea kiasi cha kutosha. Umeninyanyasa kiasi cha kutosha! (Mifano Hai :3 p. 54)

> (I wish I had gone to him the day I did wrong! You would not have gotten so much strength to torment and make me slave for you as you did all these months. You have tormented me! You have really bullied me! You have bullied me enough! You have persecuted me enough! You have belittled me long enough.)

The following popular statement often quoted from Nyerere's speech rings in the mind of the reader as he listens to the boy:

> We have been oppressed a great deal and we have been disregarded a great deal. It is our weakness that has led to our being oppressed, exploited and disregarded. Now that we want a revolution which brings to an end our weakness, so that we are never again exploited, oppressed or humiliated.

The stories of Darubini 5 try to show what designates the Tanzanian as human and indirectly refers to Nyerere's speech quoted above as they castigate exploitive elements in the society. In Kipimo Cha Utu the words used for those who exploit others

by not working are "makupe" and "jeta" (ticks). Both he who exploits others by charging them more than he should and the one who does not work hard as he should are the enemies of 'umma' (masses). One of the children responding to the lessons learnt from Darubini 3: says the most memorable aspect of the book was:

> "Nimejifunza kwamba kipimo cha utu wa mtoto wa shule ni kutia bidii katika masomo na kuheshimu wengine, hasa wakulima."
>
> (I have learnt that the measure of humanity of the school child is to put effort in studies and to respect others, especially farmers.)

As they read books, children consider the titles of books but some titles attract readers attention more than others either positively or negatively. The title of Darubini 3 is a bold statement reminiscent of the colonial times. It is affirming that really there are some aspects of foolishness in the Africans, or more specifically in Tanzanians, who are so drunk with thoughts of witchcraft that they are not ready to adjust to changes in their society. The title Ujinga Wa Mwafrika shocks the person who has not read the book but after reading the children tend to agree with the title. The title Darubini 5: Kipimo Cha Utu seems acceptable to most children readers. One reader categorically declared:

> "Sikupenda kichwa cha Darubini 3:"
>
> (I did not like the title of Darubini 3 at all.)

This reader went on to say that she liked the pictures in the book and was encouraged to read because of these pictures.

> "Picha zingine zinachekesha sana. Nilifurahia hasa ile ya mtu amelala kama jongoo. Mvivu huyo."
>
> (Some of the pictures are very amusing. I enjoyed especially the one in which a man is lying down like a millipede. Lazy one!)

In the last statement it is clear that the child is not only very much aware of what is happening around him but he is also ready to pass a moral judgement on the characters he reads about, showing that he is already making choices as influenced by what he reads.

Both the Darubini series and Elimu Ya Siasa textbooks tend to be too instructive even going to the extent of running political errands in a preachy manner. Didactic books are hard to write if one is to avoid preaching. On the other hand, children want to learn but they do not tolerate preaching as they read for pleasure. J.W.Stewig discourages peddling or preaching in literary works for children:

> A didactic book, written only to promulgate the author's beliefs, is dishonest, but clearly every author has his or her own point of view. It is when the belief overpowers the characters and what they are doing that the fiction fails.[8]

Lihamba in Wimbo Wa Sokomoko avoids preaching by consciously presenting her story in a creative and dramatic way. She employs the use of speech bubbles which are common in comic strips in order to attract her young readers' attention to learn about slave trade in their country.

The dramatic presentation appeals to the young reader so much that he is attracted to read Mulokozi's Ngoma ya Mianzi in which the author simply builds on the characters who were created by Lihamba only that this time Mbumi and Chulu are much older and ready to fight political battles.

These two books not only give an overview of the period when the Dutch invaded Tanzania, the era of slavery and the various moods and atmosphere of the time . They are a breakthrough in the history of Tanzania children's literature because they seek to inform the children about the most unpleasant aspects of slave trade in Tanzania.

The mixture of strips and narrative are visually attractive but sometime they slow down the flow of the story as the reader's attention consciously shifts from one comic strip to straight narrative. Lihamba and Mulokozi demonstrate by their style in handling the subject of slave trade that political literature need not be dull or preachy.

3. 2. 5. Religious Story

The religious story is linked to the political literature in the sense that they both have an underlying didactism. Indeed the religious story is the hardest to write without preaching or talking down to the reader. Preachy treatises tend to bore young readers and so to avoid this problem the tendency is for writers of such stories to discuss moral issues without necessarily making religious statements. On the other hand the Bible is replete with stories that children of all ages like to hear and read, so Christian writers have been making such material available in simplified booklets in Kiswahili and English for young readers.

Combining literary talent with his religious interest M.P. Nyagwaswa has written four books which are unapologetically intended to present biblical lessons. His series of the books, Mifano Hai, were not written for children but as the author admits, for the youth and adult readers. Yet these books appeal to the children who read them. As European children appropriated Pilgrim's Progress Tanzania children also appropriated Mifano Hai. The first to appropriate the books were the author's own children who first found part of the handwritten manuscript of the first book and read it. They enjoyed it so much that they pestered their father to get on with more stories as he had planned. As it turned out the assessment of the author's children was right because when the books got into the market they were positively received by other child readers.

In Mifano Hai literally translated as "Live Examples", Nyagwaswa presents experiences which are true incidents drawn from his or other people's lives. Even the few stories that are drawn and adapted from folktales are so vividly described that they are memorable to the reader. When the `mfano' or the "live" story is over, the author proceeds to use it as an illustration for the relevant passages or verses of scripture.

The author is using a method which was used by Jesus himself, and he acknowledges this inspiration by quoting at the beginning of each of his books the following words:

> ... Akatoka nyumbani, akaketi kando ya bahari .. na ule mkutano wote ukasimama pwani. AKAWAAMBIA MAMBO MENGI KWA MIFANO .. Hayo yote ... ALIWAAMBIA .. KWA MIFANO wala PASIPO MFANO hakuwaambia neno, Mathayo 13:1 na 34 (Emphasis Nyagwaswa's)
>
> (Jesus) went out of the house and sat beside the sea .. and the whole crowd stood on the beach. AND HE TOLD THEM MANY THINGS IN PARABLES ... ALL these (Jesus) SAID .. IN PARABLES; indeed he SAID NOTHING TO THEM WITHOUT A PARABLE. (Matthew 13:1 & 34 (RSV).

Undoubtedly the author enjoys parables and this is why he uses this method of presentation especially since they were so effective in Jesus's teaching. But the impact of parables depend entirely on how they are told, how apt the allegory is and how effectively the author has drawn from them. Our analysis of Nyagwaswa's books will

determine whether the allegorical form satisfies the literary needs of the children and gives pleasure in spite of the didactism of its religion.

The four books in the series of Mifano Hai are similar in format, each containing from five to seven stories. The stories in each book do not seem to be connected by a running theme but each is independent of the others apart from their evangelistic purpose. We have chosen for analysis, three stories from each of the first three books in the series of Mifano Hai on the basis of their popularity among children. From these we shall illustrate some of the strong points that make Nyagwaswa's narratives interesting. The stories are those which are best loved by the children.

'Zukizi' in Mifano Hai: 1 tells the story of a worm, (given the name) Zukizi, who loves maize and invades a maize plant when it is still young. Nyagwaswa intrudes in the course of narration to educate the readers:

> Kadiri mmea unavyoendelea kukua ndivyo Zukizi naye anavyozidi kustawi na kunenepa. Mihindi ikianza kubeba, Zukizi huhamia kwenye kiini cha mahindi hayo machanga na kuanza kuyafaidi mpaka yatakapokomaa na kukauka (p. 49)
>
> (The more the plant grows the more Zukizi continues to grow fat. When the maize plants get cobs, Zukizi moves to the new cobs and eats them until they dry up.)

As Zukizi is busy enjoying the maize a friend warns him that there are dangers of hanging to the maize plant and so tells Zukizi to be careful. Zukizi's answer whenever he is warned is:

> "Usiwe na wasiwasi rafiki yangu. Mimi maisha haya nimeyazoea. Sikuyaanza leo. Najua kila kona na kila mbinu za kujiponya: hivyo usiumwe kichwa bure na kunihojia. Kwa heri!" Zukizi akamjibu rafikiye kwa madaha mengi.(p.49)
>
> (Don't worry, my friend. I am used to this life for I didn't start today. I know every corner and every way of saving myself; so don't allow yourself to have an unnecessary headache questioning me. Good bye!" Zukizi answered his friend with a lot of pride.)

The character of Zukizi slowly unfolds. He is revealed as one who does not heed warning because of his pride and overconfidence. In his happy-go-lucky attitude he is quite comfortable on the maize plant.

His friend, however, is patient and follows him up at every stage of the development of the maize plant. Zukizi's answer every time is, "Ngoja niyafaidi (mahindi) kwanza" (Let me enjoy the maize first). After warning him eight times it is too late to save his life. Eventually he is boiled with the maize he has been clinging to.

The contrast that emerges between Zukizi and his friend holds the interest of the reader as the obvious foolishness of Zukizi is balanced against the wisdom of his friend. Each repetition of their conversation strengthens this contrast and heightens the

expectation of the danger ahead. When Zukizi dies, the reader feels that he deserves what he gets. The sympathies are drawn towards his friend who has to mourn Zukizi's foolish death.

In this story the author uses only one name, Zukizi and refers to the second character as simply 'Zukizi's friend'. This spare use of proper names is a feature in many of his stories. In some stories Nyagwaswa does not even give a name beyond `my friend' but when he uses names he tries to match the meaning of the name with the content of the story. A good example is Mwasi in "Shimo La Uharibifu" (Bk 1) which is given to the boy who does not heed the warning against playing near the dilapidated pit latrine. Disaster falls on Mwasi and it is a miracle that his life is saved in the end. In "Kazikwa Angali Hai" (Book 1) the slave Manyanda is eventually promoted and made head of the other slaves. The title he receives "Mheshimiwa Mtumwa Mkuu Manyanda" (Honourable chief slave, Manyanda) which the author often repeats in the narrative is not really a praise name after all when we see the predicament Manyanda finds himself in. When his lord and King dies "Mheshimiwa Mtumwa Mkuu Manyanda" is, according to custom, buried alive with him. The ironic title sounds humorous but Nyagwaswa conveys the message of its uselessness in a degenerate Manyanda who no longer values his parents and brother.

The effectiveness of the story 'Zukizi' is also achieved in the use of conversation between the two friends:

Zukizi: Una wasiwasi gani?

Rifiki: toka upesi kwenye hayo mahindi ya watu. Watu Wenyewe wanaweza kuyavuna. Nahofu nawe utavuniwa katika hilo hindi lako ulimo, halafu utapatwa makubwa. Yawezekana ukachomewa au kupikiwa katika hilo hindi.

*Zukizi:*Wewe rafiki yangu, mwoga mno, tena una wasiwasi unaozidi kiasi ... Sasa mpaka waje kufikia hindi langu, unadhani mimi nitakuwa minezubaa tu? Wakikaribia nitachomoka nikimbie zangu. Acha nifaidi bwana!

*Rafiki:*Usiwe mjinga Zukizi. Toka sasa kwenye hindi, ushuke twende zetu. Hatari imekukaribia sana. Kesho watavuna sehemu hii ulipo. Hakika hindi lako litavunwa, nawe utachukuliwa humo humo.

Zukizi's friend keeps referring to the maize cob as Zukizi's. By this repetitive reference to "your maize cob" he hopes to bring back Zukizi to his right senses, but Zukizi continues to argue his case out.

The reader recognises the conversation as that of any two friends and which has nothing to do with worms. The exchange between the two worms draws on humorous phrases often heard by the reader among Tanzanians of today such as:

-Toka kwenye hayo mahindi ya watu

-Wasiwasi unaozidi kiasi

-Kuzubaa

-Acha nifaidi bwana

-Twende zetu.

Another example of a story in which Nyagwaswa uses dialogue effectively is "Kazikwa Angali Hai" (Buried Alive) where we witness Manyanda talking to his parents when they come to buy his freedom:

> Mheshimiwa Mtumwa Mkuu Manyanda kusikia hivyo akasimama huku akisema, "Ohoo! Naona mambo haya ya kuliliana na kuombolezeana yataleta zogo na taharuki kwa mjio mzima! Wazee wangu, fahamuni neno moja: uamuzi wangu niliowapa ni wa mwisho, hautabadiliwa na machozi wala vituko vya namna yoyote ile kwa herini!" Akabadilishana macho na kuelewana na Mfalme Budishi. Mfalme akatabasmu na kumkonyezea wakaenda zao na kuwaacha wazee wakishika vicha na kuomboleza kwa huzuni. (p.11)

> (The Honourable Chief Slave stood up saying, "Ohoo! I see that this business of crying and mourning for one another is bringing trouble to the whole town! My parents, I would like you to understand one thing: I have made the last decision which will not be changed by tears or any other fracas. Good bye." Then they exchanged understanding glances with King Budishi. The king smiled and beckoned Manyanda to go out with him leaving the parents holding their heads in great sorrow.)

In the above paragraph we not only hear Manyanda but we assess his moral degeneration so far. He no longer has love, respect or pity for his own parents and is completely blinded by material wealth to see beyond their poverty. The drama in the paragraph

above makes us lose the respect we had for Manyanda. The description of the incident is so vivid that the reader not only absorbs the details but also takes sides against the foolish Manyanda.

In Mifano Hai:2 the story that many readers isolated as the best is "Uchaguzi Wa Hiari" which narrates the story of a couple who, according to Nyagwaswa:

> Waliishi maisha ya taabu kabisa kwa miaka mingi. Chakula na mavazi walivipata kwa shida. Nyumba walimoishi ilikuwa ni kibanda cha miti na madebe, nacho kilikuwa kibovu karibu kuanguka, na wakati wa masika mvua ziliponyesha, walifanana kama wanaishi chini ya mwembe kwa vile nyumba yao ilivyokuwa ikivuja. (P.5)
>
> (They lived a life of utter poverty and trouble for many years. They got food and clothing in difficulty. The house they lived in was just a shack made of sticks and tins. It was almost collapsing. When rain fell, the couple looked as if they were living under a mango tree.)

The detailed description reveals to the reader the extent of the couple's poverty which is made worse by the fact that they do not have a child and now they have lost hope of getting one. They are so weak as a result of recurrent sicknesses that working for their living is a big problem. Salvation comes their way one day when a benevolent angel appears to them and gives them three choices. They are very happy about this big chance of their life so they sit on the mat to decide what to ask for but before they get very far:

> Mumewe akajibu, "Ni kweli, mke wangu. Ila kwa sasa nakuambia nina njaa ya watu ishirini. Laiti ningepata wali mwingi wa pilau na kuku, nikala nikashiba mpaka nikasaza." (P.6.)
>
> (Her husband replied, "It is true, my wife. But for now I tell you I have the hunger of twenty people. If only I could get spiced rice and chicken to eat to my fill and have left overs!)

What happens surprises both of them but in different ways. The husband with his hunger does not realise what he has done. Instead:

> Mume alipoona hivyo akaanza kuurukia wali auchapilie huku akipiga sala, "Alhamdullilah! Leo ndiyo leo, asemaye kesho mwongo huyo!" (P 7)
>
> (When the husband saw this he fell upon the rice saying "Alhamdullilah! Today is today, whoever talks tomorrow is a liar!"

His wife is so angry that she does not weigh her words, and she too commits a blunder:

> ... Ama wewe kweli mwanamume wewe, ingawa una kichwa cha binadamu kusema kweli hukitumii sawa sawa. Heri ungekuwa na kichwa cha punda kuliko kuwa na kichwa cha binadamu usichojua kutumia sawa sawa. (p.7)
>
> (A man that you are indeed with human head but the truth is that you don't use it well. It were better if you had a donkey's head instead of a human head that you don't use well.)

The second wish was therefore wasted in giving the husband a donkey's head. To the reader it is humorous to imagine the man with donkey's head using donkey language and pleading with his wife with donkey tears to ask for his return to normality.

When the husband was normal again they did not blame each other for the mistakes they made. Instead they joked about the whole business of having a donkey head. The wife insisted:

> "Mbona wanaume walio na vichwa vya wanadamu wengi wao ni wakali kama punda, wanapiga wake zao mateke kama punda. Wanapiga kelele nyumbani kama punda, hasa wakilewa." (p.9)
>
> (How come men with human heads are as fierce as donkeys. They kick their wives at time like donkeys especially when drunk.)

The husband is grateful to have his human head back and can now enjoy his wish for twenty dishes of chicken and rice. It is quite a relief even though the three wishes are foolishly wasted.

"Kuku" in Mifano Hai:3 endears itself most to the children because the major character is a young boy who feels and bahaves like any other child. His name is given simply as "Boyi" (Boy), just as the Cook is 'Mpishi' and their employer is 'Bwana' (Master). Boyi is hardworking and well-behaved and for these reasons his master, Bwana, likes him very much.

After finishing work Boyi normally amuses himself by shooting at lizards, birds or rats using his catapult. On one fateful day he finds none of these creatures to shoot at and in his boredom he experiments at shooting at a chicken which is at what Boyi considers a great distance. He says to himself:

> ".. ebu, nijaribu kwa mchezo tu nione kama shabaha ya jiwe langu itamfikia karibu na kumshtua tu."
>
> "Let me try, just as a joke and see whether this stone will get near the chicken and just scare it a little.)

The conflict that is in 'Boyi's mind after killing the chicken is a conflict that faces not only children but also adults. After debating whether to report the matter to Bwana and ask for forgiveness or bury the chicken, the latter thought prevails.

The success of this story stems from the experience itself and from the presentation of Boyi and his feeling especially after killing the chicken. The reader is even given a chance to hear Boyi's heart beating as he debates on what to do. Children who read this story have had similar experiences all too often when they make a mistake and their friends, brothers and sisters threaten to report them. Mpishi blackmails Boyi since he had seen what had happened to the chicken. Boyi becomes Mpishi's slave and the former gets thinner and thinner as the latter grows fatter and fatter. The story reminds the children that the best thing to do, in a similar situation, is to confess and ask for forgiveness rather than suffer Mpishi's blackmail.

Mpishi the adult is presented as a mean man who takes advantage of the poor boy's predicament. It is the portrayal of Mpishi that helps to heighten the conflict of the story which is resolved by the boy's confession and the master's magnanimity.

All Nyagwaswa's stories have strong story-lines that are buttressed by simple but strong conflicts. The children enjoy reading the resolutions of the problems thus created and relax in the denouement of the stories. What follows the denouement is the application and reference to bible passages. This kind of preaching is not interesting to the child and so he skips it as many of the European children skipped all moralising sermons as they read Pilgrims Progress.

In an interview with the author, Nyagwaswa observed that Mifano Hai interested his own children in manuscript form but he did not comment about their responses to the ample biblical texts used. Tanzania children were keen to know the lesson of the story without delving into the details so they got the message even when they did not read the commentaries. In future, Nyagwaswa may have to consider children's editions of his works where he leaves out the sermons as did the publisher of the children's version of Pilgrim's Progress.

3. 2. 7. Family Story

As already realised in our previous discussions the generic descriptions we are using are not watertight. Thus some of the historical, religious and political stories can fall into the category of family stories as long as they concern family relationships, problems, conflicts and resolutions. We also realise that some of the books discussed later as realistic stories could also be categorised as family stories.

Olaf B. N. Msewa's Kifo Cha Ugenini was cited by five children ranging from 12 to 15 as their favourite book. What was most surprising was the fact that all five were from Dodoma town and only two were from the same school. Thereafter the book was circulated to other children ranging from ten to fifteen and it was very well received and enjoyed by most readers.

The book is basically presenting an adult story and in fact none of the main characters is even a youth. It traces the life of a family from the time before the coming of the white man, through colonialism to the period when the community, no doubt representing the entire nation of Tanganyika, is ready for a revolution and ready to get freedom.

The Msambinungu family still lives in the remote part of the country because the spirit of Msambinungu's late grandfather has not allowed them to go. Here they are untouched by the changes that sweep across the country. Msambinungu's grandfather had prophesied that:

> "Wakati huo mtu mweusi atadharauliwa kama nyani. Heshima yake, utu wake, utamaduni wake, vyote vitayumba sana wakati huo. Matokeo yake damu zitamwagwa. Lakini hata hivyo hawatatoka katika makucha yao. Leo, hili ni giza kwa watu weusi lakini hakuna shaka lazima mwanga utakuja. Wakati huo utamaduni na mila zote za mtu mweusi zitarudi tena kama zamani". p. 8
>
> ("During that time a black person will be looked down upon and treated like a monkey. His respect, his humanity, his culture, all of these will be very shaken during this period. The result will be bloodshed. Even so the black people will not get out of the fangs of these people. Today there is darkness for the black people but no doubt light will come. Then the culture and practices of the black man will return to normal.")

This prophesy is already coming true even though Msambinungu and his family are not aware of it.

Msewa gives a picture of peace and harmony within the Msambinungu family. There is respect and friendship between family members. They even are in harmony with their environment. This peace and harmony with their environment is disrupted when the family moves to the new residence to rejoin their former village-mates. They

received and love and respect is showered upon them. They are not allowed to suffer want of any kind and the period of transition is sheer bliss.

They have hardly settled when the colonial government authorities come to the Msambinungu family to demand tax from them and here for the first time Msambinungu comes face to face with rudeness. Mzee Msambinungu is too surprised to speak and the authorities take this for stubborness, whereupon he is given a beating for this and reminded:

> Mnadhani hii ni nchi yenu? Hamjui kwamba hii ni nchi ya Mdachi? (P. 31)
>
> (Do you think this is your country? Don't you know that this country belongs to the Dutchman?)

After the tax issue is sorted out three of Msambinungu's sons are chosen to be porters for the white man and to travel to the coast and back again. It is a long and tiring journey which is made worse by the rough treatment the porters receive from their overseers. Kazimzuri, the youngest of the three Msambinungu's, falls ill and is left behind to be taken care of by the Lisasi family. Although Kazimzuri dies a new bond develops between the Msambinungus and the Lisasis.

The book is very informative to the children and youth of today who only hear about but did not experience the colonial period. The book reminds them that societal co-operation and respect for one another is vital in building a sound nation.

It seems like what endears the children to this book is the exciting story. They have heard of colonialism and now, perhaps for the first time they encounter characters who can take them through this period. What they have been studying in their political science lessons are exemplified here. As a political and family story, Kifo Cha Ugenini succeeds in informing the children.

The opening catches the reader's attention as Msambinungu wakes his wife and in their dialogue the reader gets not just the setting but also the main purpose of the story. Msewa maintains this method of unfolding the plot through conversations but at times gets preachy. Most of the times he maintains the balance between action and conversations to make Kifo Cha Ugenini a pleasant book to read.

Msewa is skilful in his characterisation and again he employs the dialogues to the full. We learn the nature of the white man, for example, through the following conversation in which Nyapara Kambanga instructs the porters how to behave during the travelling. Many of the children found the details amusing, for example porters had to be gentle and smooth as they transported the white man so as not to shake him when asleep or when smoking his pipe or in deep thought. Failure to observe all these will bring the wrath of the white man down to the porters in the following terms:

"Tutakiona kilichomnyoa kanga manyoya shingoni" P. 57

(We shall see what plucked the guinea fowl's neck feathers)

The white man also did not like noise as he was carried on the shoulders of these porters. Moreover:

> Shida lazima kumsikiliza kwa haraka, kwani wakati mwingine atapenda kukaribiana na mkewe, kwa hiyo machela yao lazima yakaribiane kusudi waweze kuongea kama wakitaka. Wakati mwengine atataka kuyajua majina ya milima, mito na kadhalika , kwa hiyo itakuwa ni wajibu wetu kumjibu haraka ili asikasirike na kutupiga. Katika mambo haya yote wa kumwangalia sana ni mkewe. Kama mkwewe atakasirika katika safari hii tujue wazi kwamba takajuta kwa kuzaliwa. p. 7
>
> (The problem is that we must be alert to hear what he says. Sometimes he wants to get close to his wife and so their stretchers must be brought close together so that they can talk as they wish. Sometimes he wants to know the names of mountains, rivers and so on. We have to be ready to answer quickly before he gets angry and beats us. Above all we must be particularly careful with his wife. If his wife get angry on this journey, we know that we shall regret the day we were born.

The influence and power of the white man are felt and recognised by those who work around him to the extent that they fear him. Even the way they respond to him shows the fear and awe they have for him, for example:

> "Nataka kuwaona manyapala wote ofisini haraka sana."
> "Ndio bwana mtukufu, tunakuja."
> "..." akaanza kuwaita majina ...
> "Nipo bwana mkubwa."

"Ndiyo bwana mkubwa."
"Kasuku wa Liboya."
"Nipo bwana mfalme."
"Watu wako watazichukua ngozi za mamba, nduli na chui kutoka mwenye ghala."
"Ndiyo bwana mkubwa."
"Kambanga wa Mkwera."
"Nipo bwana mkubwa."
"Watu wako watamchukua bwana mkubwa na familia yake. Kwa hiyo tangu sasa ukachukue machela kutoka kwenye ghala ya kuwabebea na uwaeleze watu wako kwamba yote yanayohusika kabla hamjaondoka."
"Ndiyo bwana mfalme."
"Mapipa kutoka Bostani."
"Nipo bwana mkubwa." pp. 55 -56

("I want to see all supervisors in my office right away."
"Yes, your majesty. We are coming."
"..." and he started calling their names....
"Present, sir."....
"Yes, sir."
"Kasuku wa Liboya."
"I am present, your majesty."
"Your people will carry crocodile python and leopard skins from the store."
"Yes, sir."
"Kambange wa Mwera."
"I am present, sir."
"Your people will carry the master and his family. So get the stretchers for carrying them and instruct your people what to do before you leave."
"Yes, your majesty."
"Mapipa from Bostani."
"I am present, sir."....)

In the above conversation the whiteman is addressed as 'king' by servants. In this story the white man is treated like a god.

One of the readers complained that the book is unfinished as she commented:

"They should have told us what happened after that meeting."

The neat ending with a straightforward conclusion so characteristic in children's books is lacking here. Whereas the adult reader is content to learn that the spirit of co-operation is born to fight against the common enemy, the colonialist, the child reader, on other hand would have been more comfortable with a definite, conclusive ending.

A family story set in a different period and championing different national sentiments from Kifo Cha Ugenini is Chiume's book, Mbutolwe Mwana wa Umma. The main character in the story is Mbutolwe, born of a drunkard father Undefi, and a suffering mother, Marita. Undefi thoroughly beats Marita when he comes home on the night that Mbutolwe is born. Apparently she delays in opening the door. Marita is hospitalised and Undefi imprisoned but when Undefi is released from prison, there is so much fighting that the couple is forced to part company. Marita flees with her son to her own parents. All goes well for a time. Mbutolwe is sent to school by his grandfather, Mzee Mwakilele.

Bliss does not last very long for Mzee Mwakilele is killed by a leopard and this death unleashes a family conflict. Mzee Mwakilele's brother now claims all that Mwakilele owned, dispossessing the bereaved wife of everything. The heartbroken woman advises her daughter to leave with Mbutolwe and move to Marita's grandfather.

Marita is rejected by her paternal aunt but finds solace in Mzee Mwakilengule's home. It appears that Marita's grandmother is the one who maintains the home through beer selling so when she dies there is confusion. Mzee Mwakilengule and Marita take to drinking and Mbutolwe, now out of school because of lack of fees, joins a gang that makes a living through stealing.

Eventually Mbutolwe is imprisoned but the officials notice that by nature he is a good boy. When he is released he is given a job and later joins the National Service where he proves to be the true son of the land. Just whem he is getting successful and his parents are together again, death strikes his parents as the story ends.

Many children said that they had read this book. We have narrated the story to reiterate some of the comments the children made:

> "Nilikipenda kwa sababu kinanifundisha kwamba uovu in mbaya"
>
> (I like it because it teaches me that evil is bad)
>
> "Mbutolwe alihurumiwa na umma. Hadithi hii ingepaswa kusomwa na watoto ambao in wahuni."

(Mbutolwe was helped by the community. This story should be read by children who are roguish).

"It is a sad story. I wish the parents did not die."

"Sipendi kabisa mwisho wa hadithi yenyewe."

(I really don"t like the ending of the story.")

Chiume"s message is quite clear even as can be testified from the children's comments but the statement "It is a sad story" and the children's evaluation of the ending suggest there is a problem with Mbutolwe Mwana wa Umma. The book lacks the sunny aspect of life, presenting only a few happy incidents which are overbalanced by sadness. The story could be true to life but the author had some liberty to bring more sunshine into the story. In a book of fifty-five pages, four major deaths taking away Mbutolwe's loved one are too many. Such a story even if it is a true one is not suitable for child readers.

As a political book the work is a success. Chiume teaches the reader the value of National Youth Service and Ujamma villages without preaching. Mbutolwe is seen to grow to be what the title suggests - the child (son) of the people, the masses. It is in

trying to justify the state of affairs whereby Mbutolwe cannot depend on his own relatives that Chiume, the author, dispossesses the main character of his close relatives.

Similar in mood and theme to Mbutolwe Mwana wa Umma is Dunia Ngumu in which we watch Chakufwa's painful growth after the death of his parents. In spite of the hardships he excels both as a child and as a young adult. He is ready to forgive even his aunt who has given him the painful nick-name "Muota-meno-ya-juu, mleta-kifo-mjini".

The first half of the book deals with Chakufwa's parents. It explores their culture, their position in the society, their predicament and their hopes. Chakufwa is the son of poor parents who are forced by their destitute situation to live apart for three years then tragedy hits the family. Chakufwa's father is murdered by his predecessor at work who is jealous of his success. Chakufwa's mother dies of shock at hearing that her husband is dead and Chakufwa moves in to stay with his aunt. He runs away from his aunt's home when life becomes unbearable. In his successes however he does not forget his village, his aunt and relatives. Before a great gathering he declares his forgiveness to his aunt.

The reader is impressed by Chakufwa's spirit of forgiveness especially when his aunt's behaviour in the past is remembered. She had been previously presented as lacking in kindness for example as she advises her husband how to discipline Chakufwa:

"Hukulipiga sana hili dudu muota-meno-ya- juu, mleta-kifo-mjini. Ingekuwa ni mimi ningemwulia mbali mnyama huyu".(p.38)

("You did not beat it hard enough this creature that grows-first-the-top-teeth, bringer-of-death-in-the homestead. Had it been me I would have killed this animal")

The two nicknames she has given her nephew emphasise her irrational cruelty and inspires more sympathy for Chakufwa from the reader. The reader knows that Chakufwa is not to blame for the death of his relatives and the dental formula in his mouth.

Unlike Mbutolwe Mwana wa Umma, Dunia Ngumu ends on a cheerful note. Tragedy has hit Chakufwa's family but the sun comes out in the end. Children who are under twelve found the language of the book difficult but the older children complained the beginning part was boring. This is the part where Chiume is giving us the background of the characters soon after the birth of Chakufwa.

The two books reveal one aspect about the author,that is he is very sensitive to the suffering of children when their parents die. He seems also to value cohesion in the society and is inclined to be political in his outlook. As a writer, however, he appeals more to the reflective adult than the child who wants to witness fast moving action.

Msewa is quite honest in his presentation of adult characters who are often cruel like Chakufwa's aunt and Mbutolwe's father. Even children know that adults can be inconsistent and are happy to encounter faithful portrayals of such adults in books.

3. 2. 8. Realistic Story

The majority of writers for children in Tanzania turn to the folktale and fantasy leaving the story of everyday life to a few bold writers. Yet one of the reasons why Tanzanian children are struggling to read adult books is because they are looking out for familiar situations and experiences such as what they are likely to experience today.

Children enjoy reading about the familiar relationships at home and in school as reflected in the books they read. Tanzanian Children have appropriated Yasin's Nightmare which was originally written for junior secondary school teenagers and features Yasin, a naughty, bright boy who in spite of his mischief saves his school a grave situation when he catches a money thief.

Mlagala, like Barbara Kimenye, the writer of the Moses Series that is widely circulated in East Africa, does not pretend that good boys remain that way at all times. In fact Yasin is presented as the happy-go-lucky type and can be rude and cruel at times. The following incident depicts a character that some writers would reconsider giving a protagonist:

> Yasin laughed, whistled, and kicked a plate which went flying against Sudi's left ear. It hit him. Yasin felt happy, laughed again, and, before Sudi recovered from the pain of the plate blow, a cup came flying at him and crashed on his forehead. When he recovered and looked up, Yasin was already up in their dormitory. (p.1)

Not enough justification is given for this assault and further characterisation does not paint Yasin in better light. When he saw the thieves stealing from the headmaster's office and hiding the loot he had infact broken a school rule and gone out of school to see a girlfriend. What appeals to the readers of this book are the familiar incidents that take place in the school: the usual boyish pranks, conflict with teachers, heroic daring and facing danger. The readers can recognise Yasin as nicknamed "Apple" for they are used to such nicknames.

Martha Mandao's book, The Torn shorts,is another school story but for younger readers. Matiko, a young boy, learns the hard way that stealing is bad. As he, with his friend, are stealing oranges from the school orchard, his shorts get torn at the bottom and he suffers a lot of embarrassment in the classroom in front of his teacher.

Many young children liked the story which is supported by illustrations which though unrealistic, make the narrative vivid. This is basically a moral story and the most striking aspect is the way Mandao tells it without peddling. Like the main character, the reader learns, without hearing sermons, that stealing is wrong. The

for Matiko is the act of judgement that he gets for stealing and the punishment is effective. It is unlikely that he will steal from those orange trees again.

Part of the reason why Yasin goes out at night is because the youth of his age are restlessly looking for adventure. Yasin looks for the wrong kind of adventure and suffers for it but Benedikta and Mussa, two friends who live in Dar-es-salaam get caught up in a different kind of adventure in Shija's Mashujaa wa Kazakamba. They are pleasantly surprised to learn that their parents have agreed that they travel together to Morogoro for a holiday with Benedikta's uncles' family.

Real adventure comes not during the bus ride from Dar-es-Salaam to Morogoro, nor during the reception of the two children but when they discover village thieves, get into danger and are caught and imprisoned by the thieves, in a lonely place. The story is exciting even to the climax at the final rescue. This is a contemporary story and children readers easily recognise characters and their situations as they revel in the adventure it provides.

The adventure in Eddie Ganzel's Jogoo La Shamba., an adult story appropriated by children, is different. The protagonist, Heri Mwajibe, an adult, finds himself in an awkward predicament when company money is stolen from his hotel room in Dar-es-salaam. Although he is largely to blame for not heeding the warning of his superiors in Morogoro, the reader sympathises with him in recognition of poor judgement of the

situation. The protagonist is a careless man who embarks on a long journey without checking on his spare tyre. But as the story progresses he sobers up and embarks on the search for the thief who stole his money and finds both Mkude and Asha. The children who read this book enjoyed it although it is an adult story. No doubt they have heard similar stories narrated about the happenings in the cities and so in Jogoo la Shamba they are witnessing a realistic happening.

It is not just the story that is appealing to the children who read Jogoo la Shamba. The story is simply told so that even children in standard four and five had no problem understanding it. The sentences are kept short but maintain a flowing rhythm. The conversation employed advances the story and depicts the characters and the feelings of the speakers.

Compared to Baada Ya Dhiki Faraja, Jogoo la Shamba has a good basis for its appropriation by children readers. Mushi's Baada Ya Dhiki Faraja was mentioned by many readers as a book they had read or tried to read. It, too, is an adult book which is not as simply written as Ganzel's and as a result, in spite of featuring in the children's section of the library and in some schools, the book cannot be said to have been appropriated by children.

The most successful children's realistic story is the The Red Kitenge, (Kitenge Chekundu) which though available in both English and Kiswahili is read widely in

Kiswahili by children from standard three upwards. It tells the story of Pendo, a girl in standard three whose father is in jail. Mother is dead and therefore Pendo has to live with her aunt's family. The uncle is cruel to Pendo but she has nowhere else to go, so she works hard for her living. Her aunt is not given a chance by the husband to be kind to her niece. Then her father gets out of jail and brings with him not only a Kitenge for which she has longed but love demonstrated by fatherly hugs.

The writer gives Pendo, the protagonist, a strong wish for a *kitenge* but the reader knows that her guardians will not get her one. Pendo is also aware of this so she works for it and when she has money there is no k*itenge* in the shop. The story rises to a climax when a disappointed Pendo comes face to face with her father who gives her the first gift: a The Red Kitenge.

The plot pattern of the wish fulfillment is well used in this story and indeed more than one wish is fulfilled. Pendo has a father, has somebody to love her over and above what she has wished for right from the opening of the story. Mhimili shows how concerned young children can be about parents and their roles. Pendo is very hurt by her uncle's nasty comment about her father.

The story opens with dialogue between Pendo and her friend Rehema. The dialogue, as in other instances of the book, is realistic of children this age but is carefully

used to reveal information, advance the plot and depict character. It comes naturally suggesting that the author understands the language of children.

Mhimili avoids the use of stereotyped characters. Pendo is taken care of by her uncle and aunt, not a step mother and in this story the uncle is the one who mistreats Pendo. In traditional stories there would have been justification for the creation of a cruel aunt. The author only retains the absent father whose return redeems Pendo. The ending of the story is a neat " they-lived-happily-ever-after" type but quite relief after all the suffering that Pendo has gone through.

Some stories capitalise on historical or true-to-life incidents. Such historical stories may also be political or even religious in nature but what distinguishes them from the other genres is that facts determine the movement of the story and may not leave much room for imaginative or stylistic manipulation.

Mbonde, as he writes Hadithi za Kiboko Hugo ,chooses to remain faithful to historical incidents. The story is based on what actually happened involving himself and other boy scouts in Dar es Salaam as they tried to save a hippopotamus. Kiboko Hugo, the main character, is the lone hippopotamus who is in danger of being killed for plundering the crops of Kurasini farmers.

The basic plot has a lot of potential for an interesting story for children. Indeed Mbonde was writing the book for children for he says in the foreword:

> Hadithi hizi za "Kiboko Hugo"' ni za aina ya pekee, ni za muhimu sana kwa vijana wa shule ambao wamo katika ndoto nyingi za kutaka hiki au kile; kuwa huyu au yule; kupoteza hivi au vile; kusoma hiki au kile. (p. iii)
>
> (The stories or "Kiboko Hugo" are specially for school children who are still dreaming about doing this or the other; to be this or that; to read this or the other.

Moreover he hopes that his book will do more:

> "Kila mwanachuo amalizapo kusoma kitabu hiki awe amepata nuru ya kushika kalamu na kuanza kukusanya hadithi kwa mtindo wa kisasa ili kutosheleza hamu za wasomanji wa siku hizi." (p. iii)
>
> (After finishing this book, it is hoped that the reader will have some inspiration to write stories in a way that will interest today's readers.)

Unfortunately the basic problem of Hadithi Za Kiboko Hugo is in the way it is written. The children who read the story did not like it although they were not able to explain what they did not like about it.

A major weakness in the story is its method of narration. Mbonde starts the story by using the objective view point and informs the reader at length on the history of the Kiboko family in the Kurasini area of Dar-es-Salaam. Often the narrator interrupts the

story to give the reader not the thoughts and feelings of his characters but his own. For example as people come up in arms against Hugo and as they wait for the authorities, Mbonde reflects:

> Ohoo! Huenda jamaa huyu yupo njiani aja, lakini ole wake huyo kama shupavu huyu atachelewa au atashindwa kuwathibitishia wenyeji wa Kurasini ubora wake. Wakazi wanamkusanyia na kutoa hoja zao kuhusu migogoro ambayo imeanzishwa na Hugo. Laiti kiboko mwenyewe angeweza kujiwalikisha katika kusanyiko hilo ili aweze kupikuana nao. Mhu! Sijui maisha ya kiboko huyu yatakuaje! (p.6)
>
> Ohoo! It is likely he is on the way coming, but Hugo is doomed if this hero is late or is unable to convince the villagers of Kurasini about Hugo's value. Already these people have gathered to give their opinions about the disagreement which has been brought about by Hugo. If only the Hippo was able to represent himself at this gathering! Mhu! I don't know what the life of this hippo will be like.

In the above last sentence the author's involvement is very clear but it is more confusing to the child reader than useful. Mbonde forgets that he is in control of the story. The readers may not even remember that this is a historical account and so Mbonde's effort to keep to the facts serves no purpose here. His use of multiple viewpoint does not enhance the development of the characters. Eventually Hugo emerges as a passive character who waits helplessly for people to do what they wish with him. He is not even aware of the extent of the dangers around him. His life is characterised by inaction except when dirtying the water and plundering people's farms.

The conflict that is introduced in the book does not touch Hugo. Two groups of people argue and discuss the value of the Hippo and the reader can choose which side to be on. One of the children readers had good reasons to take sides with the farmers as she asserted.

> 'The farmers were right. The hippo was really bad.
> Coming out at night and eating the crops was bad."

