

**SOCIO-CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC RESURGENCE IN SELECTED
POST-MILLENNIAL SHORT STORIES IN EAST AFRICA**

OMONDI HILLARY OWINO

**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Master of Arts in Literature of
Chuka University**

CHUKA UNIVERSITY

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DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS


Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has not been submitted for the award of a degree in any University or institution.

Signature  Date 12/10/2023
Omondi Hillary Owino
AM10/35731/18

Recommendations

This research has been examined, passed and submitted with our approval as University supervisors.

Signature  Date 12/10/2023
Dr. Antony Mukasa
Chuka University

Signature  Date 12/10/2023
Prof. Colomba Muriungi
Chuka University



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DEDICATION

My beloved parents, brothers and sisters

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ABSTRACT

The short story form has been in existence in the African literary scene since the pre-colonial times when it was mainly in the oral form. With the inception of writing and publishing, many short stories have been published often covering issues addressed by novelists. The short story form has gained prominence especially in the 21st Century where writers tend to pick convenient issues in the society. However, little criticism has been done on these stories as many literary critics tend to focus on the novel, drama, poetry and oral literature. This study interrogates the short story form written by emerging writers from East Africa. It examines the socio-cultural and economic resurgence in selected short stories produced after the year 2000 to explore how the 21st Century writers are sensitive to issues affecting their society and how they attempt to propose societal transformation through literature. The study is guided by two objectives: firstly, to examine how the short story writers utilize style to reveal socio-cultural and economic resurgence in the selected post 2000 short stories of East Africa and secondly, to evaluate how the selected short stories engage with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in order to analyze the extent to which these narratives respond to the historical epoch that birthed them. The study relies on Post-colonial and Narratology theories of literature to analyze the short stories. Post-colonial theory as espoused by Homi Bhaba helps to demonstrate what the texts reveal about the need to transform the society's knowledge and understanding on cross-cultural relations as well as highlighting how the MDGs influenced the socio-cultural and economic status of East African region. The theory further helps in examining how cultural differences, race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, cultural beliefs, and customs interact to form one unit and the effects of the resultant cultures. Narratology, on the other hand, helps to investigate how the selected short story writers utilize literary techniques to uncover the socio-cultural and economic transformation of the society in chapter 4 and 5. The study adopts a qualitative research design and close textual reading of the short stories sampled on the basis that they uncover the socio-cultural and economic resurgence and they were produced by emergent authors after 2000. Data collected is interpreted according to the objectives of the study and compiled in chapters 4 and 5 of the study. Findings of the study are that the emergent post millennial short story writers have used style creatively to reveal the socio-cultural and economic resurgence in East Africa, and they have infused the content of MDGs as themes in their creative works. Chapter Four shows that the selected works have portrayed that the artistic nature of a text works together with the content to give meaning thus supporting the argument that form and content are inseparable. Chapter 5 demonstrates that the writers under study capture issues affecting the society around them including the demands of the Millennium Development Goals that make the texts fit within the historical epoch of their production thus confirming that literature, history and the society are interlinked. The study shows that short stories can be used for religious, philosophical, economic and cultural reawakening. This study therefore makes a critical contribution to knowledge on the nexus between literature and society.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIDs	:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARV	:	Antiretroviral
DRC	:	Democratic Republic of Congo
EA	:	East Africa
HIV	:	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus
MA	:	Masters of Arts
MDGs	:	Millennium Development Goals
MPhil	:	Master of Philosophy
PhD	:	Doctor of Philosophy
TB	:	Tuberculosis
TZ	:	Tanzania
UG	:	Uganda
UK	:	United Kingdom
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	:	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WHO	:	World Health Organization
YAs	:	Young Adults

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Resurgence is one of the primary functions of literature which critics interrogate in works of art. It is the ability of literature materials to make a people understand their nature of existence and reconfigure their basic beliefs to illuminate their cultural, religious and social values that in turn molds and guides their behaviour and actions. Apart from reflecting the reality in the society, literature creates awareness and makes people rethink their cultural practices with a view to changing for better. Writers are, therefore, seen as seers and visionaries in the society in that they stand out in their mission to raise the consciousness of the society and direct it towards socio-political and economic development. For instance, Adebambo (2008) states that a writer does not only write to entertain but also to create possible ways of solving humans' myriad challenges. Adebambo adds that committed literature strives to achieve a transformed society as it calls for progress.

This study examines how the five selected writers use literature to reawake their society in the 21st Century. It is therefore important to understand their background information in order to be able to review and analyze the presentation of their narratives.

Adelina Mbekomize was born in Tanzania but raised in Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Kenya. Defining herself as an African nomad, her first fictional short story, 'The Stone Baby,' weaves in cultures and beliefs from different parts of the world. It reveals the life of a young lady living with a disease in Africa at a time when the continent grapples with science, spirituality and traditions. Having lived in different countries of Africa makes her works part of the selection. She has interacted with a number of African cultures.

Yvonne Adhiambo Owuor was born in Kenya in 1968. She studied English at Kenyatta University then went for a Masters of Art in TV/Video development at Reading University and later took a Masters of Philosophy (Mphil) in creative writing in Australia and lived in Brisbane, Australia. Her story 'Weight of Whispers' won the Caine Prize for African Writing in 2003. 'Weight of Whispers' is a short story about a

Rwandan royal family struggling to flee the Rwandan Civil War that led to 1994 genocide. The unproductive struggle to make way through Kenya to Europe reveals the vulnerable and miserable difficulties that the once ruling family undergoes in exile as stateless asylum seekers.

Goro Wa Kamau was born and lives in Kenya. He did his undergraduate studies at the University of Nairobi and holds a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in literature from Egerton University. His work, *Ghost and the Fortune Hunter*, won CODE's Burt Literary Awards in 2016. Most of his works are children and young adult literature hence the settling on his Short Story 'When the Sun Goes Down.' The story reveals how the victims of HIV/AIDs suffer stigmatization in the society. It revolves around a couple living with AIDs and struggling to gain their neighbours' acceptance.

Makena Onjerika is a Kenyan writer who studied economics at Amherst College, USA and later did Masters of Fine Arts in Creative writing in New York University. Her story, 'Fanta Blackcurrant,' won the Caine Prize for African Writing in 2018. The story is about Meri, an orphan girl who lives in Nairobi as a street child together with other homeless girls. She is beautiful, smart and struggles for a better life as a juvenile beggar. Tough city life later forces her into prostitution, violence, substance abuse and unplanned pregnancy.

Crystal Rutangye is a Ugandan writer with 'Legal Alien' as her first publication. She did her Master of Art in Publishing Studies at The University of Stirling in the UK in 2015. She is one of the very few emerging writers in Uganda. Her story 'Legal Alien' is about unidentified protagonist who is faced with language barrier in her native home.

There is an intricate relationship touching on literature, history and the society. Maina (2018) states that literary texts are created in specific historical epochs which shape them and which they respond and speak to. The current study highlights how the period of operation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) shaped the production of literary materials by analyzing short stories produced after 2000.

Despite the fact that the MDGs went defunct in 2015, their relevance is still pertinent in literature because literature and history are intertwined. According to Klimkova (2015), literature is not only a medium that reflects the social reality, but also a creative process conditioned by historical social forces and pressures. The study of MDGs is, therefore, pegged on the assumption that literature is a historical phenomenon. It is a creative reflection of, and a reaction to, the political, economic and social environments in which it was produced. Different literary elements are shaped with the occurrences within the historical epochs.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted during a United Nations Conference - the “2000 Millennium Summit” - which took place in New York in 2000. Out of 189 UN Member States that adopted the “Millennium Declaration, 147 Heads of States signed it into operation. MDGs are international objectives that were agreed upon to foster a commitment to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity. Furthermore, they were meant to free the world from extreme poverty by creating an environment conducive to development. The Declaration resolved to put in place actions that would lead to striking enhancements in the human conditions by 2015. The Eight (8) MDGs became the world’s greatest promise to the world’s most vulnerable people.

A reading of literary genres from different parts of the world reveals that writers strive to transform their societies through their creative productions. In the works of world renowned writers like Charles Dickens, poets like William Wordsworth and playwrights like Henrik Ibsen, several issues of human reawakening are exposed. For instance, Charles Dickens exposes ills of industrialization in the Victorian era in his works *Christmas Carol*, *Great Expectations* and *Hard Times*. Wordsworth, in his poems, creates an ecological consciousness to protect the natural environment (Zhang, 2017) while Henrik Ibsen in his play, *A Doll’s House* reawakens the patriarchal society on gender roles. (Charan, 2020). All the foregoing works depict writers as societal consciences.

Some of the studies done on the world literature, especially the short story genre published before 2000, also highlight areas of resurgence as at that time. For instance,

Leo Tolstoy in his three short stories: ‘God Sees the Truth but Wait,’ ‘Three Questions’ and ‘What Men Live by,’ reveals how literature can be used as a tool to achieve social consciousness as these stories depict that the value of human life relies on how much they are aware of their environment and that this awareness is an important component of human survival (Alkayeed, 2019). Kusuma (2019) in her study of J.K Rowling’s *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*, demonstrates that literature is an important tool for shaping the psychological and social development of children as it stimulates their imaginations and creates awareness of the world around them. Perumal and Natarajan (2018) posit that the Short stories of Langston Hughes contributed significantly to the resurgence of the black community during the Harlem renaissance; that Langston sounded the wakeup call to the black American society to stand up to the struggle to achieve their much needed freedom and rights.

In the African continent, different genres of literary works (drama, novels, and poems) have also created awareness on different issues in different periods. In the pre-colonial Africa, oral literature was used as the main tool for the dissemination and preservation of culture. It was utilized to create awareness among the youths and sensitize them on their responsibility to live a morally upright life for the continuity of the society (Odaga, 2010). Any time the young generation was seen to go against the expectations, oral literature was used to correct and warn them in order to create a society with responsible adults who could fit in and ensure conformity to the established societal norms.

During the colonial period, Europeans subjected Africans to different inhuman acts such as forced labour, land alienation, floggings, rape, among other social ills. According to Nunn (2008), before colonialism, Europeans and Arabs had indulged in slave trade that led to slackening of African unity, cultural bonds and trade. The witnessing of colonial atrocities gave rise to poets and novelists such as Casey Hayford, Chinua Achebe, Ferdinand Oyono, Mongo Beti and Ngugi wa Thiongo, who wrote against the ills of colonization. For instance, Mongo Beti expresses the role of Christian missionaries in paving way for colonialism in his novel, *The Poor Christ of Bomba*. Chinua Achebe in *Things Fall Apart* explores how colonialism supplanted African civilizations. Southern Africa poets like Denis Brutus and Agostino Neto also express their concern on brutality and oppression meted against the colonized people by the

colonial powers. In East Africa, Ngugi expresses his dissatisfaction with colonialism. In *Weep not Child* and *A Grain of Wheat*, for example, Ngugi illuminates the involvement of Africans in the fight against colonialists and the torture that came with it, leading to deaths of people. Ebrahim Hussein in his play, *Kinjeketile (1970)*, reveals the encounter and great conflict between the German colonial administration and the natives in Tanzania as the locals struggled to forge a national consciousness.

The mentioned writers create awareness among the people with the hope that readers would rise and fight for a society unshackled with oppression, racism, religious segregation and other forms of discrimination. These works of art awakened African's spirit of resistance through different fronts: battle fields, strikes and demonstrations. Thus, the revolutionary actions aided the attainment of independence in many colonized states. Ekpong (2011) shows that Ama Ata Aidoo's collection of Short Stories: *No Sweetness Here and other stories* and *The Girl Who Can and Other Stories* portray the participation of women in the decolonization process and their struggle for liberation from the shackles of a patriarchal society. Jomo Kenyatta's short story, 'The Gentlemen of the Jungle' depicts how colonialists tricked Africans into welcoming them into the continent only to be thrown out of their lands as whites took control of African resources. Africans then had to take the costly steps to rescue themselves from European invasion (Owusu 2019). Ilan Ossendryver in his collection of *Short Stories of Apartheid* also depicts the ugly side of apartheid in South Africa during the colonial rule.

After independence, many African states faced new ills such as neocolonialism, which brought about frustrations and disillusionment on the hopes that Africans had on their new leaders. Different writers emerged to express their dissatisfaction with the turn of events at independence, thus sensitizing the masses on poor governance and neo-colonialism. In this way, post-colonial writers in Africa took to writing as the best possible tool to express their experiences about independence and the leadership styles that their new leaders adopted. They narrated the state of events immediately after independence and decades later as they underscored their reformist visions for the independent states. For instance, Ousmane Sembene in *God's Bits of the Woods* uncovers the poor working conditions with low salaries in Senegal, West Africa. In A

Man of the People, Achebe too engages with political betrayal by the very leaders trusted with public resources in Nigeria. This is brought out through the imagined lives of Odili Samalu and Chief M.A. Nanga. In East Africa, Ngugi wa Thiongo in his novel, *Devil on the Cross* (1982) demonstrates the wide rift between the haves and the have nots. Wariinga has to fight against many personal betrayals she experiences because she is poor. She is betrayed by lovers, employers and seducers but tries her best to maintain her self-respect and independence. Wariinga's experiences demonstrate how the poor are misused by the rich in post-colonial Kenya, although Ngugi proposes a revolutionary approach to the state of affairs when Wariinga shoots the old man from Ngorika – the rich sugar daddy – at the end of the novel.

Most literary works produced in the post independent African Nations rallied a revolt that consisted of both the peasants and the proletariats against the middle class, who Frantz Fanon (1952) refers to as petty bourgeoisie. According to Banik (2016), Ngugi's *Petals of Blood* (1977) inspires national consciousness among the peasants through the imagined lives of Nyakinyua, Karega and Munira who rally the people of Ilmorog against the oppressive regime represented by Mzigo and Chui. The purpose for this conflict is to overthrow the existing oppressive regime and replace it with an all-inclusive government. David Mulwa proposes a break of class barriers in the society in his play *Redemption* through Pastor Manela who takes over the leadership of the Church of Old Traditions and brings everybody on board including Kitaka - the outcast and an excommunicated member of the church. To create a new consciousness in the church, Manela outdoes the status quo that Bishop Muthemba had created. His Sermon, "thou shall not kill" (p.67) re-awakens the congregation on the many ways through which the society destroys hopes and lives of their fellow human beings.

Decades after independence, many African independent states are suffering myriad problems socially, politically, or economically thus, intensifying the need to re-evaluate the state of Africa in this post-independence dispensation. The emerging state of many African countries calls for a review on African socio-cultural issues. Writers like Lesly Nneka Arimah (Nigeria), Brian Chikwava (Zimbabwe), NoViolet Bulawayo (Zimbabwe), among others rose to fill this gap. In the East African context, this urge to re-narrate the state of the nation has produced postmillennial writers like the ones under

this study. Their artistic works address issues affecting the society, decades after independence, such as civil strife, the plight of African migrants, stigmatization of HIV victims and the plight of the downtrodden in the society. Most of the studies done on such post millennial literary works concentrate on novels and plays, and thus this study finds the need to examine these issues from the short story perspective.

Different scholars in East Africa have examined the socio-political and economic functions of different genres of literature. For instance, in novels, Maina (2018) examines how popular fiction engages with history and its role in enlightening the masses. Maina analyses how two popular fiction novels, *Three Days on the Cross* by Wahome Mutahi and *Black Gold of Chepkube* by Wamugunda Geteria, are based on historical events in Kenya. Through the study, Maina demonstrates that both Wahome Mutahi's *Three Days on the Cross* and Wamugunda Geteria's *Black Gold of Chepkube* disseminate knowledge and enlightens the society about the history of Kenya including the Kenya's political debates of the 1990s. Maina concludes that viewing popular fiction as an inferior piece of art on the perception that it escapes from social and political concerns of the society has no basis. Since popular fiction writes history from the perspective of the masses, Maina opines that there is need to reevaluate attitudes towards popular fiction which often blind readers. Like popular fiction, the present study interrogates how the post – millennial short stories speak about Socio-cultural and economic benefit to the society that produces and consumes them.

In poetry, Amatashe (1979) explores the social function of poetry in underdeveloped societies of East Africa. His thesis examines poetry by prominent East African poets in order to determine the extent to which they understand various social contradictions in the society. Amatashe notes that some poets are much more concerned with the form of poetry for their own personal satisfaction than the content of their work, forgetting that a committed poet is the one who strives to portray a clear picture of his society during his time. He goes ahead to state that East African poets seem to have two options: either to create poems that have the desires of the majority in the society at their core or poems that are private and isolated. Amatashe argues that poets should not look at form and content as separate entities if they wish to achieve a meaningful communication. This study also strives to explore the extent to which form and content

work together to achieve socio-cultural and economic reawakening through short story genre.

In drama, Njugi (2010) examines the cultural celebration in Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's plays: *I Will Marry When I Want* and *Mother Sing To Me*. The study deals with highlighting how the Gikuyu cultural forms are presented in the selected plays and explores the past struggles of the community including the endorsement of freedom fighters and portrayal of land as a show of masculinity which was a core belief of their life. The study comes to a conclusion that the two plays acknowledge some Gikuyu cultural practices while critiquing those that do not fit in the contemporary society. Whereas Njugi's study focuses on drama, this study contributes further on the studies done on social aspects explicated in literature by looking at short story genre which is under studied.

Studies done on novels, plays and poems, often set in the years preceding the year 2000, also focused on the rising city life and the challenges that came with it, betrayal and disillusionment, political instability and tribal clashes as social ills. Since the short story has recently gained prominence especially in the Kenyan context, the current study helps to explore modern concerns embedded in the genre.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Literary writers in Africa have used different genres of art to reflect, critique and guide actions in the society at different points of history. Apart from entertaining and preserving culture, works of art have a role in creating awareness among the audience and proposing action in the society. Concerning criticism, the pre-colonial, colonial and pre-millennium texts in Africa have received significant literary attention which the post millennial texts, especially short stories, have not received. Most studies in Africa tend to focus on canonical writers in Africa and their contributions to the political and economic developments in the society. This study, therefore, examines the socio-cultural and economic resurgence in selected post millennium short stories in East Africa in order to find out the kind of society that upcoming writers are yearning for, thus revealing the major concerns of short stories written in the 21st century. The study

contributes to the existing reservoir of literary studies in East Africa; and in addition, gives variety to the existing literary analysis.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate how the writers of the selected post -2000 short stories in East Africa propose to achieve the socio-cultural and economic resurgence in the society.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- i. To examine how the selected short story writers, utilize style to reveal socio-cultural and economic resurgence in short stories published after the year 2000 in East Africa.
- ii. To evaluate the extent to which writers of the selected short stories borrow thematic concerns from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

1.5 Research Questions

The study intends to answer the following questions:

- i. How do the selected short story writers utilize style to reveal socio-cultural and economic resurgence in short stories published after the year 2000 in East Africa?
- ii. To what extent do the selected short stories produced in the Post-millennial era adopt thematic concerns from Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)?

