



A postcolonial analysis of the Kiswahili detective fiction

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Abstract

This paper attempts a critical examination of the social function of the Kiswahili detective fiction. A way from the traditional view that detective genre deals with the investigation of crime only, this paper argues that the writers of this genre often addresses other social, economic and political realities. For instance, this paper isolates and foregrounds the commitment of Ben Mtobwa as a Swahili detective author, in addressing critical matters of his time. The paper therefore examines the question of postcolonial Africa with a keen eye on the East African post-independence situation. The defining focus of this genre is to investigate a crime with a view to apprehending the culprit, consequently offering some restorative justice to the victim. Though not all detective stories are about commission of a crime, the investigative aspect of the novel supersedes all other generic features. The detective genre of the novel can therefore at times be classified as a subgenre of the crime novel. This study uses the postcolonial theory so as to effectively contextualize those European views about other races, that were responsible for the subjugation of the non-European world during colonization and afterwards. The paper therefore not only tackles economic exploitation, cultural imperialism but also goes ahead to show how African political liberation was replete with covert dangers. Thus we have highlighted the role of the frontline countries in the liberation of Southern Africa countries and the political landmines that such countries had to navigate in their attempt to gain and preserve their independence. The paper draws illustrations from the novels by Ben Mtobwa in this endeavor.

Keywords: postcolonial theory, colonization, neo colonialism, detective fiction, frontline states, Southern Africa

1. Introduction

Postcolonial analysis is ideally both a subject matter and a theoretical perspective for analyzing literary works. As a subject matter, postcolonial criticism analyses literature produced by cultures that developed in response to European subjugation in the formerly colonized countries. As a theoretical framework, postcolonial criticism seeks to understand the political, social, economic and cultural ideologies perpetuated by the colonizers to the colonized. For instance, it seeks to find out the forces that either overtly or covertly enabled the peoples of the colonized cultures to internalize the colonizer's value systems. As a theory, it also analyses the ideologies behind the resistance of the colonizer's cultures and the development of the anticolonial ideologies within the resisting societies.

This paper therefore seeks to utilize these two views of the postcolonial criticism to analyze the Swahili works of Ben Mtobwa. We deliberately chose the detective works by this author as a representative of the detective genre because our preliminary reading of the said works reveals that besides crime and investigation, his works dwell also on the social realities of the post-independence Africa. We posit that both colonial and anticolonial ideologies can be a subject matter of any text and any genre. Therefore though detective fiction is known to have the commission of crime and its investigation as its distinguishing features, it ends up tackling other social, cultural, political and economic issues. For instance, Mohamed Said Abdulla's works which are detective generically, they invariably dwell on other social economic issues such as inheritance, vengeance and social stratification of his society. Elvis Musiba's works too, though detective generically, have effectively addressed the Rwandan crisis by revealing the historical context that

preceded the genocide. This paper is in congruent with Mbutia's views (2005) that features found in one genre can as well be found in other genres. Similar views are shared by Alistair (1982) who contends that the demarcating line between genres is not so clear. Therefore our study taking cognizance of this view goes a step further in separating the detection theme from other pertinent African realities such as the colonial and postcolonial experience.

The study of African literature and history can invariably be carried out from two points of view, namely from the Eurocentricism and Afrocentricism perspectives. Eurocentricism is the altitude among the literary writers and critics that European culture is the yardstick against which all other literatures can be measured. Said (1978) cites such Eurocentric writers as Joseph Conrad (1960) who paints the Africans as a people who had neither culture nor history besides other racial stereotypes. On the other hand, Afrocentricism refers to the approaches that stresses and asserts the aesthetics of African literature. The gist of the argument being that the beauty of any race's literature can only be inferred from the standards of that race or region. To African authors such as Achebe and Ngugi, European standards should not be used to gauge the quality of African literature.

Since postcolonial theory is a subset of theories of international relations (Eyryce, 2012:3), we will examine how post independent African nations have continued to be monitored by the western nations by drawing references from the works of Ben Mtobwa. This paper attempts an exploration of how the Swahili detective fiction reflects Western influence on the internal affairs of independent African countries especially Tanzania. Swahili detective fiction though fairly young, having been introduced in the

1960s by Mohammed Said Abdulla (Gromov, 2008, Mbatiah, 2016) ^[8] has grown rapidly in Tanzania than in other East African countries. Other prominent Swahili detective authors are Faraj Katalambulla, Eddie Gaanzel, John Simbamwenne, Hammie Rajab, Elvis Musiba, Geoffrey Levi and Ben Mtobwa. From the list, only Geoffrey Levi hails from Kenya, the rest are all Tanzanians which is a pointer to the barrenness of the Swahili detective fiction in Kenya and Uganda. We have singled out Mtobwa's works because the other authors mentioned above have stuck to the rules of the genre by laying more emphasis on the crime and the investigation of the said crime with less focus on the historical realities in Africa. However, for Mtobwa, issues of how the post independent Tanzania continued to relate with the Western world are more discernible than merely presenting a story of crime and its investigation. Abdulla, who could be regarded as the father to this genre (Mbatiah, 2016) ^[8], has also highlighted other social economic matters besides crime and investigation which are the hallmarks of a good detective work. For instance issues of inheritance, religion, class struggle, revenge and traditional beliefs are well illuminated. This paper will therefore show how colonialism continues in a neo-colonial mode with different forms where colonial masters are trying to entrench new forms of domination.