Mbonde has failed to develop Hugo's character so that the reader can like him. He creates a good chance for characterisation when he introduces the little fish to communicate with Hugo, but Mbonde wastes this chance and baffles one of the child readers who says:

> "I don't understand the story. Kiboko Hugo should have gone to look for that fish."

There is no character with whom the child reader can identify. Hugo, the main character turns out to be uninteresting. The human characters in the book are either making long speeches or grumbling, the little fish appears once and is negatively dismissed by the author with:

> Toka siku hiyo hadi leo, Hugo hajakutana na yule samaki. Usitoe siri zako kwa mtu usiyemfahamu, kwani wapelelezi na watu wenye hila hujinafikisha katika mengi ili kumpaza mtu. Kikuumacho ki nguoni mwako. Jihadhari na marafiki wa mabarabarani.(p.27.)

> (From that day to the present Hugo has never met the fish again. Don't give your secrets to a person you do not know because investigators are ill-meaning people and pretend in order to get information from a person. That which bites you is in your clothes. Be careful with friends that you meet in the highways).

It would appear that Mbonde brings in the fish so that Hugo has somebody to whom to narrate the historical account of his family but this was not necessary since the author is using the omniscient viewpoint. Here he is not suffering the limitations of a historical writer for the fish is his own creation.

The characters sometime engage in conversations which advance the interest or excitement. Fitz-Randolp as she discusses how to write for children cautions:

> But remember that the reader's emotion cannot rise higher than that of the main character, and it is by and through emotion of one kind or another that you hold the reader's interest. You must do all you can to create and sustain reader sympathy for the main character by making him as likeable as possible.[9]

Mbonde simply fails to exploit the story. For example having presented the reader with talking beasts he does not build upon this feature which would otherwise have opened avenues for him to develop an interesting story and memorable characters.

It is quite evident that the author likes proverbs and sayings. He deliberately and generously uses them in his book. A good example is on page twenty two where the reader encounters the following:

1. Mwizi hushikwa na mwizi mwingine.

   (A thief is caught by another thief.)

2. Mwenye shibe hamjui mwenye njaa.

   (The one who is full [who has eaten] does not know the one who is hungry.)

3. Subira yavuta heri.

   (Patience brings blessings.)

4. Mwana wa kuku hafunzwi kuchakura.

   (The child of the hen is not taught how to scratch [the ground] for food).

5. Mtu huulizwa amevaa nini au amevaaje, kamwe haulizwi amekula nini.

   (A person is asked what he is wearing or how he is wearing it. But never what he has eaten.)

6. Lila na fila hazitangamani.

   (The hypocrite cannot be hidden.)

These proverbs appear studied and deliberately put together to make a point. The author is aware that the school syllabus required knowledge of proverbs and therefore he tries to cater for this need. The child reader does not have to understand all these proverbs to enjoy the story but in the case of Mbonde's work the proverbs lessen the interest and break the flow of the narrative. For Mbonde the proverbs, however, come in handy in the long speeches to moralise and press his point about prevention of cruelty to animals and the usefulness of the animals to the Tanzanian Society.

Tanzanian children are crying out for more realistic fiction which depict people as seen in real life, with contradictions and complexities that are as believable as life itself, they do not find this last story appealing because the author fails to make it interesting.

3. 7. Conclusion

In this chapter we have explored the types of books which Tanzanian children are reading and isolated some tenets that make them exciting or otherwise. We have seen that most of the books written for the Tanzanian child have been directly or indirectly influenced by traditional literature in content and form of presentation. As in chapter two we have also encountered a dearth of children's drama and poetry the

implications of which are reflected in chapter six of the thesis. A lot of the literature feature stories that are deliberately didactic.

We have noted some specific responses made by children on specific books and more will emerge in our next two chapters The responses reveal that children enjoy stories which have strong lives and those that deal with problems or issues related to childhood and growing up. On the other hand they reject stories that are preachy.

The centrality of the child with regard to children's literature is emphasised in our next chapter where we discuss the kind of responses that were encountered during the research.

NOTES

1. Pioneer in this work means the first indigenous written books for children.

2. Julius K. Nyerere, Quoted in J. P. Mbonde, Historia Fupi ya Utamanduni wa Mtanzania. (Nairobi: Foundation Books, 1974) p. 53

3. W. D. Kamera, "Fasihi Simulizi Na Uandishi Katika Shule Za Msingi", (Dar es Salaam: USDM, 1978) p. 43.

4. J. P. Mbonde, Uandishi Wa Tanzania, Kitabu cha Kwanza: Insha. (Nairobi: EALB, 1976) P. 43.

5. Georgmbeeyi Adali-Morty, "Ewe Poetry" in Ulli Beier (ed.), Introduction to African Literature, (London: Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd.) p. 16

6. Taban Lo Liyong, The Last Word, (Nairobi: EALB, 1969) P. 81.

7. Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart, (London: Heinemann, 1964) p. 6.

8. J. W. Stewig, Children and Literature. (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Company, 1980) p. 344.

9. Jane Fitz-Randolp, How To Write for Children and Young Adults: A Handbook, Barnes & Noble Books, 1980) p. 58.

CHAPTER 4

TANZANIAN CHILDREN'S RESPONSE TO LITERATURE

4. 0. Introduction

In the previous chapter we appraised the literature written for and available to Tanzanian children, analysing it in the context of the child both at school and at home. We demonstrated how it answered or failed to meet his imaginative and literary needs. Children's responses to the works discussed in the last two chapters served to deepen our analysis of the literature. Our critical evaluations and statements were often illustrated or sometimes tested by the children's responses. Among these books we included works written for adults that the child reader has appropriated. We have now found it necessary to give a separate chapter on children's responses because we acknowledge the fact that these responses are important. The child's choice of and response to a book indicate the subjects, presentations and language that appeal to him. It is even more important to get a child's responses because generally the books that he reads are those recommended by adult patrons in the first place. His reading is determined by his own interests and the interests of his peer groups. An analysis of Tanzanian children's responses to books would be a helpful guide for selection of books for children.

For the writer and the critic of children's books such an analysis of responses will be even more invaluable since it will not only help our appraisal of children's literature in Tanzania but would also elicit evaluative criteria for judging the worth of children's books. This kind of evaluation involves carefully planned field work, carefully prepared questionnaires, tests and observations followed by sensitive analysis of data and conclusions which can be tested and re-tested from time to time on other generations of children.

This chapter is not a record of how the researcher tried to nurture children's responses to books, since this is the responsibility of the teacher and the librarian; it has not tried to concern itself with individual reading interests and attitudes; it has simply elicited and analysed responses on books in circulation which children had read on their own. The major thrust of our particular investigation in this chapter is to gauge, as in the words of L. H.. Smith:

> ...whether the work has significance for the reader for whom it was intended. When it was intended for children they themselves will give the final verdict, because children cannot long be deceived by the books to which their instinctive response is not that of ... joy wonder and delight.[1]

Our investigation has therefore sought to elicit children's instinctive responses and analyse these with a view to making statements that would give an indication of the kind of books that would inspire joy, wonder and delight in Tanzanian children.

As a preliminary to the investigation and before going into the depths of analysis we intend to isolate the types of responses we have encountered and how we have elicited them. We shall discuss both the overt and immediate responses whether written or verbal. The responses discussed here have assisted us to recognise the enjoyable literature and determine those aspects of subject matter and presentation that appeal best to children.

4. 1. Silent Response

The silent response was the individual's subjective response to the literature that was available. In most cases this type of response involved the investigator overhearing the respondent give opinion on a book to his peers. At other times, especially during the observation schedule, it was either the eager grabbing of the book from a library shelf or from the hand of the reader, or the disinterested dismissal of another book which was not so attractive.

Not all responses were immediate or easily interpreted in words. For this reason we were careful not to pressurise the children to offer verbal or written responses unless they were ready to do so. In a majority of cases they were enthusiastic to talk about books they liked but more reserved with regard to those they did not like.

Other scholars have acknowledged this silent response as being difficult to assess especially from children but J. W. Stewing observes that this kind of response is not limited to children alone:

> Some books are so special to the reader that to insist on a culminating activity may spoil the effect. We have probably all finished a book and wanted to sit for a while and respond to it silently. In that quiet rethinking, questioning or reacting, we are making the only response necessary.[2]

We tried to give the children the opportunity to sit back and rethink without obligating them to respond but it was possible to gauge how they received the book. We studied the facial expressions and other signs that depict interest or disinterest. Sustained reading and involvement with the book, for example, revealed that there was interest.

Different children responded differently. For example we overheard the following exchange between two boys:

Boy 1: How was the book? (Kifo Cha Ugenini)

Boy 2: Aisee!

The way the respondent answered inspired the first boy to snatch the book and said he would be the next person to read it. Other short statements were:

"Ndicho chenyewe!" (Shukrani za Simba)

(That's the book [to read]!)

"Cha kusoma ni hiki" (Mifano Hai: 3)

(This is the book to read.)

"Wow!" (Yiluselekwilanga)

In our view these were simply ways of recommending a book to a friend and demonstrated both interest and judgement. Emily Bronte sums up this kind of response very clearly when she states:

> Children can feel, but they cannot analyse their feeling; partially affected in thought, they know not how to express the result of the process in words.[3]

Observation schedules in the library also proved useful and helped to confirm that the books which were not borrowed out did not interest the children. Included among such books were Mwanangu Mpoki which appeared too difficult for the readers.

This kind of silent response, however limited, helped us to gauge the enthusiasm of child readers. A good example was witnessed in a public library where a group of four boys put their books on the table and went to the shelves. One of the boys spotted a copy of Mama Haambiliki and showed it to one of his friends and they started reading it in audible whispers while the other two boys drew near to listen as they looked over the first boy's shoulders.

On another occasion we watched two girls and three boys in a public library as they worked out a schedule in whispers with regard to reading a copy of Hila Za Mzee Kobe which one of the girls had found. The interest generated by this book suggested that the children had either been looking for the book or it had been recommended to them by another reader. Such is the book that is read behind the desk or tucked into another book during a dull lesson or read during illegal times. In some cases, having read exciting books, the children requested for similar books or works by the same author to read.

The silent response was by far the hardest to gauge because different readers responded differently as they read the books. Another drawback was that the researcher had a limited period of interaction with the children. In spite of its limitations, the method helped to forge an idea of the kind of books that interested child readers at particular stages.

4. 2. Response Through Re-reading

In eliciting this kind of response we assumed that whenever possible, or subject to availability of the book, a good story would invite the reader for a reread. We also assumed that the child found something new to respond to every time he re-read a story. It was interesting to note that the books which the children enthusiastically circulated from their personal collection or from the libraries are those that they enjoyed and some of which they had read more than once. The re-reading sometimes took the form of reading for younger brothers and sisters or shared reading between friends. We for example, saw two boys lying on their tummies on the school lawn one break time reading a book between them. The one who had read the book before often gave such an inspiring running commentary on Mtu Nyani that his classmate could not take his eyes off the text.

Re-reading confirmed that the reader had an interest in the book and did not consider it a waste of his time to re-visit it. C. S. Lewis seems to indirectly commend this kind of response when he asserts:

> The sure mark of an unliterary man is that he considers 'I've read it already' to be conclusive argument against reading a work. ... Those who read great works, on the other hand, will read the same ten, twenty or thirty times during the course of their life.[4]

C. S. Lewis is suggesting that works that are re-read are unlikely to be the mediocre or boring. It is often the book with exciting characters with whom the child reader recognises and identifies that is revisited, for re-reading is like re-visiting the characters in the story and sharing their experiences.

This feature is common in oral story-telling where children and adults alike want stories retold. Oral narrators are not surprised when the audiences return to listen to a tale they have heard and know so well. Part of the enjoyment in fact comes from hearing a known tale well told. Children especially love to listen to stories retold even if those stories are presented in the same terms, same gestures and modulation of voice. As the narrator tells the story he enkindles fresh wonder in the child and builds up curiosity and pleasure. As with the oral tale, a good story that is re-read has a power of its own that makes demands on the reader to read again. Our findings concurred with Nina Bawden's suggestion that this response is inspired by a strong storyline.

> The clue to what they really enjoy is what they go back to, and this is almost always a book with a strong narrative line.[5]

We observed that children read and re-read only those works they enjoy and then advertise the good story to their friends. It was therefore not unusual, as it happened in Dodoma, to find a single copy of a book that had been read by all the forty-four children in standard six. Mercifully the book, a copy of Eddie Ganzel's Jogoo La Samba, survived and the owner read it the third time. Books that were widely circulated among friends included Hadithi za Bibi: Kitabu Cha Kwanza. Sungura Kizimbani, Mifano Hai: Kitabu Cha Tatu, Kifo Cha Ugenini, Methali Zatufundisha: Kitabu Cha Tatu, Hila Za Mzee Kobe, Pilipili Hoho, Hamu ya Matamu, Mama Haambiliki, Zimwi Mjini, Shukrani Za Simba na Parkipuny. Most of these titles have stories based on or adapted from traditional oral literature and are, in addition, well written.

The major constraint with regard to this response was the fact that children had to rely on a limited supply of books available at home, in school and libraries. Even for our research purposes it was not possible to avail books for long periods to know how many times they would re-read them. It may well be that they re-read these books because for some children, there was nothing else to read at the time but one could argue that there was always the alternative of not re-reading at all.

4. 3. Response Through Dramatization

Sometimes children respond to what they read through acting out parts of the stories. Such skits are observed during school breaks especially after an exciting reading of a good story. Thus dramatisation need not be formal as when a teacher suggests it in a class after reading a story or a poem. It may be an impromptu, informal performance, organised by the children themselves on a story or song that they enjoyed. They seem to select action oriented scenes that are naturally quite dramatic. One performance we witnessed involved team-work as children acted out the last scene of The Enormous Turnip. One of the bigger boys pretended to be the turnip as he crouched in the play field waiting to be uprooted by the various children who pretended to be the characters in the story. Make-belief was necessary here to build this drama to a climax when the team members were all together and ready to pull the "turnip". The uprooting of the turnip ended in hilarious screams and laughter as the pre-school children including the "turnip" fell on top of one another bringing the drama to an end.

The above drama was prompted by the reading of the story in class by the teacher but the teacher made no suggestions about dramatisation. Similarly, poems which were learnt in class were recited or sung by the children outside classrooms. The investigator read "Ligalu na Nyoka", a story in Zimwi Mjini to a standard three class.

Three hours later a group of six children were seen dramatising Ligalu, the character, as they chanted the song he sung as he went though the villages selling his baskets. In the next scene they became even more organised so that there was one man called Ligalu carrying a branch from a tree which had been felled recently. The other children immediately became the children of the village who in the story followed the movements of Ligalu as he sang and they responded:

Ligalu	*Others*
Ta ra	Taratibu
Mlima wa ukindu	Ligalu na ukindu
Matenga	ya ukindu
Pakacha	za ukindu
Mikanda	ya ukindu
Mikeka	ya Bwana Mkeka
Anachekecha	Na kuchekesha
Ta ra	Taratibu
Karibu.	

In our research, and using some of the questions in the appendix, we encouraged children to respond to characters, context, plot and theme. We also solicited some value judgments on the works they read. The children thus imitated

book characters as they acted out interesting parts of the story. Part of the response to characterisation was detected through the nicknames that children gave to themselves or to others after an exciting experience with a book. It was possible to tell which books or stories had impact on the readers. Such nicknames were used in dramas staged by the children during their play time. These included Pwagu, Pwaguzi, after the comic strip Pwagu na Pwaguzi, Mtu Mamba, after the Kiswahili translation of the Crocodile Man (Mtu Mamba). Yiluse, after Yiluselekwilanga, Abunuwasi, after Hekaya za Abunuwasi, Umsolopagasi after Allan Quatermain.

The nicknames seem to share some aspects in common: they are either rare names often coined by the author or unusually long, for example, "Yiluselekwilanga," and "Umsolopagasi". They often have humorous sounds while others are names of widely read literature, for example "Abunuwasi", and "Pwagu" and "Pwaguzi".

It is interesting to note that not all the names are of particularly upright characters. Abunuwasi, for example, is a trickster who enjoys the foolishness of others and delights in putting such people on the carpet. He uses his intelligence and cunning to help others not necessarily for his own gain. He is, however more positive than hare, the trickster of traditional tales. Umsolopagasi is admired for his physical strength but the writer, Rider Haggard, denies him the intelligence that readers would like to have.

4. 4. Response Through Writing

Over and above re-reading exciting literature, children also enjoy reciting their favourite poems and retelling their favourite stories in their own words. We heard some of these retold during our research especially when we solicited responses on their favourite titles. When we asked the children to fill in the questionnaires some of them went ahead to give summaries of their favourite stories and a few even wrote whole stories drawn from their favourite books. Occasionally, the re-telling is deliberately committed to writing either because the adult solicits such a response or simply when the reader is reflecting on paper. The stories thus written may be limited in style and even content but the basic plot is maintained. This kind of response, if encouraged, will help the child to internalise good literature, interpret and criticise the mediocre. As he selects one story above all the others, copies or adapts it, he is really making the point that he has enjoyed ~~the~~ it.

We examined the texts of the stories written by children to elicit some general statements with regard to books that influenced these young authors. Most of these written responses were based on written traditional tales for example "Punda Wa Dobi" in which Pendo (Girl 10 years) weaves in two stories in one. The main story is "The Monkey and the Shark" which tells of how shark invited monkey to his home with the

sole intention of feasting on his heart. Monkey is clever enough to escape. The shark waits for a long time and then asks his friend what he is doing in his tree. In answer monkey gives shark the story of "Punda wa Dobi" (The laundry man's Donkey) who found himself in a similar predicament and was eaten by lion, his friend.

PUNDA WA DOBI

Hapo kale palikuwa na Nyani na Papa. Siku moja Papa alitoka akaenda nchi kavu kwa Nyani. Alipofika alimwita Nyani rafiki ee, Nyani akasema ee. Papa akasema, uko wapi? Nyani akasema niko huku. Nyani akamwambia twende kwetu Mfalme wetu anakuhitaji. Nyani akasema siwezi kuogelea. Papa akasema utapanda mgongoni mwangu. Nyani akashuka. Alipofika akapanda mgongoni mwa Papa. Papa akaingia majini akaogelea, walipofika katikati,Papa akasema, unajua kule kwetu mfalme ni mgonjwa, akasema ndio najua. Basi anaomba moyo wako, Nyani akasema sisi huwa hatutembei na moyo wetu. Nyani akasema ungeniambia kule ningeuchukua. Papa aligeuka akarudi, walipofika Nyani alipanda mtini akakaa, Papa alipoona rafiki

hashuki aliita Nyani ee, Nyani akasema ee Papa akasema umeuona Nyani akasema ndiyo kwa nini hushuki? Sielewi huelewi nini? Nyani akasema unanifanya miye punda wa dobi? Papa akasema punda wa dobi ndiyo nini? Nyani akasema huelewi ngoja basi nikuhadithie.

Hapo kale palitokea Simba na Sungura. Siku moja Simba alikuwa na njaa. Akamtuma aende mawindoni kamletee mnyama. Sungura akatoka akaenda alipofika njiani akamkuta Punda. Sungura akamwambia bwana anataka kukuona. Punda kwa sababu ya rangi zangu. Sungura akasema labda. Wakaondoka wakaenda hadi kwa Simba walipofika Simba akasema karibu rafiki niliyekutaka. Punda alimsongelea, basi hapo hapo Sungura alianza kucheka Punda alipoona anacheka alikimbia. Sungura akamfuata tena siku nyingine. Rafiki mbona ulikimbia. Punda akasema si mlikuwa mnanicheka, Sungura akasema ndiyo kuamkia hivyo, basi Punda aliposikia hivyo aliyoambiwa akamruhusu waende wote, walipofika Simba alianza kumtafuna mpaka akafa.

MWISHO

The author of the above story admitted that she was inspired by a story she loved very much and that she used the story in order to tell hers about the "Laundryman's Donkey". Ten-year-old author handles the story within a story quite commendably for her age. The story is made more interesting by the use of dialogue which helps to bring out the two sets of characters: monkey and shark on the one hand, donkey and hare on the other. Pendo has done more than retell the story. She has responded to the original author's characterisation of the donkey and the hare lion in such a way that she has been inspired to recreate them in her own mind, expanding the characterisation subjectively through dialogue. Pendo carefully connects two stories to create a story within a story. The story about laundryman's donkey and the lion serves to reinforce the story of the monkey and the shark. The monkey is wise enough to learn from the donkey's experience and does not allow himself to be eaten up by the shark. The wit of the monkey emerges even more strongly as it is contrasted with the donkey's trusting, foolish relationship with the hare who delivers him up to be eaten by the lion. Thus from the above story, the child reader has incorporated another story in order to inject freshness into her overall creation.

The young writer of this story has a good command of the Kiswahili language and seems to have a natural flair with dialogue. The dialogue, though not clearly punctuated, shows that Pendo enjoys dialogues in stories. The direct speeches here

give the effect of immediacy and urgency. The reader is more involved as he witnesses the drama between friends. It could also point to the child's cry for written drama for acting out or even reading aloud.

Another young writer, Zambia (Boy, 12 years.) said he could not remember which story had influenced him to write the story "Hadithi Inayohusu Ukewenza" (A story about co-wives) but he said he remembered reading it somewhere "a long time ago". He also said that the song could be from some of the stories his grandmother had told him.

HADITHI INAYOHUSU UKEWENZA

Hapo zamani za kale palitokea kijana mmoja mzuri sana aliyekuwa anatafuta mchumba, kwa bahati akampata msichana aliyemzuri kama yeye na wakaoana. sasa wameishi miaka mingi bila ya kupata mtoto, basi yule baba akaamua kuoa mke wapili, na kwa bahati nzuri hakuchelewa kuzaa mtoto wakamlea mtoto wao hadi kufikia miaka minne wakazaa mtoto mwingine wakati huo bimkubwa hajapata bahati ya kuzaa mtoto hata wa

dawa, ikawa sasa anamuonea wivu mwenzake wakawa hawapendani, lakini huyu bimdogo alikuwa anampenda bimkubwa, siku aliyofuata bimdogo akamuambia bimkubwa naomba unisuke, bimkubwa akamkubalia akamuambia fumua, akafumua kumbe wakati wote alikuwa anatafuta sababu ya kutaka kumuuwa.

Walipoanza kusuka bimkubwa alikuwa na sindano saba, aliposuka unywele wa kwanza akaweka sindano katikati ya unywele huo, mpaka sindano zilipoisha yule bimdogo akageuka ndege na kuanza kuruka juu.

Mme wao aliporudi, akakaa mpaka saa mbili za usiku hamuoni bimdogo, akamuuliza bimkubwa mwenzako yuko wapi? Akasema sijui aliko wakati huo huo yule ndege akaja na kutua juu ya mti ulio karibu na nyumba yao, na kuanza kuimba:

Kibaraka kibaraka,
rabe bwana rabe
mme wangu kenda wapi

kenda kusali na kuadhini, akirudi msalimie

huyo akaruka, mpaka siku moja yule bwana akamtega yule ndege, aliponasa tu akamchukua na kumtoa zile sindano kichwani na kurudi kuwa binadamu kama kawaida yake, yule bwana akaamua kumuuwa bimkubwa na kubaki na bimdogo wakaishi raha mustarehe na watoto wao.

MWISHO

In Zambia's account no child is involved as a character in this story a bout a co-wife's jealousy. The unnamed jealous woman pretends that she is plaiting her co-wife's hair but she puts needles in the knots. She put all seven needles, and the younger woman changed into a bird. The situation is reversed by the husband who removes the needles from the "bird". In anger the man kills his first wife for her jealousy.

What we found interesting about Zambia's style is his narrative method which seems to have been influenced to some extent by the oral style of narration. The author keeps changing the form of the tenses from past to the present. This is a feature which

is common in oral narratives and serves to suggest that Zambia had learnt from oral tales narrated to him as revealed by such statements as:

Sasa wameishi miaka mingi .....

(Now they have lived for many years)

.... ikawasasa anamuonea wivu .....

(.... it happens now she is jealous ....)

In oral tale-telling this feature helps to draw the audience's attention to the incident being narrated as well as making the listeners identify with the context of the story. Similarly the song draws the attention of the reader as it adds more information to the story.

Similar in theme but different in characterisation is the story entitled "Asha Na Amina" by Akiza (Girl, Age 12 years). In this story Mama Amina advises Asha to push her own mother into the river so that she can give Asha a pot. Asha agrees to this but the stepmother does not give her the pot as she had promised but instead beats her hard. So Asha goes to cry at the river. A cow appears and tells her to ask for anything she wants. Mama Amina learns of this cow that is giving her step-daughter everything she needs.

The woman kills the cow. A voice tells Asha to collect the bones and throw them into the river and to her surprise she sees a big tower at the river which attracts everybody's attention including the king's. Only Asha is able to get to the tower. Because of these marvellous things that have happened, the king announces that Asha would be married to his son. Meanwhile Amina is sent by her mother to plait Asha's hair and she puts seven pins inside the hair. The result is similar to what happens in Zambia's story although the details are different. Amina is killed, cooked and given to her parents to eat. They too are killed, and Asha's mother then emerges from the river.

It is clear that Zambia and Akiza were influenced by a similar story but as they wrote, each adopted a different style. Even the very titles are different. Whereas Zambia describes the story by its theme, Akiza uses the names of the two half-sisters as her title. Akiza's story, reproduced here, is not only fuller but detailed in its presentation of the characters and elicits the reader's sympathy with Asha.

ASHA NA AMINA

Hapo zamani za kale palikuwa na baba mmoja akaoa wake wawili. Kila mke alikuwa na mtoto mmoja. Yule mke wa kwanza alikuwa na mtoto aliyeitwa Asha, na mke wa pili alikuwa na mtoto aliyeitwa Amina. Mke wa pili alikuwa fundi wa kutengeneza vyungu. Lakini mke wa kwanza alikuwa hajui kutengeneza. Siku moja Asha akamwambia mama yake "nataka unitengenezee chungu." Mama yake akamwambia Asha aende kwa mama Amina akamtengenezee.

Basi Asha akaenda kwa Mama Amina na kumwomba amtengenezee chungu. Mama Amina akasema "Ukimtumbukiza mama yako mtoni, nitakutengenezea chungu." Asha akarudi nyumbani. Siku moja mama Asha akatoka kwenda mtoni kuchota maji. Asha akaondoka akamfuata. Alipofika mtoni, mama Asha aliinama ili achote maji. Asha akaja akamsukuma mama yake akazama mtoni.

Asha akarudi nyumbani akiwa na furaha. Akaenda kumwelezea mama Amina. Mama Akampiga na kumgombeza Asha na akamkatalia chungu. Asha akaenda mtoni akalia sana, mara akasikia sauti ikimwambia ageuke nyuma, akimwona ng'ombe amwambie chochote atakacho atapata. Asha akafurahi sana.

Kila siku akawa anakuja kumwomba ng'ombe mahitaji anayotaka na akirudi nyumbani Mama Amina humnyang'anya na kumpa Amina. Siku moja Mama Amina alimfuata na kumwona akimwomba yule ng'ombe. Mama Amina akamchinja yule ng'ombe. Asha akaenda. mtoni akalia mara sauti ikatokea nakumwambia akusanye mifupa yote ya ng'ombe aitupe mtoni. Asha akafanya kama alivyoagizwa. Baada ya muda kidogo mnara mkubwa wa dhahabu ukaota pale mtoni. Mfalme alipouona akapiga mbio ya mgambo watu wakakusanyika, akawaeleza kuwa mtu mwenye mnara huo ataolewa na mtoto wa mfalme. Watu wote pamoja na Amina wakaenda kuushika mnara lakini ulisongea. Mwisho Asha akaenda kuusika mnara lakini haukusongea.

Mfalme akatangaza kuwa Asha ataolewa na mtoto wa mfalme. Ikafanywa harusi watu wote wakawa wakila kwa mfalme siku saba. Huku nyuma baada ya kupita siku nyingi Amina aliambiwa na mama yake aende kwa Asha amwombe kumsuka. Halafu amsuke nywele saba na amtie pini saba. Amina akaondoka na kwenda kwa mtoto wa mfalme, alipofika alimwomba aje amsuke. Asha akakubali na alipomtia pini saba aligeuka ndege. Amina akavaa nguo za Asha na kukaa chumbani. Mtoto wa mfalme alipokuja alimwona mke wake amebadilika akanyamaza kimya. Ikawa kila siku yule ndege anakuja mtini karibu na nyumba ya mtoto wa mfalme na kuimba kibaraka kibaraka maneno ya ndege

Abe bibi abe mtumishi
Mume wangu kenda wapi? Maneno ya ndege
kenda msikitini kusali na kuhadhini mtumishi
Basi akija msalimie

Siku moja wafanya kazi wa mfalme wakamwambia mtoto wa mfalme, mtoto wa mfalme akaweka gundi kwenye

mti na ndege alipotua akanaswa. Mtoto wa mfalme akamchukua ndege akampapasa akamwona ana pini saba kichwani. Akaondoa pini zote mara akageuka mke wake. Mtoto wa mfalme akafurahi akamchukua Amina akamchinjia. Mfalme akapiga mbiu ya mgambo, akatangaza kisa chote na akasema adhabu yao ni kwamba wale nyama ya mtoto wao Amina, halafu wanyongwe. Watu wote wakakubali. Watumishi wa mtoto wa mfalme wakapika ile nyama ya mtoto wao na kuwapa wale Baba na Mama Amina. Wakaila halafu wakanyongwa. Asha na mtoto wa mfalme wakaishi kidogo yule mama Asha aliyetumbukizwa mtoni akatoka mtoni. Akaishi raha mustarehe na watoto wake. Mwisho akazaa mtoto.

MWISHO

Asha is juxtaposed with her evil stepmother and rewarded as the latter is punished for the evil deeds that she engineers. What Akiza liked about this story is the behaviour of the girl, Asha. When asked why she allowed Amina to be killed and yet all she had done was to obey her wicked mother, she said that Amina was also wicked

because she agreed to do wrong. Akiza thus seemed to be very conscious of right and wrong and aware of the consequences of evil deeds. The gory scene in which Amina is slaughtered like an animal and her flesh cooked and given to her parents was completely taken for granted by Akiza. She presents it in such a matter-of-fact manner as if it is the kind of thing that happens every day.

Both Zambia and Akiza employ similar stylistic devises. For example both stories have songs although the words of the songs of the birds are different. From the accounts it is clear that both children enjoyed the step-mother stock motif and the magic involved in putting seven needles in one story and seven pins in the other to change a human being into a bird. The endings also emphasise the cry for justice to be meted out to the offenders.

The three authors discussed above enjoy reading stories and also hearing oral ones told and this is evident from the material they use and the styles they employ. Although theirs are individual and perhaps subjective responses these stories reflect the co-existence of oral and written literature. The written stories take their source from the oral literature with which children are familiar. Children internalise such stories when they are also well written and recreate them not only in their minds, but also respond to their various imaginative, thematic and stylistic leads provided both by the original writers and by the oral tradition.

The young readers are also influenced by writers to use proverbs as headings, for example, Yohana's story "Mkuki Kwa Nguruwe Kwa Binadamu Unauma" which illustrates the proverb similar to "Do unto others as you would like them to do unto you". Yohana (Boy, 13 years) said he liked the way Halimoja used proverbs in his three books although the story was from his "own head". The young writer is therefore responding to style. The proverb sums up the message of the story in the same manner that Halimoja employs in his books.

The majority of the stories to which children responded by re-writing have animal characters. Many of the readers especially those below twelve years, said they enjoyed animal characters. Others wished there were more stories on domestic animals. Katarina's story, which she said was her "own story" features a guard dog and is in a way, a far cry for similar stories for children. In the narrative Katarina (Girl 11 years) writes about a "Cowardly Guard Dog" in a story that is set in a modern urban environment. A family is compelled to like their cowardly guard dog because he barks and warns them of thieves. The author wishes there were "many stories about pets" especially cats and dogs such as the one she wrote.

MBWA MWOGA WA KULINDA

Baba na Mama Anna walichelewa sana kwenda kulala, watoto walikuwa kitandani tangu saa moja ya jioni. Baba Anna alipokuwa bafuni alitupia

jicho saa yake: "Saa tano tayari za usiku." Baada ya mazungumzo marefu sebuleni waliamua kumpa mtu yeyote mbwa wao. Luka, Anna na Suzana hawakumpenda huyu mnyama. Walimtesa na hata hivyo hakua mzuri. Wote wawili walilala kama mawe mawili. Basi baada ya muda mfupi Anna aliamka tena. Hakufahamu vizuri kuwa ni kitu gani kilichomwaamsha. Mbwa alibweka na kulia kwa sauti. Baba Anna alisimama na akasongelea dirishani "Lo huyu mnyama anajificha wapi?" alinong'ona. Kubweka kwa mbwa hakukumalizika. Hata mke wake aliamka na kuuliza "Hata mimi sijui," alinong'ona Baba Anna. Mara palikuwa kimya. "Afadhali" alisema, lakini mara kubweka kulizidi tena sana. "Sasa nitamuua huyu mnyama!" Baba Anna alisema kwa hasira. Mke wake alisema: "Nyamaza, ninasikia kitu". Ndiyo, sauti ndogo ilisikika. Baba Anna alitoka polepole. Wezi wawili walikuwa karibu kuichukua redio rekoda yake. Alirudi polepole katika chumba cha kulala, akachukua bastola moja ya zamani na panga lake aalirudi sebuleni na kusema kwa sauiti kubwa: "Enyi wezi ondokeni au nitawapiga risasi!" Kwa kutisha alipiga risasi mara moja hewani. Wezi waliogopa sana wakatupilia gunia lao mbali kukimbia. Kwa mawazo alirudi chumba cha kulala. Huyu mbwa ametusaidia sana, alifikiri. Asubuhi Baba Anna aliwaambia watoto: "Anna, Luka na Suzana leo usiku mbwa huyu alitujulisha juu ya wezi wawili. Hii inamaanisha

kwamba alibweka sana kwa hiyo niliweza kuwafukuza. Sasa mnalazimika mumpende". Wote watatu walicheka kijinga kwanza, halafu Luka alisema: "Baba, mimi nina wazo moja. Ninaweza kumwita huyu mbwa Kelly?" Baba Anna akauliza kwa hasira: "Kama nikikuruhusu wewe na nyinyi", aliwageukia Anna na Susana "mtamtunza huyu mnyama vizuri?" Anna ambaye ndiye mkumbwa aliwakonyeza Luka na Susana kwa kuwatia moyo. "Ndiyo Baba!" wale wawili wadogo pamoja na Anna walisema kwa sauti. Tangu wakati ule hali ilimwendea Kelly vizuri. Mgeni wa kwanza aliyechelewa ililazimika alindwe na fimbo kabla ya kuweza kuingia nyumbani.

MWISHO

The stories retold are drawn from the written published sources including "Mtego", "Sindelela" and "Omari Hodari". In "Mtego" Patrick responds to Hans Cory's adapted but effective dramatisation of the two rats as they debate whether or not to eat the meat. He borrows from Cory the use of significant words like "kinofu" and "kibao". The repetition "usijaribu ...." reinforces the seriousness of the warning and brings out the foolishness of the rat that gets caught.

MTEGO

Kulikuwa na mtego wa panya. Panya wawili wakaja kuuangalia. Wakaona kinofu juu yake, harufu ya kinofu tamu sana. Mmoja akamwambia mwenzi wake: Twende kuonja kinofu kile. Rafiki yake akajibu: Nafikiri kitamu lakini naogopa. Baba kaniambia hivi: Mwanangu, ukiona kinofu kimewekwa peke yake katika kibao kidogo, usikiguze; ni mtego. Panya wa kwanza akasema tena: Huu si mtego; Najua mtego mimi. Hapa hakuna hatari yoyote. Twende tule kinofu, kina mafuta - lo! Sijala nyama tangu siku tano. Mwenzi wake akajibu: Namimi sikula nyama tangu siku sita,lakini baba kaniambia: Ukiona kinofu kimewekwa peke yake kukupendeza kumbuka ni mtego;

Usijaribu kuonja,

Usijaribu kugusa

Usikubali kunusa

Kumbuka ni mtego

Panya wa kwanza akasema; Wewe mwongo mno. Hakuna hatari. Kama ni mtego mbona hautegi? Je, panya yeyote amenaswa? Twende kula kinofu kile.

Twende pole pole kabisa. Basi panya yule mjinga akatia meno katika kinofu, na kumbe ... kwa ghafla mtego ukafyatuka, panya mjinga akanaswa na wa pili akawa salama.

MWISHO

It is obvious that Patrick (Boy, 9 years) enjoyed this story about two young rats that debated over a juicy piece of meat on trap. One tells the other that his father has warned him over touching any food on a trap. The foolish rat is trapped while the obedient, little rat escapes unhurt.

Another young reader, Mollel, (Boy, 11 years) responded to "Omari Hodari" in Someni Kwa Furaha: Kitabu Cha 3 by simply copying the story word for word. Asked what he liked about this story he said:

> "Nilipenda jinsi Omari aliruhusiwa kwenda safari. Halafu nilipenda alivyokuwa anampiga mamba pa pa pa"
>
> (I liked the way Omari was allowed to go for a journey.
> And then I liked the way he beat the crocodile pa pa pa).

Mollel was therefore attracted by the spirit of adventure in Omari Hodari and the fact that he could go anywhere he wished. All he wanted to do was to see places so he climbed up a tree to see everything. Then he went to the river. A crocodile saw him and came towards him to attack him but he jumped on its back and beat it up until it went away. Copying the story down was then probably his way of demonstrating his enjoyment, savouring the experience by re-living it through writing.

We shall reproduce the original story which unlike Mollel's is punctuated.

OMARI HODARI

Omari Hodari alikuwa wa miaka kumi. Alikuwa mzuri sana, hana ukaidi, hana woga, hana ubaya alikuwa akicheka na kucheza siku zote hata akila chakula hucheka tu. Mama yake akamwambia usicheke daima lakini yeye akazidi kucheka. Siku moja akasema, Mama nafunga safari. Mama akasema: Vema Omari! akachukua fimbo akafunga furushi la ndizi 2 na moja, akaenda zake.

Alikutana na Mwalimu Petro. Mwalimu Petro alikuwa mbele ya shule akisoma kitabu chake. Omari akasema, Shikamoo Mwalimu.

Mwalimu akasema marahaba. Omari unakwenda wapi? Mimi nakwenda kufanya safari Mwalimu, safari ya saa kumi! Ha ha safari ya kwenda wapi? Ya mwituni, Mwalimu. Ha ha je Mama amekubali? Ndiyo Mwalimu amekubali, lakini siendi mbali. Basi vizuri Omari. Kwaheri Omari!

Omari akaenda zake. Jua liling'ara mbinguni, na joto lilikuwa kali sana. Lakini Omari akaona aidhuru akaende akaenda. Akafika mpaka mti mmoja akasema nitakwea mti ule nipate kuona nchi yote. Akaukwea akaona nyumba za watu na miti na kila kitu. Hata kanisa na nyumba ya Mwalimu Petro. Na soko na migomba na minazi. Akaona vile upande mwingine pana mto. Akala ndizi zake akasema nataka kuuangalia mto ule. Akashuka chini, akafunga safari lakini hakukimbia. Akasimama tu. Mamba akamwangalia alianza kusongea karibu pole pole sana. Omari akafikiri nikikimbia atanipata nitafanya werevu wangu akashika fimbo yake mkononi, Mamba akaja karibu naye akafunua mdomo wake wazi sana mara Omari akaruka juu yake, juu ya kichwa chake hasa alianza kumpiga pa pa pa jicho pa kichwa pa pua pa. Mamba yule alijaribu kumtupa chini lakini hakuweza. Omari akazidi kumpiga hata machozi yakamtoka. Mwisho mamba akaenda zake.

MWISHO

From Mollel's response, we gather that what attracted him most was not only the action of Omari Hodari beating the crocodile but also the sound that action produced - pa pa pa.

Unlike Mollel who copies "Omari Hodari" down because he enjoys it, Joyce (Girl, 12 years) blends a written version of Cinderella and a traditional Cinderella type of story. Joyce admitted that she had read not only Cinderella but also the story "Siyalela" in Sultani Zuwera. She also admitted that she had heard a story on the radio about a father who had been sent by his daughter to bring her a branch which she planted on her mother's grave. In Joyce's story, the branch grew into a big branch. When her step sisters were invited to go and dance at the king's palace, Sindelela just went to her mother's grave to cry and then help came to her as in Cinderella story.

SINDELELA

Hapo kale kulikuwa na mtoto aliyeitwa Sindelela alikuwa mto asiye na mama. Baba yake alioa mke mwingine baada ya yule kufa. Yule mama mwingine alizaa watoto wawili. Walikuwa wanamchukia Sindelela sababu alikuwa mchafu.