1.6 Justification of the Study

Different writers in East Africa have utilized different styles to create artistic works to describe the diverse social, cultural, historical, political and economic issues that have shaped or affected the society in different epochs. Some literary texts act as a canvas to understand the Pre-Independent East Africa as it was before colonialism, others describe the variety of experiences that the east Africans went through during colonialism while others portray the postcolonial East Africa, with keen interest on the rise of neocolonialism, capitalism, imperialism and corruption. The specific historical periods in which works of art appear shape them as they tackle issues related to the

periods in question. This study is significant in that it explores how historical occurrences of the 21st century shape the narratives in the selected short stories thus buttressing the idea that literature is influenced by historical epochs. Furthermore, Studies have been conducted on novels and drama as genres that have grappled with socio-political re-awakening but little has been done on short stories in East Africa which calls for a need to examine this sub-genre. This study further contributes to the growing study on the relationship between form and content in literary works.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study mainly restricted itself to five selected short stories: ‘When the Sun Goes Down’ (2012) by Goro Wa Kamau, ‘Weight of Whispers’ (2003) by Yvonne Adhiambo, ‘Fanta Blackcurrant’ (2019) by Onjerika Makena (Kenya), ‘The Stone Baby’ (2016) by Adelina Mbekomize (TZ) and ‘Legal Alien’ (2013) by Crystal Rutangye (UG) representing publications from the older East African countries (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania) by emerging post-millennial writers.

The study focused on how narrative techniques are used in the selected short stories to expose socio-cultural and economic issues in the narratives. It examined how form is essential in giving meaning to the texts and enhancing the authors’ vision of the society within the confines of narratology and Post-Colonial Literary theory.

Since literature not only entertains but also directs the society towards changing its worldview, the study dwelt on examining how the selected short stories writers propose ways of making society better. In an attempt to establish the relevance of the selected short stories to their historical epoch, the study explored the extent to which the short stories borrow from the Millennium Development Goals number one, two, five and six. The focus was on the four selected goals because they have had notable thematic influence on the selected short stories.

1.8 Definition of Terms

- Awakening:** The act of making a people aware of things, occasions, events or a phenomenon in their environment.
- Canonical Writers:** It is used to refer to writers whose works of literature appeared before 2000 which are considered 'serious literature' and have been extensively studied. Also includes works published by the well-established writers in the post millennium, excluding the pop literature writers.
- Contemporary:** It is used to refer to the events taking place in the post – millennial society.
- Pre-Millennial:** It is used to mean all works of art published before the year 2000 by the pioneer writers. Including the world literatures.
- Post-Millennial:** It is used to mean the short stories produced in Africa between the year 2000 to the year 2015 by the emerging authors; it does not include the canonical writers.
- Resurgence:** It is used interchangeably with reawakening to mean an act of making a people rethink their social, cultural and economic practices towards the better.
- World Literature:** It is used to mean literatures produced by the rest of the world excluding those from Africa.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 History and Development of Short Stories

The meaning of the short story has taken different definitions that no single definition can be considered definite. Sen (2017) defines a short story as a fictional prose that outlines a unique fragment of life against the setting of a single incident; and deals with few characters to achieve its sharp and concise effect at the end. Sen concurs with Mahdi (2014) that despite the variety of definitions attributed to the short story genre, some similarities are evident and are worth noting. Some of the similarities are that none of the definitions has a prescribed finality and none displays indisputable concise accuracy which fits all short stories. Additionally, Mahdi (2014) states that many varied definitions fail to highlight the advantages of elasticity in choice of character, and use of time, which the short story holds over the novel. A short story can, therefore, be defined as an immediate portrayal of an occurrence recorded with artistic features unique to its production.

Mahdi (2014) points out that it is not easy to trace the history of the short story through its different phases of myth and legend, parables and fables and identifies Nicolai Gogol of Russia as the father of Modern short story. Ware (2019), on the other hand, argues that the short story might have begun to develop into written stories in the early 14th Century with Geoffrey Chaucer's 'Canterbury Tales' and Giovanni Bocaccio's 'Decameron' appearing around that time. By the end of 16th Century, the short story had developed and some of the most popular short stories in Europe appeared during this time. The Mid-17th century is significant to the development of short stories as this is the time France refined short stories through authors like Madam de Lafayette. Ware divides the development of short story into periods; 1790 – 1850, 1850 – 1900, 1900 – 1945 and after 1945: The post war era. Each period captured issues unique to it.

The 1790-1890 period is famous for some of the notable earliest short stories with the first true collection of short stories appearing between 1810 and 1830. The first stories in the United Kingdom were gothic tales including the works of Richard Cumberland, Sir Walter Scott and Charles Dickens. Writers like Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allan Poe wrote tales of mystery and imagination. In Germany, Heinrich von Kleist

wrote the first collection of short stories in 1810 followed by a collection by the Brothers Grimm in 1812. Sen (2017) notes that Kleist succeeded in scripting supernatural and ghost stories. In Russia, Alexander Pushkin wrote romantic and mystery tales between 1831 and 1834 while Nikolai Gogol wrote dark humorous tales about human suffering around 1842. Sen further argues that Poe's criticism refined the shape of short stories at this time.

The period between 1850 – 1900 is characterized by the emergence and growth of print magazines and journals. It created a platform for the production of short fiction that served the rising demand during that time in history. Sen (2017) notes that during this time, the short story as a branch of literature and arts became popular. The rapid industrialization during this time made people more occupied with less time to read long pieces of literature thus short stories filled this gap. The demand to read something interesting within a short period of time made short stories a popular genre of literature. It is during this period that Thomas Hardy wrote many short stories in United Kingdom including 'The Three Strangers' (1883), Mark Twain and Herman Melville of United States wrote 'The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras Country' and 'The Pizza Tales' (1856) respectively. In Russia, many writers gained recognition including Ivan Turgenev 'A Sportsman's Sketches', Leo Tolstoy captured ethical issues in his stories like 'How Much Land Does a Man Need?' and Anton Chekov became the greatest specialist in the Russian short fiction with his classic texts like 'The Lady with a Lap Dog among others'.

Ware (2019) argues that despite the fact that short stories can be traced back as far as fables, the first published short fiction emerged in the mid-19th Century and early 20th century; the period which Sen (2017) names the 1900-1945: The post war era. This period contributed to major improvements in the short story genre since there was need for quick and easy to produce content. Advancement in technology and need to capture the demands of the readers made writers to reconsider the length of their stories, shape their form and embrace new literary forms. According to Goyet (2014), the short stories that existed between 1870 and 1925 operated on extremely strict conceptions and offered psychological complexities under nuanced characters. Some of the short

fictions produced during this time include 'Kew Gardens' by Virginia Woolf of United Kingdom and 'Dubliners' (1914) by James Joyce of Ireland, among others.

In Africa, it is believed that the short story form got its origin from the oral traditions. Ancestors created myths, legends and other narratives in order to explain the world around them. They used this to solve the mysteries of life around them and helped the younger generations to understand different phenomena. According to Huber and Jonityte (2020), the origins of African literature lie in deep oral traditions of African people, especially in the art of storytelling. Before the print system, the art of storytelling was a way of infusing the history of a people with the reality. Men told stories of their hunting and raiding escapades; women too, passed important life lessons to their daughters through stories. In the twentieth century, the relationship between the oral tradition and literary traditions deepened. Literary works were associated with forms of the oral tradition. For example, the impact of the epic on the novel influences writers even today. Evidently, the oral tradition had an impact on writers such as, D. O. Fagunwa, Amos Tutuola, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Okot P Bitek and Chinua Achebe. As Ilieva and Olembo (2010) assert, in Africa, the writing and publication of short stories began in the middle of the twentieth century. Since then, the short form gained wide readership through their publications in magazines, newspapers and anthologies.

According to Siundu (2022), the short story in Africa gained widespread exposure following European colonialism. He adds that the contemporary class of written literature must have got its origin in Europe at around 12th Century when long narratives and poetry were fashionable and appealed to the higher class members of the society. By 15th Century, the tales had evolved and resulted into a more inclusive form that not only dwelt on the romance but also captured issues that the less privileged members of the European society could identify with. Similarly, the evolution also brought in change in the style of storytelling as authors became more creative and innovative on how to create stories that could attract and maintain the attention of the audience throughout the session.

By the late 19th Century when the missionaries, explorers, European travelers and colonialists traversed most of the world, they brought the short story to Africa in regions that had not developed the art of writing. Subsequently, the written short story prose borrowed aspects of the African Literary traditions and maintained the significant elements of structure and form from European short story form. The outcomes of the stylistic and cultural mixing from different regions brought about the current versions of the short stories of Africa. Since then, the short story has played a critical role in portraying how African countries define themselves. So far many African writers, such as MG. Vassaji and Grace Ogot of East Africa, Nadine Gordimer and Charles Mungoshi of Southern Africa, Chinua Achebe and Chimamanda Adichie of West Africa, and Naguib Mahfouz of North Africa, have used short stories to communicate their Messages. These writers have managed to capture the technological advancements, political developments, emerging economic challenges and improvements among other issues.

Different periods of history have therefore produced different crops of short fiction with different styles and varied thematic concerns. This study picks the post-colonial period and analyses short stories published after the year 2000, referred to as Post-millennium period here. With the revelation that different historical epochs influenced and shaped literature produced under them, this study interrogates the relevance of the post millennial literature to the society and how much the occurrences within the period, like the MDGs influenced the production of these stories.

2.2 Literature as a Tool for Societal Reawakening

Literature is a very important tool in the society as it performs different functions; it entertains the masses, reflects the reality and makes propositions about the future. This section reviews studies done on plays, films and novels, in different periods in history and different regions of the world hence identifies the gap that this study strives to fill through the analysis of post-millennial short stories.

Duhan (2015) argues that, apart from reflecting the society, literature has a corrective function as it helps the society to realize its mistakes, correct them and create an ideal world for all humanity. Moreover, literature disseminates the values in the society for

the people to emulate. Duhan adds that stories in literature are designed to portray human life and actions through characters that use their words, actions, and reactions to educate and pass information on societal values. A work of literature should include the attitudes, morals and values that writers desire the society to emulate. Thus, literature is not only a reflection of the society but also a guide to a better society. Of significance to this study is the function of literature to guide the society into its rebirth and it is what the study strives to interrogate in the selected short stories.

In order to understand how literature actually reflects and serves as a corrective channel to the society, Duhan (2015) adds that different literary materials should be read in relation to the society that produces and consumes them. Literature, therefore expresses social sympathies; it is meant to influence positively the minds and attitudes of its consumers. The society in return reacts/ responds to literature. Poets, novelists and playwrights, according to Duhan, are socio-cultural legislators- their main function is to lay ground rules and create a course of action for the society to follow. Moreover, novels and poems are credited to have redirected the society into a better condition. They set in motion and alter the way of thinking. This study therefore examines how different studies produced at the same historical epoch strive to change the world view of their consumers.

According to Nazareth (1972) writers' main duty is to respond to life around them, which means that a committed literary work has to address the problems affecting a people and how to cope with them. The post millennial short stories are analyzed here to understand how the writers are geared towards improving and sensitizing the community of its transgressions and successes and in addition, give guidance to possible solutions to societal challenges.

Literature is essential in the transition of a society. It can be used to better and change the society to fit the needs of the ever-changing world. Adebambo (2008) states that literary works emanating from a given society must/should have observable and valuable impact on the needs of the people it serves. Furthermore, the literary works determine the position of a writer in the society. He further points out that any work of art should go beyond narration in order to reveal realities, problems, challenges, and

possible solutions to the societies' ailments. A writer's main aim should be in connection to the immediate needs of the society. Thus, his work should reflect the desires and aspirations of the society he serves. Moreover, a writer should, in most cases, be considered a revolutionary leader as his/her works should be used to nourish and create awareness, awaken people from undesirable practices and guide them towards new horizons for the collective good of a society. In addition, Adebambo argues that a writer should view literature as a tool/ channel through which he/she investigates the views and needs of the society with the aim of changing them positively for a better tomorrow. Hence literature is not just supposed to be used for individual elevation and desire for promotion of individual heroic deeds but for the societal consumption and betterment. This study evaluates how the short stories studied are of relevance to post millennial Africa - and how they strive to reawaken the society towards its betterment.

Fictional characters expose readers to the various ways they deal with the challenges of leisure and challenges of stress they go through (Bohlin 2005). Bohlin adds that reading a good work of art provides the readers with periods and instances of focused moral reflection and a dialogue with oneself. The readers get opportunity to hold a dialogue with their inner selves, ruminate and reflect on their moral being then make informed choices. Excellent texts invite the audience to experience the conflicts, the desires, immoral and moral deeds hence reawakening their choices. Bohlin adds that several personalities have acquired their calling through reading, and notes that St. Augustine of Hippo got his awakening from the New Testament while Abraham Lincoln got his inspiration after reading William Shakespeare's *McBeth*, among others. In addition, Bohlin claims that anytime an avid reader is asked to name that one book they interacted with that changed their lives; they are always equipped with a ready answer. This assertion shows that Literature can be a powerful reawakening tool, and this study finds the post millennial short stories a perfect conduit to assess contemporary re-awakening in East Africa.

In the global context, Ramadhan (2018) uses Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) to illuminate the power of literature to disseminate knowledge that surpasses the insights of sociology, history, philosophy, psychology and literary criticism. Further,

he argues that *Pride and Prejudice* tells a story of how England survived the French Revolution; depicting how social integration resulted in the fusion of different classes in the country. The aristocrats had to sacrifice their pride and prestige, set aside their differences and foster integration with the lower caste in order to achieve their aspiration. Ramadhan (2018) adds that literature educates and entertains at the same time. It helps us to learn about the past, understand the present and empower us to create the future we yearn for. Ramadhan further states that the story portrays the society in a way that history or any other discipline can but only Literature. His study interrogates European literature in the 19th century and highlights how literature achieved its reawakening function during that time, a study that the present picks from to examine how the post millennial East African literatures propose ways to better their societies during their time.

Guare (1999) posits that great literatures should inspire a self-reflection and give birth to transforming grace. It should help to reveal the human conditions and suggest avenues for growth and change. Guare quotes Heidegger (1968, p. 13) who argues that awakenings “illuminate the boundaries in which all customary views are confined and summon us to reach a more open territory”. According to Guare (1999), artists often strive to address the social evils of the world through some form of accuracy which they consider an interpretive resource of human suffering. The issues of concern expressed through literary works have power to awaken new levels of consciousness. Guare notes:

Literature lures us to examine the promise and the paradox that reside in particularities, to explore other perspectives and possibilities, and to imagine lovelier and more just ways of living in the world. On another level, literature can open us to feelings of immediacy, posture us for moves toward solidarity, and engage us in critiquing social situations that dehumanize. I remember Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987) awakening in me feelings of outrage about slavery, empathy for the lost and the exiled, and determination to question things as they are. (208)

Guare’s assertion reveals how Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* contributed towards the black renaissance at a time when slavery was still practiced in America. It shows how literature proved important at this point of history that it awakened the feelings of empathy towards the slaves thus leading the society towards upholding humanity over slavery. This study examines how the post-millennial short stories suggest ways through which the society can be made better.

Guare further posits that literature clarifies and sharpens reality; it directs attention to issues that we might have ignored, violated or simply missed in our lives. In reading Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1970), Guare interacts with Pecola the unloved character who is alienated by a culture that does not see her, her mother who could not love her and friends who betray her and this reading inspires her to love tenderly mostly to her students who might be like the invisible Pecola. Guare posits that the works of Tony Morrison do the reawakening that a committed literature should achieve. Guare's work interrogates the function of literature with particular interest to Tony Morrison's work produced in 1970. The present study gives a modern African experience by studying the works written by Africans in Africa in the 21st Century and identifies how the stories speak to the society towards its improvement.

An interaction with African Short stories reveals that different short fictions at different periods captured different thematic issues in different styles. Mordaunt (2015) posits that reputable scholars have made claims that African short stories are guided by reality, and the motifs they portray are tantamount to the aspiration, needs and anxiety of characters. This contravenes the suggestions that have been made that the African Short Story shares a lot with folk tales and therefore, should be considered to be of the same genre. In his study that majors on the conflict between traditions and modernity and the city which is often present in African Short stories, Mordaunt claims that some of the themes in African Short Story are rural life, colonialism and its implication, the city, war and its aftermath, love, political corruption, religion and witchcraft, hunger and poverty, and race relations. His study deals with 'The Ivory Dancer' by Cyprian Ekwensi (1966), 'The Coming of the Dry Season' by Charles Mungoshi (1981), 'In the Cutting of a Drink' by Ama Ata Aidoo (1979), 'Blankets' by Alex Laguma and 'The Return' by Ngugi Wa Thiongo (1975): a selection of texts from West Africa, South Africa and East Africa by pioneer writers. The present study borrows insights from the above study to deal with emerging writers from East Africa and focuses on themes to do with social, cultural and economic issues in the contemporary society which gives variety to such earlier studies.

Mordaunt (2015) further cites Beier (1964) stating that “by far the greatest number of African writers are interested in depicting present-day situations and problems. The past and traditions hold little interest to them” (p.24). Beier opines that there are very few stories which deal with subject matter relating exclusively to the past and not many center only on traditional values. Generally, tradition is considered in its relationship with modernity. Mordaunt’s study deals with how short stories reflect what there is in the society more so, the conflict between modernity and traditions. The present study interrogates how the selected short stories portray the society decades after independence and their social visions for the present day societies.

In West Africa, Ogbaje (2014) discusses Chinua Achebe’s collection, *Girls at War and Other Stories* as a mirror to reflect the Igbo society. The collection imparts the knowledge on the dynamics of the socio-cultural and religious values that make up the Igbo worldview revealing the individual, social, cultural, and religious factors that give it shape and meaning. According to Ogbaje, if one takes a look at the world and the descent of human kind since creation to date, they realize that every existing group of people or society has its own perception of the world. That observation explains why man is often considered a social being that is defined in relation to its society but not defined as a lone individual. How a people view the world determines the prosperity and development of that society and the nation at large. On the same note a people’s world view determines the level at which a society is contented and its individuals satisfied with the state of affairs; it shapes politics of nations and controls the space-time future of individuals and nations as well as an individual’s eternity. In agreement with Ogbaje’s view that every existing group of people has its own view of the world, this study interrogates how the East African writers view their own community. It looks at how the selected texts capture the ills of their community and their social visions for the community they live in. These works also appear at different times of history hence the need to find out how the post millennial writers view their society and to what extent they are influenced with the millennium development goals.

Nworah and Eziafa (2014) state that it is the duty of a writer to ensure commitment to his/her society or a particular community that he has interacted with. They borrow insights from Chinua Achebe (1975) that a writer is: “... a human being with a

heightened sensitivity who must be aware of the faintest nuances of injustice in human relations...The writer therefore cannot be unaware of monumental injustice which his people suffer..." (p. 75) If this assertion is true, then it is proper to find out how much the 21st century writers appropriate from their society and to what extent they utilize the short fiction to awaken their people towards improving their practices to the better.