1.1 Key Tenets of the postcolonial Theory

Key foundations of this theory can be traced to the works of Edward Said such as *Orientalism* (1978) and *cultural Imperialism* (1993). Said's thesis is that the West has continued to propagate false and misleading image about the Orient or the East. He argues that the Western world has portrayed the people of the East (Orient) as savages, feminine, lazy and inferior against the West's image of superiority, masculinity and civilization. Said contends that colonial discourses were propagated through agents such as poets, explorers, novelists, philosophers, economists, imperial administrators and the media. The main purpose for the continuation of such discourses was to prepare for the military intervention for the advancement of colonial interests against the East or as a justification for occupation. To Said, horrors associated with direct colonization never came to an end but rather such horrors reinvented themselves in the post independent Africa in the forms of chaos, coups, corruption, civil wars and bloodshed as residues of colonization. In the books under review, we note that the author points out the presence of such matters in East and Southern Africa. This paper looks at how chaos and civil wars are engineered from outside the African continent with the objective of toppling governments, as represented in the Swahili detective.

Hamadi (2014:40) argues that the concept of 'Othering' is very critical in this theory. This is a discriminatory process where, according to Said, the Western nations portray the peoples of the East and especially Arabs as irrational, strange, weak and feminized 'other'. This was the basis for the colonization and subsequent postcolonial exploitative tendencies by the Western nations against the nations of the Orient and Africa. Wamitila (2002:167) adds that since the peoples of African origin have suffered in similar ways to the Orientals, then the concept of 'Othering' applies also to the analyses of African postcolonial relations. Said's criticism in *Orientalism* also presents an attack on the elites from the East who have imbibed and internalized the West's

views and ideals especially British and American perceptions of the Arabic culture. Similar views are also found in the works of Gayatri Spivak who in her essay, "Can the Subaltern Speak", blames the academics and other elites for continuing the distorted colonial discourse on the people of the East and the third world subjects. In this paper an attempt will be made to show how the Tanzanian elites especially those in government becomes complicit in 'Othering' their fellow lower class citizens. In the texts under analysis, these elites are portrayed committing conspiracies with the foreigners so as to defraud the country and change the governments through revolutions that are sanctioned by their Western allies.

These elites are portrayed as torn between aping the white man's culture, economic and political dictates and at the same time minding about the affairs of their nations. Postcolonial critics refers to this phenomenon as mimicry. This describes the desire of the colonized individuals to be accepted by the colonizing culture. Therefore most citizens from the colonized cultures imitate their colonizers, as much as possible, in dress, speech, behaviour and lifestyle. Another key tenet closely related to mimicry is the concept of hybridity. This is simply, the practice of a hybrid culture. In *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), Said recognizes the role of the culture in strengthening the colonial ideologies and practices leading to domination. He contends that culture too has the power to prepare the society for opposition and consequently lead to decolonization. As a result, the culture of the colonized people is a manifestation of their remnant culture and that of the colonized. According to Bhabha (1995) this dilemma results to the feeling of being torn between the two cultures. That is, the colonized and the colonizing culture. This cultural displacement accordingly leads to unhomeliness. That is the emergence of citizens who lacks clear cultural identity (to feel not at home even in your own home). Therefore the culture of most postcolonial nations is an hybrid one.

Other important critics whose views have contributed to the development of this theory are Walter Rodney (1973) ^[10], Frantz Fanon (1963) ^[5], and Hommi Bhabha (1994) among many others.

1.2 Discussion and Analysis

In this section we sample out four areas that are under the spotlight as indicators of neocolonialism and postcolonial relations: The frontline countries and the liberation war of Southern Africa, economic exploitation of African resources, both human and economic, cultural imperialism and its attendant effects and finally we tackle the question of the cold war era relations with respect to the emergence of civil wars, insurgency and espionage in independent African states. To support our argument, we will rely on the data from the detective novels of Ben Mtobwa. The author has written over eight novels but in this paper, we will use three of his works, namely; *Salamu Kutoka Kuzimu* (1993), *Tutarudi na Roho Zetu?* (1993) and *Najisikia Kuua Tena* (1993), all originally published in 1984. The three titles can loosely be translated as, *A Message from the Paradise, Shall We Return Safe? And I Feel like Killing Again*.