Baba yao siku moja alisema leo naenda mjini niwaletee nini? Wale watoto wawili walisema tuletee nguo na viatu. Baba yao akamuuliza Sindelela unataka nini kutoka mjini? Akajibu nataka tawi la mti wale wenzake walimcheka..

Baba yao alipoondoka akafika mjini akapanda kwenye basi kwenda dukani alipofika mjini alinunua nguo na viatu lakini alisahau lile tawi. Alipofika njiani kofia ikanasa kwenye mti. Ndipo akakumbuka lile tawi akalichuna. Alipofika kila mtu alipewa kitu chake. Sindelela alipopewa alikimbia mbio hadi kwenye kaburi ya mama yake. Akaliweka lile tawi. Lilikua mpaka likawa kubwa. Siku moja kulikuwa na sherehe mwana wa mfalme alikuwa anataka mchumba.

Siku ilipofika wale watoto walivaa nguo zao kisha wakaenda. Sindelela akakimbia kwenye kaburi la Mama yake huku analia. Mara kaburi likapasuka sauti ya mama yake mpendwa ikatoka akasema mwanangu unalia nini? Sindelela akamwambia Mama yake akasema panda kwenye farasi huyo vaa nguo hizi lakini ikifika saa sita rudi kisha uende nyumbani. Alipofika kwenye pati, yule mwana wa mfalme alikuwa hajachagua mke. Lakini njiani kiatu kiliangua, lakini aliwahi kufika akabadili nguo na kuvaa uchafu wake. Yule mtoto wa mfalme

kuona mke ayupo alituma askari wakamtafute njiani. Waliokota kile kiatu wakapeleka kwa mfalme. Mfalme akatoa amri kuwa wapite kila nyumba wakiona kiatu kinaingia wapeleke. Wakapita kila nyumba mwisho wakafika kwa Sindelela wakauliza wale watoto wakajaribu viatu havikuwatosha. Walimwita Sindelela, alipojaribu kiatu kiliingia bila shida wakambeba halafu walipofika njiani aliomba akamwage Mama yake. Alipomwaga wakaendelea mbele mwisho wakafika na harusi ikafanywa upya.

MWISHO

What emerges from this response is the effort of the author to incorporate her own contemporary experience into her response to what she reads. She demonstrates that children respond to the material they read with an inbuilt storehouse of experience, and that a well told story, related to the world a child knows, can trigger varying associations that can enrich the child in various creative ways. Thus, in the above rendering of the story, Joyce makes Sindelela's father wear a hat and go to town by bus. He becomes more recognisable to the child reader.

The children who have written these stories are not literary giants. Shelukindo's "Kisa Cha Sungura Na Simba" is a short response to a story which the nine year old

boy had read. He could not remember the title but he did remember the characters as Hare and Lion.

KISA CHA SUNGURA NA SIMBA

Hapo kale wanyama hawa walikua marafiki wakubwa sana. Lakini Sungura alikuwa mjanja kuliko Simba.

Siku moja wakaenda kutembea porini. Sungura akamwambia Simba kwamba kaa hapa chini mimi nitapanda juu ya mlima. Nikifika mlimani fungua kinywa chako na mimi nitakupatia nyama. Simba kusikia hivyo akafungua kinywa chake kwa furaha kubwa. Sungura kufika mlimani akabiringisha jiwe kubwa na likaingia kinywani mwa Simba. Simba kuona vile akasikitika sana kwani hakutegemea kama Sungura angeliweza kumfanya maovu kama hayo.

Shelukindo's rendering is a mere story-line, without details but dramatic enough to have stuck in his mind. Further questioning revealed that Shelukindo enjoyed this story because of the lesson he learnt from it.

"Hata marafiki wanaweza kuwa wajanja na wabaya."

("Even friends can be crafty and bad.")

It is not clear why the hare wanted to crush the lion by rolling the stone down the hill but knowing the hare stock motifs there may be an element of revenge missing from the young writer's story.

The account, though unfinished is a good testimony of a story that had been enjoyed. Sima's story "Mamba Na Kiboko" was an eight year old girl's response to a book she had read in school but which was also unrecognisable by title.

MAMBA NA KIBOKO

Hapo zamani palikuwa na Kiboko na Mamba walisema tunasikia kiu, akakutana na Fatunata akawaambia mnataka maji? Mamba akasema ndio tunataka maji, Fatunata akasema nendeni kwenye kisima mtakuta maji tena masafi sana. Kiboko na Mamba wakaenda kisimani wakanywa maji.

Even if Sima's account does not qualify to be a story as it is an unfinished record of a single incident, it demonstrates that children sometimes respond to

particular incidents in a story and then summarise them, assuming that the reader or listener knows the whole story. The incident that sticks in their memory is the one they have enjoyed most. In Sima's story, for example, thirst is seen as the common problem that the hippopotamus and the crocodile have. Implied in the story is the underlying fact that these two are aquastrine animals and perhaps that is why Sima says nothing else after the two animals are through with drinking water.

Art also allows and encourages active involvement with literature. The responses that emerge are not only of interpretation but also of emotional involvement. Some of the pictures that children draw express how they interpret certain works of literature. The scene they depict in a picture suggests which part is either more dramatic or more significant to them as readers. During our investigation, few readers responded to books by drawing pictures except where the pictures accompanied retold stories.

4.5. Conclusion

From the above responses we recognise that children respond to literature by summarising, rewriting, adapting or illustrating in pictures what they read.

During our research we realised that the individual child has the ability, to make choices of books, when that privilege is given him. The child is also capable of interpreting the works he reads. We agree with Betty Coody that:

> Ultimately each child should have the freedom of interpreting the literature in his own way.[6]

Even though they may not always articulate their reasons for liking some books more than others they, nevertheless, know how to choose. They are innately critical even without knowing why and are as sensitive as their elders to books with good stories, integrity of structure, sincerity of characterisation and appropriateness of style.

We took the responses seriously as pointers or guides to dull or enjoyable literature circulating among Tanzanian children. Our stance is that children's responses are indeed more serious than any statements by adult patrons, be they teachers, librarians, parents or other educational authorities who recommend the books as classroom texts or as leisure reading. Some of the books have been enthusiastically received while others have been far from enjoyable and would fall in the category which G. Trease describes in Tales Out of School. He is of the opinion that some educationist defend trash because anything seems better than nothing if it induces a child to read.

> For that matter they may not be induced to read for long: they will stop to read uninteresting books when they do not care about pleasing the adult patrons.[7]

Our research showed that children read with enthusiasm only those books that really excited them. This is notwithstanding the assumption that the child's choice of a book is inevitably made for him as the following table indicates:

1	All possible subjects	
2	Writer's Choice:	Selection form 1.
3	Publisher's Choice:	The selection from 2.
4	Buyer's Choice:	The selection by librarian, etc. from 3.
5	Teacher's Choice:	The teacher's individual appreciation among 4.
6	Child's Choice:	His own individual judgement among 5.

Allan Davies[8] in the above table shows that the child does not have the full control of what comes to him to read. Most of the choices are made for him by the adults and it is quite obvious that a large number of those choices will reflect adult's current literary interests and social attitudes. Fred Inglis also recognises this state of affairs but doubts whether adult choices are always what the children like. In his rhetorical questions:

> "Who chooses the best? Are they the best for children or adults?"[9]

Inglis is sharing a concern with Edward Ardizzone who is also aware of the key role that adults play in selecting books for children. Ardizzone admits that what the adult selects must be what pleases him before passing it on to children. Ardizzone is almost lamenting as he says that whereas it is hard to please parents:

> To please children is easy; one has only to give them the bare bones of a story and then go on re-telling it. In the course of the time the children will elaborate it for you, adding those details, taken from their own imagination and experiences which give it life.[10]

It is possible, therefore that in the process of trying to please the adult the writer may fail to attract the child reader. We concur with Ardizzone's view as he acknowledges the child's responsiveness to literature. The child eventually has a right to make his choice and he exercises this right from the time he holds the book in his hands. To read or not to read is the choice he makes unless the book is a required class text. He will obviously read the book which is enjoyable and push aside the dull one. Sometimes however, he may read through a dull book to please the adult but his responses are unlikely to be very enthusiastic.

These responses can help us determine the types of books children in Tanzania like to read and which kinds of stories will inspire them to wonder, enjoyment and reflection. Such responses, reinforced by our critical appraisals will build up a comprehensive evaluative criteria which can be of help to critics, who may be interested in exploring further avenues of children's literature. Teachers, librarians and parents could also get leads on the kind of books children enjoy and thus select right for them. These responses are particularly invaluable to writers who are interested in producing the books that the child has no choice but to select.

NOTES

1. L. H. Smith, The Unreluctant Years, (Chicago: Library Association, 1953) p. 18.

2. J. W. Stewig, Children and Literature, (Chicago: Rand Mcnally College Publishing Company 1980) p. 28.

3. Quoted in Nicholas Tucker, The Child And the Book: A Psychological and Literary Exploration, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) p. 21.

4. C. S. Lewis, An Experiment in Criticism, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961) p.2.

5. Nina Bawden, "A Dead Pig and My Father," In Writers, Critics and Children, ed. Geoff Fox et. al. (London: Heinemann, 1976) p. 7.

6. Betty Coody, Using Literature With Children, First Pub. 1973, (Dubuque, Iowa: W. M. C. Brown Company Publishers , 1983) p. 37

7. G. Trease, Tales Out Of School, (London: Heinemann, 1964) p. 25.

8. Allan Davies, Literature For Children, (The Open University Press, 1973) p.17.

9. Fred Inglis, The Promise Of Happiness: Value and Meaning in Children Fiction, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) p. 6.

10. Edward Ardizzone, "An Autobiographical Note" in Hoffman and Samuels Authors And Illustrators Of Children's Books: Writings on Their Lives and Works, (New York and London: R. R. Bowker Company,1972.) p. 4.

CHAPTER 5

CHILDREN'S RESPONSES TO ILLUSTRATIONS OF BOOKS

5. 0. Introduction

In the previous chapter we discussed the kind of responses we were able to elicit from children's experience with books. We maintained that children's responses to texts were important when assessing the value of literary works to the children for whom they were written.

This chapter recognises that any significant study of children's literature cannot overlook illustrations because the child responds not only to the text but also to the entire presentation. As a medium of communication, visual presentation is a language in itself and an integral part of the works written for children. Mabel Segun, a writer and critic of children's literature goes even further to suggest that:

> -- the transmission of a message is not the privilege of written language alone. Pictorial language is literature in its own right even when words are used in books for pre-school children and beginning readers, these children understand the language and the message better when these are many pictures. Illustration accentuates the cognitive function.[1]

The function of the visual in a children's book is so crucial that the ideal situation is for the writer of the children's book to be a good illustrator as well especially when writing for the very young children. Being able to perform both roles means that the illustration is the true interpretation of the text since text and illustration are both the product of one mind. Even then the artist who performs both roles would also need to be keenly sensitive to what children like to read and see in a children's book. In many cases the writer and the illustrator are two different people and this state of affairs demands that both be good if they are to appeal to the child.

In this chapter we shall examine, analyse and interpret the role played by illustrations in children's books and then proceed to discuss the children's responses to the illustrations as an extra dimension to their experience with the text. We shall analyse how illustration impacts on the text of a story and decide whether it accentuates understanding and internalisation of the story or gives other dimensions to the story. We shall discuss only those books whose physical appearance inspired comments and criticism from children. Illustrations, since they are used to communicate to children, are evaluated in terms of whether or not they speak to the child and what messages they convey. The child's response to the illustration is therefore paramount in assessing the overall literary quality of the book.

We shall not go into the technical discussion of art but we shall recognise that:

> Illustrators are creators of imagery. They clarify concept, capture moods and feelings, through drawing. They graphically represent themes, concepts and ideas which the writer has produced...[2]

Such pictures, whether on the cover or in the text are meant to communicate something related to the story. Often the picture is not drawn by the writer but by an artist who interprets the text and presents it visually to the reader. Johnson, Sickles and Sayers suggest three questions that the illustrator needs to consider with regard to illustrations:

- How good are the pictures in drawing and composition?
- Do the pictures illustrate or accompany or comment on or decorate the text sympathetically and with understanding?
- Do they (the illustrations) go well with the type and the book generally ? [3]

Sometimes the illustrations also add information that is not in the text but relates to the setting or the epoch on which the work is based. The illustrations thus enlarge on or interpret the author's meaning. Good illustrations also enhance characterisation and even evoke appropriate moods suggested by the work.

The illustrator's work is not an easy one. Children, perhaps more than adults, are critically sensitive to pictures. They do not take pictures for granted but study even minute details as they read the text. Often they study the pictures before reading the book and this sometimes influences the decision whether or not to read it. Some readers study the pictures as they read along but none completely ignores the pictures in the book. The task of the artist is made more difficult by the fact that his art is based on the ideas of the writer which give him liberty to deviate from the text. The appeal of the pictures is really tied up with the text since no matter how good and artistic the pictures are they do not serve their purpose if they are irrelevant to the text. For instance many of the children consulted during the research admitted that they first look at the pictures before they read the book. One of the respondents, said:

> "First I look at the pictures in all the pages. If the book is without pictures, I read the introduction."

This means that for this reader illustrations serve the purpose of an introduction to the book. Our observations showed that children are attracted to reach out for and examine books which have colourful pictures before they can pick up the dull-looking ones. The illustration therefore stimulates curiosity and then maintains or improves on the child's span of interest as he reads the book. Sendak underlines this point:

> And the making of books, and the touching of books - there is so much more to a book than just the reading: there is a sinuosness (sic). I've seen children touch books, fondle books, smell books, and it's all the reason in the world why books should be beautifully produced.[4]

Sendak is describing the child responding to the book not just through reading but also through exploring. In his view this exploration should not be divorced from the child's reading of the text. In other words a visual appeal is an appeal to the child's total experience with a book that reflects knowledge of children and the nature of their responses.

Joan Cass, another critic of children's books, corroborates this view when she notes:

> If however a child is going to understand what the picture is telling him, the artist must know something about the way in which children see the world and feel about people, animals and objects in it.[5]

Sometimes the interpretation of the picture is a personal one since illustrations communicate different things to different people depending on personal interests. There are, however, some general tenets of art that appeal to children and which will be the burden of this chapter.

5. 1. Cover Illustration

On the whole illustrations, whether in colour or simply in black and white, illuminate and accentuate the text. They do more than just break the monotony of print; they decorate, enlighten, explain and give extra depth to the text. It is the cover which creates the first impression for it serves as the face of a book that attracts or repels the child reader even before he has the chance to read the text. When it is beautiful, it serves the initial attraction or invitation for the child to explore the book.

The younger child is attracted to the bright primary colours on the cover especially when they serve as the background for pictures that depict action. We have already observed how children reach out for books whose covers are attractive. On many occasions the children reach out for imported western books because of the attractiveness of the cover, the illustrations and the entire presentation of the material. Ladybird Books are particularly popular for the way they compel the young reader with a "pick-me-up-I-am beautiful" kind of appeal. In other words, it is the cover that creates the first impression of the book inviting or repelling the reader.

One of the readers summarises this point most succinctly in a general comment she made on cover illustrations:

> But when you see a book with a bad picture on the cover, it puts you off completely. (Age 11)

When children were asked what they liked about specific covers, they gave different reasons but most preferred bright, shiny colours, others chose covers whose colours are cool. They also examined the picture and tried to interpret what it is communicating.

Sometimes the reader is puzzled as was one boy we observed examining Ndungu's Hadithi Zetu. He looked at the front cover for a long time, read the table of contents, looked again at the cover, looked through the pictures and then back to the cover picture again. When we asked him what he thought of the cover, he said:

> "I like colour blue and I like drums but in this book I don't know what (pointing to drums) they mean."

After he read the book he said he still did not think the picture was a good one. He said that the author:

> "should have used one of the pictures from the story."

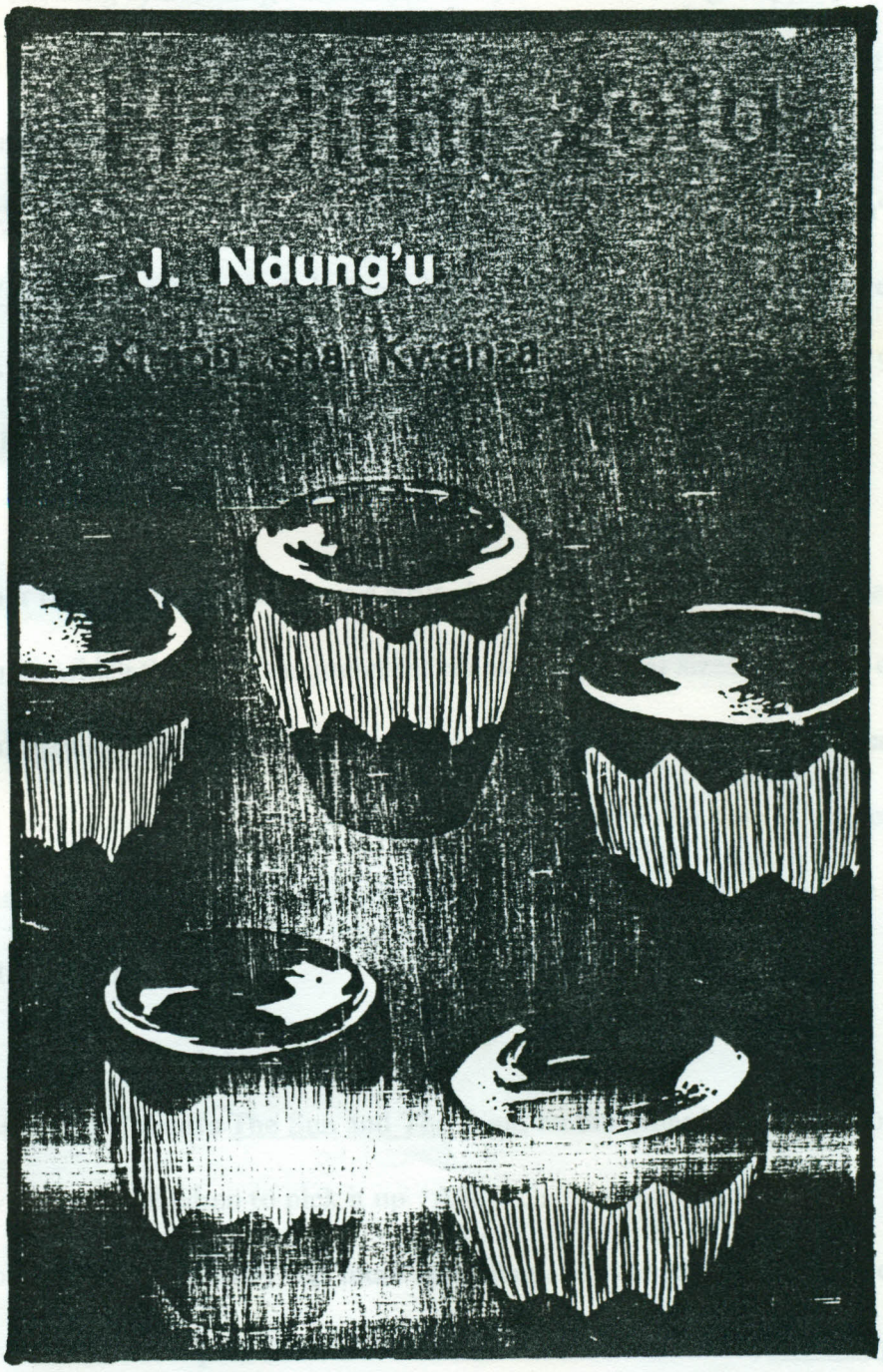


ILLUSTRATION 1

It was obvious that the five drums (illustration 1) meant nothing to the child. Other children too could not tell why the drums were on the cover. The book was published in 1967 when anything symbolising African life and culture was thought appropriate as covers of books written by Africans for African readers. It is the same period that inspired the artists who prepared the covers for Semkiwa's Mazungumzo ya Babu Zetu (Illustration 2), Rwechungura's Hadithi za Mapokeo (Illustration 3) and Landulira's Vitendawili Vyetu (Illustration 4). It is doubtful that the interpretation adults gave to these pictures were similar to those given by the child of the same period. In its 1987 reprint Hadithi Zetu should have come out with a new and more relevant cover.

Another cover that children always struggle to make sense of is Hadithi Za Kiboko Hugo on which the artist has presented nineteen different sizes of hippos on both front and back covers (Illustration 5). The hippos are coloured orange, green and white. Some have orange polka dots while others have green polka dots. One gets the impression that the artist is merely decorating the book but unfortunately he does not manage to attract the reader.

The cover of Matindi's The Sun and The Wind on the other hand is so appealing that it has invited many children to pick it up. A few children noticed that the frontispiece picture (illustration 6) was more appealing and wished it was the cover picture. The book was first published in 1957 and Kiswahili translation, Jua na Upepo

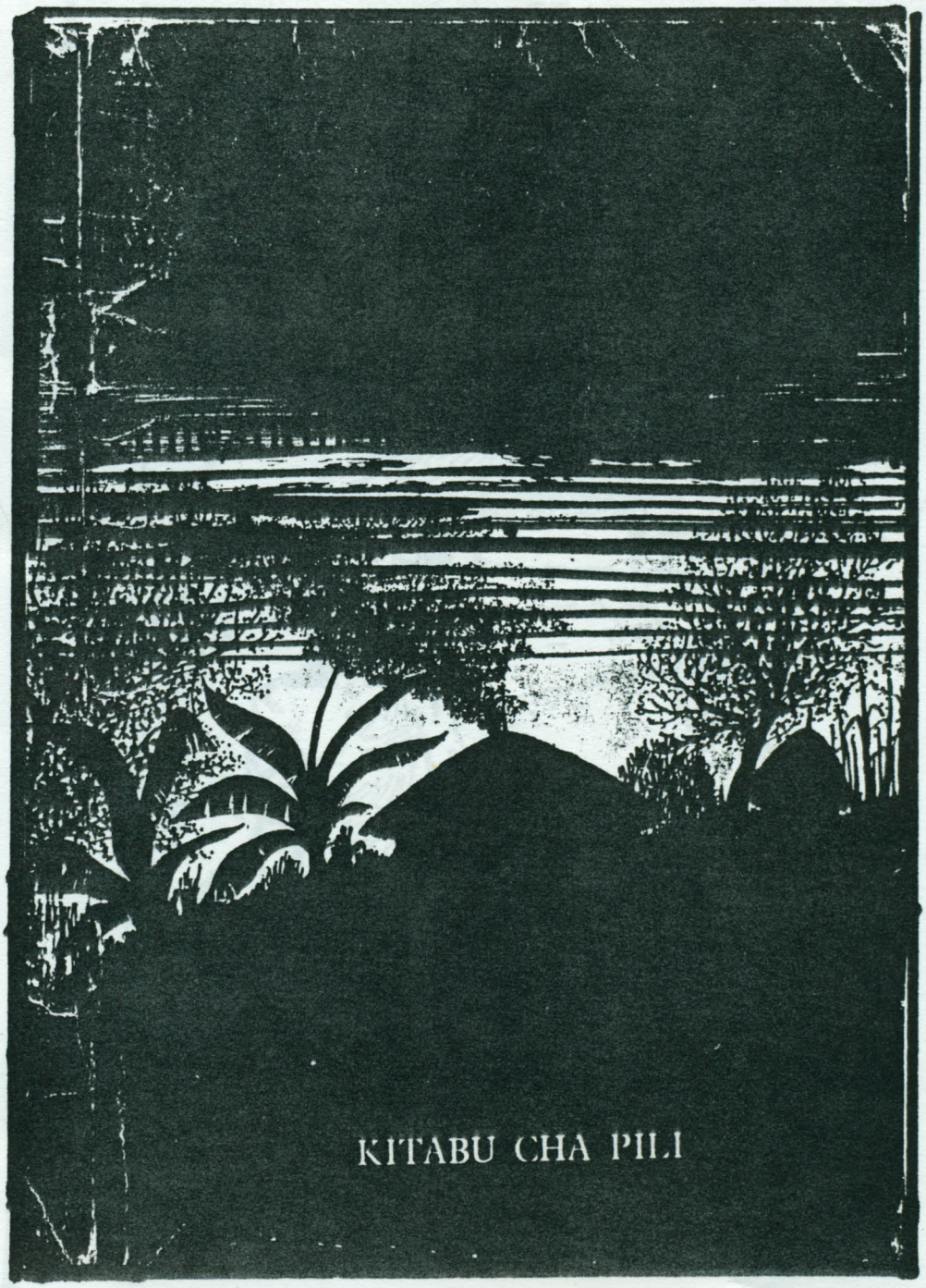


ILLUSTRATION 2

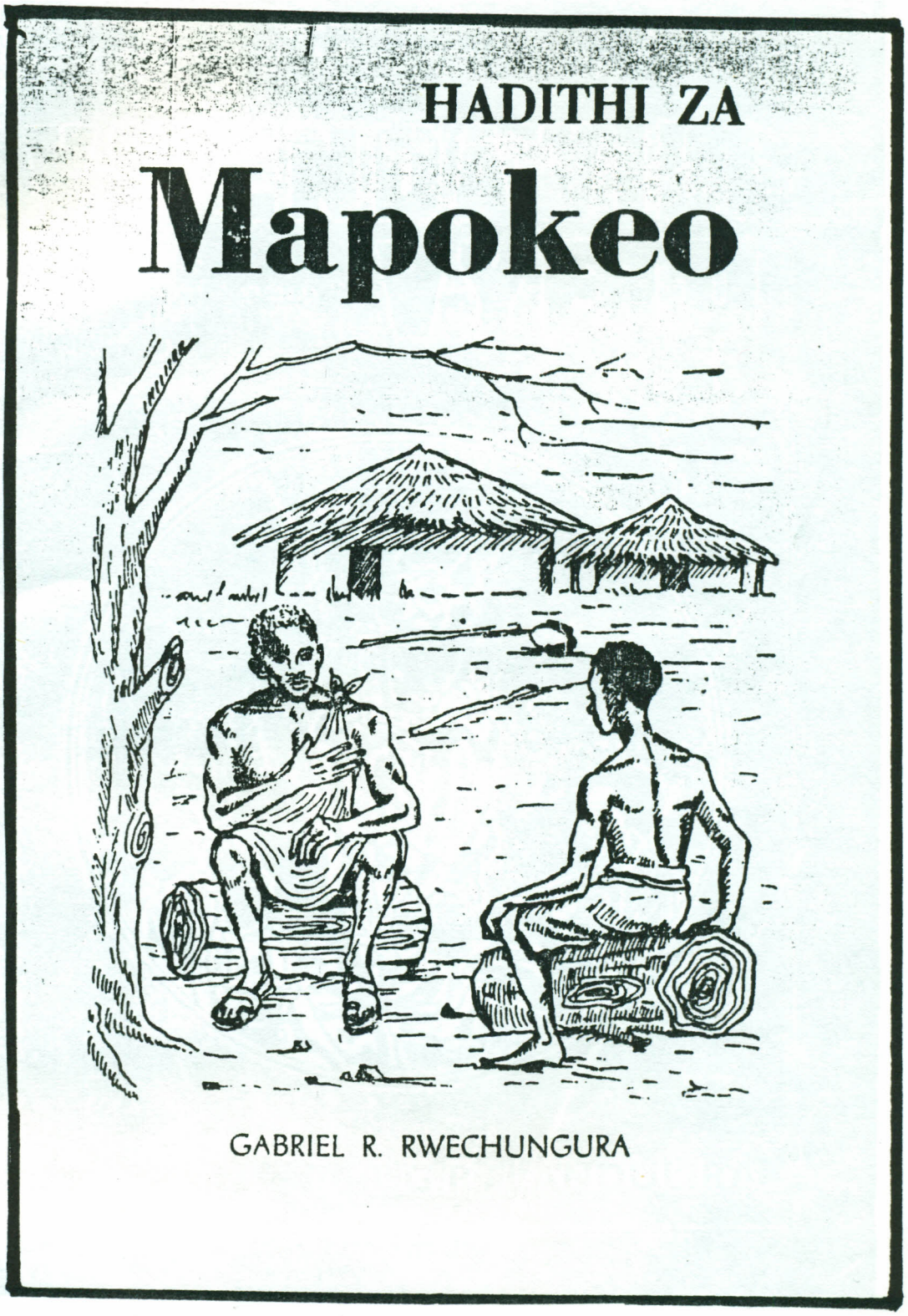


ILLUSTRATION 3

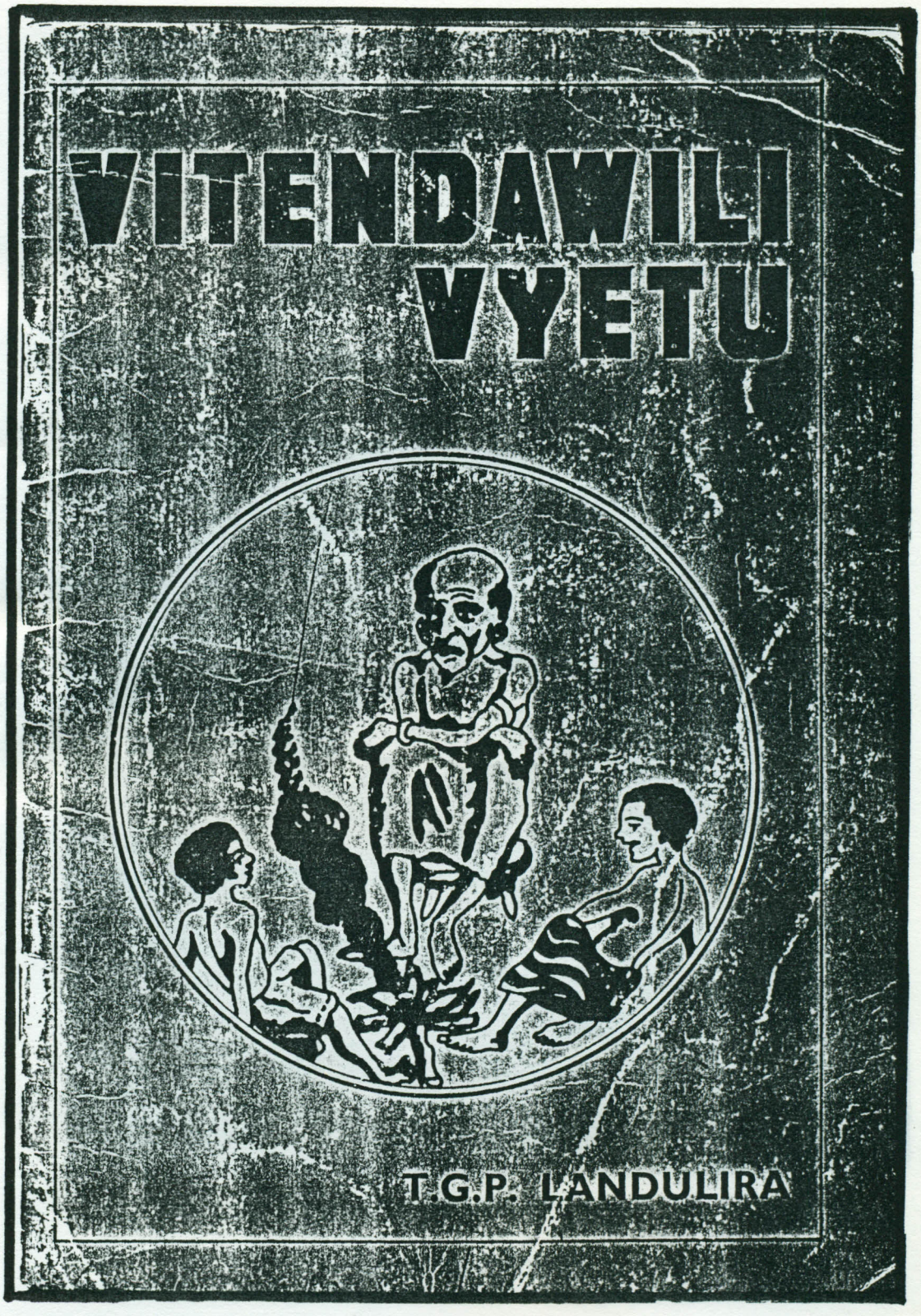


ILLUSTRATION 4

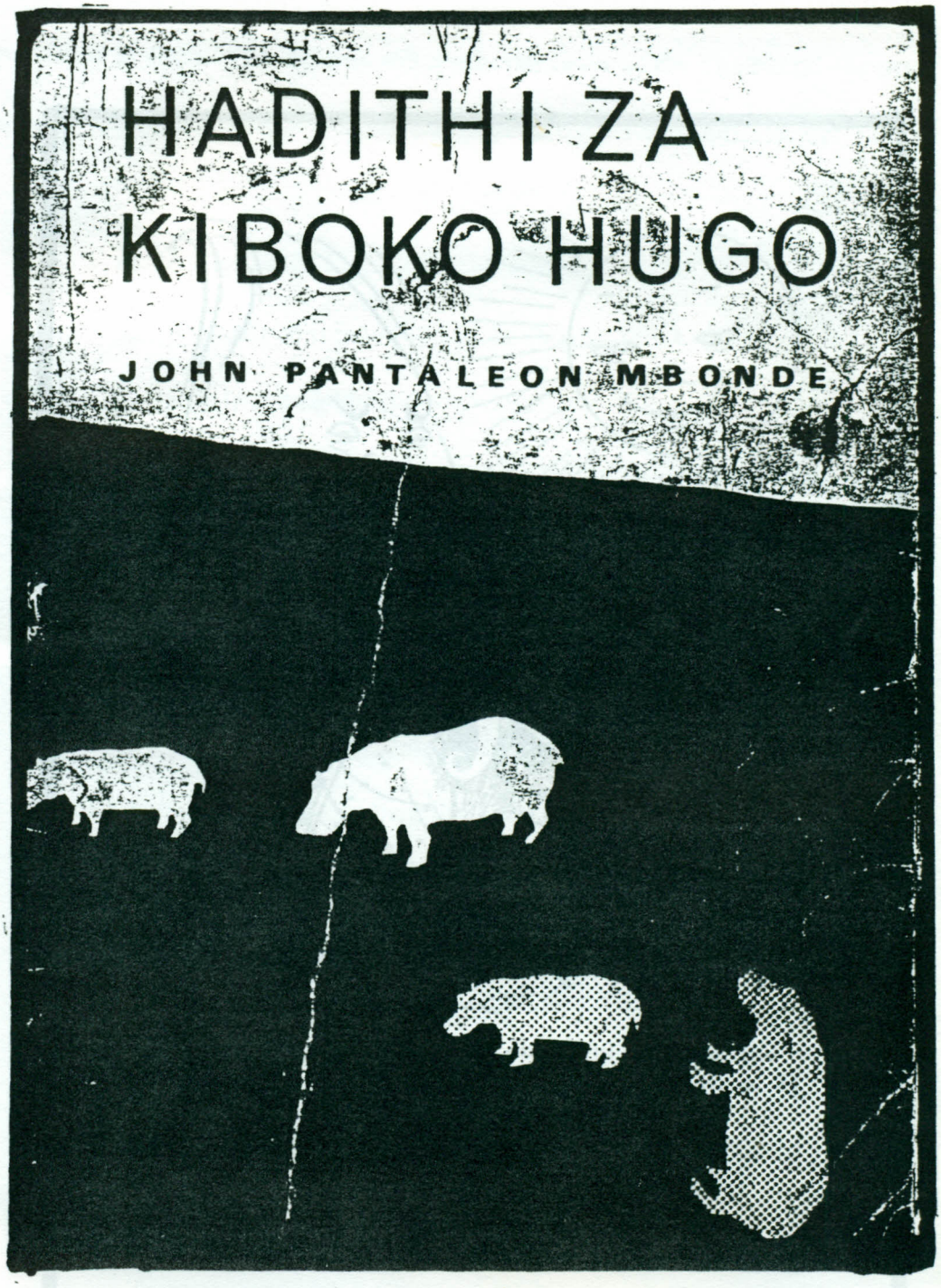
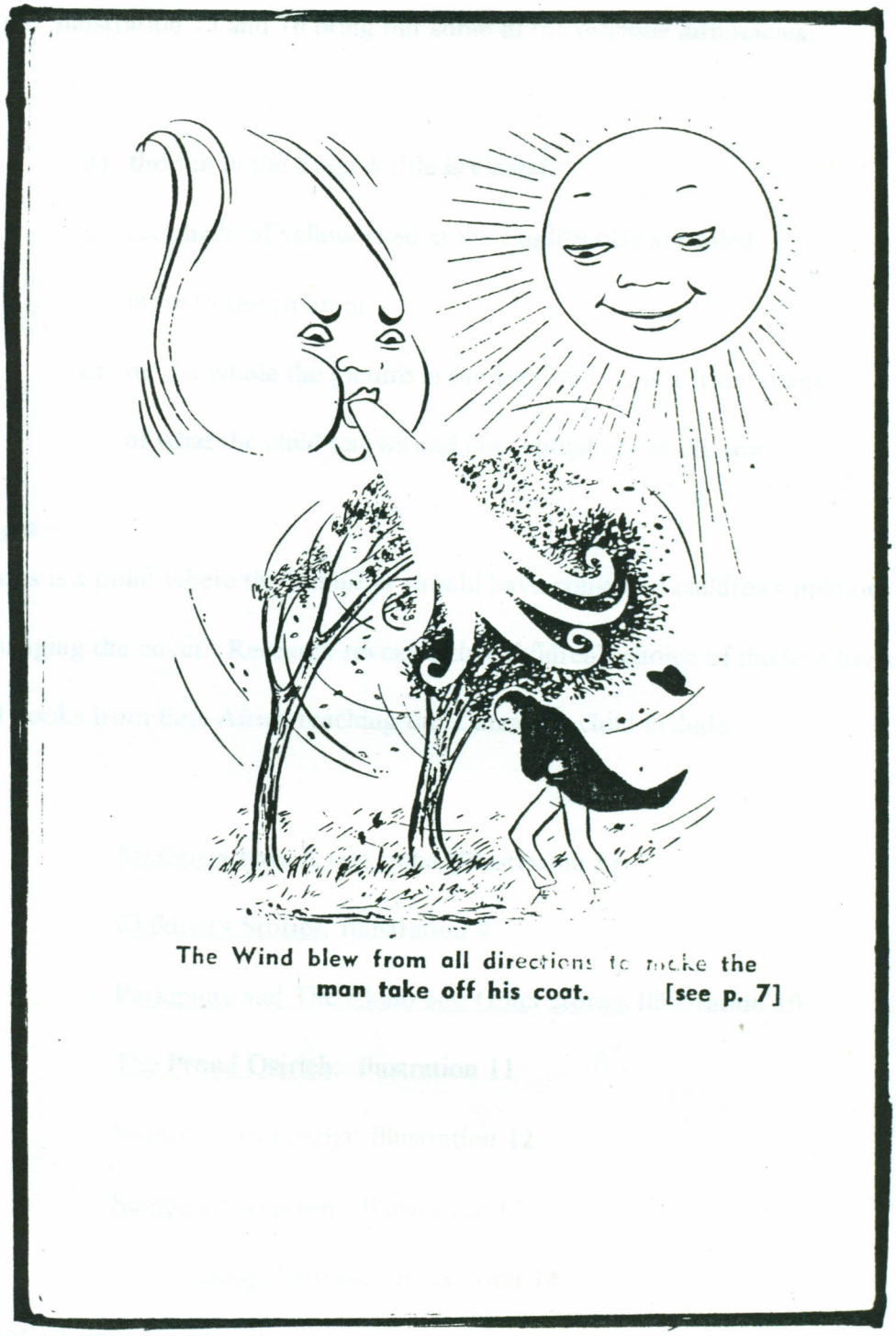


ILLUSTRATION 5



The Wind blew from all directions to make the man take off his coat. [see p. 7]

ILLUSTRATION 6

was published in 1968. The children still prefer the cover of the English title to the newer one. Illustration 7a and 7b bring out some of the obvious differences:

a) the sun in the English title is clearer.

b) the shade of yellow used in the English title appealed more to the children.

c) on the whole the picture in the English title is a truer image of what the child knows and conceptualises as the sun.