In North Africa, a study by Nkealah (2006) reveals that short stories have also been used to interrogate the plight of women in the region. Nkealah investigates how Islamic culture and the question of women's human rights in North Africa have been treated in the short stories by Assia Djebar and Alifa Rifaat. She analyses the representation of contemporary Muslim society and how marginalization of women leads to the rise of feminist movements in the Middle East and North Africa. According to Nkealah (2006), Muslim women writers like Mariama Ba, Nawal el-Sadaawi and Zaynab Alkali have made significant literary contributions in the reawakening of the Muslim society towards the emancipation of women folk. Moreover, the short stories selected for study disclose various faces of oppression meted on women by the culture they embrace. It is therefore evident that literatures from different regions treat different thematic concerns at different times of history thus the need to investigate the issues that the post millennial short story writers of East Africa portray in their works of art.

In South African Literature, Gaylard (2008) posits that the African short story had contributed greatly in promoting black renaissance in South Africa. He studies short stories that appeared between 1930 and 1980: a period in which South Africa was still under dominion of the whites and the widespread apartheid. He sums up the works of art during this time as "works of protest" or "Spectacular" representation claiming that works of art cannot be separated from their contexts of production and reception. Gaylard gives attention to the works, with close consideration to the spatial, temporal and ideological shifts in South African cultural production and identifies two major phases of black writing: The Sophiatown and District six writers of the 50s and the Staff rider writers of the 70s and 80s. Gaylard is not so much interested in the political metanarratives of these texts but on their break from established conventions of representation. Besides apartheid, these works go ahead to help one understand different issues in black writing and the forms they took under apartheid and the

pressures it brought about. The present study interrogates East African Literature published after 2000 and highlights how these literatures use different narrative techniques to propose different possible ways of transforming the society.

In East Africa, Kopf (2017) presents a study of two East African novels – Akiki Nyabongo’s *The Story of an African Chief* (1935) and Meja Mwangi’s *Going Down River Road* (1976), and a short story, ‘Discovering Home’ (2003) by Binyavanga Wainaina. The study deals with texts from three different historical periods from the colonial past to the present day East Africa with an intent of finding out the historical perspective on development in East African fiction. This study moves further than Kopf’s to interrogate the short story in the post-millennial context.

Works of the East African playwright, Francis Imbuga are among the plays that have been subjected to literary criticism to reveal their social vision. Mutura (2013) interrogates social vision in Imbuga’s works through psychoanalytic theory. The study limits itself to three plays by Francis Imbuga: *Man of Kafira*, *The Successor* and *Betrayal in the City* and focuses on how Imbuga uses Sigmund Freud’s tripartite psyche to bring out his social vision. The study avers that Africans have sacrificed their values as they desire to incorporate western civilizations in their lives. Imbuga criticizes Africans for devaluing and abandoning their cultures and languages at the expense of Westernization. Mutura claims that Imbuga’s plays appeal to Africans to re-evaluate their choices for only African culture and languages are capable of developing a truly African sensibility. The present study majoring on the recently published works reveals the changing post-colonial social vision of literary writers in Africa.

Nazareth (1976) assess the social responsibility of East African writer. He interacts with different works of Ngugi, both novels, plays and short stories and furthers interrogates other East African works of art like *The Song of Lawino* by Okot P’Bitek and *The Burdens* by John Ruganda. Nazareth points out that all these renown East African writers are invisible teachers who are struggling to change their society. On Ngugi’s *Black Hermit* he points out that:

In *The Black Hermit*, we see Ngugi’s deep sense of social responsibility to East Africa and Africa as a whole. The play asks fundamental questions:

What do we expect of our leaders? Can we ignore our past and cut our selves off from it? What happens when leaders come out with large solutions but forget their own individual failings? What happens when they ignore human relationships? What is the relationship of the individual to society in modern Africa? (p.250)

Nazareth argues that Ngugi later deals with most of these questions as his thematic concerns in his subsequent novels like *The River Between*. All the works studied fall in the colonial era and they all reflect on the issues that affected the region as at that time. The current study strives to interrogate the extent to which the 21st Century short story writers are aware of the ills of their society thereby proposing the possible solutions to such ailments.

In young adult literature, Senyi (2014) assesses social values in the young adult novels in East Africa. Senyi states that youths are imprecise to the extent that they can easily be influenced by people they fraternize with, literary texts they read, and/or television programmes or films they watch. It is therefore, important for a literary artist inclined towards the young adult literature, to carefully consider the subjects of their texts. Senyi goes ahead to establish that Esmail, in his selected young adult novels, communicates the realities of social values. Senyi examines the following social and economic issues in her study: A will of appreciation, a habit of generosity, the attitude of heroism, the spirit of honesty, ambition by young characters, respect for elders, the spirit of adventure, salutation and environmental conservation. Senyi's study examines the social and environmental reawakening of the young adults but it is silent on the socio-cultural and economic reawakening which this study strives to investigate in respect to the short story genre.

Numano (2018) in the collection by Kupper on the Approaches to World Literature states that we are living in a different post-colonial age whereby every small nation all over the world is struggling to establish its own cultures and literatures. In what he calls the Third Vision, Numano highlights possible challenges that may rise in the face of universality and diversity. Further, he notes that a conflict may arise when the English literatures advocate for universality and on the other hand, different nations advocate for diversity in the new era. Different regions are to date struggling to restructure their own societies; re-write it in a way they want it to be. Ngugi (1986) is one such writer

who advocates for the use of native languages in producing literatures in his book *Decolonizing Minds: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. In his essay, Ngugi states that language defines a people's culture which means that when children are exposed to the colonizer's language in school, they end up learning and practicing the foreign cultures as opposed to their own. Ngugi, therefore, advocates for writing in the native languages. This study investigates how language is used to achieve either universality or diversity in the post millennial East African short story.

Ndege and Makokha (2019) examine the existing oppressive nature of the patriarchal society and the struggle of women to restore their respect and dignity through a feminist voice. To illustrate the feminist concerns and the subversive practices in Africa, the two focus on three short stories: Tandiwe Myambo's, 'Deciduous Gazelles', Lindsey Collen's 'The Enigma', and Ifeoma Okoye's 'The Power of a Plate of Rice'. Ndege and Makokha's paper expose the challenges that women are facing in a patriarchal society; The women have clearly defined roles and expectations for harmonious living while the men have uncensored authority. The patriarchal society has granted men superior roles, which they have readily accepted. Women on the other hand find it difficult to accept and play their subordinate oppressive roles. Their paper explores the plight of these women, both single and married and attempt to get into their inner lives to see the situations they face, the challenges and their struggle to liberate themselves from the oppressive patriarchal system. The post millennial short stories studied here attempt to query how to liberate humanity from the oppressive socio-cultural practices and unyielding economic practices.

2.3 Style in Literature

This section gives a review of related studies done on the use of style and language in different genres of literary work at different periods of history other than the post millennial short stories under study. This review helps to determine different ways narrative techniques are employed in relation to the content of works of art.

It is inadequate to analyze a work of art without touching on its narrative techniques. Narrative techniques help to bind all the elements of a story together making it whole and meaningful. Abdullah (2016) defines narrative technique as a means of analyzing

the various elements of short stories including the characters, point of view, mood or atmosphere, setting, plot, symbolism, style and theme among others. Narrative technique is concerned with the logical turn of events presented to the readers in an attractive way that helps the author to communicate the message he/she feature in works. Abdullah (2016) further avers that the selected short stories of Ernest Hemingway and Edgar Allan Poe present different social and moral issues concentrating on social criticism of people's behavior when their environments are violated. Moreover, the two short story writers have succeeded in infusing their style with the content to bring out a complete piece of literary work. Poe's works feature techniques and themes that are in line with the romanticism era while Hemmingway's works incorporate themes and techniques that are in line with modernism movement that he followed. It is thus clear that literary writers attempt to conform to the societal and historical dictates during their productions. This study therefore interrogates how the post millennial writers use style to illuminate their thematic concerns.

According to Huemer (2016), style is a way of doing things and every given individual has their own ways of doing things. Literary style, therefore, is like the clothes that a text puts on. In connection to Huemer's assertion, different authors have their own styles in presenting their work to the readers thus the need to interrogate how the post millennial short story writers have used different styles to reveal the socio-cultural and economic resurgence of the society.

Form and content should work together to bring out the unity in a text. Misra (2011) in making clearer the concept of 'form' and 'content,' mainly takes four schools of criticism into account: Formalists (including New Critics) hold that 'form' dictates 'content' as such 'content' is at the mercy of 'form', Genre Critics or Chicago Critics unlike New Critics believe that 'form' holds 'shaping or constructive principle'. To them, the relation of 'form' and 'content' is in the manner of cause and effect. They consider all genres and its sub-genres and state that form and content are inseparable in matters literature. Marxist concept of 'form' is based on man's relation to his society and the history of the society. This school altogether opposes all kinds of literary formalisms. The psychoanalytic approach does not take much interest in style, it mainly takes interest in the revelation of 'latent content'. As Misra's study traces out the

function of 'form' and 'content' and their relationship in production of a meaningful work, this study also interrogates the relevance of styles applied in the post millennial short stories in achieving socio-cultural and economic resurgence.

Form can concretely illuminate and enhance the content of a work of art. Macharia (1988) interrogates whether Armah's fictive writing is one continuous and related narrative production. She identifies and traces the growth and significance of a single unifying thread, the motif of journeying, and used it to decipher the hidden meanings in Armah' writing. Macharia shows that by bringing to light the social concerns that necessitate Armah's writing, the journeying motif plays the added part of illuminator. Like Macharia's work, this study interrogates how the post millennial writers have used journey motif to champion for peace and socio-economic transformation in their short stories.

The language used in the production of literature has been a subject for debate for decades. According to Ukam (2018), the language issue in the creation of literature in Africa has been a major problem since the continent is rich with many distinct languages as well as distinct ethnic groups. The introduction of the colonial languages (English, French, Arabic and Portuguese) enables Africans to communicate with each other comprehensibly. They serve as lingua franca which connects Africa due to the fact that Africa has no one central language. Based on the above fact, there is a serious argument among African critics (like Ngugi and Achebe) about which language(s) would be authentic in writing African literature: the native indigenous languages or the colonial languages. Marulafau (2019) posits that "language is a part of a culture, which may not be separated from human life as a creation of the human mind. Through language, man may communicate between one with another so as to convey the ideas in terms of a daily conversation or whether in the forms of literature like poems, short story, novel or play. (p.3)" Even though the selected authors have used English as their language of publishing short stories, there are instances of codemixing which the present study examines in relation to their application in advocating for socio-cultural and economic revival.

Writing in one's native language deprives the writer of readership thus many publishers are reluctant in publishing in indigenous languages (Motsaathebe 2012). Writers, therefore, write in the acquired colonial languages in order to meet a wider audience (Ukam, 2018). Consequently, one or two major African languages should be standardized and taught in schools so as to be acquired by more than 80 per cent of Africans to be considered common languages, only such a move will minimize the use of the colonial languages and how they influence the writing of African literature. Ukam recommends that Africans should have one or two major African languages standardized, to serve as common language(s) in the region and adds that Africans should use both colonial and African languages in their literatures in order to capture both audiences. This study takes the language debate into consideration and is interested in finding out how language is used as a style in the selected short stories in the post millennial Africa to achieve socio-cultural and economic reawakening of the 21st Century East African community.

A narrative is incomplete with a narration alone. Getaneh (2017) posits that for narrative to be a complete and meaningful piece of art, narration and the narration modes must work together. In his study on narrative modes, Getaneh looks into two short stories by Ama Ata Aidoo: 'No Sweetness Here' and 'The Message.' Where he shows that through narrative modes, the author is able to present feelings, speeches, actions and thoughts of fictional characters they choose to employ in their works of art. Getaneh concludes that the two short stories of Ama Ata Aidoo largely use dialogues and dramatic monologues to present the narration as they focus on the dramatic orality of performances. By analyzing the narrative techniques used in the selected short stories published after 2000, this study demonstrates how the themes of socio-cultural and economic reawakening have been achieved.

Despite the fact that the novel can be used for psychological, philosophical or religious arguments, it has its own artistic meaning which is a proclamation of the author's skill and from which the novel draws its autonomy as a unique art form. In his study, Makau (2000) interrogates the techniques of narrative construction used by Wole Soyinka in his novel, *The Interpreters*. He argues that a text is like an organism that has to endure and maintain a given process for it to survive and function properly. The present study

deviates from novels and tackle the use of style in the selected short stories. Furthermore, Makau's research's main thrust is in the isolation and discussion of the elements of the artistic framework upon which the narrative is based; starting by accounting for the independence of the artistic aim of the author in writing the text despite the fact that the novel serves other extra-artistic purposes. The study therefore is giving express priority to the artfulness of *The Interpreters* whose content is seen as presenting an artistic function as its basic end. It is this primacy of the artistic theme that his study dwells upon. That addition is of significance to this study in that it also strives to explore artistic framework of the selected stories in relation to the socio-cultural and economic resurgence.

Style is a very important element of a short story. It is what makes the story become what it is. It is the feature that can help differentiate between the short prose and long prose. Mwanzi (1995) defines style as the use of words that helps the author to enhance the setting, tone, mood, the point of view, the plot and other aspects of the story. According to her, all other aspects of the short story relies on the style employed by the authors. Her study deals with the short stories by three canonical Authors: Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Grace Ogot and Leonard Kibera. The selected authors have many titles of short stories under their names. Ngugi Wa Thiongo has published, 'The Return,' 'The Matyr,' 'A Meeting in The Dark' and 'A Wedding at the Cross' among others. Grace Ogot has 'Tekayo,' 'Land Without Thunder' and 'The Old White Which' among others under her name while Leonard Kibera has 'A Silent Song,' 'The Hill' and 'The Stranger' among others. Mwanzi is not so much interested in the thematic concerns of these writers but the styles in which they produce their works and it is majorly interested in the pioneer writers, a fact that creates the need for this research to deviate from studying the pioneer writers and major on the upcoming writers with works published after 2000. Even though this study also touches on the narrative techniques, it is majorly seeking to outline the significant literary developments and the use of style to achieve socio-economic reawakening in the post – 2000 short stories.

In his study of Semantic absurdities in Jared Angira's poetry, Bwocha (2008) identifies and illustrates, the use of oxymoron, paradox, contrast, juxtaposition and irony as semantic absurdities that Angira use in his poetry to unveil his social vision. Bwocha

adds that the study of the already listed styles is important since it helps to unravel the message packed in Jared Angira's poem thus his social vision. The study concludes that form and content of poetic works of Angira's poems work together to pass the relevant message to the society. He therefore concludes that Jared Angira's poems speak for the poor and the downtrodden in the society. This study borrows insight from Bwocha's study and extends the stylistics study to the short story genre with an aim of unravelling how the 21st Century writers propose to transform their society.

2.4 Millennium Development Goals

Following the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000, different countries came up with strategies for the implementation of the MDGs. Some countries changed their national plans to accommodate the goals while others adopted print media to sensitize the masses. This section, highlights literature reviewed on the reports given on the MDGs up to 2015 in order to identify the issues of concern in the MDGs and how the aims of the MDGs might have been captured in the literary works.

According to the United Nations Report (2011), there are eight Millennium Development Goals which include: Eradicate poverty and hunger; Achieve universal primary education; Promote gender equality and the empowerment of women; Reduce child mortality; Improve maternal health; Combat HIV/AIDS and malaria and other diseases; Ensure environmental sustainability and Develop a global partnership for development. Each of these goals has a corresponding target for action. The present study accesses how the tenets of goals number one, two, four and five might have been captured as thematic concerns in the selected post millennial short stories

The report on the progress in achievement of Millennium Development Goals in Kenya (2015) presents an overview of the MDGs implementation process. The report traces the MDGs implementation process in Kenya through its three broad phases: Phase I focused on awareness creation and sensitization campaigns aimed at promoting the understanding of MDGs and their links to the national planning frameworks as well as the building of consensus to determine the best mode and frequency of country level reporting. The first phase is of significance to this study in that the study investigates the extent to which the selected texts sensitized the society on the issues that the MDGs

purposed to address. It also examines whether the MDGs formed part of the thematic issues addressed in the selected short stories in chapter five of the study.

Kenya recorded notable achievement in various areas in its implementation of MDGs including universal primary education; combating HIV/AIDs, TB, Malaria and other diseases; gender equality and empowerment of women; sustainable environment and creating global partnerships for development over the period under review. Despite the achievement, eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; improvement in child health and reduction of maternal mortality failed to meet the set targets. Some of the limitations leading to inability to meet the set targets included persistent severe droughts caused by global climatic change; rapid population increase, insecurity and urbanization. The present study interrogates the level of achievement of the four selected goals and the factors limiting their success as highlighted in the selected short stories as shown in chapter five of this study. It also highlights how the selected short stories treat the issues of concern addressed in the MDGs.

According to UNESCO (2019), language is a key factor for the effective implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). That language allows for the inclusion of a good majority in the achievement of the MDGs. The UNESCO's publication further demonstrates that language helps majorly in capturing human activities, identity and self-expression thus can support dissemination of the information and also aid in the assessment of the implementation of the MDGs. Moreover, UNESCO avers that the society is structured in a way that its people place notable value in their own languages thus determining the extent to which a people can participate in the implementation of the MDGs. The publication not only argues that language fosters societal participation in development projects but also confirms that language is a significant tool in fighting gender inequality, poverty and HIV/AIDs thus publishing the MDGs in the relevant language aids their acceptance in different communities. As the UNESCO (2019) publication demonstrates why language matters for the Millennium Development Goals, this study examines the relationship between the MDGs, literature and the society particularly the extent in which the MDGs influence the thematic concerns of the short stories produced in the post-millennial era.

Gwajima (2011) examines the discourses supporting the teaching of literature in Tanzanian schools in order to find out the extent to which gender representations within the texts, and as mediated by teachers, supports the discourse of gender equality. His inquiry is focused on a textual analysis of the texts which were under study in Tanzanian secondary schools through postcolonial and feminist perspectives. The study further involved interviewing literature teachers and students, policy makers and curriculum planners and obtained their views about the representations of gender. Gwajima states that the aim of his research is to raise awareness of, and contribute to, the general discussion regarding gender equality, and about meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). His main interest is on the third goal (MDG 3) that sought to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in all levels of education by 2015. By interrogating and demonstrating how the four goals shaped the narratives of the 21st C, the present study sheds more light into the interaction between literature and the MDGs.

2.5 Review of Research Done on the Short Stories under Study

This section gives a review of the available studies on the selected texts. Reviewing works done on these writers helps to demonstrate the lacuna that the present study seeks to address.

In his study on *Ethnic Identities and Gender Themes* in East African Literature, Makokha (2011) states that creative works of art are one of the pathways in which a people present itself for the world to consume. Therefore, to contribute in creating the awareness in a society, one ought to study the sociology of literature. In examining how ethnicity and gender contribute to the identity question, Makokha posits that gender and ethnicity do not influence the selection of forms in East African Literature but do influence the thematic concerns of many works of art. Makokha conducted a study both on short and long prose and concentrated mostly on two thematic issue (gender and ethnic identities). This study, intends to deviate from concentrating solely on the identity and gender themes to explore the extent to which the selected stories are in line with the Millennium Development Goals and to interrogate their socio-economic reawakening. While Makokha's work deals with both emergent and established authors, this study is particularly interested in interrogating the post-millennial literatures of the short story genre written by the emergent writers.