1.2.1 The Frontline Countries and the Liberation of Southern Africa

Evans (1984:2) tells us that Frontline countries were a diplomatic coalition of independent Southern Africa

countries committed to the liberation of Southern Africa states. He argues that the original goal of this grouping was to manage the Zimbabwe-Rhodesian crisis. Its original members being Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia at its formation in 1976. This proposition is supported by Kanduza (2004:9) ^[6]. He says that initially, it began as an informal organization of key Black States in Southern Africa, who sought to have a coordinated response to the racist rule in the region, with the first meeting in Lusaka, 1974. Zimbabwe became its sixth member on attainment of independence. This grouping also became the force behind the formation of SADCC (Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference) in 1979 through the Arusha declaration. The key objective being to promote economic liberation for Southern Africa states and reduce economic dependency on Pretoria. Besides, the grouping of these states also helped to counter CONSAS (Constellation of South African States). South Africa wanted to promote CONSAS as a tool for achieving it economic, political and security objectives. Thus SADCC, a pro frontline states block and CONSAS, a pro South African block became the new battle grounds. The Tanzanian president, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere became the front-line chairman by consensus and this partly explains why Tanzania played a bigger role in the anti-apartheid campaign. Thus the Tanzania's foreign policy inspired by the Nyerere's philosophy of pan-Africanism forced the Tanzanian government to be deeply enmeshed in Southern African affairs.

OAU's liberation committee headquartered in Tanzania is also another reason for the Tanzania's central role in the activities of Southern African region. The committee was to spearhead political freedom not only in South Africa but also in other Southern African countries such as Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The committee thus participated in organizing training guerillas besides giving financial and logistical aid. Increased activity and strength by such nations threatened South Africa's attempt at expansion and domination in the Southern African region. Pretoria had to devise ways of dealing with this new sub continental security and economic order posed by a more united SADCC members. As Evans (ibid) argues, to maintain and propagate dominance, South Africa's rule resulted to fuelling dissidence, sabotage and economic chaos in the frontline countries during 1980s. Mtobwa in his works sheds light on how South Africa infiltrated certain frontline nations with a view to sabotage their economies and thus sustain dependency. This was mostly done through destruction of key installations such as central banks, airports and key government stores. The following excerpt extracted from *Tutarudi na Roho Zetu? (Shall we Return Save?)* Puts this into perspective:

Mpango Kabambe wa kuifanya Africa itupigie magoti. Taarifa hii ni siri kubwa miongoni mwa watu wachache sanawa ngazi za juu katika serikali yetu. Ni taarifa ya mafanikio ya jaribio lililofanyika muda mrefu, baina ya wanasayansi wetu na waliotoka katika nchi marafiki duniani, juu ya kufanya nguvu zakinuklia zitusaidie katika kuwaweka Waafrika na ikiwezekana dunia nzima katika kwato zetu...Mtu wetu alitumwa Lagos kutega gololi maalum anabazo baada ya kufyatuliwa zimeifanya setilaiti iliyotupwa angani kuachia bomba la moto mkali ambao umeteketeza uwanja na watu kadhaa. Jaribio la pili lilifanywa huko Harare ambako maghala yaliteketea. Jaribio la tatu na la mwisho linakusudiwa kufanywa Tanzania

katika jengo la Benki kuu. Baada ya jaribio hili ndipo tutaanzisha mpango wa kuzifanya nchi zote zinazojiita msitari wa mbele kutupigia magoti. (uk. 89-90)

(A Plan to make Africa kneel down before Us. This information is a classified secret known only to a few top government officials. It is about the success of our scientists in collaboration with those from friendly countries. It is on the possibility of using nuclear weapons to bring Africa and if possible the entire world to our toes. We have specialized instruments and a satellite in the space. Besides, our agent is in Lagos and has attached some explosive devices on the satellite located in that country's airspace and has already unleashed fire which burnt the airport and several people. The second experimentation has been made in Harare where several government stores have been brought down. The third and final blow will be done in Tanzania where our target will be the central bank building. All these steps are to make the so called frontline countries kneel down before us) pg 89-90

From this excerpt, we see concerted efforts by the South African minority rule to subjugate and control the regional geopolitics through the use of all manner of tactics. Economic subjugation as seen above is made manifest through attacks on key security installations such as airports, central banks and government stores. This was in pursuit of South Africa's policy of regional destabilization. Through this policy, South Africa Launched military incursions in Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique and supported rebel groups to topple governments in Mozambique and Angola. This historical evaluation of the international relations of the Southern Africa countries provides a glimpse into the nature of the tensions that existed between Southern Africa nations chiefly because of the economic emancipation provided by their trade within SADCC. While South Africa wanted the Frontline countries to thrive on dependency, on their part, these countries wanted to be economically free from Pretoria. As Evans (1984:3) noted, the success of SADCC in unifying the frontline states to the detriment of South Africa's wishes, created actual confrontations. He explains that one such conflict happened between 1979-1980 leading to humiliation of South Africa as an economic giant. This was after Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980 and joined SADCC instead of CONSAS which was fronted by South Africa.