Perhaps this is a point where the publisher should have consulted children's opinions before changing the cover. Research revealed that children's choice of the best loved covers of books from East Africa reaching the Tanzanian child include:

Mashujaa Kwa Kazakamba (Illustration 8)

Children's Stories: Illustration 9

Parkipuny and The Rhino and Other stories Illustration 10

The Proud Ostrich: Ilustration 11

Someni Kwa Furaha: Illustration 12

Sungura Kizimbani: Illustration 13

The Cunning Tortoise: Illustration 14

All these titles have four things in common:

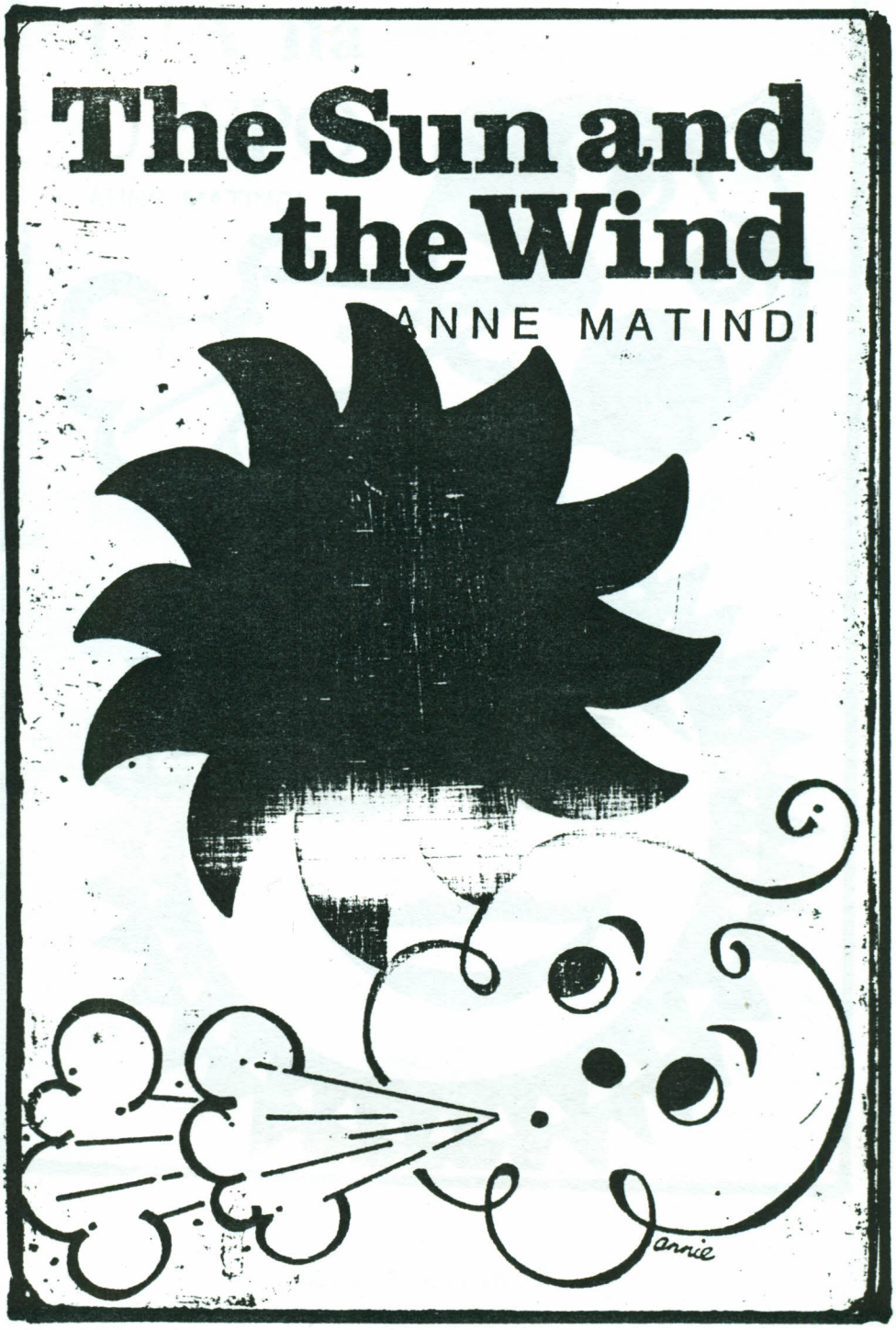


ILLUSTRATION 7a



ILLUSTRATION 7b

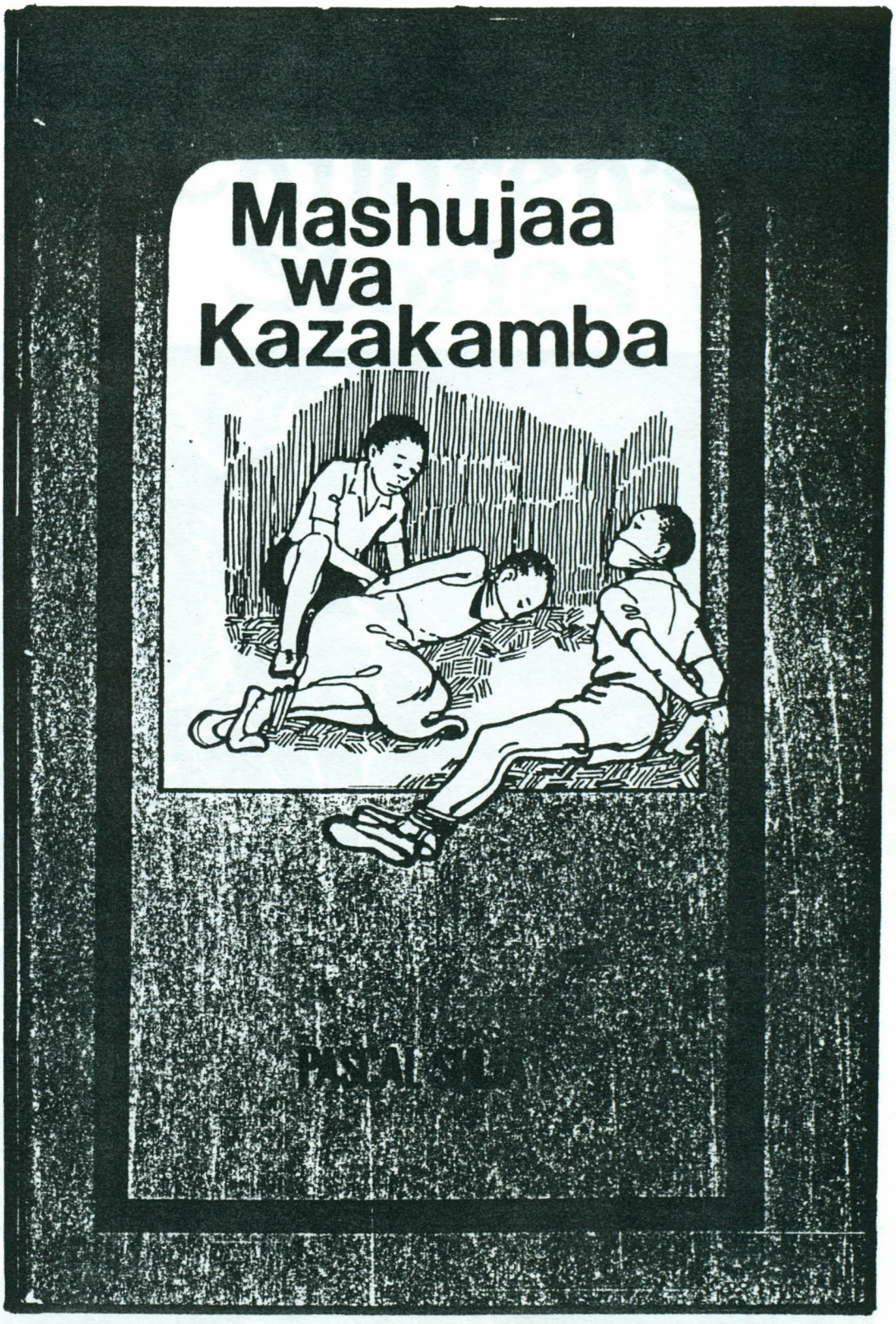


ILLUSTRATION 8

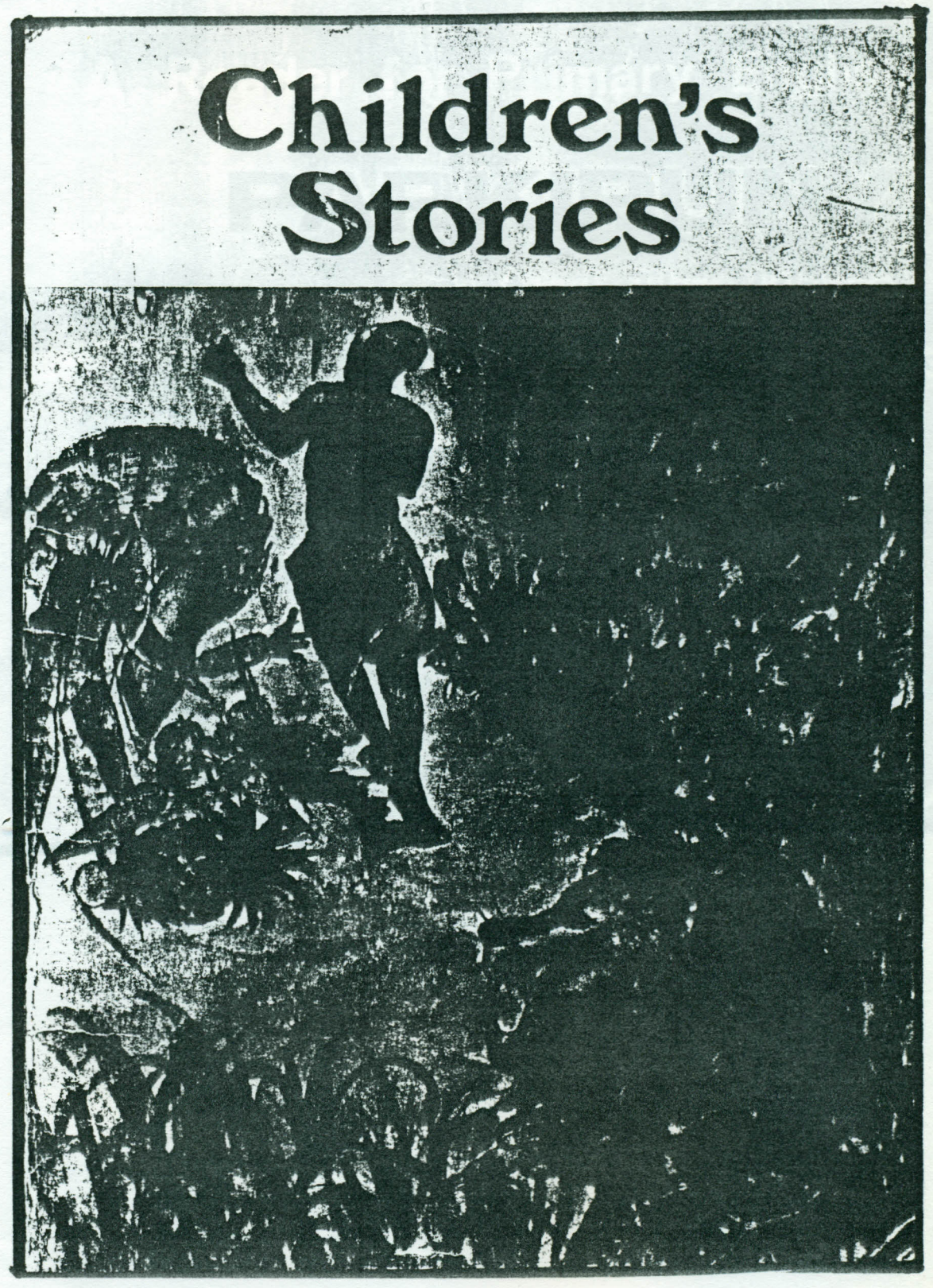


ILLUSTRATION 9

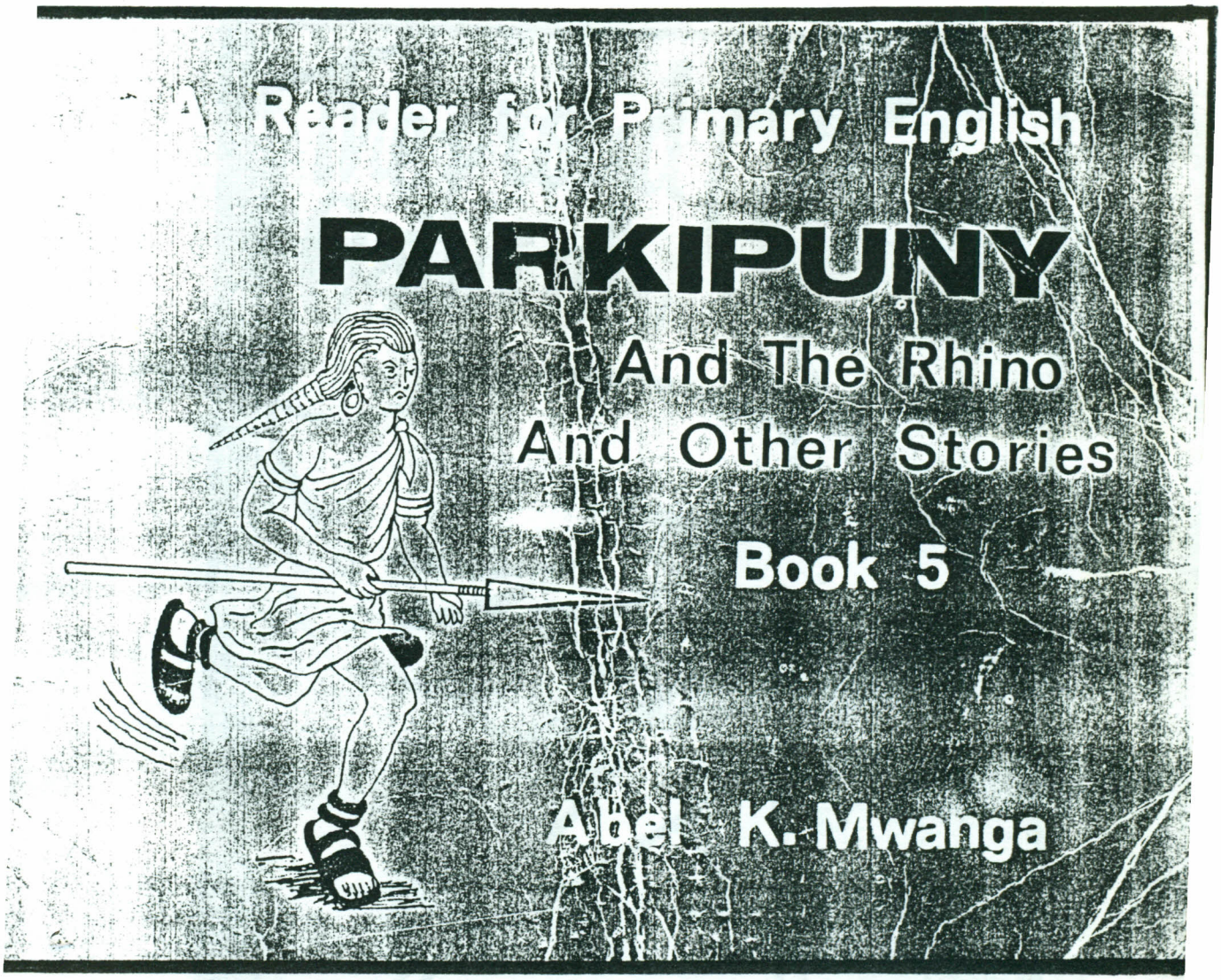


ILLUSTRATION 10



ILLUSTRATION 11



ILLUSTRATION 12

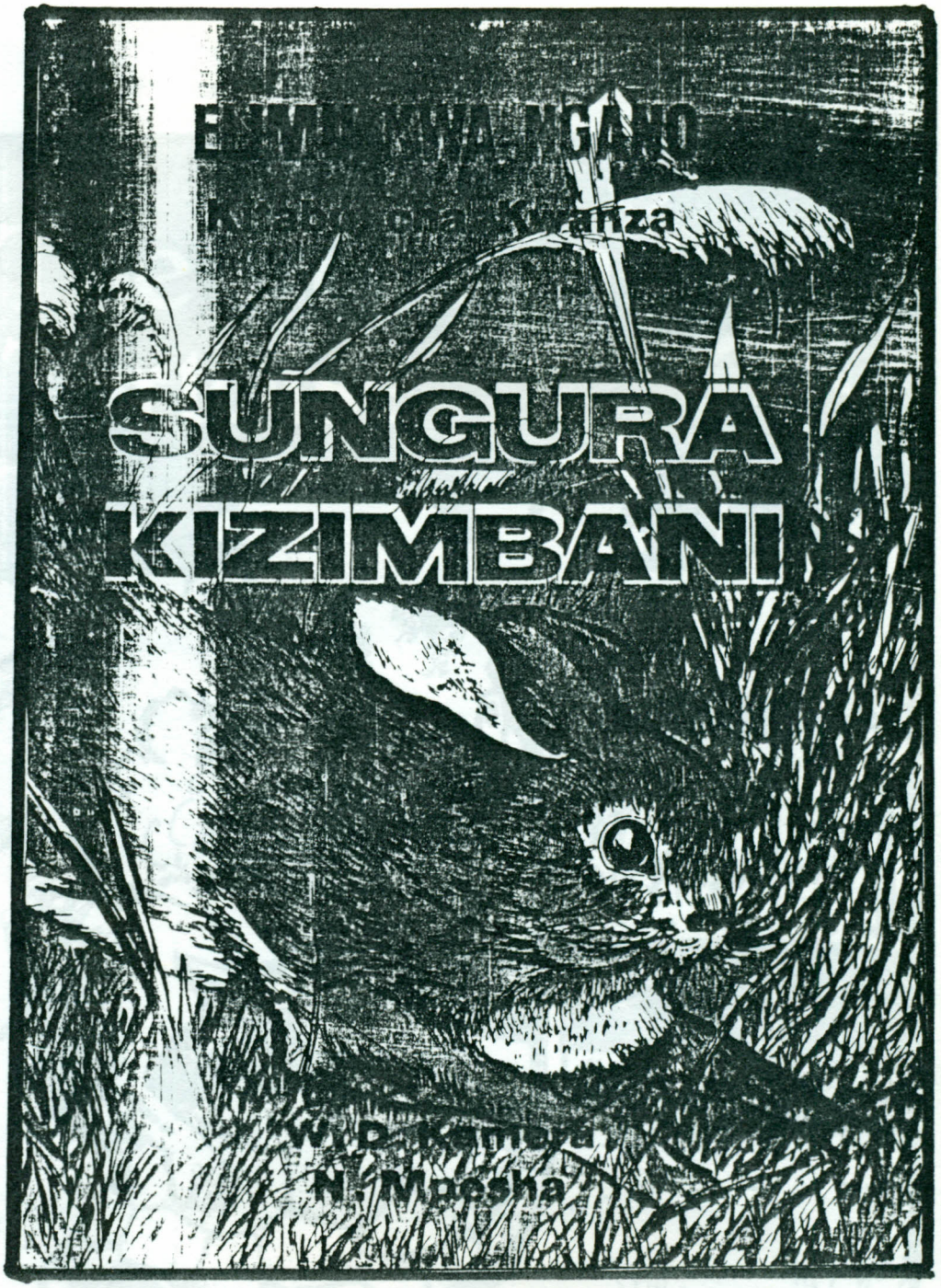


ILLUSTRATION 13

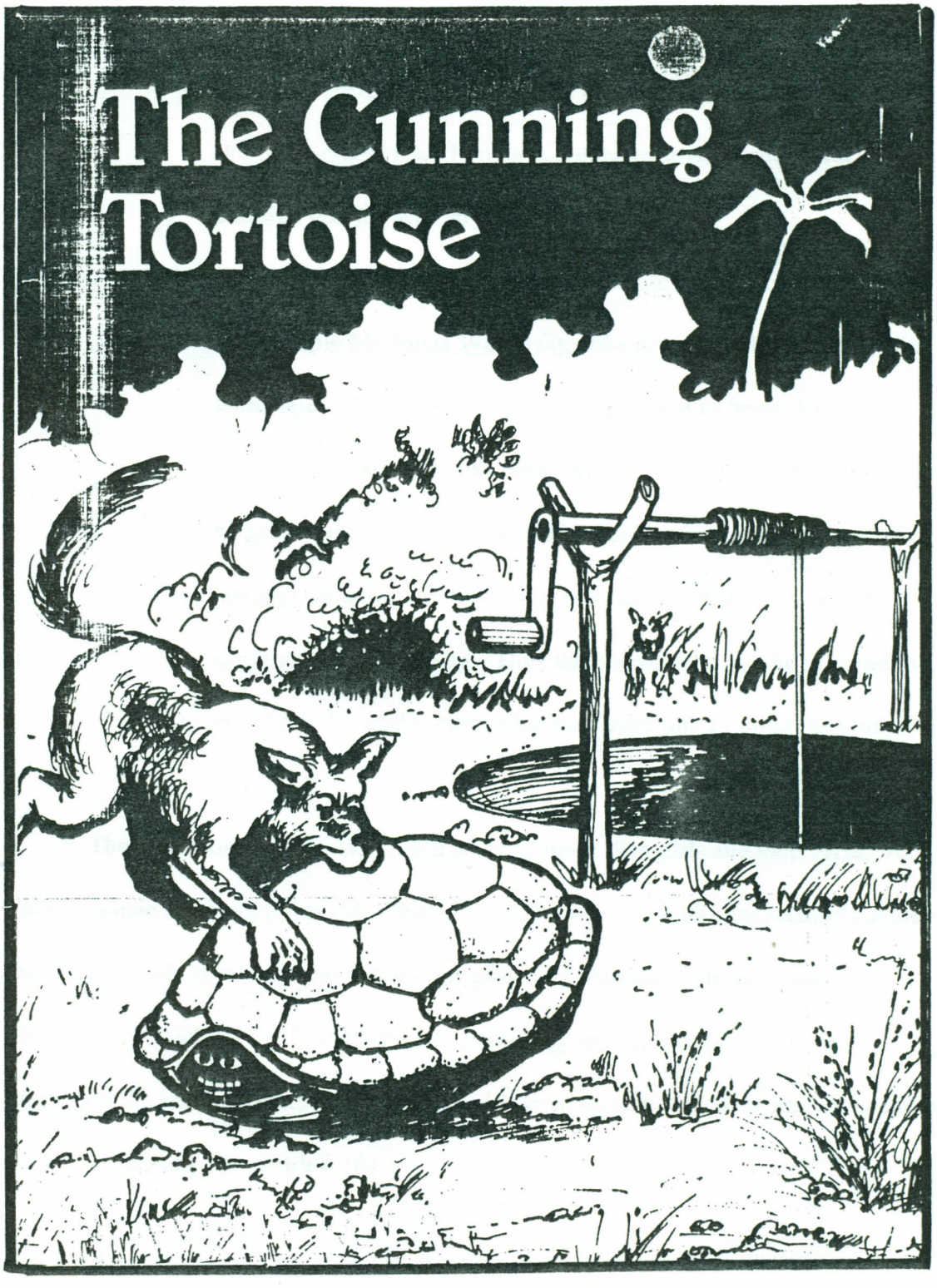


ILLUSTRATION 14

i) they have bright colours that catch the eye of the child.

ii) the pictures depict characters in action.

iii) there is a correlation between the title and the picture, for example, the title Someni Kwa Furaha is complemented by the picture of the children reading with joy or enjoying reading.

iv) the illustrations give the children some pre-knowledge of the text, for example Mashujaa Wa Kazakamba depicts children tightly tied with ropes. The reader is led to imagine and to hope that these children who are tied with ropes are indeed "The Heroes of Tight Ropes" as the title suggests. Although the picture depicts an unhappy situation the hope is in that one word "heroes" which suggests a happy ending. Thus the combination of the title and the visual tell the reader quite a lot and invite him to open the book.

There are some covers which attract boys more than girls and vice versa. A good example is Alesi's Dress (see Illustration 15) which generally attracts girls alone. One boy thought this book was written for girls only because even the inside illustrations depict only girls and women. Parkipuny and the Rhino and Other Stories,on the hand, attracts both boys and girls even though the cover picture is that of the boy Parkipuny (Illustration 16).



ILLUSTRATION 15

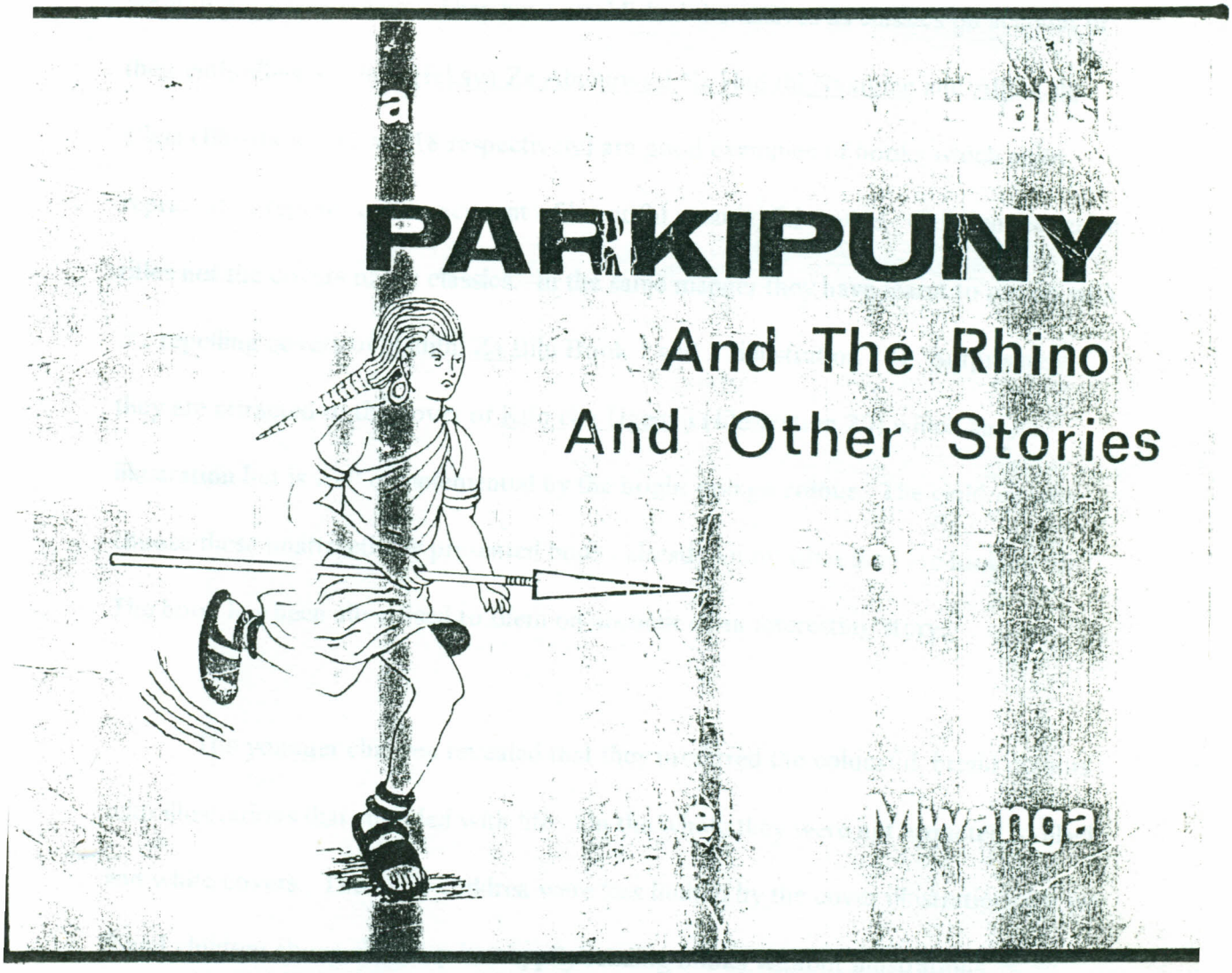


ILLUSTRATION 16

Some books continue to enjoy popularity with generations of children, even without attractive covers. They have established themselves as classics on account of their enthralling stories. Hekaya Za Abunuwasi Na Hadithi Nyingine and Alfu Lela Ulela (Illustration 17 and18 respectively) are good examples of books which enjoy reprint after reprint, not on account of beautiful meaningful covers. Children recognise titles not the covers of the classics. In the same manner they have learnt to put up with the repelling covers of Hadithi Za Bibi Book 1 and 2 (illustration 19). Surprisingly, they are attracted to the cover of Kifo cha Ugenini (Illustration 20) which has no illustration but is well complemented by the bright orange colour. The children who choose these unattractively presented books already know what they are looking for. The book has been advertised to them on account of an interesting story.

The younger children revealed that they preferred the colourful, bright colours with illustrations that sparkled with life. On the whole they were not attracted to black and white covers. The older children were less limited by the cover illustrations for we found children above eleven quite happily reading books without illustrations, especially texts which are powerful enough to appeal to these older readers.

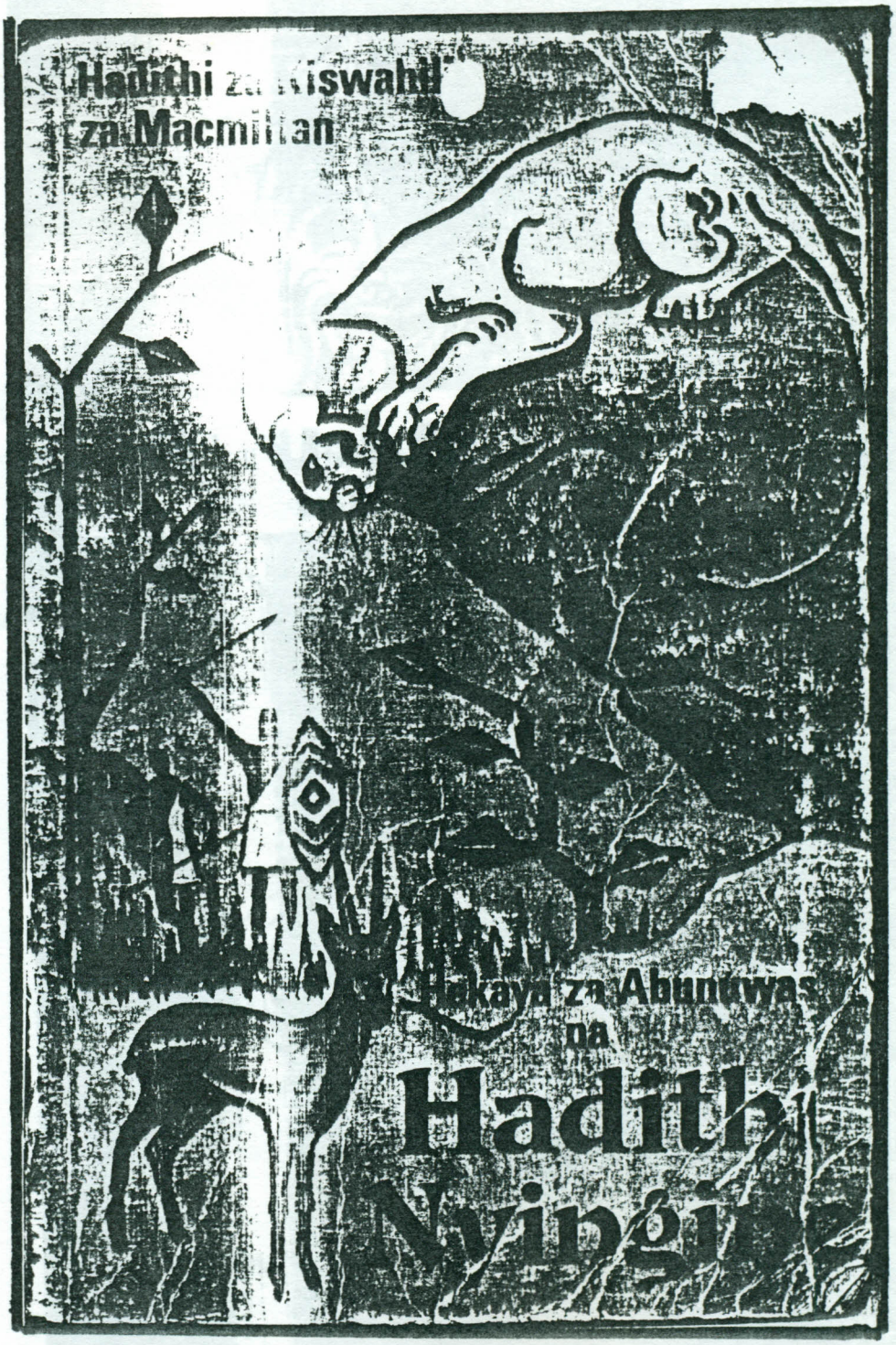


ILLUSTRATION 17

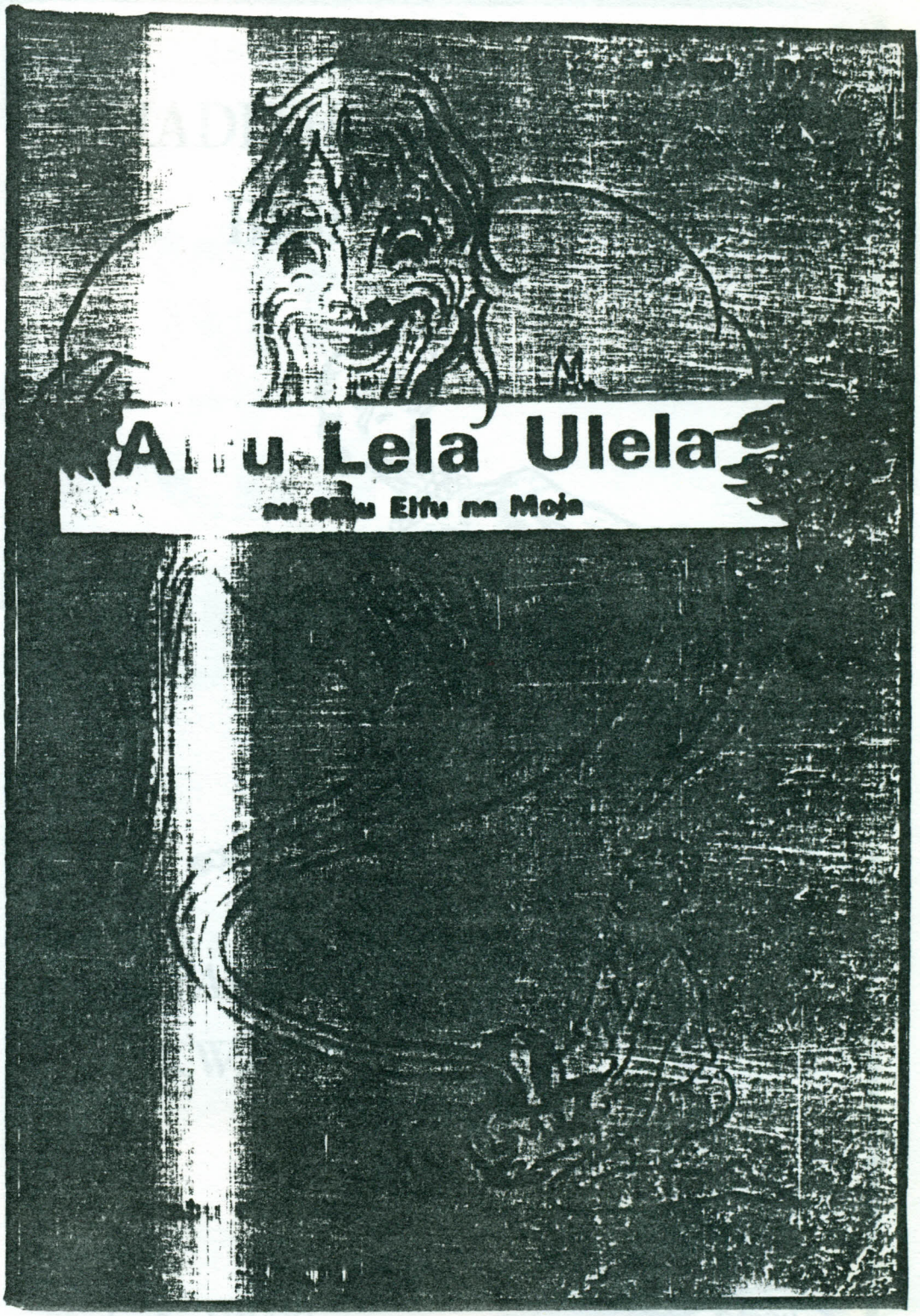


ILLUSTRATION 18

HADITHI ZA BIBI



KITABU CHA KWANZA

C. K. OMARI

ILLUSTRATION 19



ILLUSTRATION 20

5. 2. Characterisation Through Illustrations

One of the features of illustrations is to enhance the characterisation which is suggested by the text. This involves not only an accurate interpretation of the text but also a good knowledge of the epoch in which the work is set and a depiction of the characters in the most natural manner. The illustrator of children's books therefore needs to be interested in children since most of the characters, especially the principal characters are normally children. Such an illustrator will observe children to learn how they do certain things including such ordinary things as sitting, standing, walking, eating and playing. He will notice what and how children like to wear their clothes, shoes and accessories.

The pioneer children's books written for the East African readers used many animal characters, few children but a lot of adults and especially old men and women. The characterisation of the senior adult in these early works has not always been received positively by the present day Tanzanian child. The stereotypical characterisation of the grandmother as an old decrepit person with a walking stick, shaved head and shrivelled skin is one that the reader did not want to identify with as he read the stories of long ago. The emphasis on the helplessness is unmistakable. It goes beyond the fact that the person is old. A recent study done by some members of the Kenya Oral Literature Association explores this point further and suggests that

stereotypes are informed by the ideology which presents the women as always in subordinate positions to the male figures. The male characters are usually in control of the situation.[6] Even when the reader enjoyed the stories of Hadithi Za Bibi and Yiluselekwilanga he could still exclaim that the pictures are "yuk" or unattractive. There is no good reason why the old women should look ugly.(See Illustrations 21,22,23,24 & 25).

The visual impression created by Illustration 26 is far from realistic. The old woman has too long a walking stick and has bundled up firewood that is impossible for her to carry. Some child respondents interpreted that the old woman was not able to carry the load because:

> "She was smaller than those school-boys."
>
> "I think she is a dwarf."
>
> "Her walking stick was too big and heavy."