Esaida et al (2020) analyzes how identity struggles are represented in Yvonne Adhiambo Owuor's narrative 'Weight of Whispers' basing on the understanding that the narrative dominantly captures identity issues and those to do with belonging. Esaida et al look at the extent to which it projects the challenges, struggles and the length to which characters go to in their quest to understand and/or (re)create their identity. They further look at how the themes, character and characterization in the story highlight cultural, national, and personal struggles that Africans experience as they attempt to define who they are. According to Esaida et al, the fact that literature always mirrors the daily experiences of the society and community from which a writer comes from, implies that the issues represented in the texts, in a way, therefore reflect the contemporary societal setup and interactions in the society of the setting.

Partington (2006) carries out an identity based study on Yvonne Adhiambo's 'Weight of Whispers'. In his essay, Partington focuses on the use of first-person narrator in relation to the extra-textual, postcolonial construction of Rwanda's "Tutsi" and "Hutu" as racialized groups thus helping the reader make some sense of the Rwandan Genocide. Partington states:

("Kuseremane", in his rush to flee, had to leave his wealth and certain identity documents in Rwanda) that determines how productive and pleasant the experience of migration may be. Whether a person is viewed by authority as an expatriate, an exile, a national, an immigrant, an asylum seeker, a refugee or a combination of these within the nuanced semantic field of The Migrant, all of which distinctions are mentioned in "Weight of Whispers", determines the freedoms that s/he can enjoy within the postcolonial state. (p. 118)

It is possible to argue that the level of freedom one enjoys in the hosting nation determines the level of his/her productivity to that nation and themselves. The nationals can easily take part in economic activities as compared to illegal aliens and refugees. Partington reveals how Yvonne Adhiambo's short story has exposed how the immigrants struggle and fight to define themselves. This study deviates from the study of identity issues and focuses on the use of first-person narrator. The study interrogates how the authors have used this style to bring out the socio-cultural and economic resurgence in East Africa.

Rajarajani and Sivaranjani (2018) examine identity crisis in Rutangye Crystal Butangi's "Legal Alien." The two state that in her hometown the narrator encounters so many barriers in education, age, and gender. Of all those things, none would ever make her feel as alienated as language barrier. She feels so much ashamed to reveal that she cannot speak in her own native language. In the society today, as things are in reality, all the countries give preference to the global language at the expense of their own native mother tongue. Since they have passion over foreign language, parents forget their responsibility to teach their children their native tongue. In the homes, children lack exposure to their native language as they converse in the foreign language. This study deviates from studying the identity crisis but dwells on the need of a common language to achieve universality.

Goro Wa Kamau's 'When the Sun Goes Down' exposes the themes of love, tradition, conflict, HIV/AIDs and Stigmatization (Maru and Wachera 2015). As their analysis explores the themes and styles used in the text, the present study goes further than Maru and Wachera's study to look into how the themes they analyze relate to the Millennium Development Goals.

Literary studies have been conducted interrogating the social vision and reawakening as a thematic issue in different genres and sub genres of literature in different periods of History. In the Pre-colonial Africa, studies cover oral literature and its values to the society while in Colonial Africa, the scholars dwell on ills of colonialism and a wakeup call towards resistance. The Post- Colonial African critics often address the betrayal and disillusionment after colonialism. A study on the emergent post 2000 short story writers serves as the continuation of the critical narrative that goes back to the pre-colonial issues. The analysis of the socio-cultural and economic resurgence in the post millennium short stories adds to the knowledge on African literary studies.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

This study draws from Post-colonial theory as outlined by Homi Bhabha to investigate the socio-cultural and economic resurgence and narratology literary theory which guides in carrying out the structural analysis of the selected texts.

2.6.1 Post-colonial Literary Theory

Post-colonial theory can be traced back to 1950s when Alfred Sauvy came up with the phrase Third World to refer to the developing countries. It later came to emerge in the UK and the US in 1980s as part of an inquiry into the effects of colonization, the cultures of the colonized and how the colonized respond to colonization and its effects. The early proponents identified with Post-Colonial literary theory are Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Frantz Fanon, to mention only a few.

Post-colonial criticism is interested in analyzing literatures produced by cultures that developed in response to colonial domination. The Post-colonial theorists hold to the opinion that post-colonial writers examine their past, evaluate their present, and feel the challenge of how they should respond to the changes that their society is facing hence wondering what their society will become.

Post-colonial literary theory as theorized by Homi Bhabha, portrays culture to hold different dimensions and perceptions. Bhabha (1990) states that the cultures existing in the post-colonial states are a hybrid of two or more diverse cultures thus outlining the concepts of hybridity, ambivalence, and mimicry. Bhabha argues that every sense of nationhood can be subjected to narration and that Third World countries should not be considered/ generalized to have same cultural practices. He uses concepts such as hybridity, mimicry, ambivalence, stereotypes, the uncanny, otherness and the nation some of which are explained here to help understand how they are used in the analysis done in this study. His concept of post-colonial theory explores colonialism and how its effects intrude on the present cultures thereby creating the need to transform our knowledge and understanding on cross-cultural relations. Borrowing from Frantz Fanon's work *Black Skin, White Mask*, Bhabha brings out the need to look at each situation as a distinct entity of its specific time in history, thus giving a driving force through this study as it helps to examine each selected text as of relevance to the period of history stated and its function in reawakening the society that consumes it. Bhabha paints the nation as a narration in that the history of a people signifies the nation or the national culture as an empirical sociological category or a holistic cultural entity.

Bhabha's strand of post-colonial literary theory guides this study in evaluating the socio-cultural and economic practices demonstrated in the selected short stories and in turn, examines the role of these stories in guiding the actions and the decisions of the society at large. The study investigates how writers live to decide the fate of a society they occupy, how they struggle to define themselves and give direction to their society as portrayed in the selected short stories, hence the kind of a society they desire to live in. The theory guides the study to investigate the extent to which the characters mimic their colonizers at the expense of their diversity, and how well they survive in the cultural hybridity and in-betweenness? It is through this theory that the study assesses the relevance of the selected texts in reawakening and directing the society towards ideal practices.

Additionally, it is worth noting that Globalization has been made easier by the advanced technology and eased movements. People interact much better than they could do earlier and can easily interact with different cultures of the world leading to cultural hybridity. Hybridity therefore helps in understanding what the text reveals about how cultural difference, race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, cultural beliefs, and customs work together to create a united region. It further enables the unraveling of how the selected texts portray the relationship between members of the communities they feature, how healthy and rich members, the societal norm adherents and the sick, poor and the "immoral group" operate in the lands they occupy and their exploitation of the environment in chapter 4 and 5. The theory further guides the study in demonstrating how the writers are directing the society towards its betterment in a culturally diverse society. Globalization as a tenet guides this study in unraveling how interactions helps the reader to experience the untold realities of their nations. The journey of different character from one point of the glob to the other act as a pointer to new experiences.

Ambivalence emerges from the way in which the two agents, colonized and colonizer, interact, and at the same time shapes the way in which they relate to each other. This aspect guides both chapter 4 and 5 of the study to interrogate how different forces and cultures shape one another and the resultant culture that they create for a people to follow thus highlighting the roles of the selected short stories in directing the society

towards its betterment. In case of language use, this theory helps the researcher to demonstrate how language is used in different context to fit different situations.

Bhabha defines colonial mimicry as “the desire for a reformed, recognizable other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite.” (Bhabha 2004, 122). Ambivalence and mimicry helps in the analysis of language use in the selected stories and explore the use of native language or the colonizers language and how language use aids or affects the relationships in the post millennial Africa. Ambivalence and mimicry guides this study to investigate what the use of code mixing reveal about the post-colonial East Africa.

Otherness is the assumption that those who are different from oneself are inferior beings. According to Bhabha, the practice of othering leads to segregation as the dominant culture considers other cultures evil and terms them the demonic other. This concept helps shed light on the relationship between the sick and the healthy, the haves and the have nots, and the natives and the asylum seekers. For instance, otherness helps examine how the healthy characters view the sick ones, how the refugees are treated in their host nations and the position of the immigrants in their new homes. It further helps to highlight the practices/cultures that are considered superior and the ones considered inferior and the direction that the selected texts propose for the society to follow for its prosperity.

Bhabha defines Hybridity as a state when two original cultures interact and end up with a new culture with elements from both sides. The resultant culture becomes a hybrid of the two or more cultures in contact. The selected authors are victims of the hybridity since they have interacted with different African cultures and the European culture. This fact makes the post-colonial theory appropriate for interrogation of the selected texts in that it helps demonstrate how the narratives reawaken the post millennium Africa towards the hybridity of cultures. Even though Post Millennial theory is used to examine the thematic concerns of the selected texts in relation to the vision that the post millennial authors have for the post millennial East Africa, it is inadequate in Examining narrative techniques thus the need for narratology theory.

2.6.2 Narratology

Narratology, as a discipline, appeared in 1966 after the publication of *The Structural Analysis of a Narrative* on the French Journal *Communications*. Tzvetan Todorov later coined it as literary theory in 1969. Other proponents of narratology theory are Gérard Genette, Barthes and Chatman.

Narratology as a theory is concerned with the structures of a narrative. It is interested in investigating the structure and structural description of a narrative. Narratologists attempt to dissect narratives into components then strive to analyze and determine their functions and relationships.

The narratology theorist argue that all the formal elements of a text must work together to form a complete whole piece of work. A text should have organic unity and this can only be achieved if the structures work together to achieve the overall meaning of the piece of work. Moreover, a text can be understood better by analyzing its structure and meaning concurrently. Critics further believe that the literary devices used in a text gives the text meaning and helps to achieve the intended message. Narrative structures used in a text act as a skeleton on which the content of the work lies. This assertion guides the present study in dissecting the selected texts to find out how different literary devices are used to reveal the socio-cultural and economic resurgence in post millennial East Africa.

Additionally, narratological analysis is interested in the aspects of textual production thus concentrating on how a given narrative is structured and received considering the study of plot, characters, actions and their consequences. Narratologists further argue that a narrative can be analyzed historically, stylistically, theoretically, archetypally and even deconstructively, but the structures studied must be centrally and noticeably distinct to the narrative under study.

Other proponents of narratology theory include Claude Bremond, Gerald Genette, Mieke Bal and Gerald Prince who popularized the term in 1970s and considered it a structural technique for analyzing narratives. They further defined a narrative as a portrayal of a series of events in a meaningfully connected way. According to American

and Jofi (2015) some components of narratology are narration voice, tense, and the tellability. These components will guide the study as described below.

Jahn (2005) describes tellability as what makes the story worth telling. That this component of narratology focuses on the 'causal connectivity' between story units. Phelan (2008) asserts that narrative judgments are central for a rhetorical understanding not only of narrative ethics but also of narrative form and narrative aesthetics. Narratology literary theory is therefore utilized in this study to analyze the use of the narrative tellability to achieve the unity of the texts under study. The theory allows the researcher to analyze the literary piece in connection to the elements used, thus evaluating its plot structure.

Voice, as Genette (1980) points out, in traditional narratology answers the question "who is speaking?" in narrative discourse. The term refers to the way in which choices of diction and syntax convey values and thus a sense of a speaker. The who is speaking in a story is therefore an important in the analysis and understanding of a narrative. Voice, being an important component of a narrative, guides this study in understanding the texts under study. The researcher uses the narrative voice as a guide to find out how the first person/ the unreliable narrator and the innocent-eye narrators are used in the selected stories to the socio-cultural and economic reawakening in the 21st Century.

Jahn (2005) distinguishes between two kinds of tenses: the narrative past and the narrative present. The use of tense in a character's discourse, Jahn clarifies, depends on some factors like the current point in time in the story's action. However, the tense of a specific narrative does not remain the same in the whole narrative, but it changes. Tense as a component of narratology guides this study in analyzing the uses of tense in different texts. For instance, it focusses on the use of present tense to unravel socio-cultural and economic resurgence.

The term narratology is used interchangeably with theory of a narrative whose proponents believe that a story has different parts, that is: the events and the narration which consists of the narrative voice, time and narrative modes. This study majorly relies on Gerard Genette's strand of narratology which states that there are three basic

components that make up a narrative, they are: the story, the narrative and the narrating (Gennette 1980). This strand of theory of narrative guides the researcher in determining who tells the story and the relationship between the narrator and the story told.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

A research design is a plan or roadmap for investigations that the researcher intends to use in conducting his/her study (Creswell, 2012). Basing majorly on textual research, this study follows on a qualitative research design and content analysis. Content Analysis aids in obtaining a systematic qualitative description of the materials under study. It is an appropriate choice for this literary research since data is majorly generated from the selected written works of art.

The main approach in this study is close textual analysis of the primary texts in order to reveal the major concerns of the study, that is: first, identifying the styles used and their role in revealing the social-cultural and economic resurgence in selected short stories in East Africa after 2000 and second, examining the extent in which the 21st Century texts are influenced with the immediate occurrences in the society thus highlighting how much the millennium development goals had effect on the thematic issues of the selected texts.

The styles and thematic concerns identified from the selected texts are described and interpreted to reveal how the emergent post millennial writers creatively champion for the socio-cultural and economic resurgence in East Africa.

Apart from the primary texts, this research carries out a library reading of other secondary sources from the library books, internet sources, journals and other relevant written records in order to collect enough and relevant data to support in the analysis of the primary texts. The secondary records also act as the sources of data for literature review.

3.2 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The most common method of selecting the right material for a qualitative research design is purposive sampling (Streubert and Carpenter, 1995). Purposive sampling is used in a case whereby the researcher has predefined sources of materials to look for. In this study, purposive sampling is used to select the literary work and the sampling

size since the selected sources are rich on the information required in the analysis of the socio-cultural and economic enlightening in the post-colonial East African society.

Purposive sampling allows the researcher to pick on the texts that have the required information in line with the objectives of the study. Since the aim of this study is to investigate the literary use of style and the epochal relevance of the chosen works of art, the researcher purposively sampled the five short stories under study from a sample population of all East African short stories. Other considerations in the selection of these short stories are Citizenship, level of interaction with other cultures and time of production of the works. The selected authors are citizens of the given East African countries, their selected works appeared after 2000 and they must have lived outside East Africa for some time. It is assumed that spending time away from their native countries must have given them the opportunity to interact with other cultures which might have influenced their observations.

3.3 Methods of Data Collection

The study involves close reading of the selected materials with particular interest on the literary use of style and the epochal relevance of the texts. The relevant information is then recorded in the literature review metrics and other media then subjected to thorough analysis before presentation. Through close reading of the selected texts, the researcher took note of the styles/form used to reveal the socio-cultural and economic resurgence, and the extent to which the selected texts borrow thematic issues from the Millennium Development Goals for easy analysis.

Library research also exposes the researcher to relevant secondary sources of data on the socio-cultural and economic reawakening which include those sought from Journals, dissertations, books, theses and projects obtained from the Kenya National Library branch in Kisii town, the institution's main Library at Chuka University and other online sources including Cambridge University Press, JSTOR, sage journals online and African Journals (AJOL). A continued reading and review of different literatures on the selected materials helps the researcher to collect supportive evidence that aids comprehension and analysis.

3.4 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data obtained from primary sources is read, analysed and compiled. Close textual reading helps the researcher to extract data on socio-cultural and economic reawakening and the social vision of the contemporary short story writers and the narrative techniques applied in the selected texts. The analysis of data is guided by the two objectives. Those that touch on the literary use of style are compiled and organized to form Chapter Four of the discourse. The second set of data is subjected to further scrutiny and compiled as either Health related MDGs or economic related MDGS then presented in the form of a discourse in chapter five of the study with the guidance of both post-colonial and narratology literary theories. Findings from the analyzed data help in drawing conclusions based on the study objectives in chapter Six.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

The researcher obtained a research introductory letter from Chuka University which was then presented to the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) for a research permit prior to the actual study. The study observed strict adherence to plagiarism rules with clear citations and acknowledgement of the sources consulted. Other ethical issues such as methodology, data interpretations and presentation were strictly reviewed so that the results are credible and reported with honesty, integrity and confidentiality.

CHAPTER FOUR

LITERARY STYLE AND REPRESENTATION OF SOCIO-CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC RESURGENCE IN THE POST-MILLENNIAL SHORT STORY GENRE

4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines how the post millennial writers use stylistic devices/ literary techniques to champion for the socio-cultural and economic reawakening of the 21st Century East African community.

According to Ramtirth (2017), Style can be understood as a choice, a deviation, a temporal phenomenon, a situation or as an individual. Style as choice means that the writer makes deliberate choices of words and expressions to use in describing situations and/or the characters. In using style as a deviation, the writer is free to deviate from the standard form of writing and makes use of his/her own inventions while as a situation, the writer uses style in relation to the context in which the text comes to life; either social, cultural, political or pragmatic situations. Style as a temporal phenomenon is when the writer considers time factor in their text; the language use in a text should be in line with the point of history, and style as individual, is whereby every individual has his or her own unique style of speech and writing.

Scholars hold different views on the relationship between form and content of a text. Some scholars view style as a means of decorating discourse and give it some aesthetic value; it is of no relevance to the meaning of a text. It does not play any primary role in the generation of ideas and creation of arguments. According to Huemer (2016), style only comes after content. It pertains to the surface rather than the substance of a work of art. On the other hand, Bal (2009) argues that style has undeniable impact on the development of facts and how they help the audience in the interpretation of content. Every text of any genre adopts a specific and unique presentation of its plot, various degrees of narrative intrusiveness, different points-of-view strategies and different ways of depicting time. Consequently, it is important to subject narrative structures and levels of each narrative medium to a specific analytical approach.

Narratology theorist, Genette (1973) argues that all the formal elements of a text must work together to form a complete whole piece of work. This means a text should have

organic unity and this can only be achieved if the structures work together to achieve the overall meaning of the piece of work. Moreover, a text can be understood better by analyzing its structure and meaning concurrently. Gebeyehu (2019) believes that the literary devices used in a text give the text meaning and help to achieve the intended message. Narrative structures used in a text, therefore, act as a skeleton on which the content of the work lies.

Through narratology theory, this chapter analyses various narrative strategies employed in the selected short stories in relation to socio-cultural and economic resurgence of the East African nations. Thus, the theory helps to illustrate how form and content work together to give meaning to a text. This chapter discusses the narrative voice where the use of the first person narration and the innocent eye narrator is highlighted in ‘Legal Alien’ and ‘The Stone Baby’ respectively. The chapter explores how the selected authors use different voices of narration to achieve their mission of enlightening the society towards its transformation.