As a citizen of Tanzania during such times, Mtobwa is alive to these postcolonial relations, as documented in his works (most of his novels were written in 1984). Therefore though Mtobwa's works belong to the detective fiction genre per se, the author goes out of his way to address some of the key historical contexts in which he wrote his novels. This is why from the above analysis, we can see the social realities that shaped Southern Africa's countries in 1970s and 1980s. The racist government in South Africa was hell bent on creating an expansive political and economic empire and dominance in the Southern Africa region. This can be equated to what Europe was doing to the rest of the African continent through colonization. Rodney (1976) ^[10] in his seminal work, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, is cognizant of this fact when he argues that Europe was inclined on creating a dependency syndrome among the least developed countries for easier exploitation. He argues that to ensure the foreigner's success in their capitalistic intentions; they set up puppet governments in Africa that would sing to the

tune of their masters. From the above excerpt, we see the attempt by the Apartheid regime to change the regimes in some frontline countries as a way of silencing them. Thus it may be argued that South Africa was attempting to recolonize some of the Southern Africa states who had just emerged from the shackles of British rule such as Zambia, Tanzania, Malawi and Zimbabwe. Angola and Mozambique who had also emerged from the Portuguese rule also fell under the same fate.

1.2.2 Political and Economic Imperialism

Postcolonial critics, historians, political scientists and economists agree that economic exploitation was the engine that run and sustained colonialism. Therefore natural and human resources from Africa, India, Latin America and other colonized regions were abrogated to develop Europe. That is why Fanon (1963:56)^[5] harshly criticizes Europe for being responsible for the underdevelopment in Africa. He rightly argues that Europe's opulence is scandalous for it is founded on slavery, the sweat of the Arabs, Indians, Negroes and the yellow races.

Thus under the veil of civilization which was done through evangelization and enticement through the provision of basic services, the colonialists entrenched their rule and engaged in massive exploitation of African labour and natural resources. For instance the Whites in South Africa dominated the mining sector and thrived on exploitation of the poor Africans, often through poor pay and long working hours. Rodney (ibid) agrees with this view by stressing that the employer under colonialism paid an extremely small wage usually insufficient to keep the worker physically fit. In the novel, *Tutarudi na Roho Zetu? (Shall we Return Safe?)* Mtobwa shows how mine workers suffered in the hands of a mine owner, father to Von Iron, but who was ironically saved by the blacks from a collapsing gold mine. The author says:

Babake Von Iron alikuwa na mgodi wa dhahabu na watumizi wengi waliokuwa wakifanya kazi humo. Walikuwa wakilipwa ujira hafifu mno kiasi cha kuwafanya washindwe kumudu maisha jambo ambalo hakuna aliyeonekana kulijali hata ikajengeka katika fikra za Von kwamba mtu mweusi ni chomba cha mtu mweupe ambacho hakina haki wala thamani. (uk.129)

(Von Iron's father had a gold mine where he had many black workers who were paid so little that they lived in squalor, yet nobody seemed to care about their situation. This made Von Iron to conclude that the black man is an object to be used by the white, somebody with no rights or values).pg 129

As can be observed from this excerpt, it is evident that Africa's natural resources such as minerals and human capital were used to develop the white man's economies. The whites often used the racial stereotypes to justify their subjugation. Von Iron for instance sees the blacks as objects to be used at will by the colonizer. At another instance, we see the same character, Von Iron, scorning at his father for marrying a black woman. The narrator in the same novel reveals to us his thinking thus:

Baba yake alikuwa ameona nini katika nywele kavu, ngozi nyeusi na sura ya kusikitisha ya yule msichana wa Kiafrika. Wana nini watu hawa. Labda ingebidi apate mmoja ili aonje...Lakini mtu mweusi...hapana. (*Tutarudi na Roho Zetu? Uk 10*)

(What had his father seen in these hard haired, black

skinned, ugly African woman? What are these blacks up to? May be he should taste one of them...But a black? Never). (Shall we Return Safe.pg 10).

The concept of 'Othering' as postulated by Spivak and further expounded by Said (1993) is made manifest in this extract. According to these critics, the whites have portrayed the blacks, Arabs and Indians as people with no cultural values and even lacking in values and this sets the basis upon which racial bigotry would be justified. For example it was unfathomable for the Whites to marry the Blacks as evidenced through the vile words and shock expressed by Von Iron from the novel, *Tutarudi na Roho Zetu? (Shall we Return Safe?)*. Von was disgusted by his father's action of marrying a black girl, whose father had rescued him from a mine. This portrayal is reminiscent with the racial relations in South Africa. From this novel, Von Iron is seen using language that is replete with racial epithets which indicates his perspective towards the blacks.