From the story we do not get any of the three impressions. The artist has therefore misinterpreted or misrepresented the text and consequently misguided the sensitive young reader. Before reading the story "Yiluselekwilanga" one child thought it was about "an old lady who did magic with her pipe". The smoking pipe was most unimpressive to the children and yet what is most unfortunate is the fact that the pipe is

HADITHI ZA BIBI



KITABU CHA KWANZA

C. K. OMARI

ILLUSTRATION 21

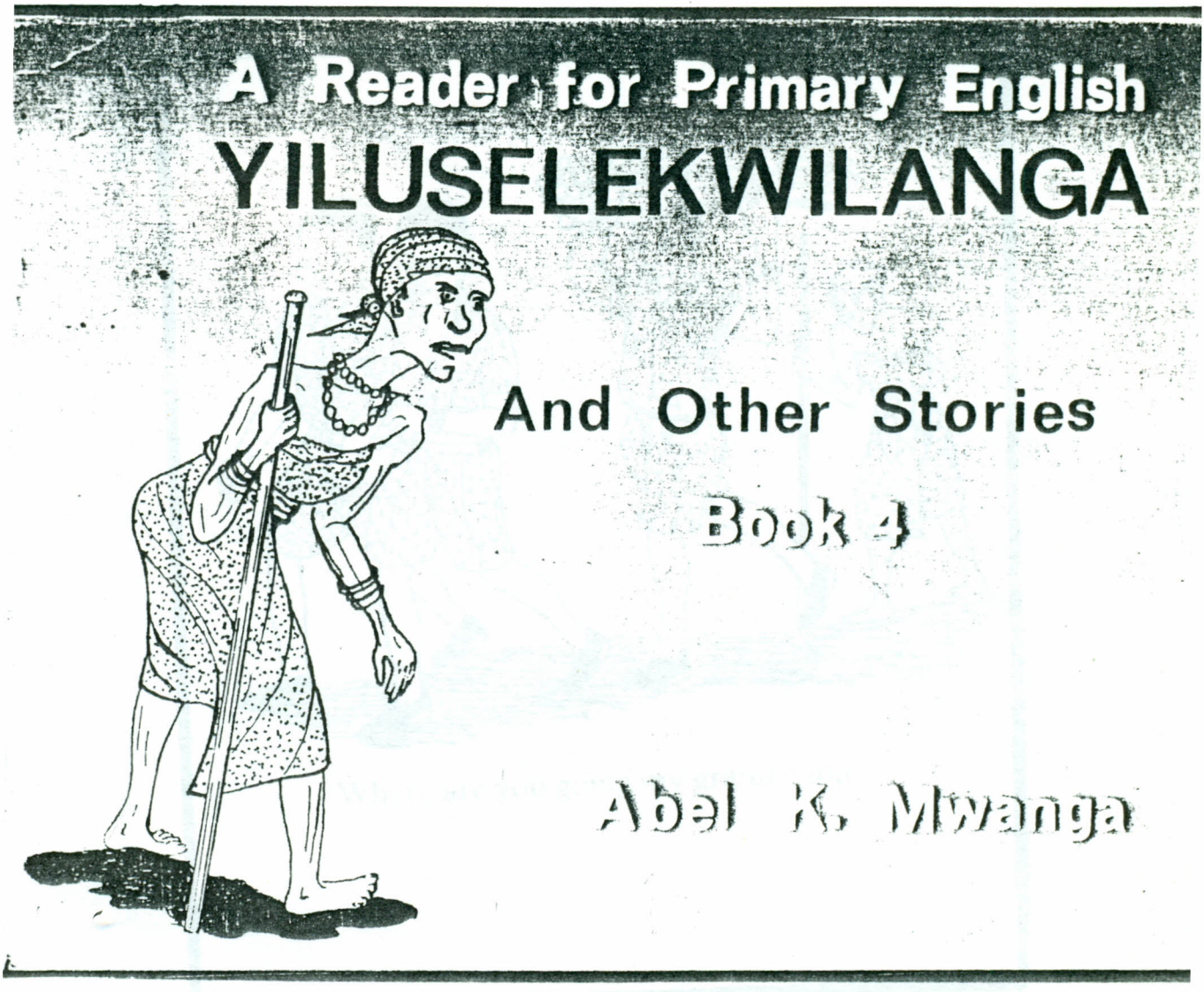
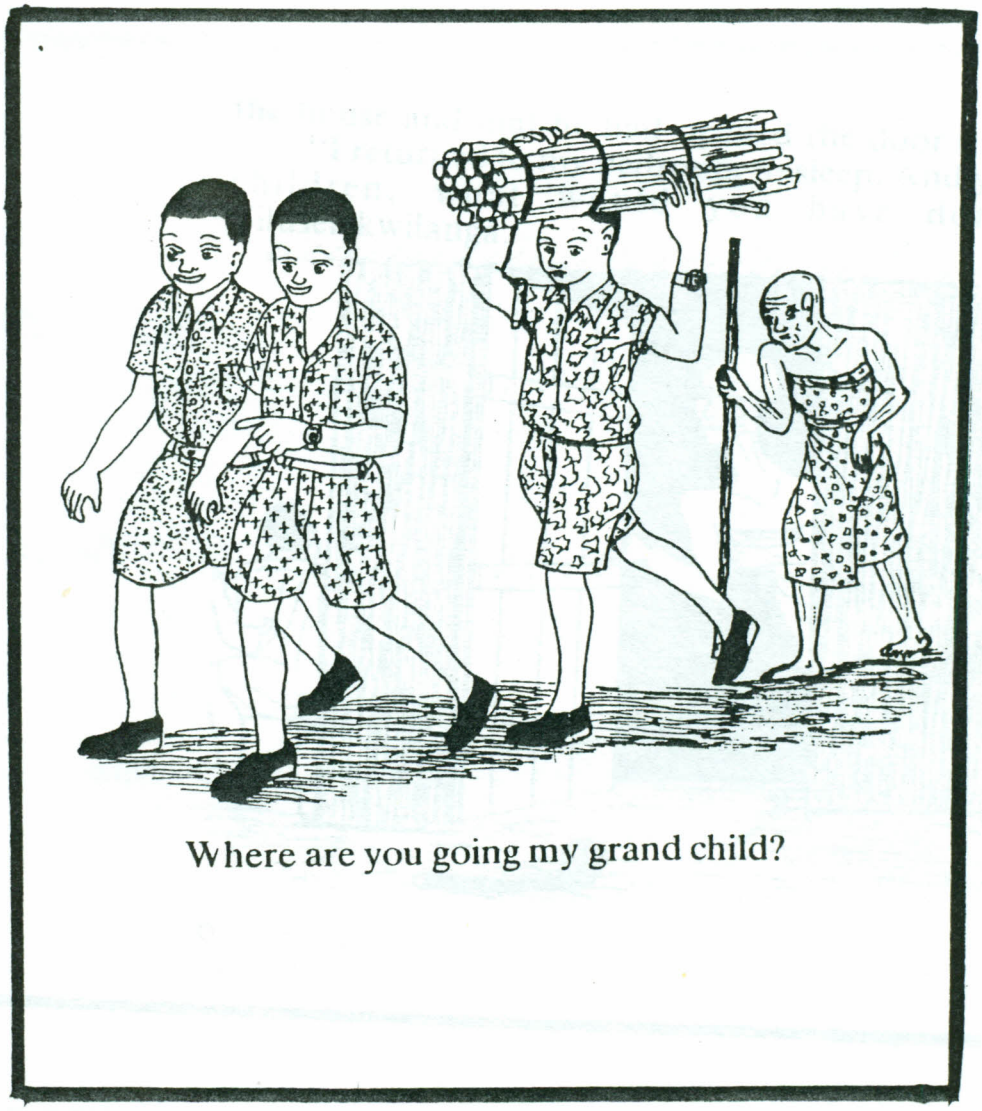


ILLUSTRATION 22

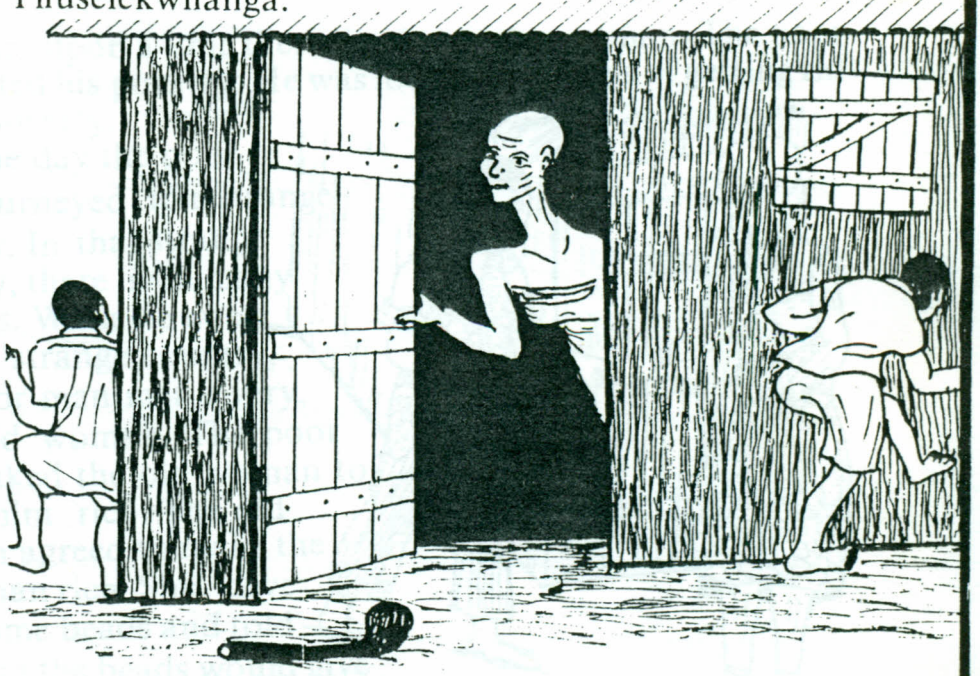


Where are you going my grand child?

ILLUSTRATION 23

the house and that he had opened the door to attack them.

"I returned to my bedroom to sleep. And you, my grand children, what would you have done?" asked Yiluselekwilanga.



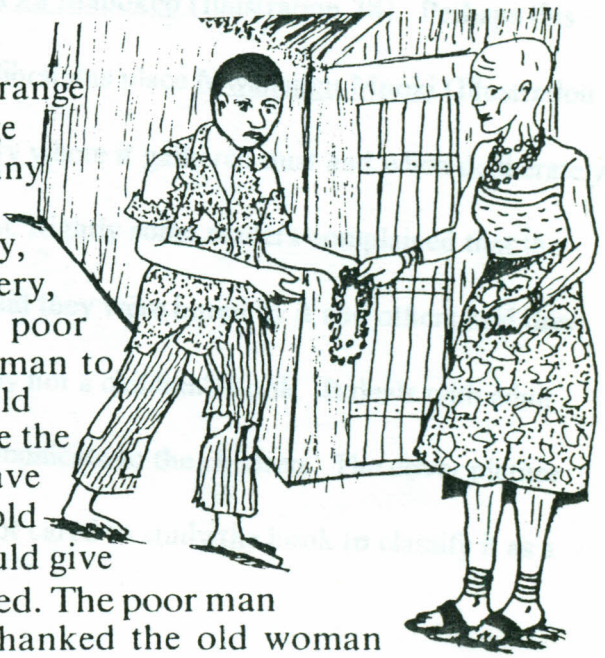
6

ILLUSTRATION 24

THE GREEDY CHIEF

Once upon a time there lived a very poor man. The poor man hated his poverty. He was looking for ways of getting rid of his poverty.

One day the poor man journeyed to a strange country. In that strange country, there lived many wizards. While he was in that strange country, the poor man met a very, very old woman. The poor man asked the old woman to make him rich. The old woman agreed to make the poor man rich. She gave him some beads and told him that the beads would give him anything he wanted. The poor man was very happy. He thanked the old woman



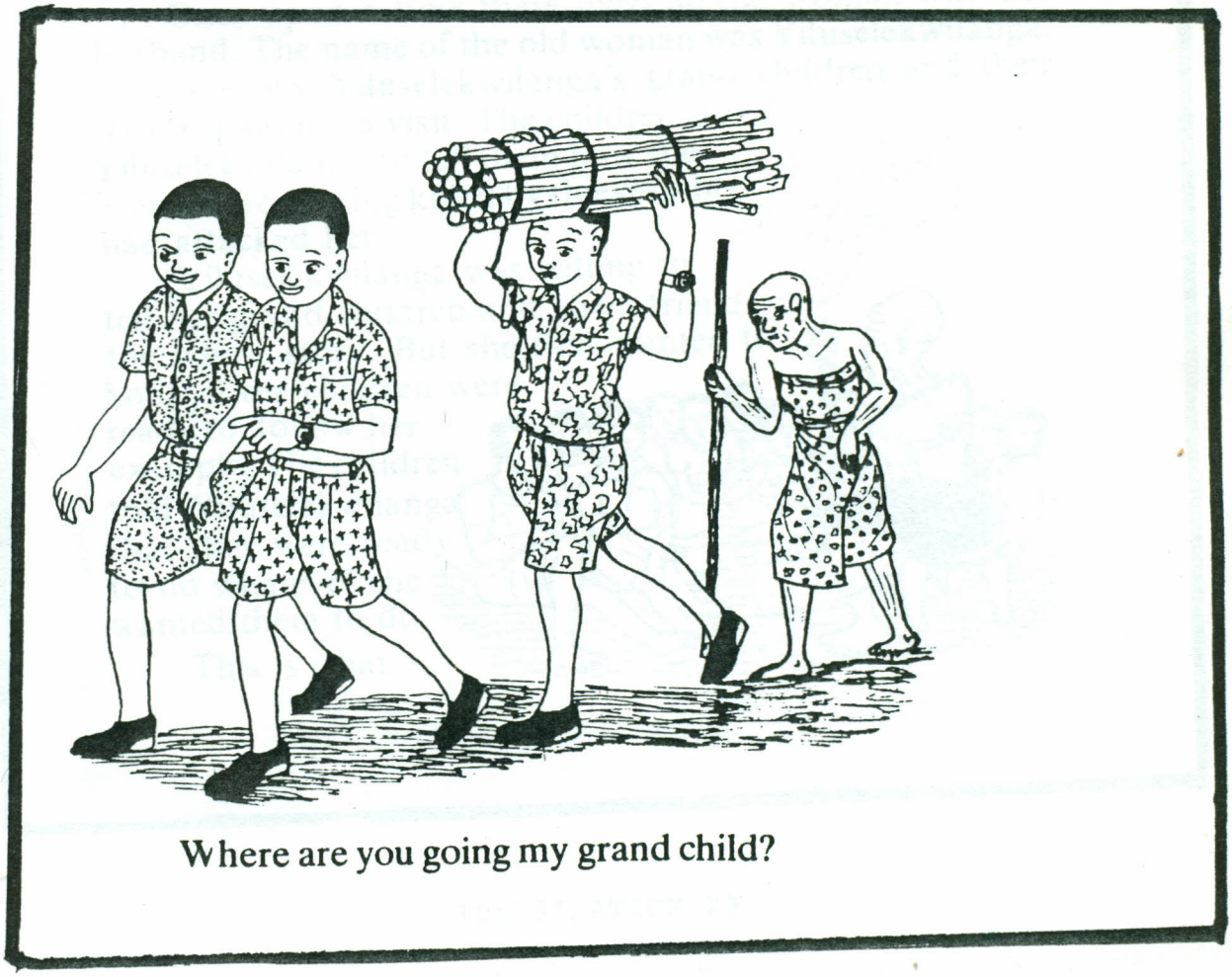
25

ILLUSTRATION 25

irrelevant to the story. The author does not mention a smoking pipe at all and yet it is the most noticeable item on page four (Illustration 27).

We observed that many of the East African titles presenting an elderly man or woman side by side with a child or young person seem to suggest that the readers are young. Such is Rwechungura's Hadithi Za Mapokeo (Illustration 28). Perhaps this stereotyped image is what made some librarians place Mwanangu Mpoki (Illustration 29) in the children's section of the library where it gathered dust and when deliberately offered to children was rejected by them. Rightly some readers complained that the language was too tough, while others said they were bored by it and others said they did not like poetry. The book is certainly not a children's book. It deals with adult problems and dreams and does not communicate to the children. The cover picture therefore tempts the librarian who has not cared to study the book to classify it as a children's book.

The picture of the old woman in one of the stories Yiluselekwilanga entitled "The Greedy Chief" (Illustration 30) was liked by many children because it is closer to their mental picture of a grandmother, and they could associate her with their grandmothers if only she had not been clean shaven.



Where are you going my grand child?

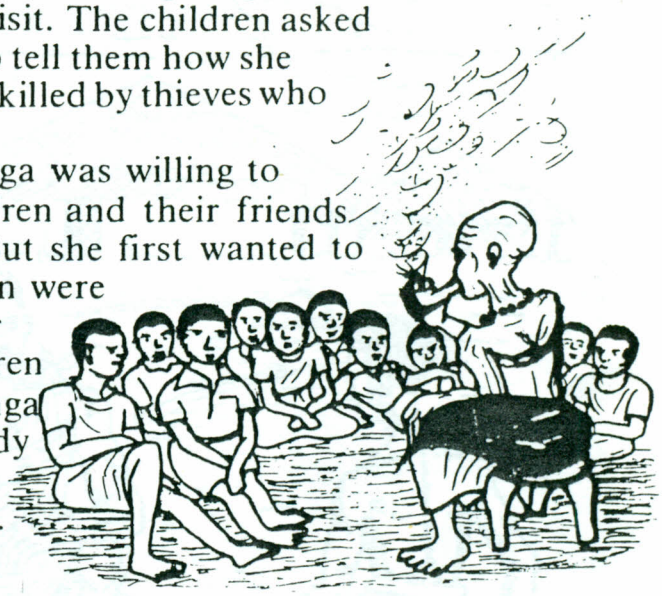
ILLUSTRATION 26

YILUSELEKWILANGA

Once upon a time there lived an old woman with her husband. The name of the old woman was Yiluselekwilanga.

One day Yiluselekwilanga's grand children and their friends paid her a visit. The children asked Yiluselekwilanga to tell them how she escaped from being killed by thieves who had attacked her.

Yiluselekwilanga was willing to tell her grand children and their friends the whole story. But she first wanted to know if the children were ready to follow her example. The children told Yiluselekwilanga that they were ready to do whatever she wanted them to do.



This is what

4

ILLUSTRATION 27

HADITHI ZA

Mapokeo



GABRIEL R. RWECHUNGURA

ILLUSTRATION 28

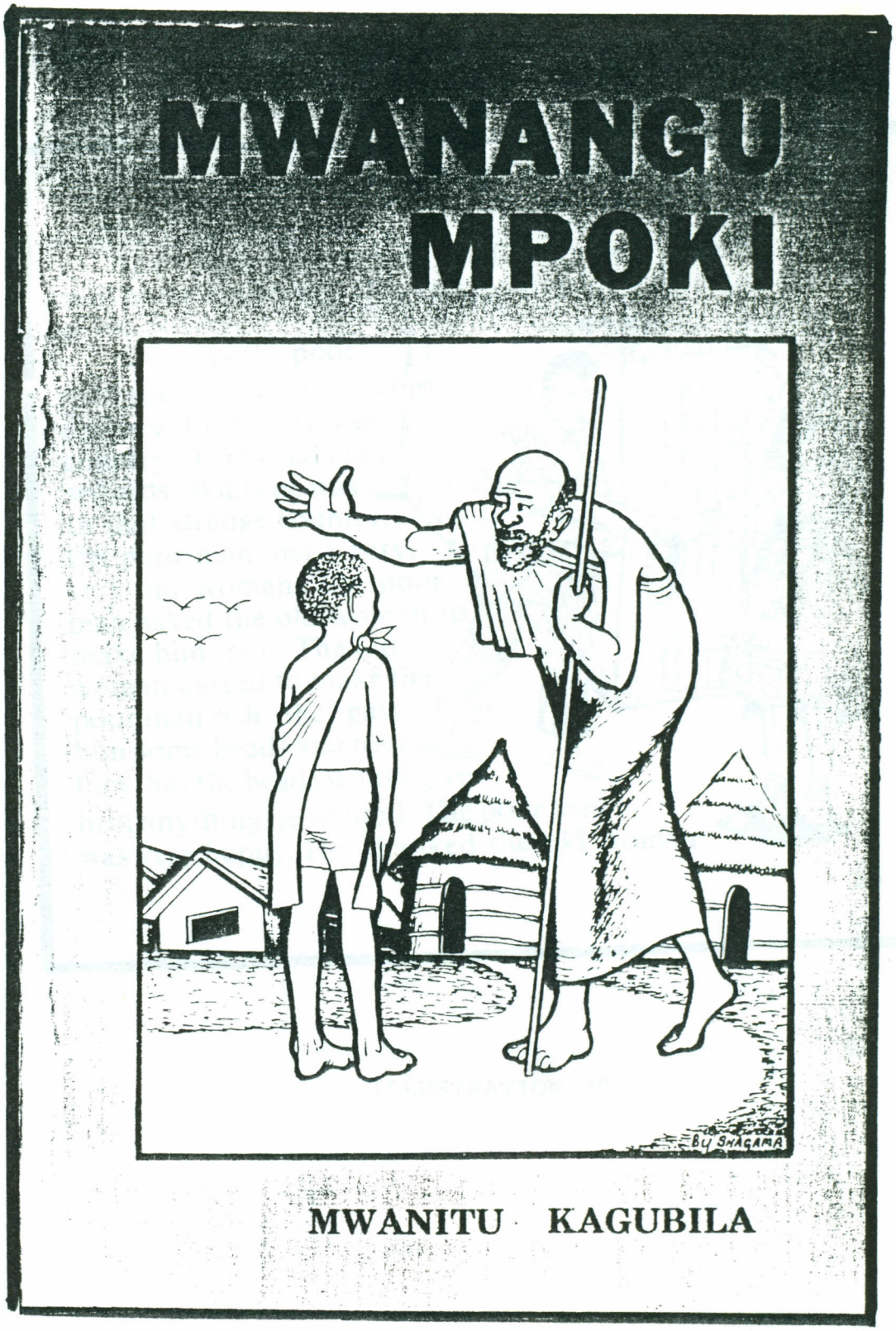
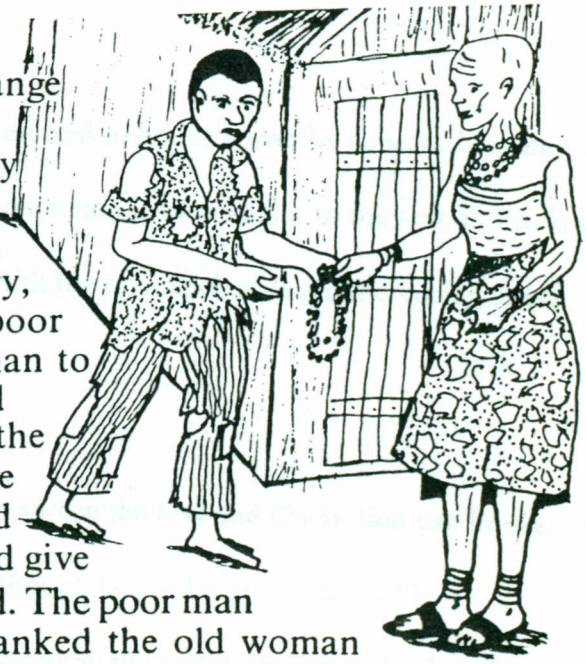


ILLUSTRATION 29

THE GREEDY CHIEF

Once upon a time there lived a very poor man. The poor man hated his poverty. He was looking for ways of getting rid of his poverty.

One day the poor man journeyed to a strange country. In that strange country, there lived many wizards. While he was in that strange country, the poor man met a very, very old woman. The poor man asked the old woman to make him rich. The old woman agreed to make the poor man rich. She gave him some beads and told him that the beads would give him anything he wanted. The poor man was very happy. He thanked the old woman



25

ILLUSTRATION 30

The old woman in King Solomon's Mines is a different kind of person for she is not only a witch but has also lived more than three hundred years. The illustrator of the Ladybird version of the story has drawn a picture that makes Gagool as frightening as she probably is depicted in the text. In the process she loses any feminine characteristics and turns out like a frightening male ogre (Illustration 31).

It is not surprising that children referred to her as a man by constantly using the pronoun "he". In the Collins edition the depiction is even closer to the text as Twala is shown as huge and ugly and contrasted with the tiny, ancient Gagool creeping at his feet (Illustration 32).

A good example of the harmony between the text and illustration can be seen in the Collin's version Solomon's Mines. Although Gagool is (Illustration 33) frighteningly ugly, the interpretation presented by the picture matches the description of the text. Something seems to be missing when the king is presented. (Illustration 34). King Twala, according to the artist's interpretation, would not be described as particularly ugly but angry and frightening. The Puffin edition gives us the picture that can be described as frightening because Twala is presented as fierce and mysterious..



"This is why!" Swiftly, I raised my rifle and shot one of his own oxen. I could see he was impressed.

Suddenly, Gagool threw back her cloak, and revealed an aged, wrinkled face. She began to caper about.

"I smell blood!" she shrieked. "Ye white men come for diamonds. But who are ye, of the proud bearing?" She turned on Umbopa, her voice more piercing. "I know ye – take off your cloak . . ."

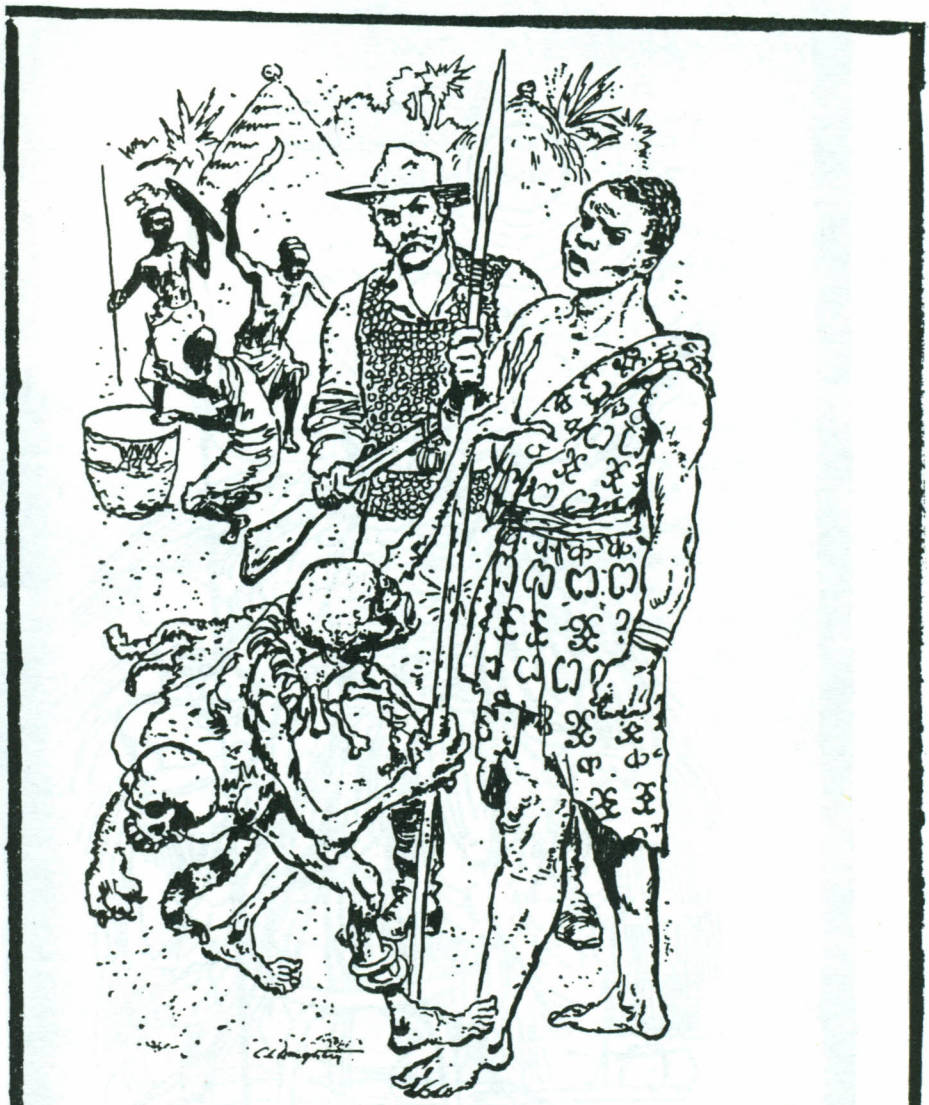
28

ILLUSTRATION 31



42

ILLUSTRATION 32



50

ILLUSTRATION 33



'Be humble, O people, it is the King'

117

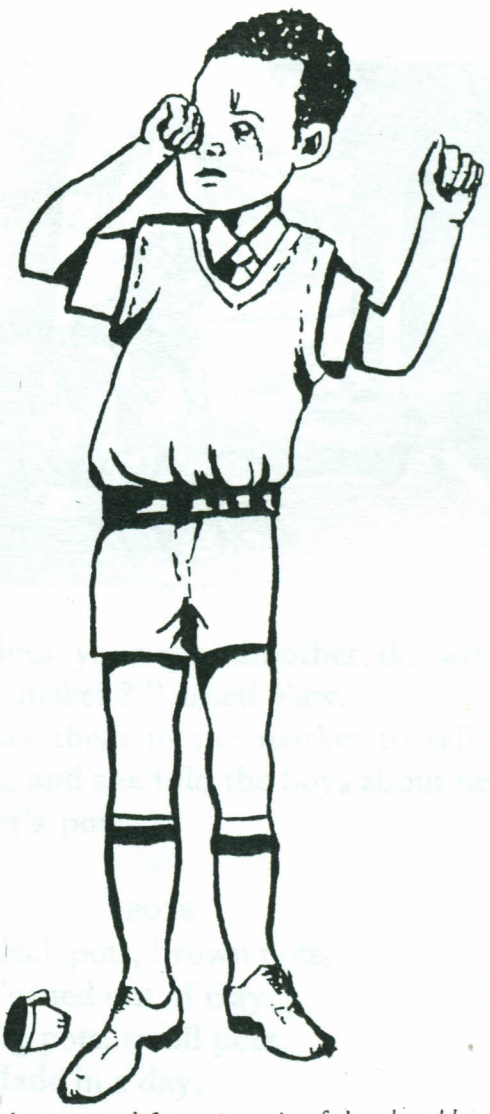
ILLUSTRATION 34

On the other hand children found the picture (Illustration 35) inappropriate as compared with the text. Similarly the pot maker in Jasper's Book of Nursery Rhymes is incongruous with the description of the grandmother (Illustration 36). The same is true of Asenath Odaga's book, The Secret of The Monkey Rock in which the artist presents an incorrect depiction of Jumamosi's mother. One of the readers was asked to show the researcher the picture of Jumamosi's mother but he hesitated. He was told that her name is given as Ikompe and was shown the picture (Illustration 37) to pick out Ikompe. The boy shook his head as he looked at the picture and said, "But it says here that she was expecting a baby." He read out loud:

> "I have come to collect some firewood for my mother because she is tired: She is heavy with child and would not be able to climb all over the hill and rocks to gather wood."p.4

He argued, quite rightly, that none of the three ladies seemed to be heavy with child as she climbed all over the hills and rocks looking for the lost girl. He concluded, "Their waists look like those of school girls'."

What attracted most readers was the discrepancy between the text and the illustrations is Yasin's Nightmare. The story takes place in Mtwango Junior Secondary School and the characters must be boys in their early teen-age years, but the illustrator



...before Sudi recovered from the pain of the plate blow, a cup came flying at him and crashed on his forehead. 3

ILLUSTRATION 35



" What does your grandmother do with the pots she makes ? " asked Yaw.

" She takes them to the market to sell," replied Ama, and she told the boys about her grandmother's pots.

POTS

Black pots, brown pots,
Turned out of clay.
Big pots, small pots,
Made in a day.

ILLUSTRATION 36



Together the three women started calling
'Jumamosi, Jumamosiiiii'

ILLUSTRATION 37

presents them as primary school boys. In the illustration Sudi is crying because he is hurt (Illustration 38) and amuses the reader as a result of this disparity.

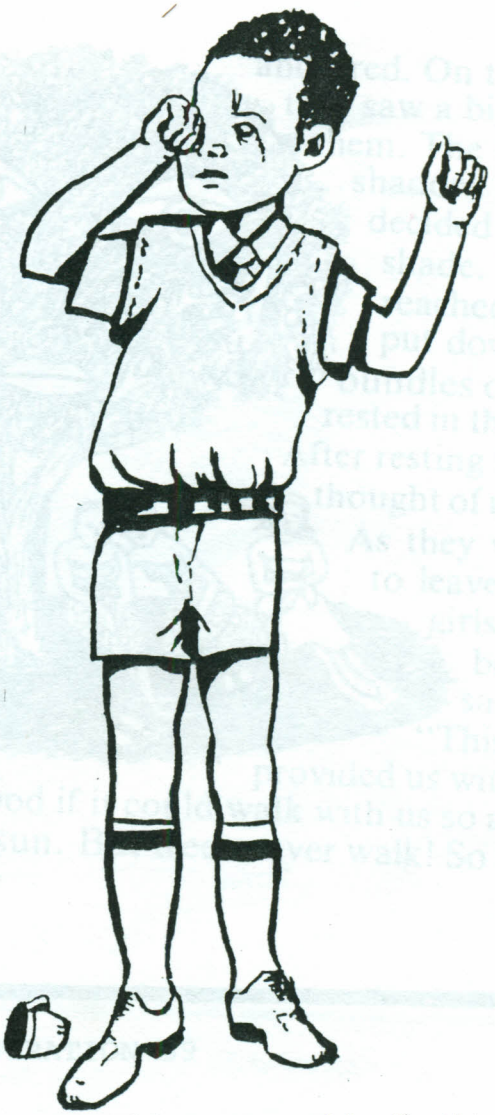
In some cases, therefore, it is necessary to be as close to reality as possible. Fantasy, however, calls for a different kind of interpretation and the artist has no choice but to deviate from reality. Sometimes the artist gets the spirit of the text and adds to it as in "The Tree That Talked" where the artist gives a strange tree a pair of eyes, a mouth and ears thus adding to the element of fantasy in the story where magical things happen. Fear grips the reader when the tree is chasing after the girls because the picture is frightening (Illustration 39,40). Here the character of the tree is fleshed out by the illustration. It is clearly personified as a kind of ogre. Anyone would be scared of a tree that has eyes, ears mouth and ability to talk and even walk.

The illustrator of Pilipili Hoho also appeals to the child's love for fantasy and magic by creating a big green pepper plant with a big green pepper. The green pepper plant as it germinates is given a happy face, probably to reduce the element of fear from such an unusual phenomenon. The whole experience with the green pepper is a happy experience. As a character, green pepper is playful and happy as it is being taken to school as a specimen for the vegetable growing competition. (Illustration 41 and 42).

Another good example of added characterisation through the visual is from Mifano Hai in which a mean man enumerates all the wrong things that his wife has been doing because he had recorded them in a book. The meanness of the man can be seen in his action: his finger pointing at the woman, a gesture of cruelty on his face as his big mouth is wide open (Illustration 43). His wife is presented as both meek and angry as she listens to the narration of all the wrong things she has been doing. The woman has a get-set-ready-go posture while the man appears like he could conclude the insults by beating her. The children were attracted to the picture because, as one representative put it:

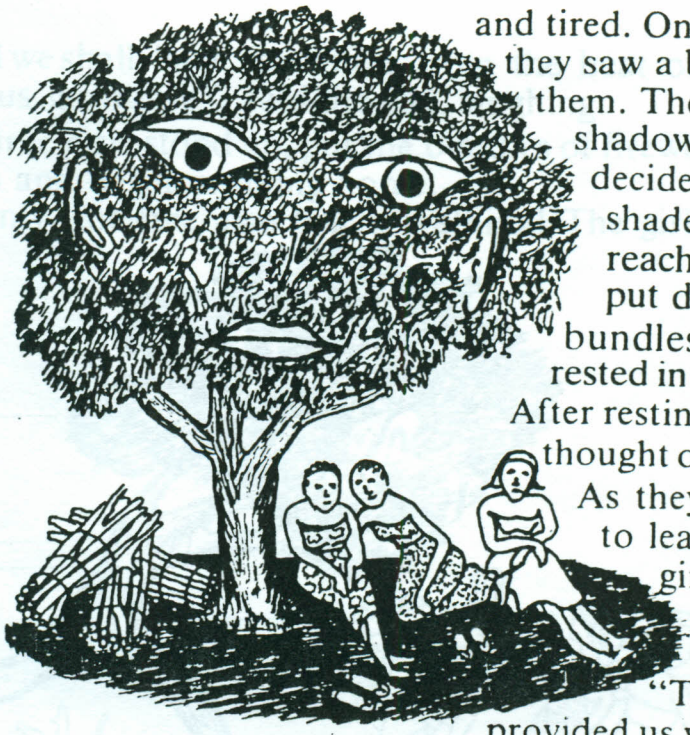
> Tuna njirani ambaye anamgombeza mke wake hivi hivi.
>
> (We have a neighbour who scolds his wife just like this character.)

The woman in Mama Haambiliki also has a character similar to the man depicted in illustration 44 in that the most conspicuous part of her body is the big mouth which really matches with her character and name.She is the woman who cannot be told anything or informed of anything. She thinks she knows everything. By employing a caricature the artist catches the attention of the reader. In the same way the illustrations of Ujinga wa Mwafrika capitalise on the frightening picture of the wizard or witchdoctor who has killed a chicken to delude the man who has come for consultation (Illustration 45 and 46).



...before Sudi recovered from the pain of the plate blow, a cup came flying at him and crashed on his forehead. 3

ILLUSTRATION 38



and tired. On their way home, they saw a big tree in front of them. The tree cast a big shadow. The three girls decided to rest in the shade. When the girls reached the tree, they put down their bundles of firewood and rested in the shade.

After resting for a while they thought of returning home. As they were preparing to leave, one of the girls, the most beautiful one, said jokingly: "This tree has provided us with a nice shade! It would be good if it could walk with us so as to protect us from the hot sun. But trees never walk! So it will remain

26

ILLUSTRATION 39

behind and we shall have to suffer from the heat of the sun. Let us go home", said the girl, laughing.

The three girls stood up, put the bundles of firewood on their heads and began walking home.

Suddenly, the tree also began walking! The girls were



27

ILLUSTRATION 40



ILLUSTRATION 41

alifahamu kwamba Chipegwa
doka nyumbani mapema sana. Kengele
le haitalia kwa muda bado. Imekuwa
bwa kwake Hoho kukua hivyo.
litaka kucheza kidogo. Ghafula
wa alisikia Hoho anateleza.
dwa kumshika.
, Hoho, unafanya nini? Usikimbie!'
Hoho alikuwa anafurahia uhuru wake.
anakimbia mtoni akicheka.
egwa rafiki yangu, tucheze, tucheze.'
eze vipi? Tutachelewa shuleni na
zawadi.'
wa anamkimbilia.

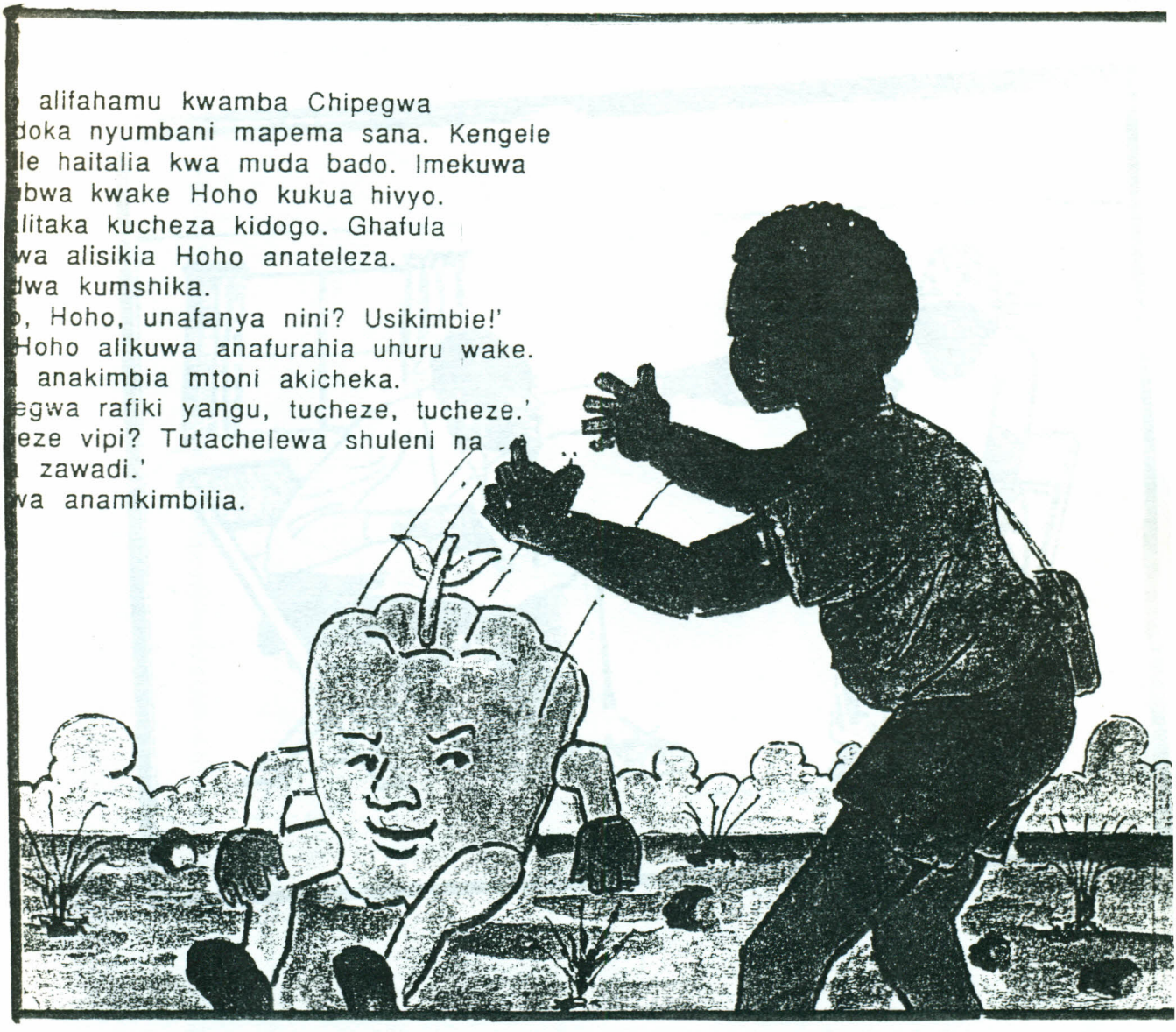
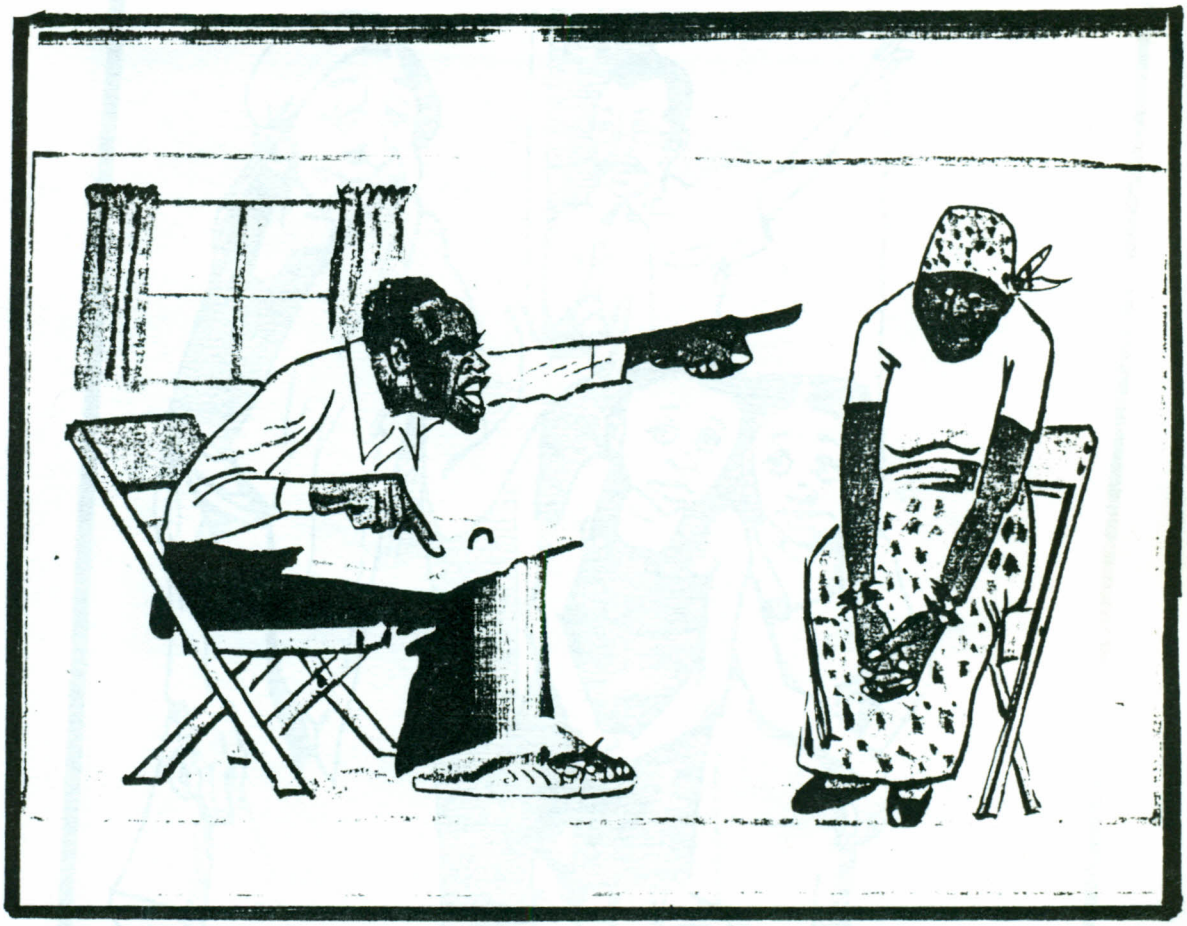


ILLUSTRATION 42



ILLISTRATION 43



ILLUSTRATION 44



ILLUSTRATION 45



ILLUSTRATION 46

Action not only adds to character but also makes the book sparkle with life. Action however can be uncoordinated or unrealistic as for instance Matiko's fall from the orange tree (Illustration 47). The fall suggests that Matiko is a stupid boy who does not know how to climb down trees. But the problem could be the writer's for suggesting a tear that is impossible to get when one is climbing down trees. In this case the illustrator should have known that the picture will look ridiculous because climbing down the tree the way Matiko did, with his back on the tree just so that his shorts can be torn, is stupid and even the child reader knows that . This picture is depicting a scene that is the essence of the whole story and therefore when the children respond negatively to it they are responding to the whole book.