The chapter further discusses literary use of language in Owuor’s ‘Weight of Whispers’ and Onjerika’s ‘Fanta Blackcurrant,’ where the use of present tense and non-standard variety of English are discussed. Other features of style used to reveal different thematic issues on the socio-cultural and economic resurgence are: journey motif in ‘Legal Alien’, ‘When the Sun Goes Down’ and ‘Weight of whispers.’ Under journey motif, the study unravels what pushes the characters into taking the journeys and the changes that take place in their lives during the journey as well as the messages that these journeys pass to the readers. Proverbs and aphorisms are discussed to investigate how the post-millennial short story writers propose socio-economic improvements in the society through their stories, ‘The Stone Baby’, ‘When the Sun Goes Down,’ and ‘Weight of Whispers’. Additionally, the chapter focuses on how the selected authors use flashback as the thread that weaves plot, develop characters and bring out the themes on social-cultural and economic revival of the society thereby, depicting how form and content work together to achieve socio-cultural and economic resurgence in ‘Weight of Whispers’.

4.2 The Use of Style to Reveal Socio-Cultural and Economic Resurgence

4.2.1 The Narrative Voice

Point of view determines the perspective from which the story is told. It also helps to establish the relationship between readers and a literary text since it provides an angle through which the readers get to understand different characters. According to Diasamidze (2014), the narrative voice has to do with the story teller's point of view – the method of narration that helps in determining the angle of vision or the position from which the story is told. For any story, having a story teller is a very important element. The story teller reveals the nature of the relationship that exists between the story and the narrator which is always very important for the art of fiction. The point of view of a story shapes and colours the plot, setting, character and the way in which everything else is perceived in a story. Choosing a point of view means choosing the person you prefer to tell the story; the person who talks to the reader. The choice of a narrator can be omniscient point of view - a narrator outside the work; first-person point of view – a narrator inside the work; or dramatic point of view – telling the story from a limited omniscient.

The choice on a point of view to employ depends on the distance that the author intends to uphold between the reader and the story, and the extent to which the author is willing to involve the reader in the interpretation of the story, among other things. Authors of the selected short-stories use different points of view to express the socio-cultural and economic renewal. Narratology theory is used to dissect the selected narratives into components in order to analyze and determine their functions and relationships with the content. First person point of view and innocent-eye narrator are distinct voices used in the selected stories to reveal the place of vernacular language and religion in socio-economic development. This section examines how first-person narrator is used to demonstrate that learning different languages helps an individual to practice different cultures and knowledge on different cultures widens economic horizons. On the other hand, the use of innocent-eye narrator demonstrates the role of religion in economic betterment.

First Person narration is a method in which the storytelling lies on the shoulder of the I/we or us character. In this perspective of storytelling, the narrator is observant and

witnesses the happenings around them that may have little or no relation with them. Al-Alamin (2019) avers that using a first-person point of view means limiting omniscience to what can be known by a single character. Even though the first-person narrator is free to speculate, they can only give a report of the information that they come across as first-hand knowledge of the world or as second hand knowledge they learn from other sources. First-person narratives are subjective in that they expose the reader only to the thoughts and feelings that the narrator experiences directly.

Rutangye's 'Legal Alien,' is a short story told in the first person point of view. The narrator is a Ugandan graduate who is struggling to obtain papers to enable her get a visa to Australia for her Master of Arts Degree. She spent her early years in Australia, hence, learnt English as her first language but does not know her native language which makes her feel alienated in her own home. At the hospital, she meets a receptionist who speaks to her in Luganda but she is unable to respond. Her inability to respond threatens her success to transact business with native Ugandans. Guo (2021) avers that when first-person narrative point of view is used in the story as the story teller and protagonist, it seems to the readers that they are listening face to face to the "I" who is telling his own story or something he/she personally experienced. Everything the "I" tells tends to be regarded as true or trustworthy and thus readers tend to believe what they are reading. This can therefore, be considered a way in which Rutangye wins trust among readers.

The narrator, in an attempt to get a medical clearance that could allow her apply for a visa, realizes that she cannot speak her own language when the receptionist recognizes her to be of the same tribe because of her surname. Despite her level of education and mastery of the English language, the narrator is unable to communicate with the receptionist in their own language but just murmurs, nods and uses some gestures to pretend to be understanding yet she does not. The reader discovers the narrator's position in the following quotation:

"If you had told me where you were from, I wouldn't have told you to pay that high consultation fee. In fact, I've got enough for today, so don't bother paying for consultation. Just wait for the patient who is in now to come out and you can go in for your check-up." Thank goodness she sneaked those last sentences in English. She started rattling on in our language again. I

dared not inform her that I didn't understand a single word she was saying. Today, was not going to be the day I revealed my excuse for not knowing my mother tongue (p.25).

The ghost of failing to learn her native language haunts the narrator and she ends up feeling like an alien in her own home. She finds it very difficult to adjust to her new surroundings and feels lost and alienated. Language creates such a barrier that she cannot move and socialize freely with her own people the same way she did in Australia. She states: "I've encountered so many barriers; age barriers, education barriers, gender barriers, but none has made me feel as alienated as the language barrier" (p.2). Such sentiments point to how Rutangye sensitizes readers to start embracing their native languages lest they suffer similar experiences as the narrator. It is through language that we get to communicate with our own people, conserve our heritage and promote our diversity. In this case, Rutangye demonstrates that failure to learn native language hinders one's freedom to interact with their environment.

The use of first person narrator in this story reawakens the readers towards the struggle to learn and master their native languages. The narrator's age and level of education makes her the best story teller to narrate her experience for failing to learn her native language. Through her, the reader gets a glimpse into the real inner feelings of frustration of the character. The writer has utilized the first person point of view to expose the disadvantages of failing to learn one's native language. By learning her native language, the narrator would be able to understand two different cultures; her own and the Australian culture. The two cultures would then widen her scope of operations. Her knowledge on the two cultures would encourage cultural comparison which creates healthy improvements. Kuada (2020) avers that culture gives correct standards of evaluating values such as good, evil, beauty and legitimate acts. The narrator having learnt the Australian culture compares it with her native land and realizes that the hostile and corrupt nature of the Ugandans need improvements for the country to thrive economically. She learns that the name identity can be used as a gate pass to success in Uganda. Since from her second name all the rules are bent in the clinic and she gets all she wants, it becomes apparent to the reader that Ugandan economic culture allows corruption and tribal discrimination to thrive, and a culture that supports corruption is economically crippled. The story thus demonstrates that the

cultural practices of a people determine their level of economic success. A culture that promotes values support business operations as compared to a culture that thrives on vices.

Ngugi wa Thiongo has been in the forefront championing the use of mother tongue in writing. In his work *Decolonizing the Mind* (1992), Ngugi argues that Africans have for a long time believed in the supremacy of the language of their colonizers. Countries colonized by the French tend to believe that French is more superior than their own mother tongue. Anglophone countries also believe that the language of their master is superior; a mindset that Bhabha (1990) calls otherness. Ngugi in this case paints a scenario that the narrator in Rutangye's 'Legal Alien' finds herself into. On the same note, Bhabha states that many Africans strive to mimic the whites because they believe that everything white is superior. Africans struggle to speak like the Europeans because they consider their native languages inferior, wear like them and even eat like them at the expense of their own languages, therefore alienating themselves from their own culture. Reading 'Legal Alien' passes invaluable lesson to the readers that those who consider their native language inferior have to rethink their position since no language is inferior, thus, language is a tool for economic restructuring. It allows people from diverse borders to transact amongst themselves and share new ideas and economic cultures thereby creating an economically healthy society.

The narrator feels lost since failing to learn her native language has exposed her to untold seclusion. She has become a stranger in her own community. However much she is well versed with the tenets of the borrowed culture, she is naïve on her own identity. Through the first-person point of narration, the author demonstrates that failure to learn one's mother tongue denies speakers the opportunity to practise their culture because such people practice borrowed cultures but fail to appreciate their own. Through the narrator's frustrations, the author sensitizes the society to strive to learn and speak their own language, in addition to other languages they have the ability to acquire. Mastering many languages encourages cultural diversity that in return preserves and disseminates different cultures and heritage. In this case the post-millennial short story, that exists in the literary field when many societies have

undergone cultural transformation, can be read as a tool to call the readers to value their native languages which are important channels of cultural transmission.

Cultural diversity enables individuals and the community at large to gain knowledge from different cultural practices and in turn be able to discern and identify a culture that lacks development-oriented values and mindsets. Cultures that lack the mindset of development do not create a favorable environment for the society to thrive economically. Consequently, they fail to develop efficiently hence the need to inculcate values that can support economic development and alleviate poverty. Through learning different languages, a person gets an exposure to different cultures to learn from and choose what is best for their prosperity. Maridal (2013) states that if a society places emphasis on cultural values like honesty and diligence, its occupants develop trust and enduring business relationships thus ensuring sustainable business performance. Similarly, a society that thrives on lies and dishonest deals create an environment that is unfriendly for economic expansion. The narrator in 'Legal Alien,' experiences a rotten business atmosphere in Uganda where corruption thrives and poor political environment hinders progress. The reader learns about the widespread corruption through the narrator's remarks at the beginning of the story, a scenario that exposes different sides of the two cultures. The narrator's innocence and guilt shows that the cultural practices she borrowed from Australia condemned corruption, but in Uganda it appears to be a norm and widespread to the extent that even small clinics practise it.

The author also uses first person narrator to reveal poor health services and how it disrupts the economic power of the nation by exposing how citizens cannot achieve good medical services because of corruption, tribalism and other forms of discrimination together with high cost of health care services. The narrator worries about how she can raise the high consultation fee at the hospital only to realize that the receptionist is from her own tribe and she allows her access to the doctor without paying high consultation fee. The narrator says:

I can't believe the receptionist is not going to take my consultation fee just because I'm from her tribe! I thought corruption was only for the politicians and big businessmen. But here, in a small town clinic, I am going to be the beneficiary of a corrupt doctor's receptionist. Is this a good thing or a bad thing? Well, I don't care right now. I have spent the day running around

offices getting papers stamped. Now, I have to get a doctor to give me a check-up, approve this medical form, and stamp it. I was about to walk out of this clinic because the consultation fee alone, without the medical check-up fee, was way too high. But then, the receptionist glimpsed my name on the form and said, “Eh, you mean you are from my village! Why didn’t you tell me your surname, I would have done you a favour.” Then she started chatting away in our language (p.1).

The narrator in ‘Legal Alien’ can be said to be of good standing economically since she has travelled and studied abroad and her father is a lecturer. This means that she could probably be more economically empowered than some of the native Ugandan citizens. If she finds the medical services expensive, then it means the rest of the people could be suffering from not being able to afford such services. Rutangye, here positions the narrator in such a way that the reader is able to follow her story and her experiences thus revealing the socio-economic decay in Uganda. The narrator, therefore, becomes the voice that brings sensitization process to the readers, calling for action to save native Ugandans from such decay. Poor and unaffordable health services are of greater disadvantage to the economic well-being of the society thus the better the health sector, the better its economic power. With a guidance from Narratology literary theory, Jahn (2021) states that narratology framework leads the critics in identifying who tells what and how. Through the first person narrator, the author is able to reveal the rot that bedevils Uganda, sabotaging economic development. This can be read as a general reflection of many third world countries. In this case, the post-millennial short story acts as a sensitization channel to reveal economic sabotage in the third-world countries.

The writers also use children as narrators often referred to as the Innocent-eye narrator. Such a narrator can also be a mad person or a naïve character. According to Alhadi and Mohamed (2020), the use of a child narrator in a novel definitely simplifies the events of a novel and the topics under narration. The child narrator is used in the short stories under study to reveal how religion influences the socio-economic well-being of a people. Genette (1980) avers that the story, the narrative and the narrating are three basic components of a story that makes it complete. That by examining the narrative voice, the reader gets to understand the relationship between the voice and the narrative discourse. Thus, in examining the use of child narrator in Mbekomize’s ‘The Stone Baby’, the reader gets to experience the relationship between religion, traditions, and science in the economic resurgence.

'The Stone Baby' is a story about Upendo, a young girl who suffers some unknown illness. In an attempt to rid her of the disease, her mother tries different remedies. Upendo is first subjected to incessant prayers which are later proven futile, after which she is taken to the hospital where she is diagnosed with fibroids. Her mother is left wondering how a child her age could get a disease that affects only old women. As the story progresses, the doctor advises Upendo's mother and books her for surgery but the mother opts for traditional method of treatment. Upendo is finally subjected to some ritual although the story ends leaving the reader wondering whether Upendo gets healed after the ritual.

Through the use of innocent-eye narrator, in 'The Stone Baby,' Mbekomize makes the reader to realize the conflict between religion, traditions and modernity (science). On realizing the protrusion on the narrator's womb, mama is interested in finding a cure to restore her child's health. They attend the church services after which they go for private prayers. Mama and the pastor believe that Upendo is under some evil spirit. The narrator says:

“Katika Jina la Yesu!” The women's voices echo around the room. We all gulp the humid air into our mouths, careful to make sure it lands in the pit of our stomachs. The pastor says that this way, it will star up whatever unwelcome spirits are trapped there (p.1).

Religion offers mama the most immediate solution. Being a religious lady, she considers every ailment as spiritual thus religion becomes her only choice of remedy. Mama may be considered a religious fanatic who believes that religion cures everything. The process of reaching the pastor is tedious but she uses her authority as a church elder to reach Pastor Matau with ease. Even though she has been to the pastor for prayers for long with no immediate change and Upendo's condition is worsening, she is still blinded by religion and believes that she does not need to seek alternative means until the pastor tells her to try something else. Upendo's mother in this case represents the section of the society that holds high the religious beliefs that they may fail to reason and seek practical solutions.

Through the innocence of the narrator, the reader also gets to learn the uncouth behavior of the man of cloth in the absence of Upendo's mother. She says: 'The pastor moves

his right hand further down my abdomen. His eyes dilate.” (p.3). She exposes the hypocrisy exhibited in the worship houses. Pastors are exposed as using their power to prey on the innocent and unsuspecting congregants. The church is therefore shown to be a breeding ground for moral decadence, something contrary to societal expectations. Sexual immorality has become a menace in religious institutions and propagated by the ministers of the gospel. According to Farrell (2009), the fact that sexual abuse is perpetrated by religious leaders is one of the most contentious dilemmas that the church currently faces. Farrell further notes that sexual immorality among the clergy may have become the 21st Century phenomenon. ‘The Stone Baby’ therefore becomes a good channel that the author uses to capture the hidden practices of the church in the 21st Century. Mbekomize, in this case, uses the innocent Upendo to sensitize the readers on the effects on overreliance on religion to the point of failing to reason.

Upendo further recounts what she sees happening in the church. She talks of how the pastors have made the church to be a money-minting institution. Several baskets of money are collected but little is used to better the church infrastructure. People are thirsty for healing from different troubles and they feel that church is the only solution. The poor throng the church and give all they have at the expense of their economic betterment. The church has become notorious in misappropriation of funds as well as getting involved into fraudulent financial practices. Fikizolo (2019) states that misuse and abuse of church finances by the religious leaders has been a practice for centuries but such cases are never reported to the relevant authorities and the involved clergymen go unpunished. Mbekomize thus uses Upendo to share the cases of abuse of church funds with the readers. Despite the numerous collections made in the church, there is no accountability since the money seems not to do what it is meant to do. The reader is made aware of the church collections through what Upendo says:

Our Lutheran church has a Pentecostal soul: loud music, exorcisms and numerous collection baskets. Collection baskets that have no impact on the peeling walls or the pigeons that scatter grey-white fecal matter on the heads and shoulders of the congregants. At the end of the 2 month a Sunday service has six collection baskets: Tithes, Thanksgiving, Building Fund, Promises to God and one that accompanies the prayer because “the devil is afraid of our offerings”. Then there is the spontaneous donation, sprung on us every Sunday (p.1).

With all these contributions, the congregants still lack plastic chairs to sit on. They are forced to stand throughout the church service. One would wonder where the building fund is directed to when the congregation does not fit in the said church. Economically, Mbekomize reveals how a lot of money is pumped into the church projects at the expense personal development of the church goers. Socially, she demonstrates how some men of cloth are predators and may use the slightest opportunity to prey on innocent young girls. She thus reawakens the society to be wary of such ills and fight against those that hinder their socio-economic well-being.

Faith in religion has stifled the ability of the congregants to think of alternative solutions to their problems. They flock the churches and get private appointments with the pastor but fail to note that there is no notable progress. After several attempts on prayers, the pastor admits his inability to cure, leave alone to diagnose, the disease. It is then that mama shifts focus to science. She takes Upendo to the hospital where she is diagnosed with fibroids then booked for a surgery. Mbekomize uses the innocence of the narrator to highlight ills of religion and how it inhibits the success and financial wellbeing of the believers. The readers are thus left free to decide whether to follow religion blindly as Mama Upendo does in the initial stages of the narrative or fail to take religion seriously like Baba Upendo. At the hospital, Upendo further makes some sensitive revelations that fibroids affect children and teenagers too. Mbekomize uses the innocent-eye narrator to bring this information to the fore. At Regency Hospital, mama is relieved of the fact that her daughter, Upendo, is not pregnant as she had earlier suspected but she is equally shocked of how her daughter can suffer from the “mama’s disease.” The doctor on learning her ignorance states that: “However, I will schedule an appointment for an ultrasound. I suspect Upendo may have a benign tumour, a fibroid. It is very unusual for someone as young as Upendo to have this problem, it is more common in women over thirty, but we have to check.” (p.5). “The Stone Baby” is again used to sensitize the readers on matters health as the doctor goes ahead to reassure mama not to worry that fibroid is not a death sentence since it can be cured. Despite the fact that mama Upendo is worried about Upendo’s ability to give birth, the doctor calms her down and requests her to let them make the appointment first which is a sign of hope to the patient.

After some consultations, the narrator's mother withdraws the idea of taking the child for surgery but instead hopes for traditional treatment. The reader is left wondering whether the illness is a scientific concern, spiritual illness or may be as a result of some traditional beliefs. According to Genette (1980) each narrative medium requires a specific analytical approach to narrative structures and levels. The innocent-eye narrator here helps the reader understand what bedevils the society. Through her sickness, the reader gets to understand the different ways in which those suffering may seek solace: religion, traditions and science. The author in this case becomes what Ezekiel Mphahlele calls "the sensitive point in a society (Achebe 1990)." She uses the short story genre to expose what is ailing the post-millennial social set up and is causing suffering to these societies. By narrating this confusion that Upendo and her mother go through while seeking treatment, Mbekomize is calling on the society to be not just sensitive but more realistic in seeking solutions to their problems.

Mbekomize, therefore, advises the society to pick the best part of religious, traditions and scientific practices and make them the norms that the society should live on, an idea that Bhabha (1990) named hybridity. Bhabha states that the concept of hybridity arises when two or more cultures have interacted and created a new culture with components from the involved cultures. The narrator's mother seems lost in what to practice but at the end, she borrows from religion, traditions and science. From religion, she gets hope and faith while the hospital and modernity gives her the scientific aspects to diagnose the medical condition of her daughter. The traditional medicine accords her treatment without surgery although it is not clear whether she heals as stated earlier.