Mtobwa seems to be also at loggerheads with the international media for spreading this false image about the African. The media is therefore also complicit in social 'othering' advocated by the Western countries. For instance, the key private detective in Mtobwa's works. Joram Kiango, buys a newspaper while in London and he is baffled by how the headlines portray the black as evil. In the novel *Tutarudi na Roho Zetu?* one headline screams "Kati yao hakuna aliye mwaminifu"uk.74 (*There is none of them who can be Trusted*) pg.74, while still in another newspaper the headline was, "Watu weusi wanaishi wanavyotaka hapa London baada ya kufanya maovu huko kwao, wako wachoyo, wahujumu, wazembe na wanafiki" (*The blacks are roaming freely in the streets of London after committing abominations in their countries, they are selfish, saboteurs, lazy and hypocritical. pg 74*). A closer analysis of these descriptions reveals that the same narratives used by the colonialists are still at play in postcolonial times but away from the eyes of the formerly colonized people. That is, the people in the colonizing countries have a pessimistic view of the formerly colonized peoples. In South Africa for instance, the Whites promoted violence in the neighboring countries so as to portray the blacks as unable to be trusted with leadership and therefore that the black majority rule could not work in South Africa (Chikane, 1986:6). The above description also marries well with what Said in *Orientalism* (1993) says is the West's view of the Arabs and other colonized peoples. In *Orientalism* (43) for instance, Said contends that the media was critical in spreading the false images about the colonized people where they were portrayed as savages, lazy, weak, irrational and feminized 'other' contrasted with the rational, familiar, strong and masculine West. To him, the West fabricated this image about the Orient as a preface and reinforcement to the imperial rule over the Orient.

In the books under analysis, the international media is biased in its coverage as it spreads false and alarmist images about Africa and in the process scaring investors. The media therefore advances the interests of the neocolonialists. From the novel *Tutarudi na Roho Zetu? (Shall we Return Safe)* the author poses:

Baada ya kuzitawala na kuzinyonya sana nchi zetu za Kiafrika, na baada ya kutoa uhuru shingo upande, Uingereza iliendelea kijifanya baba na mama wa makoloni yake. Falsafa hii ndio chanzo cha visaada kadha wa kadha. Eti Uingereza ndio mtaalam wa habari zinazhusu iliyokuwa

himaya yake. Na habari hizo ni zile ambazo si nzuri; Kushindwa, rushwa, udikteta, uzembe na kadhalika. uk.73. (After colonizing most of these African countries and granting them independence unwillingly, British still considers itself a mother and a father to them. She too assumes the role of a communication expert on all former empire. Her media only communicates the negative information from the colonies: Corruption, failure, dictatorship and laziness)

The mass media acts as agents of political hegemony by dictating to their mother countries how to relate with the former colonies. Said (1993) captures these media prejudices aptly when he hints that the culturally stereotyped images of the Orient still permeate the Western media, academia and political circles. Such negative publicity serves to undermine the economies of third world countries by painting them as corrupt so as to dissuade foreign investors from such nations.

Double colonization as a key tenet of the postcolonial theory is also evident from the above excerpt. According to the proponents of this theory, especially Spivak, women from the colonized countries have suffered double colonization first as victims of colonization just like their male counterparts and also have suffered from the patriarchal ideologies which devalues them because of their sex. This is mostly revealed in the above extract through the words of Von Iron who sees women as sex tools. As the books under analysis falls under the detective category which often involves commission of crimes such as murder, we observe many women getting killed by their male accomplices. There are hordes of others who are used as sex objects by criminals in various towns mentioned as the plot unfolds, others physically abused in the process of being forced to cooperate with the criminals. All this points to the prevalent double colonization.

Concerning political sabotage and interference, various tools such as propaganda and espionage have been used to cause insurgency, civil wars and even revolutions in formerly colonized countries. During cold war, such tactics were used to cause regime changes based on the political and economic ideologies of communism and capitalism. Thus some nations experienced civil strife due to these forces. For instance, Shamuyirira (1998) mentions that in Angola, Soviet Union and Cuba sided with MPLA over the rival movements of UNITA. MPLA had used Russian weaponry and Cuban military training. Though espionage is a common aspect of detective fiction, if used in the contexts of international relations it is an indicator of the tensions brought about by the forces of capitalism and communism during the cold war. From Mtobwa's works, we see foreign spies using top government officials as their agents. With funding from the Western nations, such elites collude with foreign saboteurs to cause a revolution hoping to set up new governments with foreign assistance. We see one such sinister maneuvers between top government officials and foreigners in the novel, *Najisikia Kuua Tena (I Intend to Kill Again)* as shown in the following excerpt:

Kwame hakuwa Kwame bali Joe Kileo, mwakilishi wa kampuni moja kubwa ya kijasusi kutoka nchi za Magharibi. Kampuni ambayo ilikuwa ikiendesha shughuli nyingi na hatari katika nchi ndogo na kubwa kuhujumu tawala na uchumi ili zielekee upande wanaotaka kwa manufaa yao na nchi zao. Shirika hilo licha ya kumlipa Kwame fedha nyingi za kigeni, ndilo lililompa mtaji mnene ambao aliutumia

kufungua kampuni. Haja yao kubwa haikuwa faida wala huduma kwa jamii, bali ilikuwa kupata fursa nzuri ya kuwawezesha kukutana na watu wao waliojifanya watalii ili kuingiza silaha, madawa hatari na vitu vingine ambavyo vingetumiwa siku za usoni. uk. 34-45. (Kwame had now changed his name to Joe Kileo, a local agent to one Western spy organization. This organization conducted many dangerous activities in both small and big countries with a view to dictate the political and economic directions to their own benefit. Their goal is not on service delivery or profit but rather to get an opportunity to smuggle in arms, drugs and other items which they would use in future. This would often be done through their citizens who come disguised as tourists. Pg.34-35)