Illustrations need to be meaningful to the target reader of the book. As seen in the above discussion some of this meaning is enhanced by matching pictures with the text. The least appealing in terms of the visuals meaning on the page was Vitendawili Vyetu. The book has several purposeless pictures which seem to communicate nothing for they neither illustrate the riddles nor match with the answers to those riddles. It seems as if they are just meant to fill up the pages.

The picture of the cock (Illustration 48) does not communicate anything especially since the opposite page is blank. The readers of Vitendawili Vyetu are well past the age of picture books so they already know what a cock looks like. The horse

(Illustration 49) and the hyena (Illustration 50) are not illustrating the solutions to riddles.

The younger children puzzled over the pictures trying to connect them to the text while the older ones simply ignored them. Some of the older children said that the book is for younger children and yet they found some of the riddles difficult to answer.

Unmatched illustrations contradict the facts and confuse the child. It is better to have no illustrations at all than to use them to put off the child from reading an otherwise interesting story. Matching illustrations, on the other hand make the story come to life, bringing out humour, where humour is used, and fear, as in the story of the tree that talked and walked. Sometimes such illustrations underline the sterotypes drawn from traditional oral literature as in illustration 51 where the hare is riding on hyena's back. On the other hand some illustrations explode sterotypes as in the story where the woman is taking the monkey to court. In the normal, stereotypical situation the woman would have been afraid of the monkey and the monkey would have taken advantage of this fear. The point of the story is that the monkey cannot escape judgement and this is what the illustration accentuates. The author could also be exploding the theory that women are cowardly. The depiction of the woman holding the monkey by the tail also creates humour (Illustration 52). The monkey is arrested

and can only be held by the tail. This is a different depiction from the stereotyped situation we find in Barker's Kapteni Aliyeshambuliwa na Simba (Illustration 53).

The children interviewed were more critical of realistic pictures because they noticed easily when the artist was being inconsistent. Martha Mandao, the author of the Torn Shorts (Kaptula Iliyochanika) was heavily criticised by the children. The artist of this book did not take the trouble to make the main character easily identified by the reader until his shorts get torn. Matiko's face changes from page to page and so does his teacher's. In one picture the teacher has five fingers and a thumb (Illustration 54). Matiko's neck seems to be so flexible that it can turn right round so that he faces backwards (see illustration 55 and 56). In fantasy this is acceptable but even then a touch of magic is necessary to convince the reader of this possibility. Comments were made about the pictures, some of them unsolicited.

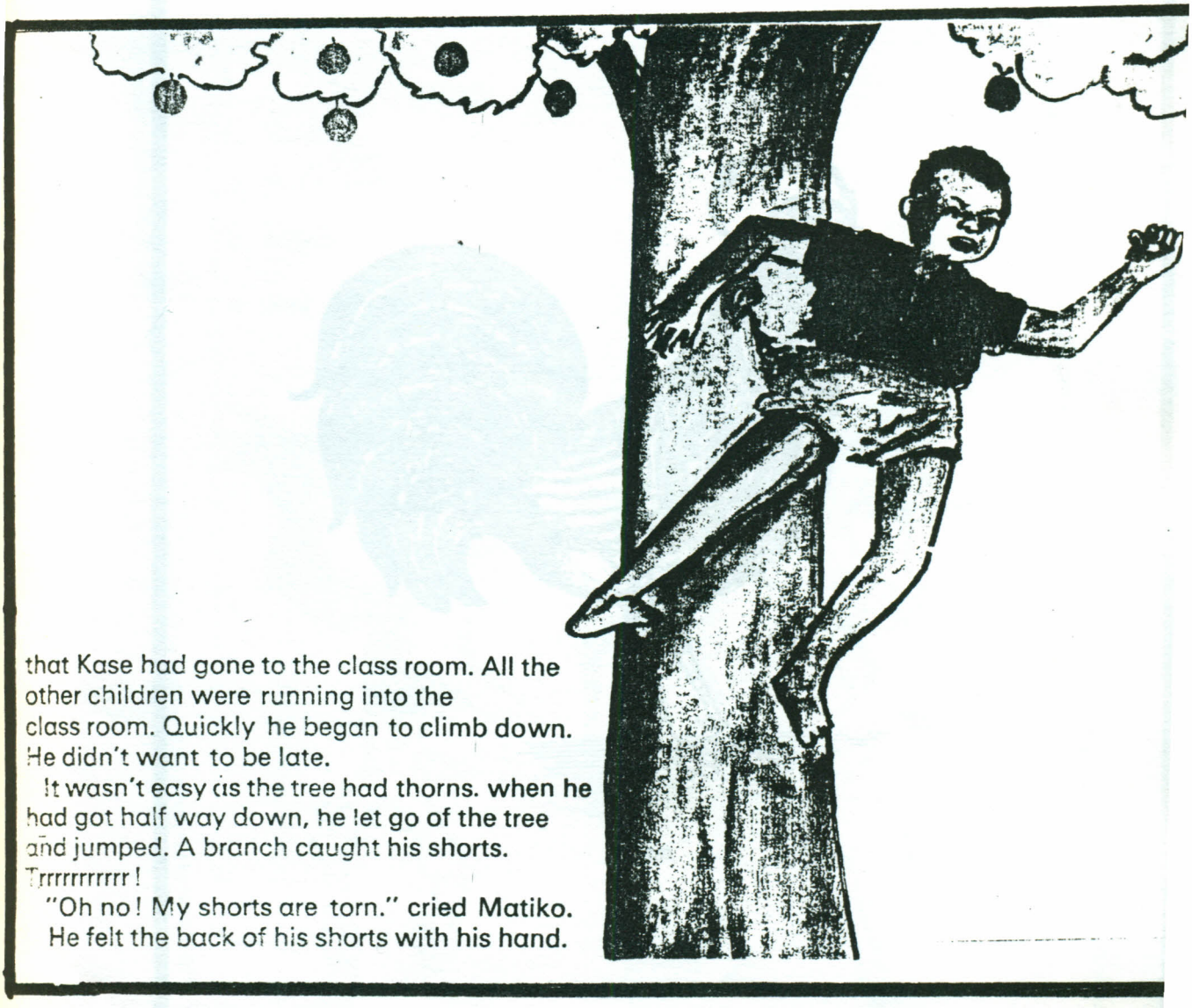
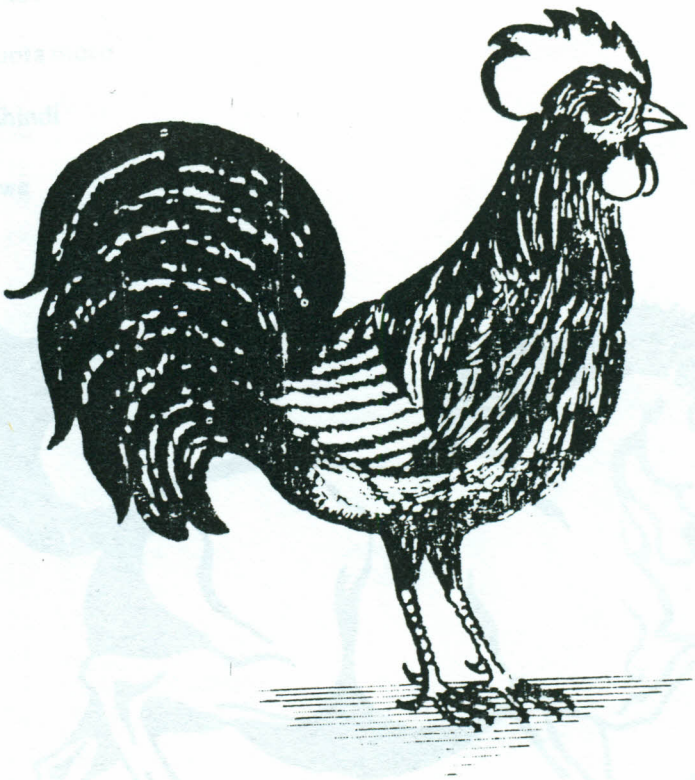


ILLUSTRATION 47



Jogoo

(ii)

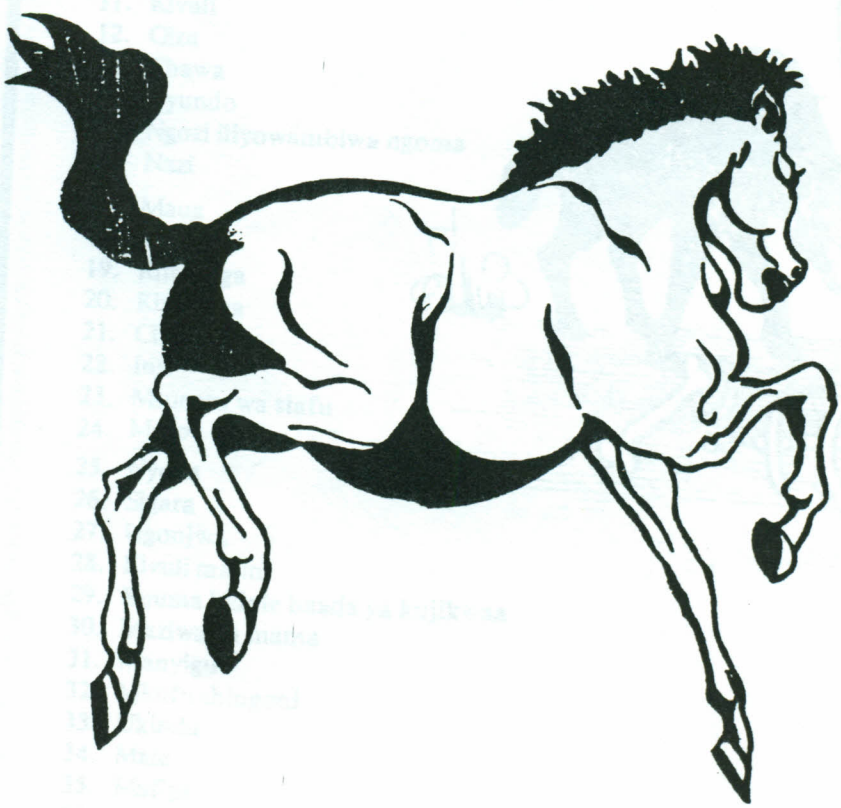
ILLUSTRATION 48

VITENDAWILI VYETU

Ufafanuzi

A

1. Kinoo
2. Kuota moto
3. Mhindi
4. Jiwe



Farasi

ILLUSTRATION 49

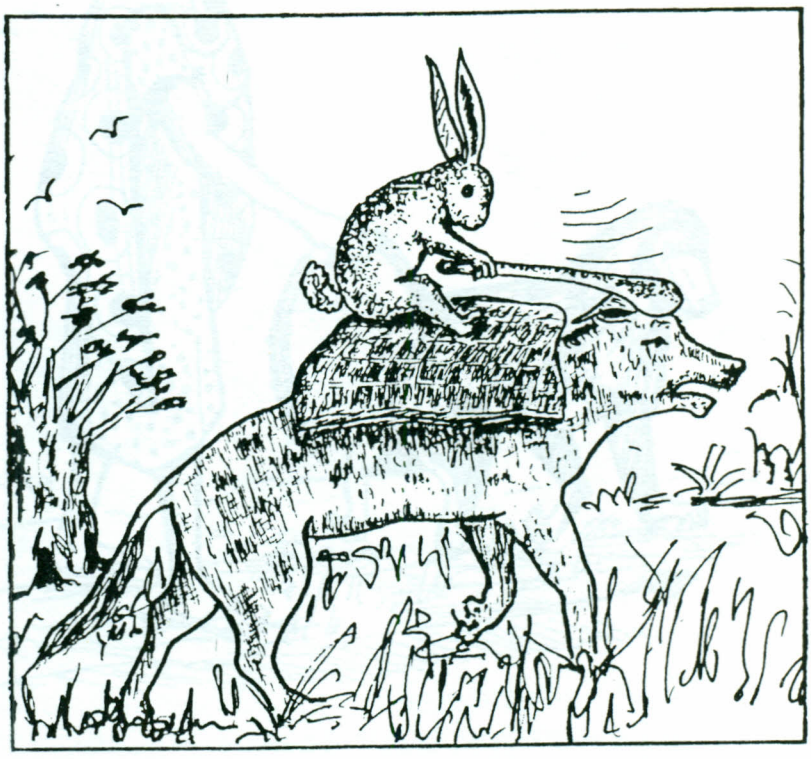
VITENDAWILI VYETU

N

1. Akiba ya uzeeni
2. Uwongo wa mganga
3. Kinu
4. Upepo
5. Kujikwaa
6. Jicho
7. Mzinga wa nyuki
8. Mimba
9. Mfu
10. Kivuli (ndani ya kioo)
11. Kivuli
12. Giza
13. Chawa
14. Nyundo
15. Ngozi iliyowambiwa ngoma
16. Nazi
17. Maua
18. Mke
19. Kinyonga
20. Kinyonga
21. Cheo
22. Inzi
23. Msururu wa siafu
24. Moto
25. Nyoka
26. Sigara
27. Ugonjwa
28. Kivuli majini
29. Kuuma kidole baada ya kujikwaa
30. Maziwa ya mama
31. Manyigu
32. Mkufu shingoni
33. Ukindu
34. Mate
35. Mafiga
36. Ulimi
37. Kwenda haja



ILLUSTRATION 50



Fisi amembeba Sungura mgongoni

14

ILLUSTRATION 51



Safari mahakamani

15

ILLUSTRATION 52

Njiani juu ya kilima kidogo kulikuwa na nyumba nzuri yenye kuezekwa kwa miaa na kukingwa na kivuli kikubwa cha mwembe mkubwa wenye matawi mengi. Nje ya nyumba hiyo



Manyani wajaribu kumnyang'anya mama mihogo yake

kulikuwa na mtungi mkubwa uliojazwa maji baridi matamu. Mtungi huo naukumbuka mpaka hivi sasa kwa nakshi zake zilizokuwa zimetiwa pembeni mwake. Kata yake pia ilikuwa nzuri na sisi wote tuliokuwa katika safari ile tukapata maji ya kunywa na kuburudika. Siusifii mtungi huo kwa ajili ya kutukatia kiu yetu, lakini pia ulifinyangwa kifundi sana na kuokwa kwa ufundi kadhalika.

4

ILLUSTRATION 53

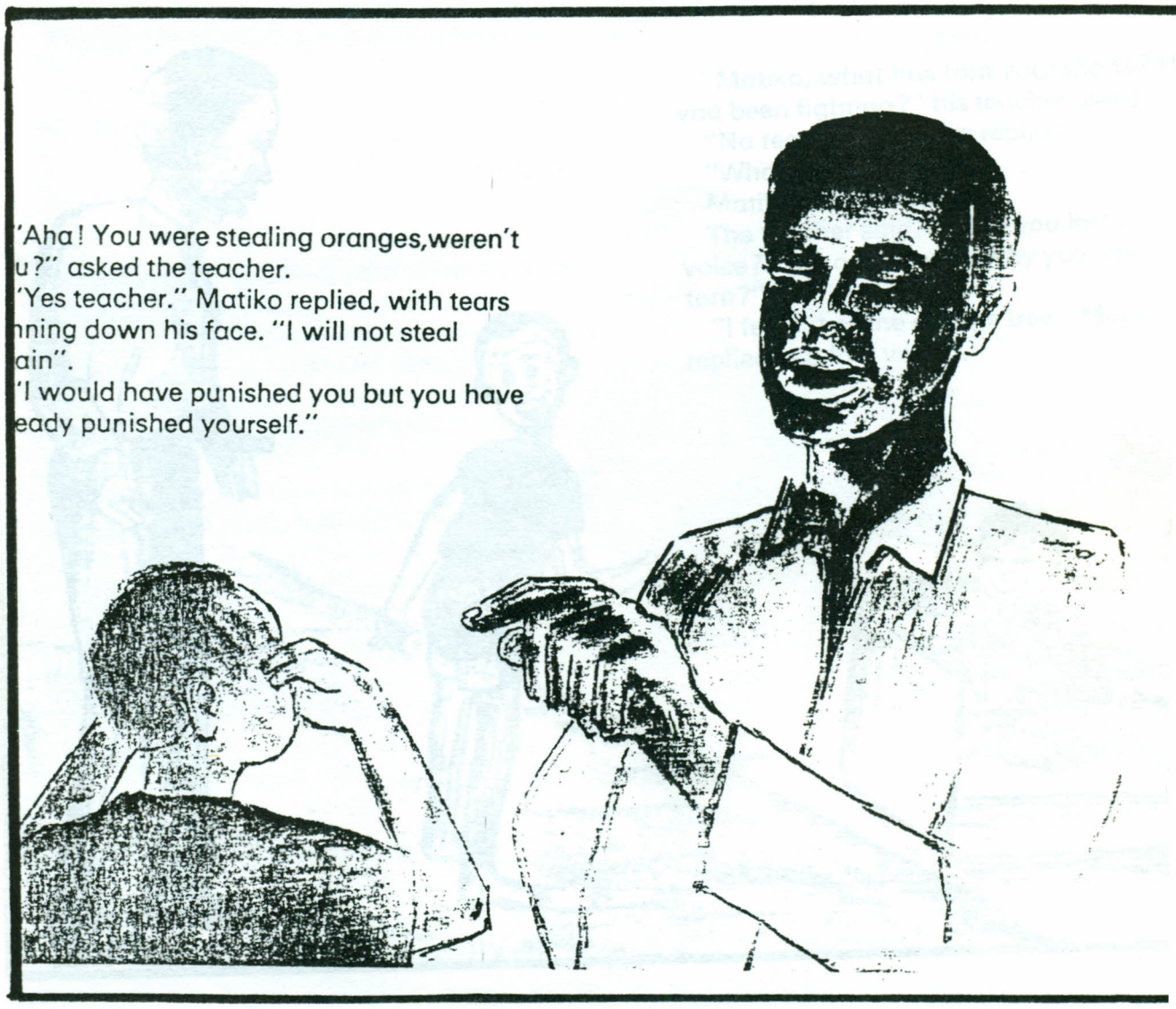


ILLUSTRATION 54

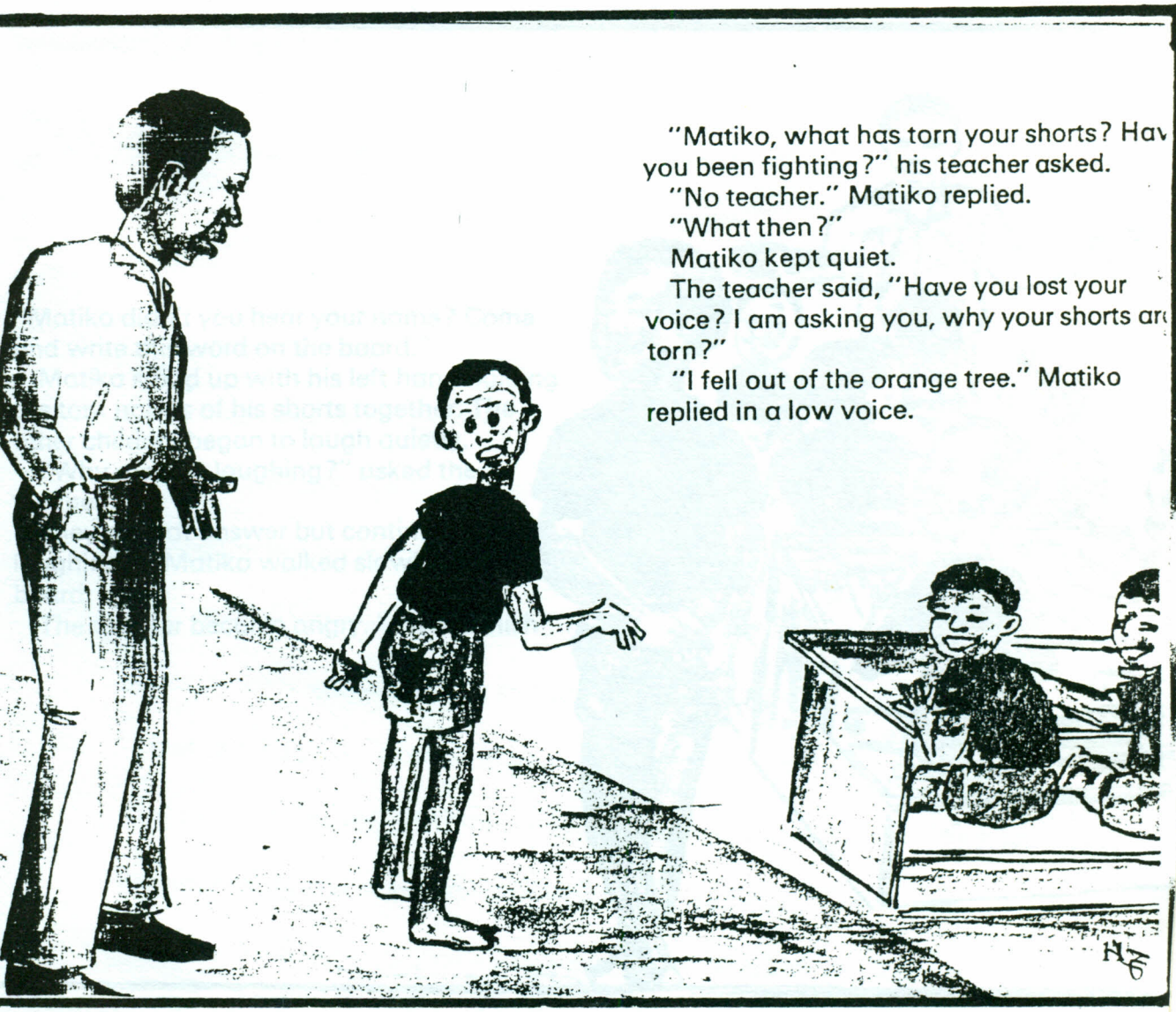


ILLUSTRATION 55

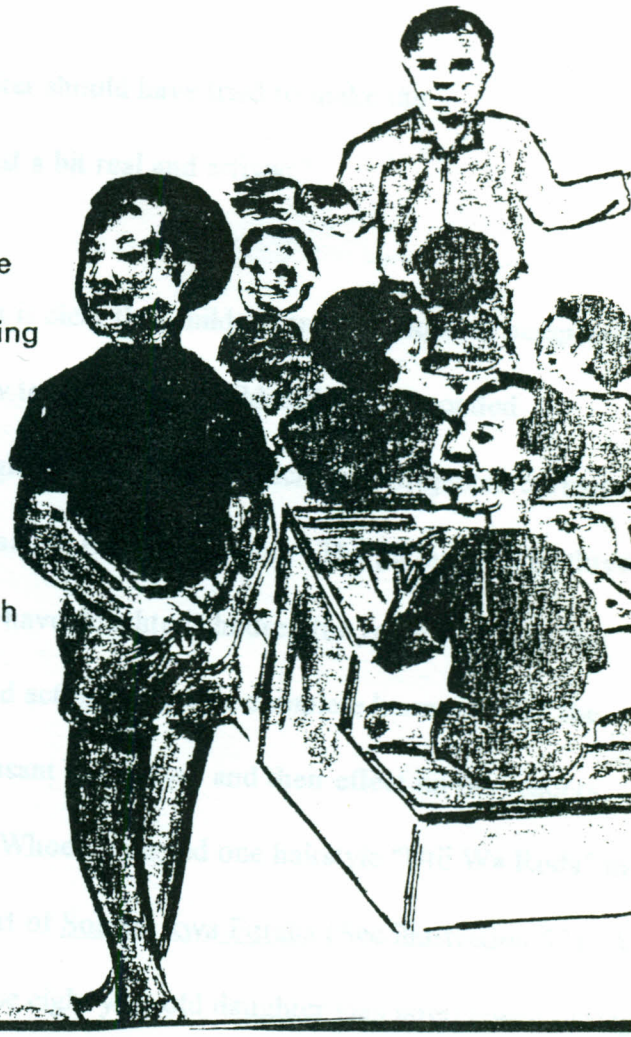
"Matiko didn't you hear your name? Come and write this word on the board."

Matiko stood up with his left hand holding the torn halves of his shorts together. The other children began to laugh quietly.

"Why are you laughing?" asked the teacher.

They did not answer but continued laughing as Matiko walked slowly to the board.

The teacher became angry. "I will punish



8

ILLUSTRATION 56

"Matiko has a neck like that of a doll."

"...and also the writer should have tried to make the pictures look at least a bit real and artistic."

From the above examples it is clear that children are conscious of perspective even though they do not know how to discuss it. Children have responded enthusiastically and with great delight to illustrations which have projected correct perspectives and presented co-ordinated, realistic pictures. The pictures in the three books entitled Someni Kwa Furaha have delighted children for years with their line drawings. They sparkle with life and action and are in complete harmony with the content and the print. They are pleasant to the eyes and their effect on the readers sometimes lasts beyond childhood. Whoever named one hairstyle "Utii Wa Roda" must have enjoyed reading at least this part of Someni kwa Furaha (See illustration 57). A young mother in Dar es salaam whose eight year old daughter was interviewed during our research casually mentioned that she had objected to her first son being named Paul because of the illustration of a poem she remembered from her school days (see poem and illustration 58), arguing that her son might grow to be as dirty as the Paul in the book. Someni Kwa Furaha Books 1, 2 and 3, succeeded in getting attention from children because of the delightful, simple, line pictures that they contain. It is not true to say that illustrations of children's books have to be in colour to be appealing. By

comparison, in fact, Someni Kwa Furaha has better pictures in black and white than does The Torn Shorts with its pictures in two colours which seem to be just splashed about, obscuring the lines of the drawings.

Some pictures appeal more to girls than boys and vice versa. In Mushi's Baada Ya Dhiki, Faraja the girls found the first inside picture disgusting (see illustration 59) as it showed the woman breast-feeding. Some girls commented:

Utii wa Roda

Mama yumo nyumbani, anapika chakula chetu. Roda yuko nje, anacheza na wenzi wake. Sasa mama anamwita Roda aje kumsaidia.

— Roda, njoo hapa.

— Ndiyo mama.

Lakini haji. Anacheza na wenzi wake. Mama anamwita tena :

— Roda, rjoo ; ukapasue kuni.

— Ndiyo mama, nakuja sasa hivi.

Lakini haji.

— Roda, nakuita, je husikii ?

— Ndiyo mama, nakuja.

Lakini hata sasa haji. Anaendelea kucheza mchezo wake.

— Je, Roda, utakuja ama huji ?

— Naja mama, sasa hivi.

Lakini bado anakawia. Anasema ndiyo, utii hakuna. Mama anaona vibaya, anakasirika.

— Basi, sasa nitakupiga, Roda.

— Usinipige mama !

Nimekwisha kuja sasa.

— Sasa umechelewa.

Si mtoto mwema we.



Huna utii.

5

ILLUSTRATION 57



Paulo, usije kucheza na sisi,
una mikono michafu.
tutachafuka
hata kunuka,
una mikono michafu.

Paulo, usije kula na sisi,
una mikono michafu.
hutaki kunawa,
sabuni ni dawa.
una mikono michafu.

Paulo, usije shuleni na sisi,
una mikono michafu.
unahitaji
sabuni na maji.
una mikono michafu.

15

ILLUSTRATION 58

Kisaka alirejea nyumbani saa za magharibi. Mkewe, Nkambora, alikuwa amekalia jiwe nje ya nyumba akimnyonyesha mtoto na huku akimwimbia kwa sauti tamu ili kumtumbuiza na kumfanya alale upesi.

Lala, mwanangu, lala,
Jua linakuchwa:
Ndege waimba sala,
Usije kuachwa.



Watoto wengine walinyonyeshwa mpaka walipofikia umri wa kwenda kuchunga wanyama, na waliposikia njaa

ILLUSTRATION 59

"It is yuk!"

"I do not like it so much because the breasts look like mangoes."

while the boys focused on illustration 60 which they thought was embarrassing because the man carried nothing while the woman carried two children. The younger ones thought the man was wearing torn trousers, and were not particularly impressed by him either.

The violence depicted in illustration 61 disturbed some children in the same manner that they were disturbed by illustration 62 from King Solomon's Mines and yet Robinson Crusoe's gun evokes no horror as it kills the native black men (see illustration 63). The gun is taken for granted as a lethal weapon but the spears and arrows "frighten" the reader. The fear evoked by these illustrations is logical because human life is lost in the wielding of the arrows and the spears. The gun should evoke a similar fear but the child reader, especially the urban child is more familiar with the gun and therefore takes it for granted in Robinson Crusoe. Perhaps this acceptance of the gun points to the moral decadence of the society that is represented by the readers. Baada ya Dhiki Faraja seems to have been intended for adult readership and only attracts children's attention because of the pictures of children. Baada Ya dhiki Faraja had very few readers and these only from the older group of respondents. One reader said that he read only Chapter 1 because the story was boring. He, however, studied all the

Kisaka akabeba vifaa na vyakula mbali mbali. Wakatembea mwendo wa kasi. Mara Nkambora akaona kitoto kidogo kati ya shina la mgomba. Akakitazama kwa makini; akaona ni kitoto kizuri cha kiume.



Pande zote za dunia zilitoa vilio na maombolezo ya kutisha. Kisaka alikuwa ametembea hatua nyingi bila kusikia mwendo wa mke wake nyuma. Akageuka na kumwambia avute mwendo.

"O Mume wangu, kitoto kizuri kichanga. Tukichukue," alilia Nkambora, huku akikazia macho.

"U mjinga sana, mwanamke we! Una kazi gani na kitoto hicho ambapo wewe mwenyewe huna hakika ya kuishi na kuuona tena mwanga wa Jua? Haya, twende!"

Kwa bahati nzuri, wakafika huko mapangoni salama salamini. Kisaka akagundua kuwa mke wake alikuwa na watoto

ILLUSTRATION 60

wakajaribu kukimbia, lakini hawakwenda mbali kabla ya kudungwa mikuki na askari wa Mseto. Wamseto waliendelea kushambulia mpaka maiti za Wamatumbi zikaitanda ardhi kama mizoga ya hayawani inayoililia misaada ya wazishi.

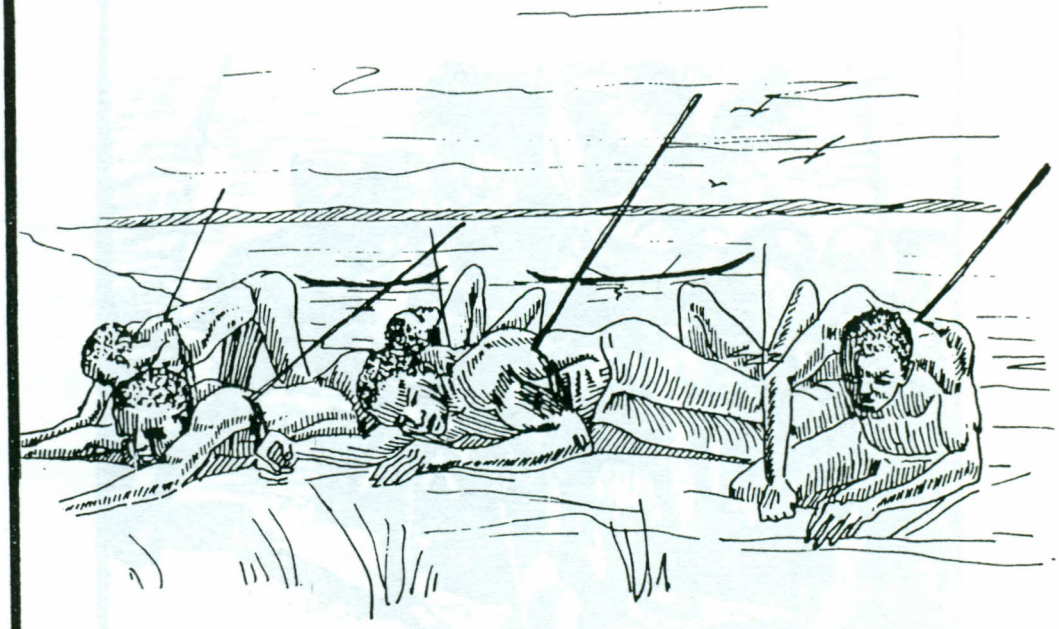


ILLUSTRATION 61

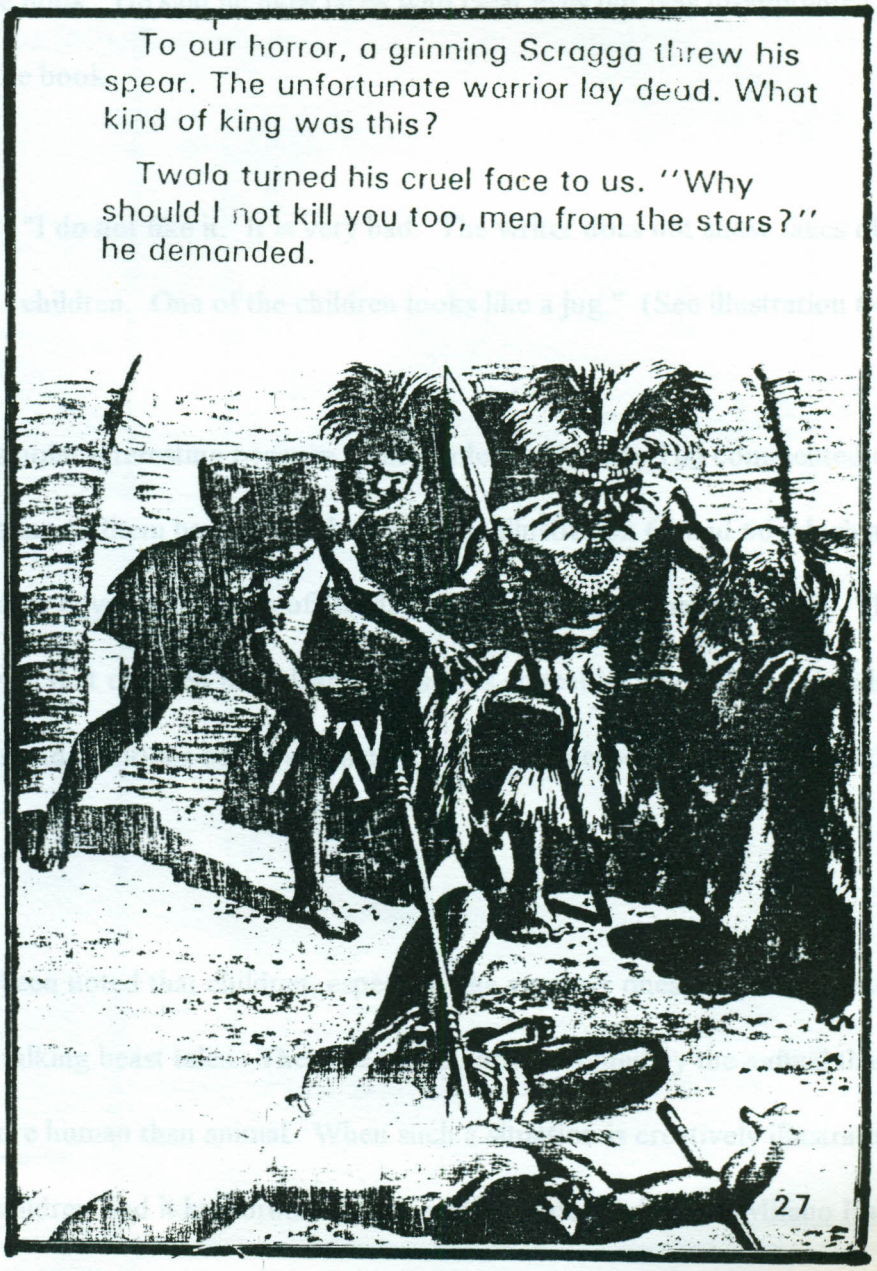


ILLUSTRATION 62

pictures of the book. He said he likes faces with clear eyes but was disappointed with the cover of the book.

> "I do not like it. It is very bad. The writer does not show faces of the children. One of the children looks like a jug." (See illustration 64).

We found this point interesting because some readers of Mifano Hai commented on the pictures appealing to them because of the eyes as in illustration 65 and 66 which are different from the cover illustration of Baada Ya Dhiki Faraja (Illustration 64). The comments reveal that children find clear expressions appealing when a face reveals the various moods and emotions of the characters. The eye is especially catching to the reader.

It has been noted that children, especially the younger ones, love animal stories especially the talking beast tales. They are particularly intrigued by the animal that emerges as more human than animal. When such a situation is creatively illustrated by an artist, the children find it humorous. Such is what made "Zukizi" of Mifano Hai (see illustration 67) attract so much attention from the children because of the picture of the worms who seem to be talking to one another as they enjoy eating maize. The whole idea of worms wearing hats made children thoroughly amused. The pictures of animals on two legs remind the reader that the character are mere types of human



"BASI PALE PALE AKAANGUKA, AMEKUFA."