4.2.2 Literary Use of Language

Language use is also an important channel of exposing the socio-cultural and economic resurgence in the texts under study. Often the reader gets to understand issues of concern in a text only by understanding the language used in relation to the context. As Jakobson (1987) puts it, for a language to be operative, the message it passes requires a context that both the addressee and the addresser understand. Furthermore, Shrawan (2019) states that language use in literature is exceedingly creative, innovative, and is used in representing the unique expression of the human feeling.

Language use in literature is an intentional departure from what competent users of a language consider as the standard meaning of the words, standard order of words, in order to convey some special message, or achieve some effect. It is this manipulation of language which allows writers to transform their basic concepts into an effective and meaningful message. Shrawan (2019) adds that it is this very freedom to manipulate language that enables a reader to understand the meaning of a literary work. In order to compose a good piece of art, one has to do some research concerning themselves with the morphological, phonological, syntactical, and semantic components of a language, together with linguistic aspects like plot, setting, characterization, theme, imagery and motifs. The authors of the selected short stories utilize language to; first, highlight the plight of refugees and the voiceless in the society and how much they influence the socio-cultural and economic stability of a society and Second, to highlight the universal importance of a common language in order to demonstrate the effects of form in enhancing the socio-cultural and economic resurgence in the post-millennial literature.

A look into ‘Weight of Whispers’ shows that Owuor (2003) tells her story in present tense to intensify the emotions of the reader towards the painful plight of the refugees and the voiceless in the society. The narrative shows that the 21st Century, East African community is still deep into civil wars and its aftermath is disastrous to the economy. In the story, Kuseremane and his family escape Rwanda using Kenya as a route to exile but end up as refugees in Kenya. In an attempt to secure travel papers out of Kenya, Kuseremane uses all the money he has and plunges into poverty. The family falls from riches to destitution and suffer betrayal from friends and relatives, some of whom, they had assisted during their ‘feel good’ days.

Owuor uses present tense to sensitize the community to look at things from some different perspectives – rethink their way of utilizing labour from asylum seekers to better the economy. From the story, it is apparent that the refugees and the voiceless in the society get cold and inhuman treatment in their host nations or in their dwelling camps in case of the internally displaced persons. The following quotation shows what Kuseremane undergoes at the hands of the police who are supposedly tasked to protect and guide him:

A thin sweat-trail runs down my spine, the backs of my knees tingle. I look around at the faceless others in the dank room. His hand grabs my goatee and twists. My eyes smart. I lift up my hand to wipe them. The man sees the gold insignia ring, glinting on my index finger... The Policeman's grin broadens. He pounces. Long fingers. A girl would cut her hair for fingers like his. He spits on my finger, and draws out the ring with his teeth; the ring I have worn for 18 years - from the day I was recognised by the priests as a man and a prince. It was supposed to have been passed on to the son I do not have. The policeman twists my hand this way and that, his tongue caught between his teeth; a study of concentrated avarice. (p.1)

Kuseremane suffers abuse in the hands of the Kenya police to the extent of bribing them but does not get served. In trying to get services from the Kenyan and American Embassies, no one understands that he is a refugee or maybe, a visitor seeking a way out of the county. The family ends up alone, in total poverty and extreme hunger. In an attempt to find some route to survival, Chi-chi – a sister to Kuseremane – ends up in prostitution leading to her death. The system in place has sealed their fate. They cannot get jobs nor secure better services because no one can speak for them and no one is ready to listen to them.

It appears that Kuseremane is aware of the suffering that the refugees undergo; that is why he is reluctant to register as a refuge after reading from the dailies that the Registration of the refugees was to begin at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). He says, “The Kuseremanes are not refugees. They are visitors, tourists, people in transit, universal citizens with an affinity...well...to Europe (p.9).” Owuor, therefore, sounds a wakeup call that some of these refuges are learned people who can help build the economy instead of leaving them to be a burden to the economy of their host nations. Kuseremane is a prince, a Diplomat and well educated because he holds a PhD in Diplomacy and a Masters in Geophysics. His attempt to acquire some job in Kenya fails because the immigration officer demands papers which he does not have. The officer does not listen to him when he talks about his PhD but instead he laughs out loud and ridicules him: “Ati PhD. PhD gani? Wewe refugee bwana!” (p.20). The officer threatens to report Kuseremane to the authorities for being in the country without relevant papers thus forcing him to pay US\$500 for the police to remain silent.

Corrupt practices drain the pockets of Kuseremane so that he cannot take care of his family. His economic worth is further dented that he cannot sustain himself. He has to

struggle to flee Kenya for Europe which may offer better environment as compared to his homeland and Kenya – his host nation. Kuseremane goes ahead to satirically describe his encounter with the police officers in present tense. He says: “The collection of teeth on the man’s face is a splendid brown. I have never seen such teeth before. Refusing all instructions, my eyes focus on dental contours and craters. Denuded of any superficial pretence; no braces, no fillings, no toothbrush, it is a place where small scavengers thrive.” This description gives evidence of the nasty environment that corruption creates in a nation that practises it. Corruption costs Kuseremane the little he has instead of providing a solution to his misery.

The use of present tense underlines the immediacy with which the plight of the refugees needs to be addressed. In page 21 Kuseremane says, “I have used 5 shillings to buy small round green sweets from a mute street vendor. Good green sweets which calm hunger grumbles. A few more days and we will be leaving. I have resolved not to bother compiling curriculum vitae.” After failed attempts to get a job, Kuseremane stops trying any more. He is filled with hopes that his family is leaving Kenya soon. The numbers of the refugees are escalating each waking day, mostly due to civil wars, for instance, in South Sudan and DRC. The likes of Kuseremane can be employed as expatriates in their field of expertise and thus help reduce the number of people laying burden on their host government or the UNHCR. If such qualified refugees cannot be employed, the corrupt systems that deny services to the voiceless citizens can be abolished to ease the access to these services. Owuor exposes that the refugees do not enjoy any rights but struggle through bureaucratic systems in Kenya and are in constant threat of being arrested for nothing. After several attempts of getting a job, Kuseremane loses interest in searching for one. He summons hope believing that things are going to work to his advantage so that he can get his family out of Kenya. He states:

Outside the shop, my hands are shaking. I have to remind myself to take the next step and the next step and the next step. My knees are light. I am unable to look into the eyes of those on the streets. What is my mind doing getting around the intricacies of a foreign currency? I have to get out with my family. Soon. P. 21

Kuseremane creates a feeling that if he continues to stay in the foreign nation (Kenya), he would suffer more trouble as opposed to the peace and harmonious leaving they had

expected. It therefore forces them to find a way of fleeing the trouble-forsaken country with some urgency.

The present tense allows the reader to feel empathy; feel the exact pain that the once royal family is going through in their exile or let's say refugee life. After being duped by his friend Rene, Kuseremane is left wondering on the streets. Kuseremane says, "Which way did they go?" I ask the guard in black with red stripes on his shoulder. He shrugs. He says they entered into a blue Mercedes. Their driver had been waiting for them. He thinks they went to the Carnivore. It is raining as I walk back to River Road. Three fledglings are waiting for me, trusting that I shall return with regurgitated good news (p.16)." With nothing to carry home even though he hoped he would get some cash from Rene, he is lost for words, he hums as he walks home dejectedly. The reader sympathizes with the kind of misfortunes that Kuseremane and the family face in their host nation Kenya. The feeling of empathy is meant to reconfigure how the society perceives asylum seekers. They should be treated with some dignity.

Owuor uses the present tense to bring out the unreliable protagonist; what John Updike (1960) calls the jumpy or unstable protagonist. 'Weight of Whispers' portrays Kuseremane as an unreliable narrator. His story seems broken and some pieces missing. Through this, he makes the readers sympathize with him as the victim of all the ill treatments. However, when the different parts of the story are put together, the reader gets to realize that Kuseremane must have been one of the perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide and this explains why everyone avoids him and the ill-treatment he receives from his country men who are also in exile in Kenya. When he mentions to professor George that his name, Kuseremane is in the list of Genocidiaries, Professor too disappears: "With the same agility that the crocodile used to become a log again, Professor George pulls away from the fence. He wipes his hand, the one I had shaken, against his shirt. He steps away, one step at a time, then he turns around and trots, like a donkey, shouting, looking over his shoulder at me," (p.31). All Kuseremane's letters are not replied to, simply because he is not the innocent Kuseremane we see at the beginning of the story. The use of present tense in this case helps the readers to learn the value of self-evaluation. Through self-evaluation, an individual is able to connect

dots in their lives and understand why things happen in a particular way, hence, make informed choices.

One can argue that, Owuor uses the present tense to bring out Kuseremane – the unreliable narrator to - awaken the masses into understanding that the individual actions in the society may end up leading them to their own suffering. In addition, it passes the message that people can never escape the consequences of their actions however far or fast they run. Kuseremane suffers the consequences of his actions: loses his wealth, sees his daughter and fiancée join prostitution and eventual death of his mother Agnethe. In the end, his name comes out open in the newspapers as a major force behind the war. Owuor, therefore, uses her short story to sway the society into reconsidering their actions and avoiding those that can cause civil wars leading to the suffering that the refugees undergo.

Poetic license allows the writers to use language in a manner that deviates from its conventional use. The author has freedom to choose which language to use in order to achieve the desired effect. For this reason, the selected writers might have chosen to deviate from the use of standard variety of English in order to achieve various effects.

For a long time, there has been a debate and confusion on the language to use in the production of literature in Africa. As some scholars advocate for embracing the native language for diversity, others are of the opinion that authors should use the European language(s) for universality. They are in a situation that Bhabha (1990) refers to as the inbetweenness. As stated earlier, Ngugi (1986) is one such writer who advocates for the use of native languages in producing literatures while Chinua Achebe argues that writing in a universal language is the best option as it speaks to a wider audience. In ‘Weight of Whispers,’ Owuor exposes the diversity that Africa enjoys through the use of different languages. The protagonist meets different people during his time in exile and during his numerous trips abroad when he was still ‘a man of substance’. Coming to Kenya, he realizes that Kenya is an Anglophone nation as opposed to Rwanda where they speak French and Kinyarwanda as official languages.

The fact that Rwanda is mostly francophone shows why Kuseremane uses French in many episodes of the story. For instance, Roger says, “J’ai terminé. Tout a été nettoyé.” It is done. All has been cleaned.” (p.5). In Kenya, Kuseremane is forced to speak English to be understood. He says, “Their language and manner are not as sweet and gentle as ours.” (p.7). At some point he meets a policeman who harasses him in Swahili. He is therefore forced to try to practice English language so that he can get closer to the Kenyans. The use of all the above languages can be interpreted to reveal the need for a common language to achieve universality. That language should not only be used as a mark of identity but also as a discursive channel. As Bhabha (1990) posits on the concept of otherness, it is clear that no language is superior to the other and for one to fit in a particular environment, they must use a language that can be understood in that environment. Since Kuseremane struggles to fit in the different countries that he visits due to language barrier, Owuor thus points to the need for a common language.

Chi-chi is forced to try her best to learn the basic Swahili in order to fit in the neighbourhood the Kuseremanes’s occupy after leaving the hotel. Kuseremane says, ‘Chi-Chi has learned to say “Tafadhali, naomba maji.” She asks for water this way, there are shortages.’ (p.13). During one of his visits to Netherlands, Kuseremane is forced to speak to an African man in Dutch in order to understand each other. Even though this man has origins in Sierra Leone, he has mastered the Dutch language in order to fit in that foreign land. Mastering the Dutch language, however, does not make the African man forget his own Identity as he uses the West African Pidgin to talk to Kuseremane. He says: “Broda.” he savors the word. “Broda... its fine to see de eyes of anoda man...it is fine to see de eyes.” (p.26). Owuor, therefore, suggests that however much one wants to preserve their heritage and diversity, however much one has to learn their native languages, they have to struggle to acquire other languages for them to fit in the international scene. In this way, Owuor uses different languages and dialects in her story to reawaken the society towards embracing the universality; she starts by admitting that diversity should be upheld. Native languages are good and they help individuals to establish and appreciate their identity. However, in order to get into business with the rest of the world, people have to struggle and at least acquire the international languages. Owuor uses different languages at different points and instances to expose how different languages fit in different environments. Although in

post-colonial theory, Bhabha (1990) discourages mimicry of languages that may water down the use of native languages, Owuor advocates for a use of language in the context it fits; most of her characters are struggling to achieve universality by learning and using the language of that region. Owuor, therefore, uses literature to emphasize the importance of learning many languages for social interaction and international consciousness.

According to Shrawan (2019), “In the world of aesthetics there has been a marked awareness of the creative use of language and its meaning. Aristotle in his Poetics, talks of language as distinguished and out of the ordinary when it makes use of exotic expressions; non-standard words, metaphor, lengthening, and anything contrary to current usage. He also holds that any deviation from the use of ordinary words will give it a non-prosaic appearance (p.6)”. In ‘Fanta Blackcurrant,’ Onjerika uses sub-standard English to establish the need of learning international languages for universality. The use of sub-standard English in the short story reveals the illiteracy level of the street children and their thirst to acquire knowledge which also reveals the different classes of people in the society and their economic standing. Due to their poverty level, the teenage street girls undergo several economic challenges. Socially, when the TV people visit the street children, to capture a news item on police brutality leading to the death of one of the boys, the girls cannot address the nation because of their language inadequacy. In a national TV, only a person with some basic knowledge in English can speak and that is where Meri, the main character, comes in. The narrator says:

All of us wanted to be put in the TV. Quickly, quickly we beat dust out of our clothes; we stopped smiling loudly to hide our black teeth; we pulled mucus back inside our noses. All of us wanted to tell the story of Wanugu, how he was killed with a gun called AK47 when he was just sitting there at Jevanjee gardens, breathing glue and hearing the lunchtime preacher say how heaven is beautiful. He was not even thinking which car he could steal the eyes or mirrors or tyres. All of us told the story, but at night when we went to the mhindi shops to look ourselves in the TVs being sold in the windows, we saw only Meri. She was singing Ingrish (p.2)

Meri puzzles all the Street children with her knowledge of English. They have never heard anything like it since they have never gone to school but Mari at least attended the elementary levels of education. Not only are they jealous of Meri but also fear that people may come and save Meri from the streets. Meri, apart from revealing the state

of language in the street, has also managed to talk to the world with her little knowledge in English. This, too, is a fact that even though native languages are important and portray how the world appreciates diversity in cultural heritage, we also need the international languages in order to reach the world. Thus, Makena Onjerika and Yvonne Owuor make use of local dialect and non-standard English to sensitize the society on the significance of embracing other languages and at the same time learning a universal language. The authors, therefore, utilize language stylistically to enlighten the society on the socio-cultural and economic transformation.

4.2.3 The Journey Motif

Another style that the writers employ to reveal socio-cultural and economic resurgence is the journey motif. According to Mahima (2021), a motif may be used in literature to symbolize something larger than itself. In addition, the effectiveness of a motif depends on its role in the artistic structure as opposed to its own meaning. A motif, therefore, operates like something of an extended symbol in a work of art and helps to suggest new levels of meaning.

The journey in literature is an important symbol frequently used to represent a character's adventure leading to a self-realization or some sort of notable change. The reader who does not become a physical part of the journey gets to experience it through the visual imagery that the author employs. Journey motif is not restricted to the mere transfer of physical self from one point to another, but rather involves the mental rejuvenation (Gachuiiri, 2018). A creative writer can thus, decide to use the journey motif in their work with a collection of intentions due to the fact that it plays the role of enriching the literary meanings. The journey motif is utilized in Rutangye's 'Legal Alien,' Kamau's 'When the Sun Goes Down,' Owuor's 'Wheight of Whisper' and Onjerika's 'Fanta Blackcurrent.' to demonstrate the social and economic growth of different characters hence, the reawakening.

In the selected short stories, all the major characters seem to be moving with or without some intent. Consequently, the journeys they make leave some mark on their being. In Rutangye's 'Legal Alien,' the narrator moves from Australia to her native country Uganda after her father secures a job at Makerere University; a journey that leads her

to self-realization. She discovers what she lacks to fit in her society – the inability to speak her native language – and what she needs to do to escape all the tribulations brought by failing to learn her native language. Even though the main intention of the journey is to go back to a peaceful home, the journey helps the reader to learn a different situation in Uganda. The narrator's father has been in Exile since the start of Amin's regime in Uganda, and on learning that normalcy has returned in Uganda he resigns from his job in Australia to go back home. At home, the narrator is exposed to several challenges including the language barrier as discussed earlier. She learns that there is no peace in Uganda as the family had thought because the nation is still experiencing a lot of challenges that hinder economic growth. Due to disputes in the presidential elections, the opposition members are on a strike which in turn affects business as people escape teargas:

Ever since Muammar Gaddafi died, the opposition thinks it can overthrow our president too. So every Monday they hold 'Walk to Work' demonstrations. All opposition party members and parliamentarians walk to their offices. Idlers and workers in town stand by the roadsides to cheer them on or join them, so every Monday morning the police and army roam about in 'mambas' spraying tear gas and pink water at the crowds, then the shops close for a few hours to prevent theft, until the protestors are arrested.' (p.28)

The stories act as a pointer towards the unbecoming routine in African countries that after every election, the countries break into chaos. The post-colonial African state is painted as undemocratic or rather the leaders are filled with too much greed to accept election results or maybe hold fair and credible elections.

The narrator realizes that the peace they were seeking (that made her family leave Australia) is far from a reality in that the country is still suffering political instability. The situation in Uganda has divided the citizens into two groups, the pro-government group and the team against government. This kind of division harms the social set-up of the society therefore leading to unhealthy socialization. Economically, the pandemonium in town hinders smooth running of the businesses. The entrepreneurs find it difficult to work in such a hostile environment so they close their shops for some time until normalcy returns. It is therefore, clear that civil disobedience is a great threat to economic growth and development. It is only peace that attract investors in the nation

as represented by the narrator's family who come back home with an aim of building their country. Realizing that things may not change for the better to support her wellbeing, the narrator is processing travel papers in readiness to go back to Australia. She leaves a changed person with vast knowledge of herself, her culture and the state of her nation. She takes yet another journey out of her country Uganda. This time not seeking peace but in search for knowledge. One may argue that she is really not travelling back to Australia to earn her master's degree but to escape the isolation and alienation brought about by lack of knowledge of her native language and to escape her warring country. Through this journey, the reader learns the significance of peace in the society. The author therefore uses this style to enlighten the society to create a peaceful environment for a better socio-economic development.

The narrator learns a lot from her Ugandan family and friends, and teaches them a lot in return. She acquires the Ugandan culture that expects women to kneel down when speaking to elders, and learns how to prepare and cook Ugandan dishes. She also learns a bit of Luganda language. Similarly, the Ugandan friends also learn a great deal from her; they learn that not every Ugandan overseas is doing menial jobs to survive and they expanded their geographical knowledge on the difference between Australia and America. The narrator says:

I have learnt a lot since then, over the years. I have learnt to kneel when greeting elders and to peel and steam *matooke* in its banana leaves. I have learnt to iron clothes with a charcoal iron when there is no power, and to cook with firewood. I learnt to wear three pairs of shorts under my school uniform so that it didn't hurt as much when I was caned by teachers. I learnt enough Luganda to bargain for things in Owino market, and how to make *kwepena* balls out of any piece of soft rubbish in the compound. I no longer have an Australian accent. My friends learnt a lot too. They learnt the difference between Australia and America. They learnt that not every Ugandan abroad is cleaning toilets and bedpans in hospitals. They learnt that not every child from abroad is a spoilt brat who can't climb trees; in fact, children from *bulaaya* can be very generous with their fancy toys! They learnt that it is futile to speak vernacular to someone who spent the first nine years of their life speaking English in a foreign continent (p.29).