As can be noted from the above excerpt, Western countries are bent on controlling African countries through the back doors usually through conspiring with a few local elites. Often, the final objective is to cause a revolution which is preceded by a host of other steps. For instance, such elites are assisted to set up companies (as in the example of Kwame mentioned above) and then dubious methods such as the use of tourists are used to bring in weapons for eventual toppling of the governments through a civil war, a coup or a revolution. In return, Western nations benefit by getting opportunities for illegal mining, getting money for military trainings and testing of dangerous arms. The new African elite is portrayed as one with insatiable greed and so eager to sell his country to the Western bidders. Mtobwa restates this point further in another novel, *Salamu Kutoka Kuzimu (A Message from Paradise)* (1984) where the elites once more are seen working with the Western powers to smuggle products such as bhang and black marketeering in minerals. Proceeds from these economic crimes are used to purchase homes and other properties in foreign countries. However part of it is used to start companies locally but registered using pseudonyms and proxies. Such elites also conspire with the Western nations to assassinate the current leaders so that the foreigners can install their own puppet presidents and governments that will be controlled from abroad. The author describes them as:

Kuna yule kabla ya kuingia bunge alifanya biashara ya magendo ya madini na bangi nje ya nchi. Tayari amenunua nyumba ughaibuni na kuanzisha kampuni hapa kwa jina la mtu mwingine... Mwingine ni yule anayeza siri kwa mashirika ya kijasusi huko nje ya nchi. Wao humlipa pesa nyingi na wamemuhidi hifadhi ya kisiasa endapo lolote lingetukia. Kuna huyu aliyekuwa kiungo muhimu katika kifo cha kiongozi shupavu aliyonekana kauawa na majahili wa nj. (Salamu Kutoka Kuzimu. Uk. 64). (There is one who before he became a member of parliament, was engaged in smuggling bhang and minerals out of the country. He has already bought a house abroad and set up a company but registered under proxies. Another one is an agent of an international spy organization. He is paid well and has been promised political asylum in case his activities are known. There is still another one who was linked to the murder of his opponent in collaboration with foreign mercenaries). (A Message from the Paradise...uk.64)

The above extract shows that the problems affecting African nations are both internal and external. While the external problem can be attributed to the former colonial masters and other outside forces, Mtobwa shows that the internal problems emanate from the greed and corruption of the leaders. Some are engaged in illegal trade thereby denying

their nations income through taxation. Spivak (1995) has similar views though expressed from the Indian society's perspective. She opines that the Western discourse has highly distorted the image of the formerly colonized people because of the perspectives of the elites who are the informants of the Western intellectuals.

The colonial imperialists used the policy of divide and rule as a tool for easy administration. They in the process caused conflicts between tribes so as to minimize resistance and discourage transnational unity. As mentioned earlier in this paper, the Southern African countries through the economic block, SADDCC, posed a threat to the Apartheid rule in South Africa. From the texts under analysis, it is clear that the Tanzanian policy of Ujamaa (socialism) sent fears to the colonialists on the possibility of African unity. The colonialists learnt though belatedly that economic freedom may spell doom for their rule in South Africa and therefore every attempt was made to delay independence to the Southern Africa nations besides dissuading them from accepting the Tanzanian model of communism. From the novel, *Najisikia Kuuu Tena* (1984), (*I Feel like I can Kill Again*) we see this illustration:

Inafahamika wazi kuwa nchi hii ni kama nuru ambayo Afrika nzima inafuata. Ukombozi wa nchi zote za Kusini ambazo zilikuwa hazijapata uhuru wake na zinazoendelea kuupata umetokana na msimamo wa nchi hii. Baya zaidi ni uhuru wa kiuchumi ambao nchi hii mapambano. Mara itakapojimarisha kiuchumi chini ya siasa ya ujamaa, nchi zote zitaona nuru mpya na kuifuata. Hilo litaleta muungano wa Afrika. Hatutaki mambo hayo yatokee leo wala kesho. Uk.66.(It is known that this country is the light of Africa. The liberation of all the Southern Africa nations that are independent and those that are still fighting for independence has been greatly due to this country's political stand. The worst bit is the economic freedom that this country continues to advocate. Other countries may emulate it and therefore this may bring African unity. We don't want this economic freedom to happen any time soon). Pg.66).