41

ILLUSTRATION 63



ILLUSTRATION 64

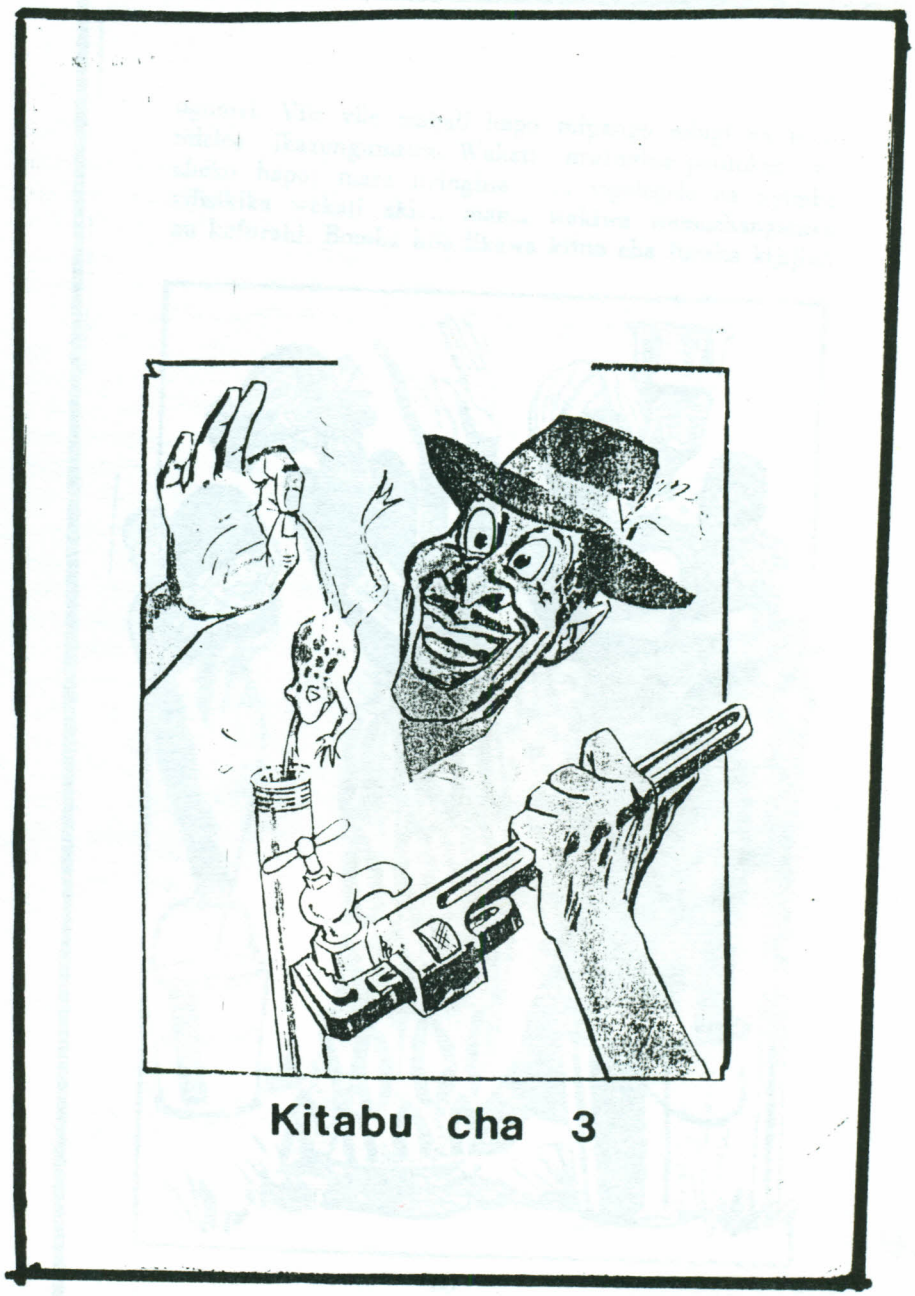


ILLUSTRATION 65

ugomvi. Vile vile mahali hapo mipango mingi ya maendeleo ikazungumzwa. Wakati mwingine palitokea vicheko hapo; mara nyingine ...ta vigelegele na nyimbo vilisikika wakati aki... mama wakiwa wamechangamka au kufurahi. Bomba hilo likawa kituo cha furaha kijijini.

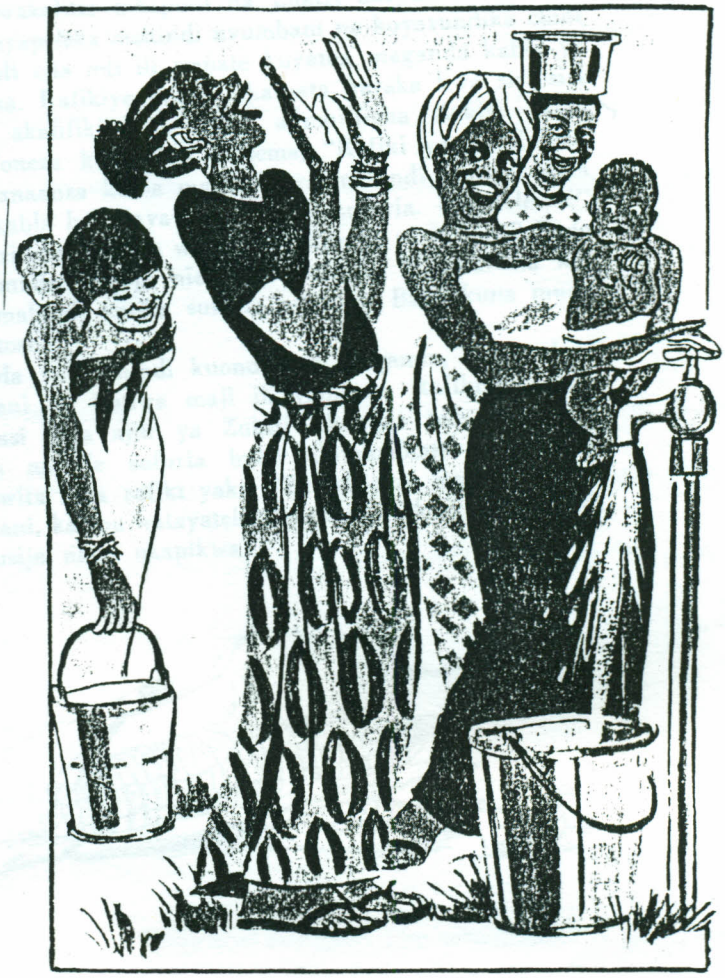


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ILLUSTRATION 66

naelewa kabisa nifanyalo. Nimekuambia mimi si mtu wa kuzubaa hata nipikiwe hindini. Wewe ngoja tu, utaniona nikitoka mzima. Acha niendelee kufaidi."

Keshoye kweli wale wenye shamba wakaja tena kuvuna mahindi. Siku hiyo wakalivunja lile hindi alimokuwa Zukizi wakalitia kikapuni na Zukizi akiwamo.

Wakayapeleka mahindi nyumbani na kuyarundika chini ya kivuli cha mti ili wapate kuyatoa maganda kabla ya kuyapika. Rafikiye Zukizi akafuata haraka kwa siri siri mpaka akalifikia lile hindi alimojificha Zukizi. Akamnong'oneza kwa bidii akisema, "Rafiki yangu Zukizi, sasa wanaanza kutoa maganda ya mahindi. Fanya hima utoke kabla hawajayaweka kwenye sufuria. Utachelewe!"

Zukizi akajibu bila wasiwasi, "Haraka ni ya nini? Bado kuna muda. Ngoja niendelee kufaidi. Wakikaribia kuyatia mahindi katika sufuria nitatoka. Bado kuna muda wa kutosha."

Baada ya mahindi kuondolewa maganda, yakawekwa sufuriani na kutiwa maji ili yapikwe. Rafikiye Zukizi wasiwasi kwa ajili ya Zukizi ukamjaa tele. Akasogea karibu na ile sufuria huku akitahadhari asionekane. Akamwita tena rafiki yake, "Zukizi, sasa mahindi yamo sufuriani, karibu watayateleka mekoni. Toka kwenye hindi hilo usije nawe ukapikwa!"

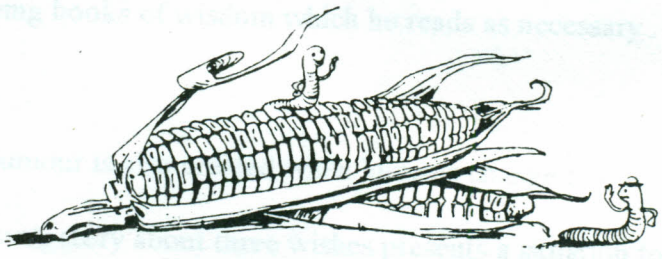

ILLUSTRATION 67

beings. They also provide the comic effect in their personification especially in the incongruity between their normal animal forms and functions in their new assumed human traits.

From Methali Zatufundisha the dog in "Mbwa na Mapapai" captured the children's interest with its upright, human-like posture (illustration 68) while the picture of the woman and the monkey presented the unusual situation of a monkey being led by the tail to court .

The illustration of Shukrani Za Simba also evokes humour as the animals imitate not only the upright posture (illustration 69) but also imbibe other human characteristics. For example tortoise is presented (illustration 70) as wearing spectacles and carrying books of wisdom which he reads as necessary .

Humour is also created when humans change into or behave like animals. Nyagwaswa's story about three wishes presents a situation to which the readers respond with a mixture of pity and delight. The amusement is generated by the story which explains how the man's head changed into a donkey's head (illustration 71). The child laughs at the foolishness of the couple over their three wishes which amount to twenty dishes of rice and stew, and a donkey head. Unlike in the talking beast tale, the



Mbwa amechukua tenga la mapapai

ILLUSTRATION 68

Hapo zamani za kale wanyama wote waliweza kuongea na kusikilizana.

Siku hizo ungeweza kumsikia Simba akimsalimia Mbogo, "Habari za asubuhi ndugu yangu?"

Mbogo naye angejibu, "Nzuri kaka Simba. Vipi watoto?" Mazungumzo kama haya yangesikika kwa wanyama wengine.

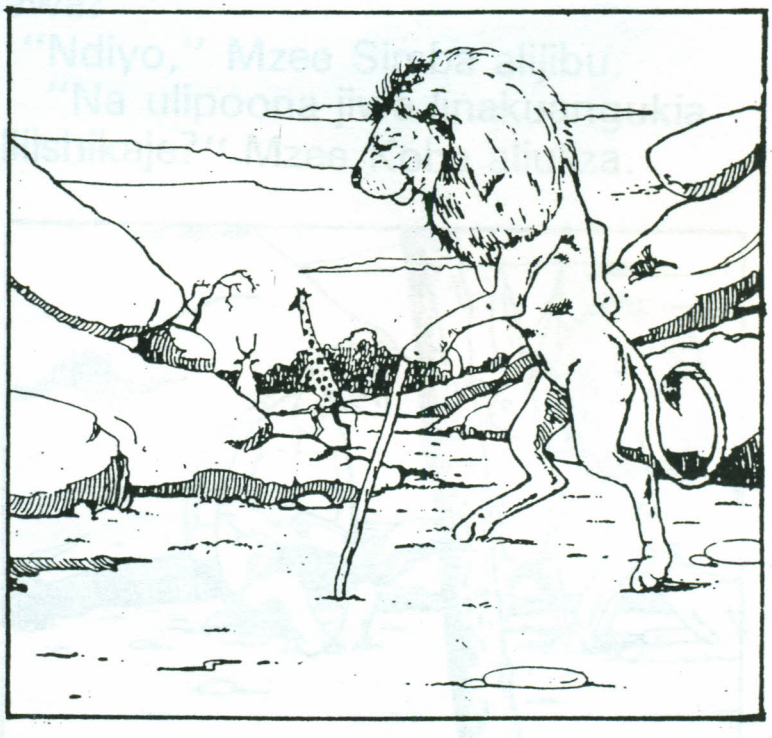

ILLUSTRATION 69

ikipindapinda kama vile msomaji anapotaka kupata uhakika wa maneno anayoyasoma.

Alikuna upara wake tena. Mara alisimama na kusema, "Sheria hapa ni ngumu kidogo. Itabidi tuanze tena maelezo tangu mwanzo. Sasa, Mzee Simba wewe ulikuwa unapita hapa. Sawa?"

"Ndiyo," Mzee Simba alijibu.

"Na ulipoona jiwe linakuangukia ulilishikaje?" Mzee Kobe aliuliza.

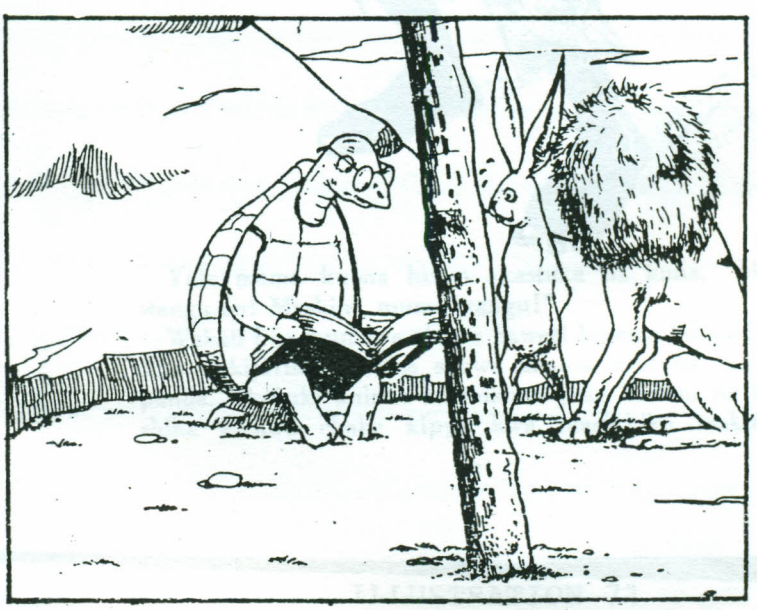

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ILLUSTRATION 70



Yule mama kuona hivyo akastuka na kulia, "Mume wangu oo! Maskini, mume wangu!"

Wakati huo mumewe akawa hawezi kusema kibinadamu. Kila akijaribu kusema akawa anatoa sauti na mlio wa punda. Akabaki kuinua tu mikono yake hewani na kukishika kichwa chake kipya kwa masikitiko makubwa.

8

ILLUSTRATION 71

man with the donkey head could not speak but made donkey noises until the unfortunate situation was reversed by the last wish.

As seen in this section, illustrations enhance characterisation in children's books. We have discussed how children respond to the illustrations in a text and how bad illustrations can confuse child readers and lead to a negative response.

5. 3. Picture Books

In our last two sections we have discussed illustrations which are accompaniments to texts and which help to emphasize and illustrate the written word. Picture books are different in that they constitute the text themselves and may therefore have very brief texts. In these books pictures play such an important role that the text would be incomplete without them. Some of these books especially for the youngest group of children could have a series of pictures without words which nevertheless tell a continuous story. Such books require children to look at the pictures and tell stories in their own words. In other words the pictures themselves are inspired by a strong story-line and as L. H. Smith observes:

> A little child's approach to pictures is first of all a literary one. He expects them to tell the story he cannot read for himself.[7]

Constant encounter with picture books strengthens his imagination and sharpens his level of perception. He is not only able to recognize the objects presented but these experiences help him to develop a sense of observation and sharpens his emotional potential.

Like all other literature for children, the subjects which make up the picture book must be those with which the children are familiar and which bear as close a relationship as possible to the visible world around the child. The idea is to get the child's interest and hold it so that each picture can stimulate observation and encourage the child to turn the page. This is the kind of book which is "read" many times over by the parent to the child or by the child himself.

Since the picture book tells the whole story instead of merely accentuating it, it demands more skill on the part of the illustrator. The details included in the illustration should be such that they help to tell the story in pictures rather than obliterate it. The picture book is not common in Tanzania and therefore not easily available to Tanzanian children. As a result we were not able to test it on children and elicit responses. This dearth of picture books is a situation that calls for a lot of concern since it denies very young children, unfamiliar with words, the chance for imaginative enrichment and development. Our view is that even the youngest readers need to be provided with

books that tell stories in pictures. Acquaintance with picture books will give them the readiness to read more advanced literature. As Betty Coody has noted:

> " pictures play such important roles that the text would be incomplete without them. The favorite picture book of young children are the ones in which the picture carry the story so well that even a pre-reading child can follow along."[8]

Paucity of such books leads the young child to attempt to read the book meant for older children or for adults and when he fails to get much out of it drops it. When this happens often the child loses interest in reading altogether. A picture book could have built up the interest and inculcated the skills required for the reading of the texts.

5. 4. Typography

The validity of our discussion on typography is justified by the fact that children made responses on it as they read the books addressed to them. It would not have received attention in this chapter if those comments were positive ones. The experience in the research field showed that children took for granted any type face that was pleasant but complained when they encountered a text that was difficult or unpleasant to read.

The choice of type faces and fonts used in children's books has often been settled by the publisher and the printer on the assumption that they are aware of what kind of print is appropriate for children's books. Phoebe Mugo, an author of children's books who has had training in editing as well, suggests what kind of print is appropriate for children:

> The type face is usually ordinary letters having no finishing strokes. The fear is that children would find it difficult to read very decorative types of lettering. The size of types is large, rarely smaller than 12 pt. For younger readers it can even be as large as 18 pt.[9]

It is generally accepted as logical that larger sizes of print are desirable for children who are learning to read. Marshall Lee has said that the type faces:

> like people's faces - have distinctive features indicating aspects of character. Some features are quite pronounced, some are very subtle and subject to individual interpretation.[10]

She further suggests factors that influence the readability of a page such as clarity of the characters. Our own observation in the field has shown that children can reject a book on account of the type face used. For instance the children who enjoyed the stories in Sungura Kizimbani complained that the.

"writing is too small and faded in some pages ---."

Responses on other books included comments such as:

> "too much ink was used so that looking at the words
>
> hurts the eyes like black polka dots on a white cloth."

What was of significance to us in this research was the rejection or acceptance of a book on account of print size and physical impression of a page. Our observations have led us to conclude that typography contributes to the overall impression of a book and needs to be pleasant if children are to establish and maintain an interest in reading good literature.

5. .5. Conclusion

In this chapter we have discussed the impact of the illustration on the text especially as it accentuates understanding and internalisation of the story. We have shown how illustrations on the cover and in the book provide the child reader with extra dimensions of the text and enhance his imagination to accommodate the various interpretations of the work.

We have reiterated that attractive books for children are also those which are well illustrated whether in black and white or in colour and argued that it is essential that the text and illustration are in harmony if the work is to appeal to the children. Some artists ruin the works of authors by not responding sensitively to the material at hand to produce aesthetically sound pictures. The result is that the child becomes a victim of two conflicting minds: the mind of the author who conceived the work and the mind of the illustrator who is also an interpreter of the work he is illustrating. The child attempts to reconcile them and if he cannot make sense of the illustrator he may lose interest in the book and look for better things to do. Authors of children's books may not know that most children think that the illustrations are drawn by the author and therefore think of them as the author's own interpretation of the story.

Our discussion and analysis of children's responses have revealed that illustrations highlight important scenes and incidents leaving the text to the reader's imagination, for even the picture story, which is notably absent in Tanzanian children's literature, allows room for the reader's imagination. In this regard the chapter has explored the various ways used by the illustrators to enhance characterisation. We have noted that where human characters were used or animals were personified, the young reader was intrigued by the impression on the faces and especially in the eyes.

Our observations have also shown that in instances where too few illustrations have been used the child reader has wished there were more. The older child, however, has been able to cope with books without pictures as has been evidenced by their appropriation of books which do not have even the cover pictures.

Another aspect that affects readability and invites negative responses from the reader is the typography. In our research we noted that some children were put off or encouraged by the print of the books in the same way as they were influenced by the illustrations. The ultimate response to the book is thus a combination of conscious and unconscious responses to each or some of the aspects discussed in this chapter.

NOTES

1. Mabel Segun in "The Importance of Illustrations in Children's Books" in Mabel Segun, Ed., Illustrating for Children (Ibadan: Children's Literature Association of Nigeria, 1988) p. 26.

2. op cit p.13.

3. Edna Johnson, Evelyn B.Sickles, Francis Clark Sayers, Anthology of Children's Literature, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, Massachusets: The Riverside Press, 1959) p.1135.

4. Maurice Sendak, Quoted in Milliam Hoffman and Eva Samuels: Authors and Illustrations of Children Books: Writings onTheir Lives and Works (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, l972) p. 365. As a young reader, the reseacher enjoyed looking through, reading and smelling new books. The new look and the fresh smell advertised the book, and if the pictures were also attractive the book was read.

5. Joan Cass, Literature and The Young Child, (London: Heinemann, 1973) p. 9.

6. Masheti Mashinjila (Comp.) Reduction of Gender and Cultural Bias in Text Selection for Book Box Loan Scheme, (Nairobi: Kenya Literature Association, 1995) p. 6.

7. H. Smith, The Unreluctant Years (Chicago: Library Association, 1953) p. 110.

8. Betty Coody, Using Literature with Children (Chicago: W.M.C Brown Company Publishers, 1983) p. 5.

9. Phoebe A. Mugo, "Publishing for Children in Kenya" (Dissertation submitted to Oxford Polytechnic) p.26.

10. Marshall Lee, Bookmaking: The Illustrated Guide to Design and Production (New York: R.R Booker Company,1969) p. 18.

CHAPTER 6

SALIENT FEATURES AND TRENDS OF TANZANIAN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

6.0 Introduction

In chapters 4 and 5 we have examined children's responses to written literature and demonstrated the ways in which our interpretations of such responses can indicate children's imaginative and literary preferences and help create an evaluative criteria for judging children's literature. In this chapter we shall make deductions from (the previous) chapters, 2, 3, 4 and 5 to draw out the salient features of content and form that have emerged as characteristic of Tanzanian Children's Literature. We shall mainly highlight those features that appeal to children in order to make general statements about literature for children. It will be appreciated that not any one book can have all the aspects mentioned in this chapter. The aspects we have identified here apply in a general sense to all the literature we have studied and are the facets that help to make children's literature effective and interesting for children.

The second part of this chapter will identify aspects of children's literature that illustrate or suggest general trends and direction of children's literature in Tanzania. There are some observable patterns and pointers that relate to how the past and present predict what could happen. We shall deduce from previous chapters what direction children's literature in Tanzania is likely to take. Observing trends necessarily means looking back at the past but it is also possible to give certain projections for future trends. We shall do this by pointing out some of the aspects of writing that have been ignored.

6.1 Genres

Written literature for children in Tanzania since the colonial period has, as seen in our previous chapters, been dominated by fiction. A few collections of riddles and proverbs exist but, there is a dearth of drama and poetry. Tanzanian children love both drama and poetry and have even been known to create their own. Absence of these two genres explains why children develop a general fear of poetry and drama as they grow up. What has emerged as significant in quantity and quality is fiction which is in circulation in three forms: the oral tale retold in written form, the adopted tale and stories arising from the writer's own imagination.

written tale. In this category we found many works that failed to communicate to the child readers because writers forgot to take into consideration the fact that the oral tale also benefit from live performance. The written reproductions of such tales must make up for the performance aspects by employing other techniques of narration and representation.

The second category of stories are written by authors who recognise the difference between an orally narrated story and a written story. Such authors have taken the liberty to adapt the traditional tale so that it is pleasant to read. They recognise the richness and dynamics of the oral tale and make up for these by employing a language that clearly paints pictures in the mind of the reader. They freely employ structural and stylistic devices drawn from the oral tale that enhance the success of their stories and are not shy of using stereotypical characters or hackneyed motifs if these would enhance the quality of their stories within the written form.

The third type of story is the work of the writer's imagination and is largely realistic. Such are the stories which are not necessarily derived from the well known traditional tale but stem from the writer's selection and recreation of everyday experiences. A good example is Mhimili in The Red Kitenge who presents a realistic story which deliberately avoids any of the traditional stereotypes. Works in this category are mostly family and school adventure stories that address political, religious,

educational or social issues. Sometimes in their concern for these issues they have sacrificed appealing literary qualities that would have enhanced the presentations. In his response to such stories, the Tanzanian child has demonstrated, through the choices he has made, that he prefers and needs realistic stories written in a language and style that would stir and satisfy his imagination. He has demonstrated this need through his appropriation of some of the adult stories.

6.2 New Diversity In Genres

We have observed that the bulk of the existing children's literature is in a few categories of stories. Some categories have hardly been explored in the creation of children's literature. The interest the child has in fantasy, realistic story, historical fiction, sports story, fables, suspense and mystery, as evidenced by the few books he has enjoyed and appropriated may inspire writers to explore these areas.

Tanzanian children have also encountered the dream story in their reading of Alice in Wonderland but, as noted, some readers felt cheated that he main character was only dreaming. This could be explained by the fact that Tanzanian readers of Alice in Wonderland were older (12 - 14 years) than the age-group that enjoys dream fantasies. Both the Kiswahili translation and the English simplified version of the book

were too hard for the six to eight years olds, the age group that is simply captivated by fantasies.

Responses also show that publishers shy away from drama and poetry for fear that these genres will not be marketable. It is beyond the scope of this study to establish whether or not these genres are or can be marketable. The only pointer we have is based on the children's responses to drama and poetry.

During our research we encountered children struggling to read A Taste of Heaven or its Kiwashili translation Aliyeonja Pepo, and Huka. This shows that they have interest in drama as genre. Even though these are basically adult plays, children as young as twelve and thirteen said they had read them. A Taste of Heaven (Aliyeonja Pepo) may have interested them because of the fascinating pictures of the angels and devils as they discuss the fates of two men in two different parts of the world. Huka, on the other hand, has no picture and so what could have attracted the children is the story behind the play. These two examples reveal that children not only need plays but will also read them if given a chance.

Written poetry available to the children of Tanzania includes socio-political subjects touching on comptemporary issues. The child is at home with oral poetry as it has been passed down by his society as part of the traditional lore. Studies in oral

poetry show that the child enjoys traditional poetry and uses it as he grows up. This study also reveals that the oral and even written traditional stories are enhanced by the inclusion of songs. The dynamism of poetry is seen in its popularisation as it addresses contemporary issues both social and political. The enjoyment that children derive from oral literature because of the use of bold word pictures, rhythm, rhyme, repetition and action have so far not been replicated in the meagre gleanings of written poetry. Appeal to poetry is derived from the poet's close association and observation of children with a keen interest to discover what is new to the child.

Some of the things that the adult considers ordinary and mundane are after all what touch the sensibility of the child and inspire wonder and delight. The poem that speaks of colour and excitement is received enthusiastically as in the following oral poem from the coast which has spread widely in the mainland. The modern poet for children needs to borrow from the oral poet whose songs speak of action and excitement as exemplified:

Ukuti ukuti,
Wa mnazi wa mnazi
Ukiingia 'pepo? wa mtetema!

The frond, the frond

Of the coconut palm, of the coconut palm

When it catches a breeze? It trembles.

Here the oral poet's observant eye sees what happens when wind blows against coconut trees. The adult may dismiss this as ordinary but a child can stand for sometime just observing the palm fronds being ruffled by the wind. What is more, he will join his playmates and dance to "Ukuti ukuti" and pretend he is indeed a palm frond.

The Tanzanian child has revealed that he has significant confidence in interpreting the riddle and proverb although he is happier when these genres are wrapped up in a story, as in Methali Zatufundisha books.

The author of Tanzanian children's literature will benefit from considering these genres in order to offer the kind of literature to which children will respond with delight.

6. 3. Plot Patterns

More important to the child reader than the choice of fiction is the story which is determined by the plot employed. The plot, like the skeleton, determines the shape

or pattern of the action in the story. Without a good plot the story loses its power and becomes a narration of incidents. We observed in chapter 2 how, because of the absence of a good plot, Barker's travelogues failed to hold the interest of the readers.

The most common plot pattern in traditional stories which constitutes a significant portion in Tanzania children's literature is the incident story. Some of the stories include incidents which do not take the characters very far from home while others involve adventures that take readers to the never - never - land of make believe. On the whole children enjoy these adventures if they are well plotted like "The Tree That Talked" which we discussed in chapter 3. The girls go out to get firewood but on their way home they are tired so they put their bundles down and sit in the shade of a tree. To the surprise of the girls the tree not only talks but also walks and then runs after them. The incidents that follow are both frightening and magical but they bring the story to that neat conclusion which is so familiar in traditional stories. At the end of the plot the normal situation is restored and one of the girls is married to the tree, now transformed into a handsome man. The story ends when all is well and the couple lives happily ever after.

The reader is at once drawn to such a story since it puts him on the move and takes him on a run for fantastic adventures. Such adventures are also provided by

Sungura Kizimbani where the crafty hare keeps his dupes on their toes as incident after incident instils the reader with a restlessness that compels him to read the stories.

Barbara Kimenye in Sarah and The Boy , a book for the very young reader, employs the same pattern but her story develops into a quest for the boy's mother. Although the mother is not found by the end of the story, Simeon, the protagonist, agrees to stay with Sarah's family until the day of the search for his mother starts. In spite of this unsatisfactory ending the readers enjoy the simple adventures provided by Kimenye's incident plot pattern.

While many of the stories are based on the incident plot pattern, a few revolve around the wish fulfilment plot pattern. This kind of story begins at a point where the protagonist has a strong desire to achieve or get something but the wish has to be fulfilled by somebody or something else not through the protagonist's hard work or ingenuity. The Red Kitenge (Kitenge Chekundu), for example, presents a Pendo who would like to have a red cloth wrapper and does indeed work for it and would have afforded to buy it for herself. When she gets the money there is no wrapper to buy, much to her disappointment. Surprise follows disappointment when her father gives her a wrapper and it is a red one.

Fulfilment of some of the wishes seems to be impossible and can sometimes develop into jokes as in Nyagwaswa's story "Uchaguzi wa Hiari" in Mifano Hai:2 which expresses the wish of a couple who are poor and childless. They need so many different things that when they are given the opportunity to make three choices events take place that make the reader consider the couple down to earth rather than foolish. They get their three wishes but they are wishes that are delivered with humour which is an aspect of style Nyagwaswa employs effectively.

Whatever plot pattern is used, children are more at home with concrete events rather than with the abstract, reflective type of presentations in which the story is used as a vehicle to peddle a lesson or moral. Child readers do not want to be told what to do or not do, as the Darubini series does, but they prefer to be shown what happens, to hear through their minds ear, to taste, and to feel. They prefer and enjoy the stories whose actions unfold naturally and whose language appeals to their senses. The story parts of Mifano Hai are good at dressing up the religious teachings in a simple, creative narrative style.

Children enjoy action and adventure as was revealed by response to stories such as Mwanga's "The Tree That Talked", Sungura Kizimbani, Hadithi Njoo and Kifo Cha Ugenini. Their sense of wonder is touched by adventure that leads them to enchanted land where they encounter magical objects and creatures as in Ndio Maana, Siyo. They

thoroughly enjoy the adventure in which physical action and danger are the chief constituents.

6. 4. Style

The use of language differentiates one writer's work from another and determines whether the work is enjoyable or not. Even when they do not realise it, children are attracted to works which are written in a manner or style that enhances enjoyment. Tanzanian children have enjoyed stories in Hadithi Za Bibi for their simplicity and clarity of language as opposed to Hadithi Za Kiboko Hugo which is sometimes ambiguous in its presentation especially when the writer intends to give his own opinions about the animal character's predicament.

Many of the writers who have lost touch with childhood tend to forget the young child's interest in words that are pleasant when read aloud. This "read-aloud-ability" calls for the choice of words that are exciting and memorable. Even if the book is indeed for silent reading, the child turns the words in his mind and hears them with his inward ears. He will therefore "hear" the strange sounding words that strike him as being out of the ordinary. The nick-names given to Chakufwa, the protagonist of Dunia Ngumu illustrate what we mean. "Muota - meno - ya - juu, and Mleta - kifo - mjini" may be presented as riddles or tongue-twisters to tease the young mind. They

may even be presented as formulae to be learnt, as in Ali Baba And The Forty Thieves where Ali Baba had to learn "Open Sesame", the magic formula for opening the cave. Metusera in The Magic Stone pays with his life for not learning his formula correctly. The child readers' awareness of the power of the spoken word is heightened as he witnesses how Metusera's boat sinks because he is careless with magic words. It is this awareness in magical and sometimes untranslatable words that made one reader comment that Ali Baba Na Majangili Arobaini is not properly "written" (meaning translated) because "Open Sesame" is put as "Fungua Ufuta" as if the sesame in the story is a sesame seed.

Traditional tales are replete with features which enhance interest for the listener. The writer of children's literature has a lot to learn from the oral performer who knows just how much the child enjoys listening to new or strange-sounding words. The child reader also enjoys the types of oral poetry often labelled "nonsense poetry" and "limericks" for the same reasons. After all many children like to read their favourite books aloud to friends, brothers and sisters. The writer of children's books - especially for the younger child - has no choice but appeal to the ear of the reader for maximum effect.

The read-aloudability is particularly important in conversations. Unlike the long, boring, unmodulated speeches of characters in Kukopa Arusi Kulipa Matanga,

the conversations attract young readers when they are clear, precise and natural. For example the reader should be in a position to gauge the mood of the speaker from the tone of his voice as presented by written words. Nyagwaswa's story on the three wishes in Mifano Hai:2 captures the mood of the couple as wish after wish is granted. The reader is able to feel the shock, confusion and sadness of the wife who realises her carelessness in the second wish. The reader sympathizes with her because the wish is fulfilled through the slip of an angry tongue. The cry is even more pathetic as she does not know what to do and can only cry:

"Mume wangu oo! Maskini, mume wangu! (p.8)

"(My husband oo! My poor husband!)"

Conversations, as in Nyagwaswa's story quoted above, that touch the emotions enliven the book and hold the reader's attention.

Writers who know children well realise how effective repetition can be in children's books. In fact repetition seldom tires a young child if it is employed skilfully in poetry or in prose. In chapter two, we pointed out that it is put to good use by writers for young children, and especially in Enormous Turnip and "The Old Woman and Her Pig". In both these stories it is the repetition that gives the lyric quality to the

prose and gives pleasure and enjoyment. Successful use of repetition is witnessed in Mabala's Hamu ya Matamu where Doto is felling mangoes with pieces of wood. The child reader identifies with Doto as she puts her water bucket aside and starts throwing sticks:

Rusha ... kosa

Rusha ... kosa

Rusha ... pata

Doto anakimbia

Anaokota embe

Anaweka ndani ya ndoo

Rusha ... kosa

Rusha ... pata

Anaokota tena na kuificha ndani ya ndoo.

(Throws ... misses

Throws ... misses

Throws ... hits

Doto runs

She picks the mango

She puts it in the bucket.

Throws ... misses

Throws ... hits

She picks it and again hides it in the bucket.)

Repetition is again used to describe the way Doto eats her mangoes:

Anaanza kula embe moja ... mbili ... tatu ... nne

Maembe matamu kweli kweli.

Kila akimaliza embe, anasema basi sili tena.

Anasimama ili aende nyumbani.

Halafu anasema.

Ngoja nitakula moja zaidi

Anakaa tena.

Tano ... sita ... saba.

Anasimama tena.

Lakini maembe matamu kweli.

Anakaa tena.

Nane ... tisa ... kumi.

(She starts to eat one mango, ... two... three... four.

Very sweet mangoes indeed.

Every time she finishes one mango, she says I won't eat

another one.

She stands to go home.

I will eat only one more.

She sits down again.

Five ... Six ... Seven.

She stands again.

But these are very sweet mangoes.

She sits again

Eight ... nine ... ten).

The train of her thoughts and the resulting actions are repeated to depict a very normal child found doing what children like to do -to eat sweet things. Repetition is effective here in bringing out the character of Doto, the sweetness of the mangoes and the passage of time.

Useful as repetition is, especially in books for the very young readers, this devise has hardly been exploited by Tanzanian writers of children's literature except in the repetition of songs in tales.

Another ingredient of good writing, humour, seems to be more consciously employed in writing than repetition. Children, like adults, are attracted to literature that amuses them and reject any that is wholly solemn. The children recognise and respond to humor as they read the books. Part of their enjoyment involves a response to humorous statements and situations. The most common is slapstick humor which is popular in traditional literature. The children enjoy the fun arising from witnessing or experiencing violence especially against the evil characters as in Zimwi Mjini where different types of ogres are destroyed though not necessaryily annihilated. Children delight in slapstick humour even when there is suffering of innocent characters such as the three blind mice whose tails were mercilessly cut off by the farmer's wife with a carving knife.

Humour is sometimes presented through juxtaposition of different characters with regard to size. For example, the hare, a small animal, is often presented as tricking the larger animals, especially the hyena. At other times the juxtaposition is on the behaviour of the characters. A good example is Kukopa Arusi Kulipa Matanga which deals with two characters whose very names Silipideni (I-Never-Pay-Debts) and Siachideni (I-Never-Forgive-Debts) contrast and therefore conflict ensues. The reader watches with interest to see which of the two characters is superior. The positing of opposites brings about incongruity, suggests the ridiculous and heightens conflict. The

most humorous writer, however, cannot achieve much without effective use of language and recharacterisation.

6.5. Language

The literature of the colonial period was largely written in the English language. Attempting to make some of this literature available to the Tanzanian child necessitated translations of the works into Kiswahili. Some of the works from the colonial period include English and Kiswahili titles. The translation centres largely on prose fiction and documentaries. Such prose works include Hadithi Za Robinson Kruso, Elisi Katika Nchi Ya Ajabu, Mtu Mamba, which were published in the colonial period. Recently fresh interest has emerged in favour of translation into Kiswahili bringing out titles such as Paka Na Majogoo, Samaki Mdogo Mweusi, Mashimo ya Mfalme Sulemani, Mzee Na Bahari and Ali Baba na Majangili Arobaini. This translation exercise is a sign of the prominence that Kiswahili has enjoyed over the years. Thus foreign literature could continue to inform the Tanzanian child in a language that is familiar.

The 1980s saw growing interest in the English language after a general outcry from educators who complained that even undergraduate students were unable to handle the English language comfortably. At the University the stop gap was the introduction of a compulsory communication skills course. The curriculum developers,

the teachers and even writers have focused their attention on the English language without neglecting Kiswahili. The result has been among other things, a production of literature in the English language which includes: The Lema Family, Visiting The Serengeti National Park, Parkipuny, Yiluselekwilanga, The Torn Shorts, The Red Kitenge, and Mabala The Farmer.

The focus on the English language has not generated any interest in translation of works from Kiswahili to English. As written works in English language increase with sustained interest in the language, it will not be surprising if works that children have treasured in Kiwahili over the decades are translated into English.

The bulk of the literature written specially for the Tanzanian child is in Kiswahili. This is true especially of those books written since independence during which period Kiswahili was promoted as a national language and the language of instruction in primary schools. Most of the works discussed in this study are therefore Kiswahili works. It is likely that as more children get used to reading literature in English they will demand more and the result may be literature in two languages developing and growing side by side.

6. 6. Characterisation

Tanzanian children, like other young readers all over the world have been attracted by books which portray child characters and especially as protagonists. We have already observed how children were drawn to Baada ya Dhiki Faraja because it has pictures of children in the illustrations of the text even though the book is really for adults. Tanzanian children like to read about other children in order to share in their joys and misfortunes and join them in their adventures. Thus whenever an adult takes over the show in any of the books, there is some loss of interest on the part of the child reader. Invariably adult characters bring into the book adult problems, adult conflicts and even adult speeches. The Tanzanian child searches not only for the child character but also listens to hear the authentic voice of that child character. Most children want to hear a fellow child say as in Kitenge Chekundu:

> "Pendo, joo hapa Pendo. Nataka kukuambia siri. Sitaki wengine wasikie". (p.1)
>
> ("Pendo, come here Pendo. I want to tell you a secret. I don't want others to hear it.")

They can recognise the voice and words of the character in the story. In the following quotation they identify with the little creatures who taunt the hero in Barbara Kimenye's Martha the Millipede:

> Grasshopper chirped, 'Who ever saw a millipede with shoes?'
> Mouse squeaked, 'A millipede with shoes? What a silly idea!'
> And Butterfly fluttered, 'What are these things called shoes?' (p.10)

Martha behaves very much like Florence in Muthoni's Florence the BlueFlamingo who is mocked by other flamingoes for having had her feathers painted blue:

> "Ho, ho, ho, ho, Florence, hee, hee, hee," they roared, "whoever heard of a **BLUE** FLAMINGO?'

The picture of the child character varies from one genre to the other. The child as presented in stories that are adapted from folklore is often defenseless as he grows up in a world that is surrounded by malevolent powers in the form of ogres who may take the deceptive shapes of gourds, yams, handsome men and women. The child is seen needing adult protection and is trained to recognise these ogres and to learn how to avoid them. He is therefore advised by the adults never to stray into forests and uninhabited places, since the way to such places leads to danger that is especially frightening at night. But the child is endowed with curiosity and the spirit of adventure. The prohibition merely whets his appetite for travel and he breaks the prohibition, not out of defiance of adult authority but simply out of the strong urge for adventure. The curiosity is stronger than any threat and in fact the stronger the threat or prohibition, the stronger the curiosity becomes. Immediately he steps into the malevolent world he

becomes the easy prey of the evils that abound in it. Ogres kidnap him and take him to a world that is full of mysteries and fear. The urge to go home becomes very strong, and help miraculously comes to him usually through an adult relative.