From the above quote, it is evident that movement and interactions with different cultures can positively affect our cultures thus a people need to pick the best out of the cultures that they interact with. The alleged presence of peace in Uganda prompted the

narrator's journey and its absence triggers another travel. This relocation, to and from Uganda, demonstrates that a peaceful environment attracts and retains visitors thus the journey motif is significant not just as a pointer to new places but also as a trope that facilitates interactions, discoveries and exposes threats to healthy socio-economic development of the society.

In Goro wa Kamau's 'When the Sun Goes Down,' the reader gets to learn that life itself is a journey and at one point, the occupants of the world will be replaced by new generations. Consequently, the people around an individual during the tough moments determines the kind of life one lives. In the journey of life, Maurine meets her soldier husband who is a womanizer, beats her up and leaves her with HIV/AIDs. It is later in her life, after the death of her husband that she meets Steve her true love. Kamau uses this journey to expose the challenges of marriage and how the marriage institution can be a nightmare with a wrong choice of partner. Later, with Steve, they build a strong family that wades through the challenges of life. This journey is therefore an enlightenment that family as a basic unit of the society needs some integrity and love in order to thrive.

Steve on his Journeys between Kangema and Muranga meets Maurine who sits with him in the front seat. It was love on the first sight; they meet later as he waits for his matatu to fill. It is during this conversation that he learns that Maureen was earlier married to a soldier who mistreated her but remained faithful to the man and always prayed hoping the man would change to the better. Steve marries Maureen only to realize later that Maureen is HIV-positive. Meeting and falling in love with Maureen changes his life completely. The life's journey as an HIV-positive individual teaches Steve serious life lessons. He learns that one's social circle might diminish when they suffer from HIV/AIDs – a disease whose carrier is considered immoral and therefore a societal outcast. His friends alienate him due to stigmatization. Steve thus, learns that social acceptance and economic growth only succeeds with the people around you. Steve says: 'Tragedy is friendship that wears the cloak of hypocrisy! That is how they hanged Jesus...' (p.17). his social wellbeing is hurt. Even though he is at peace with himself, he is at war with the social constructs (stigmatization) thus suffers a great deal. Lack of peace and societal acceptance robs him the ability to run his matatu business

effectively. People referred him a sinner in the society therefore very few people would dare associate with him. He becomes the inferior other as Bhabha (1990) puts it. If Kanja is unable to take a glass of juice offered to him, one wonders if he can dare travel in the same vehicle with an HIV positive person. Kamau uses this journey to enlighten the society on how stigmatization and alienation of the less fortunate people in the society bedevils socio-cultural and economic development of the same society.

In 'Fanta Blackcurrant,' Meri – the protagonist – is always on move, disappearing from the gang members and coming back a different person with every journey. She comes back clean, with new clothes and with more economic value, either with money or different foods. Her journeys expose different sides of the nation; the poverty, hunger and suffering that the street children undergo on the other hand, and the wealth and opulence that the town people enjoy on the other. Meri's first journey occurs when she comes to the street from home after the death or maybe disappearance of her parents carrying her mother's rosary and a knife that killed her father as a souvenir. In the streets she learns new survival tactics, she gets into drug abuse and her life changes totally. She learns to move up and about the street begging for money and later gets into prostitution where the reader is exposed to how the watchman connects them to customers then they share the proceeds. After becoming pregnant, Meri has to devise other methods of survival. She changes her begging positions to the supermarket entrance. This spot favours her since she earns notable amount but in turn angers the other beggars. This journey exposes the conman ship in the streets. Beggars with broken legs stand when nobody is seeing them and chase Meri away from their spot. She goes else where only to be harassed by healthy women who parade their children on the street to beg and earn them money. The author thus uses this journey to sensitize the readers to be vigilant of the street beggars in that some of them are just con men and women who make a living through begging. They fleece money from unsuspecting Samaritans.

Another journey occurs when Meri just disappears from her gang. No one knows where she has gone but when she comes back, she is completely different. She is clean and no longer in rags. She is no longer carrying old cloths for sanitary towels instead she is carrying bread, milk, sugar, sweets, soap and even Fanta blackcurrant. The content of

her bag are luxurious things that leave her gang wondering where she got them but she could not share her secret. The reader later learns that Meri has learnt the art of stealing to survive. It is through her journey that she learns new ways of survival leading to being beaten and eventual death of her unborn child. Through her journey, Meri, reveals that it is the normal and well-to-do men who are responsible for the pregnancies of most of the street children. Instead of supporting the street children economically or may be take them back to school, 'normal men' support them by increasing their number; something that is of detriment to the economic development of a nation. Meri on realizing the unfavorable environment and the poor living standard she experiences, leaves the street to some unknown destination and never returns. Her journey reveals the problems that street children go through and therefore the author uses the short story as a conduit for sensitization and call for action to help street children. Makena further calls on the society to end activities that promote the sufferings of the street family. Jahn (2021) states that Narratology framework is keen on who says what and how, one would argue that the journey motif is a component of this story that helps it reveal the need to move to a safe place where there is peace in support for economic well-being.

In 'The Stone Baby,' Mbekomize utilizes the journey motif too. After failing to get healing from religion, Mama Upendo opts to take her to the hospital with a thought that Upendo is pregnant. Through the journey mama Upendo expresses her passionate hate for Muslims and describes them as terrorists and warns Upendo against her relationship with a Muslim boy alleging that the relationship will give forth an Al-shabab. Upendo calms her mother down and tells her that not all Muslims are terrorists hence mama should not refer to them as such. Mbekomize thus uses this journey to advocate for religious tolerance through Upendo. In the hospital, the duo meets a nurse whom Upendo notices that "Her fingers were the colour of unharvested wheat, but her knuckles were coal black." The description exposes how Africans try to bleach their skin in an attempt to copy the Europeans; an act that Bhabha (1990) describes as mimicry. This shows how much Africans are not proud of their complexion and considers it primitive to the extent that they don't want to be identified with it. Mbekomize thus uses short story to remind the society of cultural erosion that is robbing it of rich heritage.

Owuor too, exploits the use of journey motif in her story ‘Weight of Whispers.’ Due to war outbreak in Rwanda, Boniface Kuseremane together with his family take a journey to Europe with Kenya as a link to their destination. Their stay in Kenya reveals the plight of refugees in their host nations and the effects of war on socio-economic development. Socially, the family loses every single friend they could count on. Former friends let them down, and they are betrayed in money matters, while the women resort to prostitution in order to secure a pass to immigrate to Canada. In one of Kuseremane’s remarks, the reader gets to learn of the different journeys he has undertaken:

In the seasons of my European sojourn, Brussels, Paris, Rome, Amsterdam, rarely London, a city I could, then, accommodate a loathing to, I wondered about the unsaid; hesitant signals and interminable reminders of ‘What They Did’. Like a mnemonic device, the swastika would grace pages and, or screens, at least once a week, unto perpetuity. I wondered (p.3).

These journeys exposed ugly sides of war from different nations. It becomes clear how war erodes peace and sends people to different sojourns to find peace and that powerful humans enjoy to shortchange powerless humans instead of helping them out. In Krakow, Kuseremane meets an academician who hands him a seminal work to go through and the title of the work, ‘A Mystagogy of Human Evil’ send them into discussions reveling the evil nature of human beings. Kuseremane learns that adversity reveals one’s truest friends. Due to war, the once royal family loses their powerful position only to live at the mercy of other more powerful men. The family realizes that Human beings think of just themselves first, sacrifice others for their own good, or abuse others just because they have the power to do so. Owuor uses exile to demonstrate the effects of violence to the social and economic wellbeing. Through war, the family loses all its wealth since it cannot access its account thus unable to transact any business of economic value. In Kenya they live in misery that they cannot get into any business. Their economic power is lost due to the absence of peace. The use of journey motif thus becomes a significant channel to highlight how conflict undermines the socio-economic betterment of the society.

4.2.4 Juxtaposition

In addition to the already discussed styles, the authors under study also utilize juxtaposition to make a commentary on the societal socio-economic situation.

Juxtaposition in literature is the side by side placement of two or more concepts, pictures, other literary elements, places or characters, which for the most part, may not come together. Writers typically use this technique to make readers understand a text in view of the similarities or differences between the elements juxtaposed. Juxtaposition can also be called contrast. It is used in the stories to drive the readers towards advocating for practical and holistic education system in their societies which exposes the upcoming generation to practical ways of tackling different problems in their lives thus gets empowered socially and economically.

Rutangye, in 'Legal Alien,' compares and contrasts her native land – Uganda – and Australia. For instance, on class population, Ugandan education system allows for a hundred or more students per class. The classes are densely populated with one bench carrying seven pupils. In contrast, in Australia, the Grade 2 class had thirty-two pupils and it was the biggest in the whole school. The narrator recounts that: "I couldn't understand my new surroundings. Back in Australia, my Grade 2 class – with just thirty-two pupils - was the biggest in the whole school. Each class had a fridge to keep snacks until break time and a microwave to warm them if necessary (p.25)." The individual attention that each learner gets in Australia is therefore much better than the Ugandan system. According to Genette (1980), each component of a story serves an important function to make the story meaningful, contrast in this case brings out the glaring shortcomings in the East African education system that may disadvantage its citizens when competing for economic empowerment with their peers from the developed nations since such education systems produce a whole rounded person who is more productive in the society. The reader is then made aware of the inadequacies of the education systems in the developing countries like Uganda.

On infrastructure, the author shows Australian Schools are well maintained as compared to Ugandan schools. In Uganda, the classroom walls are dirty and paints are scratched out. There is no space for teacher's desk, no carpet, no sleeping corner and even tiles. The narrator describes the class to hold only the children, benches, a cemented floor and a huge black board positioned at the front. On the other hand, in Australia, a class has a carpet for story time, and tables for writing, a painting corner,

an imaginary nature corner and a sleeping corner for taking afternoon naps. The narrator states:

My Australian class had a carpet for story time and tables for writing at and red and blue building blocks for doing algebra. We also had a painting corner, an 'imaginary' corner, and a sleeping corner for taking afternoon naps. And we could wear anything we wanted. Not like this school, where I had to wear white socks pulled up to my knees and a green and white checked dress that looked exactly like the ones mummy used to wear when she was pregnant with my younger brother - except mine had a belt. Such a strange uniform! (p.25)

From the clear contrast depicted in the quote, the reader gets to learn the kind of environment that Ugandan children undertake their education as compared to Australian schools. The author therefore uses juxtaposition in this case to expose the challenges and disadvantages learners go through in the third-world countries. Basing on Bhabha's (1990) concept of otherness, Australia becomes the superior other in matters education while Uganda becomes the inferior other. In Uganda, learners wear specific kind of uniform while in Australia, learners are free to wear anything that they like. They are even allowed to keep their hair long which is not allowed in the Ugandan School rules and regulations. With this comparison, the writer sensitizes the society to strive to better the school environment since from it the young generation learn a lot that may help them improve the socio-economic status of their societies.

Moreso, Australia boasts of relaxed learning environment for learners and learners have a healthy relationship with their teachers. They are free that they get it easy and satisfactory to appreciate their teachers for teaching them, something unheard of in Uganda. The teachers in Uganda find it strange when the narrator thanks them after the lesson. She says: "...I went to thank the teachers for their classes. They were sitting at their table on the classroom verandah. My thanking them sparked off some kind of debate." (p.27). The social set up of the Ugandan Schools may have contributed largely to the learners lack of values. For instance, learners may consider their teachers hostile and abusive that they do not see any need of appreciating them. Due to harsh economic times, Ugandan learners maybe so concerned with survival and passing the day as opposed to practicing values they get. One may still argue that learners in Uganda lack perfect models to learn values from; the narrator only finds the class teacher approachable out of all the staff members. Australian education system therefore

imparts important life values such as honesty and humility which the Ugandan schools may not cover. The learners are exposed to different life skills for their holistic development. It is worth noting that the society needs these virtues to prosper, therefore, the author is championing for a society where school system not only imparts knowledge but also spread relevant virtue for the socio-economic wellbeing.

Additionally, In Ugandan schools, learners are subjected to corporal punishment, something that is illegal in Australia. Teachers harass learners and learners are not given time to express themselves. During her stay in Uganda, as a new pupil in Nakasero School, the teacher slaps the narrator for failing to do the assignment yet that was her first day in school while in Australia, we are told that a teacher is not allowed to beat a student. Slapping a pupil would be criminal in Australia and only parents are allowed to discipline their own children. This contrast between Uganda and Australian system of education provokes the readers to realize that hostility and violence are not healthy for the growth and development of a child. A child that grows in fear fails to develop relevant social skills thus may not help the society achieve it socio-economic betterment. It is apparent that learners in Uganda are not exposed to diplomatic ways of solving problems. The teacher does not even find out why the narrator has not done the assignment and does not correct her in a welcoming way. The hostile environment that the learners go through may contribute greatly to the number of hostilities experienced in the countries. Learners grow up knowing that the only way to get something done is through violence and this may explain widespread strikes and demonstrations in Uganda. The author thus uses short story to enlighten the society towards ensuring school impart relevant values to the learners that will in turn determine the kind of society they live in.

‘Legal Alien,’ also compares and contrasts service delivery in Australia and Uganda. In Uganda the power supply is so poor and often interrupted without prior communication whereas in Australia power only goes off once or twice a year and the interruptions are communicated six months earlier. About media operations, Uganda suffers government control over which channels to watch and which to avoid. The narrator laments that there were only two TV channels for children. In contrast, there

is free media coverage and there is a variety of channels for the children to choose from in Australia. The narrator laments:

Uganda was horrible at first! When we arrived, three weeks before my initiation into Ugandan school days, we did not have electricity for two days in a row. After that, electricity was off every other night. There were only two TV stations; UTV and CTV. Between those two stations, there were only five cartoons; *Pingu*, *Superbook*, *Kissyfur*, *Duck Tales* and *Didi*. Well *Didi* wasn't a cartoon, but he was just as fun to watch since he was a clown. In Australia, power only went off once or twice a year, and the dates of the power cuts were announced at least six months before the blackout. And there were two whole channels dedicated to cartoons all day and night. Here, the cartoons only came on during the weekdays in the evenings... (p.29)

With reliable power supply, the learners are able to conduct their private studies without interruptions in Australia as compared to Uganda where the narrator has to devise methods of ironing her uniforms. TV Channels are also available in variety that can aid learners learning during their leisure time apart from entertainment. Rutangye, therefore, employs juxtaposition as a style to bring out the differences that exist between developed nations and the developing nations and how education system in Australia provides learners with conducive environment for their holistic growth, something lacking in the developing nations. In Australia, learning is practical and learners do their mathematics using building blocks while in Uganda learners are subjected to theoretical learning. It can therefore be argued that through such short stories, literature becomes a tool for sensitization especially for developing countries where learning seems not to have adopted modern technology. In a way, the short story is a tool for resurgence because writers use these stories to point out what is lacking in specific societies.

4.2.5 Proverbs and Aphorisms

The authors under study also utilize proverbs and aphorisms as stylistic aspects that help to propose socio-economic improvements. Different scholars have come up with varied definitions of proverbs. Finnegan (1970) acknowledges that the exact definition of proverb may not be easy to come about. Mensah (2013) defines proverbs as short, succinct sayings that contain the reserves of traditional wisdom which are passed down from one generation to another. Mensah adds that proverbs reflect the practical

knowledge and deep thinking and express long-standing truth gained through experience; they are symbolic of the rich cultural histories of the people. According to Orwenjo (2009), proverbs are noble fields of African Oral tradition that enjoy a special prestige of being the custodian of people's collective philosophy of life, experience, fear, wisdom and aspirations.

Finnegan (1970) argues that proverbs bring out a feeling of language for imagery and for expression of abstract ideas through compressed and allusive phraseology in many African cultures. It is therefore true to note that proverbs, especially local Proverbs, are well rooted in the cultural tradition of a people for the purpose of criticizing bad things in the society, guiding people to get rid of problems in life, summarizing situations, passing judgment and encouraging hard work among the individuals. Proverbs are used depending on the situation at hand. They fit in different contexts. Russo (1987), acknowledges that proverbs are found in all human cultures, they display similar structural features across the widest spectrum of languages and societies and they serve many of the same functions.

Closely related to Proverbs is Aphorism. It can be defined as a short adroit saying that is intended to express a general truth. According to Sahibzada et al (2020) aphorism is more or less the same as a proverb which has a quotable quality. Aphorism has been known for a long time and widely used in notable books like the Bible especially in the Book of Proverbs. The aphorism was also seen in the writings of the Greek and Latin writers of the Classic times. The precision of the aphorism for reasoning and persuasive power has been widely accepted.

Băiaş (2015) traces the origin of the word aphorism from the Greek word "aphorismos" which means to distinguish or define. Băiaş notes that aphorism shares certain traits with an axiom, proverb, short dictum, the adage, the epigram and the cliché hence can fit in the same category. According to Auriel and Strumpf (1989), the aphorism is "a concise statement of a principle, a short pointed sentence expressing a wise or a clever observation or a general truth".

From the above definitions, aphorism can simply be defined as an author's novel thought written or spoken in a summarizing and memorable form. Aphorism being an original thought makes it the opposite of common opinion. It is unique hence somewhat different from the cliché which is a thought that has lost its original nature and has entered the anonymous daily circuit. Băiaş (2015) states, "Unlike the cliché, the proverb or the adage, the aphorism is associated with the name of an author that created it either privately, in written, or spoken it in public. The aphorism has a touch of bravado, of the courage that stems mostly from its oral form." Lara (2011) argues that proverbs get their meaning from the context of use in that they rely on the conversational situations to make sense. On the other hand, aphoristic texts do not rely on the contexts to be meaningful, they occur outside the conversational contexts.

Many of the proverbs used in the selected short stories serve as a sensitizing tool as well as encouraging the masses in difficult situations to hope for better. The short story, 'The Stone Baby,' exposes how religion exploits the masses with numerous collections whose effects is not felt in the church. The church is turned into a money making enterprise. It is ironical how the pastor asks the congregants to raise twenty million shillings to pay off engineer's debts when the house itself is described to be below the expected standards.