From this context, it is apparent that the economic freedom that Mwalimu Julius Nyerere envisaged for Tanzania under Ujamaa was seen by outsiders as a threat to the perpetuation of economic dependency syndrome which the government of South Africa would have wished to promote. As we have argued before, weak economies for other Southern Africa states such as Namibia and Angola would have been beneficial for the Apartheid South Africa, in its attempt to achieve regional political expansion and influence. Therefore, the author has aptly captured the social, economic and political reality in post-independence Africa. As we can infer, he is alluding to the tensions that existed between the Western and the Eastern Block during the cold war era. Some members of SADDCC such as Tanzania, Angola and Mozambique gravitated towards communism and this created tension between them and the capitalist South Africa.

1.2.3 Cultural Imperialism

Lunga (1997) examines African postcolonial experiences with a special focus on the language and cultures where she ventures on the debate of whether the colonized peoples of Africa can use the languages of the colonizers without reinscribing their own colonization and consequently losing their own identity. She points out that postcolonial identity is full of confusion, indecisiveness and weakness. She

quotes African writer and critic Chikwenye Okonjo (1996) who proposed the sanitization of English as a way of rescuing its African users from the imperial past. Okonjo says that as a language of imperialism, English is potentially disabling to the African. For instance, it alienates him from his own culture. On the other hand, the use of English can be liberating for the Africans. She for instance claims that English allows the Africans to challenge and expose colonialism and racism.

In *culture and imperialism* (1993), Said dwells on the interwoven connection between culture and the success of colonization. He argues that the imperial enterprise was strengthened by the European culture often through literature. This was one of the ways of entrenching Eurocentricism as an ideology. Thus Eurocentricism was spread through the school system. The elites from such school systems tried to imitate their colonizers in speech, dress, behaviour and lifestyle. This was mostly an attempt to gain acceptance in the class of the civilized. Spivak (ibid) refers to this phenomenon as mimicry. This refers to the desire of the colonized to be accepted by the colonizing cultures and the shame experienced by the colonized people regarding their own culture which they were programmed to see as inferior. In the works under the analysis, we see cultural imperialism through the lifestyles of Africans as evidenced by foreign language use, dress and obsession with foreign things. In the novel, *Salamu Kutoka Kuzimu* (*A Message from the Paradise*), Neema Idd is a character who is portrayed as one who lacks a clear cultural identity due to her love for foreign styles of dresses. The author tells us, "Lilikwa gauni la kitambaa chepesi ambacho ni dhahiri kilitoka nje ya Afrika Mashariki"...uk.15.(Her dress was made of a light linen which was evidently a product from outside East Africa) pg.15. Joram is also described as carrying a 'suitcase' which contained his clothes and a short gun (.pg.33), a pointer of the Africans' obsession with Western lifestyles.

The author is also critical of Africans' over glorification of Western urban life, they ape the West's urban life and are very happy to visit such cities as London and New York. We also see this habit among the African rulers who buy houses in the capital cities of their former colonial masters' countries and also educate their children in such countries. In *Tutarudi Na Roho Zetu*, (Shall we Return Safe?), the author quotes one Briton as saying, "When a man is tired of London then he is tired of life for in London there is all that life can afford". This glorification of foreign cities as so enticing has lured African elites to practice certain aspects of Western culture such as feeding habits, music, religion and dressing. Some Africans have valued this narrative to the extent of despising their cities. Joram Kiango leaves Dar es Salaam for instance, with his girlfriend, Nuru and visits London and other British cities to sample the taste of the good city life. Their observation of London life is in tandem with the above expression by a Briton. The narrator describes their experience as:

"Kwanza walipenda kuona mto unaogawa London, Thames, kisha walizunguka miji ya Kingstone, Bromley, Croyon wakiona mambo tofauti tofauti katika mitaa ya Oxford, Kingsway, Dean na Sheftbery. Usiku ulpoingia walienda katika jumba la Her Majesty kutazama michezo ya kuigiza..uk70.(On arrival in London, they first wanted to see Thames river which divides the London city. Then they visited the the cities of Kingstone, Bromley, Croyon sight-

seeing different things in the streets of Oxford, Kingsway, Dean and Sheffbery. At night, they went to watch a play at Her Majesty's Hall. Pg 70)

As Said and Fanon (ibid) agrees the process of colonization especially through the cultural imperialism was so intense that Africans internalized their inferiority and appreciated the superiority of the British culture. In the former British colonies such as Tanzania, British system of education was used to inculcate the British culture. This results in what Bhabha (ibid) called unhomeliness. He says this is the habit of feeling not at home even in your own home, emanating from cultural crisis. From the above excerpt for instance, we see Joram Kiango and his girlfriend Nuru valuing the British culture than their own Tanzanian life. They are therefore caught between cultures; belonging to neither the Tanzanian nor the British. The love for the Western lifestyles is also evident further in another novel, *Salamu Kutoka Kuzimu (A Message from the Paradise)*, where the key detective Joram Kiango and his girlfriend Waridi plans to visit several cities to enjoy Western life. The narrator says: *Toka hapo tutaenda zetu London na New York, tukatumie au unasemaje? Uk.23. (From there we shall travel to London or New York and spend our money there. How do you see that? (Pg.23.)).* Though most detective works utilize urban setting as a key structural feature, we still take this as an aspect of cultural imperialism. Why didn't the concerned characters visit African cities for instance? Therefore this was partly in compliance with the conventions of the detective genre and partly as an indicator of lack of identity among the colonized societies as argued by the postcolonial theory.