It may be noted that adults themselves are no better at observing prohibitions. The malevolence that surrounds human beings is therefore a threat not only to children but also to adults. Children can be excused for yielding to the temptation of stepping into the malevolent world because of their inexperience and their curiosity which is fired by the interdiction. Surprisingly enough adults have not learnt from their own mistakes or even recognise the weaknesses inherent in human beings.

Sometimes the evil is right at home in the form of a stepmother. Whenever we encounter the stepmother and stepchild, we expect a conflict, and the child must suffer at the hands of the stepmother who often acts out of jealousy. The child, however, does not die although he suffers greatly. Such is what happens to the step daughter of "Mwanamke Aliyekuwa na Wivu" in Hadithi Zetu. In such cases the reader takes sides with the child and the stepmother is condemned to destruction. It is possible that more than exaggerate the woman's jealousy, the stories illustrate the strong patrilineal bond. The stories also suggest that there is a power protecting the children, and nature does not allow them to become mere instruments of failure. That the children are not

completely destroyed expresses the society's wish that children live and outlive parents so that they can carry on the line.

The child's innocence and goodness are often exploited. His love and trust are tested and shaken as in Omari's story in Hadithi Za Bibi: Kitabu cha Kwanza where two young friends, antelope and leopard, are taught by their parents their true nature. Mother antelope tells her son to avoid the young leopard lest he is killed, and mother leopard tells her son that his handsome friend with whom he enjoys playing is actually his food. The result is that enmity grows; young antelope avoids his former friend while young leopard hunts for antelope, this time not for play but for food. The adult thus plays a role of directing the natural instincts of the child and with time innocence, trust and love wear thin for these young former friends. The contradiction in this story is that the children become friends because the adult antelope and leopard are friends. Such are the contradictions that even the child reader finds in real life as he grows up among adults.

In stories , the child reader is often reminded that physical strength is surpassed by intelligence or wit. The trickster is normally presented as an admirable but little character, such as the diminutive hare against the ugly, bone-loving hyena in Sungura Kizimbani or gigantic ground-stumping elephant; the squirrel against the majestic king of animals, the lion. In human stories too the younger brother or sister turns out to be

the most intelligent and saves others from destruction. This presentation is significant in that most children will often identify with the small characters if they are presented positively.

Written stories drawn from traditional lore often present fathers as positive characters who must be absent when their children are being tormented by step mothers. Sometimes they are cruel, unreasonable and not in proper control of their homes. The father, however, protects his family from ogres and other evil characters and his presence is always felt though not always seen. The mother on the other hand, is often a practical woman, affectionate, occasionally cruel to her own offspring but definitely brutal to her co-wife's children.

There is a significant preoccupation with old people, especially the grand mother. Every child wishes to grow up as fast as possible, "overtake" his parents in stature and stop looking up to adults. In the following poem, "Questions", Raymond Wilson expresses the sentiments on how it feels to be small:

I often wonder why, Oh why
All grown-ups say to me:
When you are old and six foot high,
What do you want to be?

I sometimes wonder what they'd say

If I should ask them all

What they would like to be, if they

Were six years old and small.[1]

It is not just the size that bothers the character in the poem; he is also anxious to get out of the subservient position he finds himself in. Few children, however, want to be old because they, like adults, know what follows old age. Paradoxically the old, especially grandparents are traditionally the best friends of children. They listen to children, pamper them, tell them delightful stories and play with them. It is with love and respect that children respond to the senior adult's treatment.

In traditional literature, old age is neither overlooked nor played down. Tales, for example, depict the helplessness of old age which demands pity even where the old man or woman is a stranger. Those who help and respect the aged are rewarded, as Nzagi is in Yiluselekwilanga and Namsi in Bi Kizee Msituni, while those who pour scorn on the aged are not rewarded but rather punished as they deserve. In some other stories, old people have superhuman powers which they use malevolently or benevolently depending on those with whom they interact. Endowed with great discernment and wisdom, they have a way of discriminating between good and evil and

often their prime role in these stories is to steer society in the right direction. Their lack of physical strength to perform hard chores does not therefore render them useless members of the society. Some of these stories, however, present paradoxes in their characterisation of the old. An old person sometimes may look weak and helpless but possess a lot of physical strength which may be looked at as magical rather than human. This portrayal is an affirmation of the role of the aged in the society and the respect that is due to them.

Some writers have presented a dignified old age, for example in Asenath Odaga's The Secret of Monkey Rock, our attention is drawn to two old characters, Matene and Patene whose descriptions are in one sense, stereotypical and in other fantastical. We learn of Matene:

> She was very old. He face was wrinkled into furrows and ridges, and her body withered like a wilting maize plant. Her head was with thick grey hair, and her skin was a dull bronzed colour .....
> (p. 18)

and of Patene:

> She noticed the man was as old as Matene, was taller, but he was taller bigger and more handsome in the handsome way of old people; and he too was not in the least bent. He was as straight as an arrow.(p.18.)

Odaga knows that these descriptions will puzzle the reader so through Matene she volunteers an explanation:

> "I am as old as the rock the earth, rivers, lakes, oceans and everything under the sun. This you can believe if you look at my wrinkled face and my withered body. I have reached limits of old age and I am not ageing any more." (p. 19)

The child reader is thus given an opportunity to fantasise about agelessness. He sees dignity in old age rather than mere helplessness and loss of physical beauty.

The interpretations that the child makes on these presentations are important, and they no doubt affect the life of the book and the manner in which it is circulated among children. Unlike adults, children do not entertain mere monuments and celebrations of the past unless these also have relevance and meaning to the here-and-now. As they listen to the stories of long ago, they like to identify with the characters, win battles after difficulties and live happily ever after. The old people are part of the child's reality and must exist in his life, but the child does not need to be reminded in every other book he reads of sickly, ugly, decrepit people crushed by old age.

Co-existing with the presentation of old people as characters in children's fiction is the personification of animal characters. Some animals gossip and chatter with humans, but they behave like animals, and the incidence of intrigue and enmity among them is

based on the recognition that animals prey upon each other. The point, however, is that children recognize these animals as representing humans. On the whole, Tanzanian children do not seem to mind stereotyped characters such as the hare and the hyena in Sungura Kizimbani as long as the characterisation makes these animals sparkle with life.

Unlike western realistic literature for children, there are very few domesticated animals as principal characters in books. Part of the reason, as observed earlier, is that the bulk of Tanzanian literature is based on or developed from oral literature. The positive effect of vivid characterisation is also noted in Ganzel's Jogoo La Shamba where the author unfolds the characters to the extent which the readers recognise them even by sight as evidenced in the following descriptions:

> Mwenyekiti wa Shirika, Mzee Fadhili, alishusha pumzi. Alikuwa mtu mzima, mwembamba na mrefu, aliyevaa kanzu nyeupe, koti nyeupe na kofia nyeupe. (p.3).
>
> (The chairman of the Company, Mzee Fadhili, sighed. He as a tall, thin elderly man, who wore a white robe, white jacket and white cap).

> Katibu wa Shirika, Musa Msekembo, mtu mwembamba asiye na nywele utosini na mwenye miwani usoni, alimtazama mwenyekiti wake akatikisa kichwa (p.4).
>
> The Company Secretary, Musa msekembo, a slim, man without hair on top of his head and wore spectacles, looked at his chairman and shook his head).

in the above brief descriptions the reader visualises the characters and even hears their spoken and unspoken feelings.

As part of the effort to excite children and offer interesting characters, some writers of children's books characterise through choice of names that tell part of the story. In the European traditional tale, Simpleton was the name given to the youngest of three brothers who is thought to be foolish but turns out to be the one who, because of his kindness, is rewarded. In Hadithi Zetu similar reward goes to the boy nicknamed "Mjinga" (Foolish) in Ndungu's story. The author of Mifano Hai series, Nyagwaswa, also uses tags to describe what his characters do for example, "Boi", the young boy who serves the white man and "Mpishi" the cook. The child reader found some of these character tags amusing especially the satirical name given to the slave "Mheshimiwa Mtumwa Mkuu Manyanda" (Honourable Chief Slave Manyanda), and especially in the context of the story in which Manyanda is seen as a foolish adult who refuses his freedom because of the present glory he is enjoying. The very young readers of Mama Haambiliki not only learn the proper pronunciation of the difficult name of the main character but also its meaning. She is simply a woman who never listens to anyone or sees anybody's point of view. She has a big mouth for not only drinking four cups of tea as a guest but also for speaking without stopping.

Characterisation that is skilfully employed enhances the child's interest in reading. The child reader rejects cardboard characters that fail to come alive in children's books but is drawn to a main character that is both interesting and likeable. The main character's problem or goal will concern the reader who identifies with the protagonist. But the reader will only identify with a principal character who is presented positively by the author. Lee Wyndham cautions that authors should:

> Avoid creating a thoroughly unlikable character - an antihero in the main role, regardless of age-group.[2]

The heroes that are not actively involved in the action of the story limit the reader's interest as was the case of Hugo the hippo in Hadithi Za Kiboko Hugo.

Children prefer to identify with characters whose traits are commended by society. They prefer Yasin's bravado in Martha Mlagala's Yasin's Nightmare but not his flouting of authority; they prefer the cleverness and confidence of the hare but not his meanness. Our readers take sides with the small but intelligent animals like the tortoises who defeat their big but stupid dupes.

Depicting life-like characters that are credible to the reader needs to be one of the major tasks of the writers of Tanzanian children's books.

6.7. Title, Story Opening and Ending

Part of the identity of the children's book is in the title which influences or inspires the cover illustration. The title speaks about the story and therefore should arrest and sustain the interest of the reader. Many of them do not seem to worry very much about choice of the title as long as it bears some relevance to the text. They, however, became critical over a title like Hadithi Za Kiboko Hugo when they discover that the book had only one story, not many stories as the title suggest.

In many books containing more than one story, the author normally selects one of the story titles and uses it as the title for the book. It has been observed that the title story often turns out to be more popular probably because of the attention given to it by the author, the double emphasis on the title, or because most people choose a title from their best or even favourite story. It is therefore not surprising to find that children liked the following title stories more than others in the respective collections:

"The Magic Stone" in The Magic Stone and Other Stories,

"The Fly Whisk" in The Fly Whisk and other Stories.

There are some exceptions where the title stories are found to be good stories but not the favourite of those who read them. Such titles include:

Sultan Zuwera and Other Stories,

Yiluselekwilanga and Other Stories,

Parkipuny and the Rhino and other Stories.

Some of the titles are long as in the last three examples given while others are short, for example: Hadithi Zetu, Tabibu Kalulu, Bibi Msemi, Kitenge Chekundu, Hadithi Njoo, and Children's Stories. The length of the title, however, does not seem to influence the selection of the book. The cover and illustration of the book are more decisive.

The title should be more than a name by which the book is known. It should be a significant name which a child is likely to remember. Marion Van Horne suggests that it should do more than attract attention:

> The title of a story, like a sign in a shop window, catches your eye and tells you something about the items on display. If it is a good sign, it does more than attract - it intrigues! It stops you, stirs your interest, and lures you inside.
>
> A good title does the same. It has definite eye-appeal, and it sounds interesting. It sets the mood of the story,

> arouses curiosity, and makes the reader open the covers of the book to find out more.[3]

Thus if the title is to do its job of drawing the child's attention then it needs to be short but memorable. Mama Haambiliki is a good example of a title which is catching, significant and thought-provoking. It teases the reader to work out the reason for its use in the book. Children also find Yiluselekwilanga and Purkipuny interesting because these titles make the reader pause and deliberate on their pronunciation without seeming to be difficult to articulate. Nyani Mtu, especially coupled with the design of the words and the illustration of the woman who is both a monkey and human, creates certain expectations in the minds of the readers. The picture instils a sense of mystery and fear in the reader that compels him to read the book.

Some of the suggestions and associations in titles can easily put off the young reader. For example, a title like Dunia Ngumu may push a reader to look for more cheerful stories. The Magic Stone and Other Stories on the other hand creates an image of the magic stone in the mind of the reader and this in itself compels him to open the book. In the final analysis, however, what matters is the text itself because sometimes children are able to overlook the title and try out the book.

Tanzanian children are not all put off or discouraged by plain titles such as Children's Stories, Hadithi Zetu and Hadithi Za Wahenga. Their acceptance or

rejection of the books depends on how the stories begin in the text itself. Openings are often very critical in arresting and deciding the sustenance of the children's interest. Children enjoy lively openings that catch their attention immediately. They are neither interested in the preachy openings of Nyagwaswa's "Chagua Moja" in Mifano Hai: 1 nor are they interested in prologues or lengthy introductions as in Kukopa Arusi Kulipa Matanga. Few children read such preambles. They either skip them and move on in search of the real story or abandon the book altogether. Mwanga starts his work with what he calls reading readiness exercises which most children skip and go straight to the stories. The effect of starting with anything but the story itself therefore reduces or even kills the interest in the story. A good beginning is the one that instils a kind of urgency in reading the work. To achieve this Lee Wyndham suggests that children's stories "begin immediately"[4] This is what happens, for example, in Kitenge Chekundu, Martha The Millipede and Kisa Cha Paka Kupenda Jikoni. Each of the authors goes straight into the problem facing the protagonist and the issue that emerges is how to solve the problem.

While the opening helps the reader to keep reading, the ending needs to be the type that helps the reader to close the book with a satisfying feeling of achievement or completion. The child knows that even if the promise of the journey and the journey itself are exciting, the journey's end is perhaps more important because after it, he can sit back and evaluate his experience.

The ending, like the beginning, should avoid the peddling, moralising tone that is characteristic of Darubini and Mifano Hai series. Hadithi Za Kiboko Hugo is another case in point where the author presents an epilogue on the future of Hugo. He weighs the pros and cons of possible places that Hugo can live in. Such an ending is a waste of time for child readers because, as was seen during the research, few respondents hardly read this part. The effective ending of a children's book is the one that focuses on the main character and if possible involves him in some action. Some children find the announcement END or MWISHO at the end of the story offensive to their intelligence. On the other hand it can be argued that this is a personal opinion. Our research reveals that some children write MWISHO when they come to the end of their stories. After reading Mbutolwe Mwana wa Umma one girl encountered a bold "Mwisho" at the end of the story and genuinely asked,

"Why should the author write END when

it is clear that the story is finished?"

The endings that are characteristic of children's books are those in which the main character is victorious over his enemies, the evil punished and the good rewarded. Often there is restoration of order and peace. The equivocal endings, as what is noted in Kifo Cha Ugenini, which leave the reader wondering what happens next need to be

avoided in children's literature. The author of Kifo Cha Ugenini can be forgiven since the book was written for adults in the first place. It is the author's prerogative to complete the story for the reader after resolving all the conflicts and disentangling any complications. The ending, however, must avoid giving a sense of hopelessness such as was evidenced in Mbutolwe Mwana Wa Umma where sadness follows the protagonist to the end of the book. This is the kind of ending that Mariam A Mason does not recommend:

> Downbeat endings, are taboo in children's books, because reading for children must be an affirmation of life, a joy, a growth. There can be sadness in the book but never hopelessness.[5]

The child therefore needs to leave the book after an ending that has a sense of completion.

6. 8. Social Values in Children's Literature

Whether realistic or traditional, most of the stories that the Tanzanian child is encountering is set in a rural environment characterised by agricultural and domestic life. Very few stories have exploited the urban setting even though avid readers of children's books are found there.

The setting, however, does not affect the child's choice of the book as long as the story is interesting. This is why even fantasy with its typical never-never-land of magic continues to entertain him. The author addressing the Tanzanian child is increasingly aware of the need to write books which are related to the reader's cultural background. This feature reveals itself in the titles chosen for stories especially drawn from traditional tales. They are described as Grandmother's Stories, Our Stories and Traditional Stories or similar titles.

While many books have been largely entertaining as they inculcate values, some have been more of the didactic type, fulfilling what the writers consider to be the needs of the child. The national party's Darubini series and even Mbutolwe Mwana Wa Umma were written to create political awareness in the readers; while Nyagwaswa's Mifano Hai series preach religious truths especially to adults. Similarly Hadithi Za Kiboko Hugo aim at educating children on how to take care of wild animals. This kind of literature talks down to children.

We admit that a good story must have lasting value. While it sustains the child's sense of wonder and interest it ought to inform without preaching. The dominant themes that the Tanzanian child is encountering have been found to be largely universal, relating to the rise and fall of the fortunes of both good and bad people. A good example is in Nyagwaswa's story, "Kazikwa Angali Hai" where Manyanda is

buried alive with his master. Manyanda's foolish arrogance and insults to his parents are justifiably retributed in unnecessary death. If he had heeded his parents, he would have been safe, but he chose to be the "Chief Slave". Manyanda's fall in fortune is down to earth and the reader can recall a similar situation in real life. Magical happenings, however, bring good fortune or disaster as payment for a deed. Namsi's good fortune in Bibi Kizee Wa Msituni is the result of her encounter with a hideous looking old woman whom she agrees to kiss four times. Sometimes good fortune comes to a character not out of his or her good performance but through an inadvertent sequence of events. The tree in "The Tree that Talked" does not bring disaster to the girl it follows as would be expected of a tree that behaves like an ogre. Instead the tree changes into a handsome young man to whom the girl is married. This does not necessarily contradict the social values which advocate that girls should not marry strangers, but rather suggests that life is full of surprises.

In life bad fortune is as much a possibility as good fortune and perhaps the worst that could happen to any child, other than losing parents in death, is for him to get lost. Children even fantasize about what would happen if they got lost or were away from adult authority and protection. This kind of imagination is what makes them enjoy stories that involve entrapment and getting lost. The fear they feel as they read the experiences of characters in dangerous places constitutes their enjoyment. Children love to read about heroes and follow them on their quests for precious objects

or in their journeys to conquer enemies to maintain just order. Mbumi and Chulu in Wimbo Wa Sokomoko are good examples of heroic child characters who set out on a dangerous mission to look for their mother who had been taken as a slave by the Dutch people during the colonial period. Similarly, Gwake's encounter with Ndosi, the old lady who is famed to be a witch, and his eventual discovery that Ndosi is just a lonely, old woman, demands that the reader of Tanzua engages in fearful adventures.

Over and above teaching that fear is part of the reality of any human being, literature for children, as for adults, seeks to extol the virtues that mankind holds dear. They teach love not only for family members but also for the wider society, suggesting, for instance, that Ndosi in Tanzua deserves love and care, not judgement and estrangement. Gwasi in this case is held up as a good example to the child on how to treat neighbours and strangers. This kind of love and concern should extend to the abandoned children, helpless old people, crippled or ugly human beings and even some wild animals. Loving people in children's stories are rewarded while cruel ones are punished.

Some situations call for forgiveness especially after a confession of misdeed or as a result of the character's magnanimity. While vengeance is recognised as a normal and human part of interactions between people, it is not encouraged in children's literature. In traditional stories, the hare is often fond of revenge but this is viewed as a

flaw rather than something to be emulated. Forgiveness is what is applauded by society because it acknowledges the fact that humans are not infallible. They are worthy of respect and love even when they make mistakes. It is not enough for a person to respect others but he must respect himself too. Such respect does not express itself in pride but acknowledges the fact that certain things cannot change and are best accepted as they are. Such is the lesson that Martha and Florence learn in Martha The Millipede and Florence, The Blue Flamingo respectively.

Children are reminded by stories to be diligent and aspire to work hard for their living. Exploiting other people's labour is anti social and is often discouraged in stories for both children and adults. The greedy are presented in a negative light too. The hyena and his type are often getting into trouble because of their insatiable greed. Such greedy individuals fail to recognise people's needs and just selfishly keep everything to themselves. But society preaches unity among its members, sharing of tasks and proceeds and living peacefully with one another.

The society in most children's stories is often clear on what is right and wrong. The person who steals, for example, is castigated and punished as the young boy, Matiko, in The Torn Shorts. This character suffers embarrassment for he cannot hide the consequences of stealing. He has to explain to the teacher that his shorts got torn when he was stealing oranges. The message is more poignant as it is subtly wrapped

up in such a way that it is not preachy or moralising. It takes some skill to do this while at the same time bringing out the values in a writer's world view. Such quality literature, has the power to influence the reader, for example, teach him to change behaviour or improve attitudes. It also helps to aid in self awareness and understanding. Any national literature will therefore be conscious of decorum and social expectations. Literature for children that is of value will not condone behaviour that is contrary to ethical principles. Even as they read, children slowly absorb the social values which are imparted through literature.

6.9 Appropriation of Adult Literature

In our earlier discussions we have considered books which have been offered to the child as reader and have been rejected by him. Such are the books that are left unread in libraries, schools and homes, suggesting that the child is making a choice against the book. When the same child reaches out for a book that is not offered to him and not only enjoys reading it but also circulates it to his friends, he is in a sense appropriating it and making it a children's book through continued circulation and readership. From our research, especially through the questionnaire in which children stated their favourite books, we have noted the books that children appropriated from the adult. When he appropriates adult literature, the child is setting a standard and demonstrating his interest through his personal selection of books. Children have for

instance appropriated Kifo Cha Ugenini and Jogoo La Shamba among other books whose strength lies in strong story lines. In these books episodes hold the reader's interest and characters sparkle with life and are recognisable. Although the authors employ the omniscient viewpoint the narratives are presented in a straightforward manner, avoiding flashbacks, flashforwards and sub plots. At the same time the characters, their problems and relationships are complex enough to maintain the reader's attention.

Another major attraction of these books and which is reflected in other books appropriated by the children, is that they fall in the category of realistic literature, for example Nyagwaswa's "Mifano Hai" series , Jogoo La Shamba and Wali Wa Ndevu na Hadithi Nyingine. The message that children could be passing on is that the literature they respond to with enjoyment is down-to-earth and deals with contemporary issues. It is the kind of literature that is set in the world that is familiar and has characters who are recognisable and true to life.

These appropriated books also employ a simple language that children can understand. On the other hand Mwanangu Mpoki, a book that is often picked up by children and quickly put down again, fails to communicate to the reader on account of its difficult language. The children find the poems in this book not only difficult to

understand but also boring because the subjects of the poems are outside their experience.

Another reason for the appropriation of the adult book is the style in which the story is told. We find the child appropriating Jogoo La Shamba which tells an exciting adult story, and rejecting Hadithi Za Kiboko Hugo because it lacks an interesting story. The latter book uses multiple view points in the narrative that could be confusing to the reader because of the various authorial interruptions and unnecessary reflections.

The reasons why children have appropriated some adult books is that relevant material suitable to their interests and inclinations are limited. Considerably few books are available to children and some of these are rejected leaving an even limited supply especially for the avid reader. Such a child has no alternative than reach out for some adult books. While reading adult literature may be considered better than not reading anything at all, it is not a satisfying situation since it denies the child the right of exploiting childhood through a literature that is readily relevant, and exciting. In the literature targeted for children he is more at home, solving problems akin to those he faces, meeting characters his age and size and hearing the familiar language of his world.

6.10 Conclusion

Trends in Tanzanian children's literature show the interests and perspectives of the society during its various epochs. The colonial period, for example produced educational documentaries, religious books, as well as literature for pleasure some of which were translations or adaptations of western children's literature. The post independence period begins with an affirmation of the beauty and validity of the African culture by reproducing or adapting a lot of folktales in written form. It is also during this period that Tanzania asserted herself as a political entity by promulgating her ideological stand through literature. A lot of the children's literature of this period reflected this phase by producing literature which has ideology mixed with moral stories. More recent books have begun to consider the interests of the child especially in the 1980's and 1990's. There has been more output of realistic literature for children particularly since 1990. This trend is likely to continue because children are enjoying this kind of literature.

These trends in Tanzania children's literature point to the direction the literature is taking. They may not have evolved in any one calendar month but are part of a literary evolution that is also linked to Tanzanian's history. Moreover, the trends which depict that there have been changes, however gradual, point to the fact that the literature has been dynamic to accommodate changes.There is, therefore, interaction between social change and literary activity.

The trends have been dictated by the subtle combination of children's responses and adults' (writers and publishers) reactions and interpretations of these responses. Consideration for what literature the children will like to read has had a positive impact on writers who have cared to consider the literary needs of the readers. Tanzanian children's literature is still growing and the possible directions of growth are diverse.

The trends have also been influenced by what the adults, especially the publishers, consider to be the market needs. Such needs are influenced by cultural, ideological and other societal dictates of the state. The child only comes last of all to receive or reject what is offered and from then on influences and determines the trends.

Through his responses the child reader has made choices that have began to set and shape the trends. The writer who is sensitive to the child's needs and choices will follow the trend that the reader sets. The reader is important in that as he accepts or rejects a book offered to him he is actually setting a standard and giving pointers with regard to his likes and dislikes. Sometimes he reaches out for something that is not offered to him and appropriates it if he likes it. The Tanzanian children have appropriated some adult literature and it is interesting to discover why this has happened.

NOTES

1. Raymond Wilson, in Poems For Fun selected by Zenka and Ian Woodward, (Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited, 1983) p. 37.

2. Lee Wyndham, Writing For Children And Teenagers, Revised Edition, (Cincinnati, Ohio: Writers Digest, 1968) p. 34.

3. Marion Van Horne, Give Children Wings, (New York: Committee Of World Literacy And Christian LIterature, 1970) p. 22.

4. Lee Wyndham, op. cit. p. 23.

5. Miriam E. Mason, " Big Ideas And Little Words" in The Creative Writer, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978) p. 89.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

In our last six chapters we have subjected to critical literary analysis the written literature that has been available to the Tanzania child from the colonial times to today. We have been guided by the principle that once a book is published it deserves and needs review. Whereas adult literature has received critical attention from within and outside the country, the same cannot be said of children's literature. This absence of critical analysis of and response to children's books is what has called for an urgent investigation, the result of which is this work.

In our exploration of this literature we have recognised the intricate relationship between the writer, the critic and the reading public as they focus their attention on the children's book. We have come to the conclusion that whereas adult patrons have not given it the critical attention it deserves, the children themselves have not ignored it. In their various choices of books and responses to them they offer judgements which should be important to the writer, critic and other adult patrons. We have considered the children's critical judgement as paramount in the entire investigation. We also concede that children's books do not exist in a vacuum but are related to literature as a whole and therefore some of the artistic standards

used to judge adult books are also applied in the analysis of children's books. On the other hand, studies in children's literature reveal that there are some literary aspects and theoretical considerations which are peculiar to this branch of literature. These have been employed in the entire study and specially highlighted in our last four chapters.

The work involves a wide coverage of books in the analysis of the growth and development of children's literature in Tanzania. We deliberate on the question of the enjoyment of literature and concur with the scholars of children's literature who regard enjoyment as vital in any literature whether it is for children or adults (See note 1 and 2). One of the criteria we use in our judgement of books is whether they appeal to and delight the children. We concur with these scholars that the pleasure a child derives from the book arises from a meaningful experience that not only imparts knowledge but also touches the emotions. This means that if he reads a lot of books he will encounter different characters with different emotions, and the experience will help his imagination grow. He will also be more in touch with his world and his sensibilities will be alert. Enjoyable literature, according to Housman has substance:

> ... and good literature continually read for pleasure must, let us hope, do some good to the reader must quicken this perception though dull, and sharpen his discrimination though blunt, and mellow the rawness of his pesonal opinions.[3]

Housman stresses the balance between pleasure and take-home value which the reader gains from reading and indeed it turns out that often the works that children enjoy have both elements. Tanzanian children have instinctively rejected the solemn, preachy, didactic kind of literature while some of the older children have stopped reading altogether because they have encountered too many books that fail to touch their sensibilities.

The critical evaluation we have employed in this work thus depends a great deal on the effect of the literature on the child reader. Children's responses have enabled us to gauge the children's likes, dislikes, attitudes and needs. They have also given illustration to and enhancement of our theoretical and methodological frameworks.

We see children's literature as a field which has been developing and continues to grow in various unique ways. The work considers various aspects of this development and reveals their processes. For example, it has noted the unique interaction between oral literature and written literature, the co-existence between European, Asian, African, East African, and Tanzanian literature; the growth of the Kiswahili language and its usage in children's literature; the operation with the two languages, English and Kiswahili and their mutual complimentarity. These aspects

indicate the various influences in this development and help us to determine the salient features.

During the invetigations we became increasingly aware of the fact that children receive the books they are given but acceptance or rejection of those works is entirely their choice. Some of the rejections are so subtle that the adult patrons will not even notice while the acceptance of what they enjoy is often open and enthusiastic. They are critical, perhaps more critical than adults imagine, even though they may not always have the words with which to express what they feel or what they read. Their acceptance or rejection, excitement or boredom, reading or not reading are important responses which helped us investigate why they respond the way they do. To reiterate this point that children are the best judges of the literature written for them, we consider their responses to the texts and analyse the literary aspects which they are responding to. Similar treatment is given to illustrations where we consider the elements of artwork which influence children's choices.

Further analysis reveals the salient features of Tanzanian literature for children. We explore the literary stylistic aspects that strengthen the works or of which they are deficient and make conclusions which are guided by children's responses.

The work has enabled us to look back on children's experiences with literature in order to map out some directions and trends of the literature in Tanzania. This chapter will go further to recommend directions that may even mean breaking with such trends that have been noted. Our findings, recommendations and conclusions are based upon the experience of Tanzanian children in their exposure to literature written for them and books available to them from East Africa and beyond.

Our work explores the two types of books children read, that is, the books written for child readers and those that are written for adults but have been appropriated by children in the consideration of the development and growth of children's literature. Both these categories are studied using the instrinsic and extrinsic forms of criticism strengthened by not only the child's view but also considering his psychological, literary and cultural needs.

A good literary background for children involves a fruitful encounter with all genres so as to give the readers a rich diversity of approaches and materials. Our findings reveal that the available literature is seriously deficient in poetry and drama, and yet children naturally love both and create poems and plays in their play activities. The Tanzanian child is thus denied the right to encounter and be familiar with all genres of literature in the written form. What is more disturbing is that he is denied poetry and drama, his favourite genres.

Variety should be one of the characteristics of any national children's literature. Such literature recognises the differing interests of readers and caters for them accordingly. Our hypothesis on the dearth of Tanzanian children's literature is proved correct by the investigation. While some children's literature exists it is significantly limited in its presentation through the diverse genres that children like.

The absence of picture books means that the child does not have a healthy entry into the world of literature at an early age. It means that the Tanzanian child's introduction to literature comes later and chances of developing avid readers are minimized. Picture books that tell stories dominated by the pictures but controlled by a strong story-line constitutes the happy introduction to literature. Children may not be aware that they have missed picture books but Tanzanian children pointed out that they liked sports stories.

More difficult to write than sports stories are historical stories and biographies if one is to avoid preaching and talking down to children. But these two genres, if well written will go a long way to build the confidence and pride of the young Tanzanian in his nation. Like the Arthurian legends of the English tradition, such stories will be unforgettable. The English child who encounters King Arthur and his warring factions around the round-table is unlikely to forget the story and therefore

his cultural background. A literary-historical story like Kifo Cha Ugenini succeeds because of its capitalising on a credible setting and believable characters. Above all Kifo Cha Ugenini succeeds where Hadithi Za Kiboko Hugo fails because of the action. Histories and biographies which are well written from a child's viewpoint will be a boon to Tanzanian literature. Such books will interest especially the older children who are interested in heroes and hero worship.

While histories and biographies are more realistic, down-to-earth accounts, the Tanzanian child will also want to read more fantasies that are different from traditional tales particularly science fiction which attracts young people especially if it involves space travel. This branch of fantasy is completely missing in Tanzania as are stories about toys and pets. The idea is to make available to the child the type of experiences that are common-place to him, but in an interesting way. If he has pets or toys, if he sometimes imagines his toys are alive, it is also logical that he meets these as he reads.

Available to the children in greater numbers than any other genres are adapted tales but future trends point more towards the realistic story that is clearly a departure from fantasy in terms of the subjects chosen, the problems that the characters face and solve. The realistic story endears itself to the reader with its sincerity and its down-to-earth exploration of this world and recognition of his feelings as a child.

We have suggested in chapters five and six the skills which interested authors of children's books would need to employ to be effective. The critic too should from this study derive insights into what kind of literature Tanzanian children like to read. Practising writers will concede that writing for children is a difficult task, sometimes more difficult than writing for adults and therefore will prepare themselves with the necessary skills to improve their works. They will realise that the Tanzanian child is looking out for the kind of literature that interprets life, especially comtemporary life, for him. Effective writers will offer him the kind of books that will, like an honest mirror, reflect recognisable physical and emotional landscapes and enable him to grow. In the final analysis, the writer for the Tanzanian child is writing the experiences of the child's environ. The notions of young readers are therefore shaped by their country's culture only if that culture is communicated well in a language that the children understand. Only then will the writer's work have significance in Tanzania and beyond.

Children's literature in Tanzania needs to stand out by itself as a clear branch of literature. Tanzanian children need to know where they belong as they encounter literature that speaks to them in a voice they can understand and which lifts them up, delights and teaches them. Before they can go to the rest of the world they will need a wholesome home diet. We echo Jambyn Dashdondong in his wish for Mongolian

children's literature to differ from children's literature of other countries through its peculiar capacity of describing images and faces of our children's emotional and mental landscape.[4] This is not an impossible task since we acknowledge that any society that has good story-tellers has potentially fine writers; a society that has poets who sing can also write poetry for children. A society that has respect for children and childhood has no alternative but to place in the hands of children the literature they need and deserve. Once this is done, the adult patrons who are also the gate keepers of children's literature will need to move aside and allow the children to enter into the world republic of children and enjoy their literature.

NOTES

NOTES

1. Susan Sontag, Against Interpretation And Other Essays, (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1967) p. 300. As she comments on the use of children's literature, Sontag reiterates that "the purpose is always ultimately, to give pleasure."

2. Isabelle Jan, On Children literature, (London: Allen Lane, 1973) p. 30. Jan insists that "it is the child's enjoyment of a book which gives it its strongest claim to be considered as children's literature." Jan is implying that literature which does not give delight should not qualify to be called children's literature.

3. A. E. Housman, The Name And Nature Of Poetry, (Cambridge: Cambridge Readers Union and Cambridge University Press, 1939) pp. 6-7.

4. Jambyn Dashdondog, Mongolia - Book Writer, in Bookbird Vol. 29 No. 3 (Aabernraa: Forlaget Arnis, 1991) p. 3.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PRIMARY TEXTS

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APPENDIX A: RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Questionnaire For School Children

1. i) Name:.....

   ii) School:.....

   iii) Class:.....

   iv) Date of Birth: .....

2. What books have you enjoyed reading?

   i). .....

   ii). .....

   iii) .....

iv) .....

v) .....

3. Are you a member of the National Library? Yes ( ) No ( )

4. Do you have books at home? Yes ( ) No ( )

5. List your favourite five books from your collection at home library:

a) .....

b) .....

c) .....

d) .....

e) .....

Interview with Teachers and Parents

1. What books are available to children? Is it possible to get a list of the titles?

2. Who chose these titles?

3. Who chooses the books for the Children? (tick whichever is appropriate)

Head teacher	( )
Class teacher	( )
Father	( )
Mother	( )
Elder brother/sister	( )
Child	( )
Other	( )

4. Do the children like all the books?

5. Which are the most popular books?

6. Which are the least popular books?

7. Are there any that are particularly popular with boys?

8. Any particularly popular with girls?

Questionnaires for Library Users

1. Name: .....

2. Date of birth: .....

3. Class: .....

4. What is your favourite library book?

.....

5. How many times have you read it?

.....

6. **Why do you like it?**

.....

.....

.....

7. **Who is your favourite character in any other book?**

.....

.....

8. **Why do you like him/her?**

.....

.....

.....

9. Do you have any story, poem or play you have written?

(If the respondent has written something the research should attempt to get a copy of it. The following questions could then be asked:

a) When did you write this material?.....

b) What made you think about it?

.....

c) Have you heard or read a similar story or poem?

.....

Wanaosomea au Kuazima Vitabu vya Maktaba

1. Jina: .....

2. Mvulana: ..... Msichana .....

3. Tarehe ya kuzaliwa: .....

4. Darasa: .....

5. Mahali unapoishi .....

6. Unaenda Maktaba mara ngapi?

Mara moja kwa wiki .....

Mara mbili kwa wiki .....

Mara moja kwa mwezi .....

7. Taja kitabu ambacho umefurahia sana kutoka maktaba

Umekisoma mara ngapi? .....

Eleza kwa nini umekipenda. .....

.....

.....

8. Unapenda kusoma vitabu vinavyozungumzia mambo gani?

.....

.....

.....

Vitabu Vya Maktaba Ya Shule

1. Orodha ya vitabu vya maktaba ya wanafunzi na kama vimegawanya na kufuatana na madarasa au umri. Tafadhali vipange hivyo hivyo.

2. Kati ya vitabu hivi, ni vipi ambavyo vinapendwa sana na watoto? Tafadhali andika orodha ya vitabu kama kumi (10).

3. Ni vipi ambavyo watoto hawavipendi kabisa?

4. Kuna vitabu ambavyo vinapendwa zaidi na wavulana?

5. Kuna vitabu ambavyo vinapendwa zaidi na wasichana?

6. Kwa ujumla, watoto wanafurahia kusoma?

Criticism Of Books

In the study of the children's literature the following questions will be used to guide in the criticism of each book:

1. Is it meaningful to the child in his mastery or life?

2. Is the subject matter really of the child's sphere of interest?

3. Is the subject matter presented in a way that is manageable andconducive to a meaningful experience?

4. Does the author concentrate on the conflicts that are of the child's world?

5. How are the moral issues handled?

   Is there preaching?

   Is there patronising?

   Does the author make decisions for the reader?

6. What solutions does the author make available for the problems he presents?

7. Is there fallacy? e.g. that all good people do good things and all evil is done by the bad people?

8. Is the author merely throwing a sharp light on how some real people act in particular time and place?

9. Is the author an interpreter of life?

10. How effectively has the language been used?

11. Does fact live in the story? Are there memorable and living characters?

12. Does the writer understand the child's mind?

13. If the story purports to be realistic, does it stand the test of common sense?

14. What is the significance of the book to the child for whom it is intended?

15. Does the book have a good plot?

16. i) Do the children like to read the book aloud?

ii) Is it read aloudable?

17. How is the humour presented? How do the children respond to it?

Do they recognise it?

18. What are the children's response to particular genres?

19. Does the book give the children spontaneous pleasure?

20. How many times has the child read the book?

21. What is the response of adults on the book?

Observation Schedule In the Central Library

1. To note the books available.

2. What books children like to read while in the library

3. What books they choose to borrow. Assess why.

4. What parents choose for their children.

Interview with Mobile Librarians

1. What books do you select for children

2. Do you try to assess children's responses to the books you have selected?

Observation Schedule for Mobile Library

1. Note what books are selected for children.

2. What books are borrowed and which are left.

3. Involvement of librarians and/or teachers in the borrowing exercise.

4. Do the students discuss the books with their teachers or the librarian?

Interview with the Publishers

Prior to the interview acquire their catalogues. Visit the children's literature department.

Also find out the history of each publisher in order to discover their interests. The above to be taken into consideration when asking among other questions:-

1. What problem do you encounter in the children's department e.g.

    a) Do you get suitable manuscripts?

    b) Do you have suitable editors?

    c) Any commercial problems, e.g. is it true that children's books are not bought fast enough?

2. What guidelines do you have for your editors?

3. What priorities do you have in respect of the following genres: novels, short stories, poems, plays for children.

4. Which books have proved popular?

5. Can you assess why these books are popular?

6. Any children's books which are very unpopular? Why?

7. Any books which you have decided not to reprint? Why?

Interview with the Writer (If available)

Enlist information on:

1. How many books published?

2. The writer's experience in having the work published and the nature of the problems encountered?

3. Whether there are any unpublished works?

4. Whether he knows other unpublished authors?

5. Citing titles, ask the author who the intended the readers were.

6. Invite any remarks on children's literature.

Interview with major Booksellers

Before the interview, observations will be made of what books are available in the bookshop.

Further investigation will involve looking into the book orders and deliveries to find out what type of books the bookshop is interested in. Interview questions will include:

1. Do you receive catalogues for the publishers?

2. Do you receive inspection copies of newly published books for the publishers?

3. How do you acquire books from the publishers?

4. How fast do children's books sell?

5. Which are the most popular among the children's books?

6. Are there any children who buy books themselves?

7. Does the bookshop provide any advise on what books to buy or are all the buyers left to choose their own books?

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