Apart from the obsession with the Western urban life and Western material things, there is also linguistic imperialism. This can be seen through the characters' use of foreign speech and the naming of places and things by the use of English. In *Salamu Kutoka Kuzimu*, the narrator says "Kama lile bomu la atomic alilopiga Mwamerika lililowaua maelfu kule Hiroshima. Uk.52. (The effect will be like that atomic bomb that was dropped in Hiroshima by the Americans. This was an analogy of what would happen to the frontline countries if they continued to advocate for removal of white minority rule in South Africa. That is, they would be hit hard for their stand. This allusion points to the historical reality where the minority White rule in South Africa threatened the opponents of its rule. On learning about this secret, the narrator says, "Kombora alifoka kwa lugha ya kigeni, it can't be true" (The police inspector Kombora retorted, it can't be true). There are too, a number of proper nouns especially names of places, whose usage reminds people of colonization. In *Najisikia Kuua Tena (I Feel like I can Kill Again)*, the narrator says this of Joram Kiango's activities, "Miguu ilimuongoza hadi Coffee Bar chini ya Telephone House. Uk.14. (His feet took him to the Coffee bar near the Telephone House.pg.14). Miguu ikamchukua tena hadi British Libraray na baadaye alielekea baharini akiendea hoteli ya New Africa. uk.15. (His feet took him again to the British Library and thereafter to the New Africa Hotel).pg.15.

All these cultural relics points to the fact that neocolonialism is very much in practice in post-independence African states. As Ngugi (1986) points out, economic and political control of the people would not have been possible and complete without the cultural control. Racism was also used to strengthen cultural imperialism as

Africans were programmed through the education system, to view their lives from the European perspectives. As Ngugi (ibid) insists, the entire way of looking at the world, even their (Africans) immediate environment was Eurocentric. In *Tutarudi na Roho Zetu? (Shall we Return Safe?)*, the author illuminates some of the altitudes of the Europeans towards the blacks, which were used to malign and stereotype and weaken the colonized for easy colonization. The narrator says, "Nywele fupi ni dalili ya akili ndogo. Bila hekima na uongozi wa mtu mweupe, Afrika ingekuwa bado gizani na endapo mtu mweupe ataondoka, giza litarudi...uk.104. (Short hair is indicative of little brains. Without the leadership of the White man, Africa would still be in darkness. If they (Africans) expel the white man, darkness will return.pg 104. This was said in reference to the black man's attempt to uproot the white man's rule in South Africa and elsewhere. The above excerpt vividly reflects Joseph Conrad's views in the *Heart of Darkness* (1960) where he opines that Africa has no history whatsoever.

1.3 Conclusion

Though Mtobwa's works largely belong to the detective genre of the novel, the social, political and economic matters issues feature prominently in his works. Thus though this paper isolates and discusses only the lingering matter of neocolonialism and postcolonial relations, his social novel, *Nyuma ya Pazia (Behind the Curtains)* tackles extensively the political machinations of political parties and politicians during election periods in Tanzania. This paper has tried to illuminate Mtobwa's approach to the Postcolonial relations of the 70s and 80s between Western countries and African countries on one hand and between South Africa and the Frontline countries on the other. From the analysis it has been made manifest that there existed frosty relationships between the Frontline countries and the White minority rule of South Africa. Tanzania being a leading country in the liberation war of Southern Africa suffered the most atrocities as evidenced by numerous killings of key political figures, espionage, economic sabotage, threats and propagation of propaganda reminiscent of cold war relations. Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe too suffered economic sabotage through the South Africa's destabilization policy. The author has also revealed the role played by Western countries in instigating coups and civil unrests in independent African countries often with selfish motives.

Cultural imperialism has also been shown to have impacted so negatively on the lives of the formerly colonized societies. The formerly colonized people are shown to have embraced aspects of Western culture such as dress, speech, gadgets and western-like urban lifestyles. The result of this change has been the death of African cultural identity and the subsequent emergence of a hybrid culture. Hybridity as an outgrowth of colonialism is shown to have been perpetuated by African elites who just like the colonizers are portrayed as busy amassing wealth by any means including conspiring with the foreign forces and through corruption. Though most detective fictions use urban centres as a key pillar of setting, we have seen that the books under analysis utilize both the urban and rural setting. However, the author's mention of Western cities such as London and New York is indicative of neo-colonialism. The presence of characters and especially the key detective, Joram Kiango, modelled on the basis of Western detective writers such as

Sir Conan Doyle and Allan Poe shows that the author, Mtobwa, has read and has been affected by the Western style of writing the detective fiction. His portrayal of events, characters and general plot development is also indicative of the influence through western movies, a type of cultural globalization.

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