The pastor always starts his sermon with a call for collection for church projects and this makes the congregation feel exhausted with numerous collection, money wrung from their pockets but they still attend the church to its fill every Sunday, outnumbering even the available chairs because in music they find solace and they believe that bad things happen to those who do not go to church. In 'The Stone Baby,' Upendo's (the narrator's) dad always ends his conversation with a wise saying that, '...the moth follows the light in the night thinking it is the sun.' (p.5). This proverb is used to ask the narrator to be vigilant about religious practices and dogmas. The narrator's dad sends her a wakeup call through the proverb; not to be a moth that follows religion blindly thinking it is the surest way to success. This teaching spills over to the reader to stop following the religious practices blindly for they may not be the gospel truth after all. Since religious intolerance may lead to inter-religious conflicts and the alleged terror activities which are not healthy for socio-economic growth, Mbekomize uses,

‘The Stone Baby’ to enlighten the society to accommodate diverse religious practices but be weary of what to consume from them in that to be alert and knowledgeable is to be open for socio-cultural and economic development.

The moth following light blindly may also be used to redirect the society towards religious tolerance. Mbekomize’s story exposes instances of religious intolerance in the society as the narrator’s mama, warns her sternly against falling in love with a Muslim boy. Upendo’s mother considers Islam as the inferior other. She brands the Muslim boy with derogatory names, including being a member of al-Shabaab – a terrorist group. The narrator manages her cool and tells her mother that not all Muslims are the same. This brings about the relationship between Muslims and Christians to the fore. Instead of giving a solution to this long standing problem, Mbekomize ends her story in a suspense leaving the masses to decide what is best when we realize that Upendo’s grandfather was a Muslim too. It is therefore, worth noting that proverb is used in this instance to sensitize the society against bedeviling each other on religious realms. Religious tolerance can be a gateway to socio-economic success.

Kamau, in ‘When the Sun Goes Down’ uses proverbs that are encouraging the sick to be courageous, especially anytime they face stigmatization in life. In a society where the sick are treated with contempt, they end up being lonely and no one to turn to. Stigmatizations grows deep roots in the society when it comes to the question of deadly diseases. When Kanja visits Maureen and Steve, Steve is so appreciative of him for taking his time to visit them at a time when every friend has turned his/her back on them. They feel relieved when they can still have one friend to count on. Steve tells Maureen, “A person is only a person through other persons.” (p.19). This seems to have been translated from a Swahili saying that goes “mtu ni watu”. It shows that life becomes more fulfilling and worth living with people around us. The society cannot survive/ progress with just an individual without communal touch. Kanja openly fails to take a glass of juice that Maureen offers him because he fears to be infected with HIV. This leaves Maureen in tears wondering why the world can be so cruel. Kamau uses the proverb (“A person is only a person through other persons (p.9).” to make the readers understand the value of extending love and friendship to the bedridden and to preach against stigmatization. Exclusion is not good for the societal growth and

development. When one is sidelined, they become less productive in the society and their social being is highly bruised as in the case of Maureen who chooses to die than to live with stigma. The short story is therefore used to show that love is the gateway to socio-cultural and economic betterment of the society.

Owuor uses a proverb in her work 'Weight of Whispers' to give hope to the masses that given time with the right steps taken, things are bound to change. Kuseremane, the narrator, says, '...time solves all problems.' (p.8) having stayed in Kenya for days without the possibility of leaving soon, and their accounts depleted, Kuseremane's family is realizing that things are taking a wrong turn. Their being in Kenya as tourists make no sense to them. Friends are turning against them, they have no money and they have to find a way to survive in a strange nation. Kuseremane uses this proverb to give hope to Agnethe mama who is incessantly asking when they are leaving. Arguably, one can liken the stalled life of the Kuseremanes to a third world nation that struggles to prosper but so many odds block their way to prosperity. As Kuseremane and his family struggle to regain their glory, so does the third world countries. Such countries try to gain stability but terror strikes, their peers fail to loan them together with political instability. They crawl to change the state of affair. Kuseremane's story gives hope that even with all the challenges, there is a way out. With hope in the society, people can live to make their environment better. The study argues that the story tries to sell hope to the society that when everything appears to go wrong, hope gives one the ability and strength to make the situation and the society better. 'Weight of Whispers' can therefore be read as a story that enlightens the society that hope gives strength to struggle and start again for the socio-cultural and economic betterment of the society.

Orwenjo (2009) states that, Proverbs have no tangible, and concrete meaning when used in isolation. Their semantics load is derived from the context and circumstances under which they are used. That proverbs are so flexible and do not have any natural meaning. Depending on the circumstances and context of use and the skillfulness, they can mean almost anything. This makes them essential for propaganda, which characterizes most political discourse, and an easily available means of driving a point home and convincing the audience provided that the context of use is skillfully manipulated. Genette (1980) echo the same by stating that each element of a narrative cannot work

alone but as one unit to make the text meaningful. Owuor therefore, uses the proverb, time solves all problems, to give hope to the hopeless individuals, those whose paths seems to narrow and their future blocked that they should keep believing that with time everything becomes better. Demoralized individuals are less active thus less productive. It is therefore, worth concluding that the readers are directed towards spreading hope to the members of the society in order to remain socially and economically relevant. The short story, 'Weight of Whispers' therefore act as a channel through which the author can reach the readers to sell hope.

Penfield (1988) states that, the proverbs are used as social mode of communication which have an important role in most African societies. Owuor uses the proverb to bring hope to the refugees and those in exile that with time everything is going back to better. As he is harassed and forced to pay bribe in order to get into the list of the refugees hoping that the UNCHR will shift them to another nation, Kuseremane realizes the devastating state of his mother and hopes that things are getting better soon despite the challenges. He states '...Time as she had always believed, would accomplish the rest.' (p.28). Kuseremane incessantly gives hope to Agnethe, Lune and Chi-chi any time they ask about when they are leaving Kenya. Even though he knows that things are not working to their favour, he keeps giving them hope that they are leaving soon. The writer sensitizes the masses that a time comes that they have to rethink their practices toward bettering them. A culture where by the ones with power oppress the exiled and refugees or even the voiceless in the society should be discarded and create an enabling environment for all. Proverbs are therefore used in the selected short stories to direct the society towards focusing on hope and encouraging religious tolerance so as to achieve socio-economic development.

Authors of the selected short stories have also utilized aphorisms to expose socio-cultural and economic betterment. Kamau is such one author that has used aphorism as a style in his work to help people see the need to change and better the society. He shows the significance of love to the readers through his short story, 'When the Sun Goes Down'. For the society to prosper economically, there has to be love among the people especially love towards the sick and the less fortunate. Kamau uses a maxim that love is the only sanctuary for those who suffer to demonstrate the need for caring

for and loving the sick. Tom is one character who shows love and care to Steve's family when everyone else is running away. When Steve tells Tom about Maureen's sickness, Tom sees the need of getting a more comfortable car from Mr. Kobia who turns them away. Mr. Kobia in this case represents the members of the society who alienate the less fortunate in the society; a practice that Kamau is condemning. As Lara (2011) points out that aphorism can be used even outside the context of quote, we can assume that Kamau's maxim, "The greatest is love. It was the only Sanctuary for those who suffered," (p.25) may be considered to apply not only to the HIV/AIDs patient but also to any other form of suffering or oppression in the society. The author thus uses aphorism as a strategy to help the readers negotiate through their problems; that love can help alleviate vicious circle of poverty and suffering.

The occurrences in the selected stories demonstrate that the society has grown in a way that individualism thrives at the expense of humanity. Every being is interested in himself alone but care less about how much their neighbour suffers. Owuor too, in 'Weight of Whispers,' exposes how the refugees are treated in an inhuman way devoid of love. It is illogical when the body mandated to house and feed the refugees takes bribes from them and the police that is supposed to protect the refugees harass them for personal gains. These tribulations lead them to actions they never thought they would do to survive. Lune after getting into prostitution to survive tells Kuseremane to forgive her in that, "We do what we can to live." (p.45). This aphorism shows how the less fortunate people grow so desperate that they end up doing anything for survival irrespective of the pain they cause other members of the society. Such are the occurrences that Kamau discourages, and sensitizes the society to embrace love and it is only through love that the society may get to eliminate some vices. It is a fact that everyone needs love but those who suffer need it most. Kamau goes ahead to point out the greed in the society that makes businessmen horde commodities when their customers suffer the consequences. The quote bellow gives clear evidence of lack of love and selflessness in the society:

He wished people would not horde love, the way businessmen hid flour so that the price could go up. Always thinking about their profits while across the country, hunger trailed the poor to their beds. What selfishness! What cruelty! God forgive them for they know not what they do! (p.25)

With love, the above stated inhuman acts can be prevented, such practices can be avoided for the good and well-being of everyone in the society. Through the use of this aphorism, Kamau discourages a man eat man society. He instead calls for a society where we all become our brothers' keeper. With love the society can be a better place. A place where people can mingle without discriminations thus leading to a conducive environment for economic developments. Both Kamau and Owuor use their short stories as links to enlighten the society towards adopting a culture that unites every member of the society irrespective of their socio-economic standings in the society.

In Kamau's, 'When the Sun Goes Down,' aphorism is also used to give hope to the tired and hopeless to the society. When Maureen is weighed down with the guilt of infecting Steve with HIV/AIDs and also tired of facing the world full of stigmatization, she loses hope and feels that the only solution is death. Steve stays by her side and always ready to give her hope and reassurance to always stay strong. Steve tells her: "Listen Maureen,. Never cry when the sun goes down for if you do, the tears will not let you see the stars." (p.19). Kamau's point is that during dark moments, the candle of hope is all that the afflicted need in order to spring back to life and fight to regain their social and economic wellbeing. The aphorism thus discourages the readers from considering the sick and the suffering as the inferior other as Bhabha (1990) would call them. The use of aphorism thus redirects the focus of the readers from diminishing the chances of survival among the sick and even sending them to early graves when they can survive their misfortunes through hope.

Kamau uses another aphorism to expose the hypocrisy in the society. Steve says, "So many of us are used to the shadows that when you dare stand in the light of day, people behave as if you are the one in the wrong!" (p.18). With Maureen suffering from HIV/AIDS and no one wants to associate with her including Kanja who had once expressed interest in her, Steve expresses his disappointment and hypocrisy in the society. People consider him lost and isolate him for loving Maureen, HIV patient. To the society, Steve is considered 'bad' yet he is the one on the right – showing love to those who need it most. Maureen's ex-husband beats her up that she is cheating on him when he is the one actually doing it hence infecting her with AIDs. Kamau uses this aphorism to sensitize the readers that the society is full of hypocrisy and people often

pretend to be what they are not. It is worth concluding that for a prosperous socio-economic society, a people must inculcate love, give hope and shun hypocrisy in their practices.

4.2.6 Flashback

Flashback is another literary technique used in the selected short stories to reveal moral decadence in the society. It is a device which an author uses to interrupt current events with a look at past events. A flashback, is a term which is used to describe any scene or episode in a play, novel, story or poem which is inserted to show events that happened at an earlier time (Cuddon 2013). Flashbacks help the narrator to reflect upon and narrate the experiences they have had in life, both positive and negative in connection to the present story.

According to Cuddon (2013) and Mahammed (2016), flashback brings background information of characters and events to the fore, reminds the reader of past events and reveals the thematic issues of a text. The author moves the story and then goes back to fill in the necessary background information. Flashback therefore interrupts the chronological sequence of events in a literary work by inserting past events within the flow of a narrative. Gebeyehu (2019) states that, in literature, flashback is undeniably important as it is used to achieve different objectives depending on the author's intention. In using flashback, a writer may help the readers to understand relationships and background information of the characters, their motivations and perspective of life, and creating surprise or suspense. In order to use flashback, it is important to be aware of why the flashback is necessary to the story. The flashback must reveal something intriguing which propels the plot forward or supplies essential information for the reader's understanding of the story.

Owuor uses flashback to expose moral decadence due to unemployment in the society. In one of his trips to Netherlands as a prince, Kuseremane meets an African man with no shame performing jobs that African society considers indecent and immoral just to earn a living. He entertains whites using reproductive organs, something unacceptable in African social set-up. The West African man is a master degree graduate from Leeds University and the only available job he can get with his level of education is being a

janitor. The African man chooses to start his own business than to work as a janitor washing the toilets for the whites. He has a family to feed so he does not mind what he does to survive. Through this flashback we get to learn how far people are willing to break the moral codes to earn a living. It also exposes the kind of life people overseas maybe passing through to put food on the table. As the narrator in 'Legal Alien' is informing the public that not every African abroad does menial jobs to survive, the African man proves otherwise. The following quotation reveals the level of joblessness to the educated masses and what they are willing to do to survive Kuseremane says:

Though his Dutch is crude, he read sociology in Leeds and mastered it. He is quick to tell me this. He has six children. His wife, Gemma is a beautiful woman. On a good day he makes 200 guilders, it is enough to supplement the Dutch state income and it helps sustain the illusions of good living for remnants of his family back home. He refuses to be a janitor, he tells me. To wear a uniform to clean a European toilet? No way. This is why he is running his own enterprise (p.26).

The man is educated but has no job so he does not see the worth of his academic qualifications. He calls Africans "overeducated fools (p.26)." Papers cannot take them anywhere if they have no feet to stand in. During their short dialogue with this strange African man, Kuseremane learns that the West African man has another learned brother, a certified doctor, with no job but lives in Italy through some dubious means. The West African man says, "My broda for real him also in Italy. Bone doctor. Specialist. Best in class. Wha he do now? Him bring Nigeria woman for de prostitute." (p.26). Joblessness and need to survive leads young ladies into prostitution and sex trafficking. The society is becoming increasingly immoral with each waking day.

Basing on Bhabha's concept of otherness, The West African man chooses to lower himself to the level of an inferior other; confirming the European racist view of Africans as monkeys. His form of entertaining the whites is by behaving like a monkey and walking around with women apparels together with the pictures on the male genitalia. In Africa, issues to do with sex and sex organs are treated with respect and doing something against the norms is considered a taboo. This shows the extent of cultural erosion and the much Africans are submerged in the western culture. It is therefore clear unemployment is one of the major causes of immorality in the 21st C society.

The use of flashback reveals how hard it is for the people in exile to survive in their host nations. Back then Kuseremane considered the man from Sierra Leone immoral. What he did was shameful for someone to do. Now that he (Kuseremane himself) is a refugee in Kenya, He learns that “in exile we lower our heads so that we do not see in the mirror of another’s eyes, what we suspect about ourselves: that our precarious existence depends entirely on the whim of another’s tolerance of our presence” (p. 25). This sentence portrays the situation of refugees in exile. Kuseremane can neither obtain work nor leave the country, and he is almost deprived of rights. The refugees thus, depend on the goodwill and tolerance of others. Once in exile, the kind of educational attainment one has or how powerful they were in their native land does not matter. As Makokha (2011) puts it, in exile, “It is essential to know when to say what to whom. A wrong utterance to a wrong person can send someone at least to prison. It is hard to find true friends, which one can trust, in exile, because everyone is restless, scared, and alert. It is not important anymore who you are, but that you still are (p.92).” The use of flashback is therefore an enlightenment to the society to struggle and find out a way of solving out the unemployment crisis in order to curb moral decay.

4.3 Conclusion

The analysis in this chapter reveals how different narrative techniques hold the pieces of art together to bring out the connection between different elements of a text to the socio-cultural and economic resurgence. Therefore, the authors demonstrate that style is an important tool in the delivery of the content; styles enhance the delivery/transfer of the intended messages.

The chapter has analyzed the styles that the five selected short story writers have utilized to bring out socio-cultural and economic resurgence in their stories. Despite the fact that the selected stories might have many other styles not discussed here, this study focused on the voice of narration, language use, journey motif, juxtaposition, proverbs and aphorisms, and flashback. These styles are highlighted as narrative elements that are vital in narrating the socio-cultural and economic resurgence. Basing on Bal’s account that narratology is a theory that helps the readers/critics to evaluate, analyze and understand a text, this chapter answers the question of how the selected styles bring out the socio-economic resurgence in the selected short stories.

Rutangye, in 'Legal Alien,' uses the first person narrator to highlight how important it is for an individual to learn and practice his/her native language as native languages promote and conserve native cultures and also promote cultural duality. Mbekomize in, 'The Stone Baby,' uses an innocent – eye (child) narrator to bring out the conflict between traditions, religion and modernity. It is through this that she exposes the need for a hybrid culture for a better living. She advocates for shunning the negative aspects of traditions, religion and science then put together the positive aspects for a better society.

The use of present tense in Owuor's 'Weight of whispers,' makes the readers identify with the plight of refugees and the voiceless in their host nations, while the use of non-standard English reveals the illiteracy level of the street dwellers and highlights the importance of English for global connection. Owuor too uses different languages in her work to emphasize that despite the diversity, at one point the society needs a common language in order to get in touch with each other.

The analysis further shows that there is an element of journey motif in almost all the selected short stories. The use of journey motif demonstrates that peace is necessary for socio-cultural and economic development since most of the characters in selected texts seem to be moving to escape war/conflict in their countries. In 'Weight of Whisper,' the Kuseremanes flee war torn Rwanda for a peaceful destination in Europe, while in 'Fanta Blackcurrant,' Meri flees from a conflict-ridden street for a better environment and in 'Legal Alien,' the narrator is also leaving for Uganda due to alleged normalcy. The study further shows that the journey motif used in the selected stories not only illustrates the journey as a pointer to new places but also as a style that facilitates interactions and discoveries thus enlightening the readers on necessary remedies to the challenges bedeviling the social and economic status of their society.

To expose the inadequacies in the East African Education System and provision of services, Rutangye in 'Legal Alien,' use Juxtaposition to highlight differences between the education system of the developing and the developed nations, and the need to practice holistic/practical education for the betterment of child growth. The selected authors have used juxtaposition as a style to expose the shortcomings in the education

system of the third-world countries that may disadvantage learners from acquiring quality education.

The study further demonstrates that the authors use proverbs and aphorisms to propose socio-cultural and economic improvements. In 'The Stone Baby,' for example, a proverb is used to warn the readers against religious fanaticism which in turn hinder the success of other social and economic institutions, while Kamau uses proverbs to discourage stigmatization in 'When the Sun Goes Down'. It is therefore worth noting that proverbs are crucial channels to call for action and to pass educative messages in the short stories.

Flashback is another style used in the selected texts to demonstrate how immorality is spreading in the society. In 'Weight of Whispers,' Owuor shows how joblessness promotes moral decadence through a jobless west African man who has to do anything possible to survive. The discussion therefore demonstrates that the inability of different nations to offer employment or better living standards for their citizens breeds immorality and the societal vices. Flashback is thus one of the techniques used in the short stories to achieve socio-cultural and economic resurgence. It is therefore worth concluding that form and content are inseparable elements of a text.

CHAPTER FIVE

EPOCHAL RELEVANCE OF SELECTED POST MILLENNIAL EAST AFRICAN SHORT STORY

5.1 Introduction

About two decades have passed since leaders of the world came together and established goals and targets to help save humanity from hunger, life-threatening poverty, illiteracy and disease. These leaders came up with the Millennium Declaration from where the MDG framework for accountability was derived. The framework has inspired development efforts and helped world nations set global and national priorities.

According to the United Nations Report (2011), there are eight Millennium Development Goals but these goals are no longer operational as they were replaced by Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are meant to carry the momentum generated by the MDGs and fit into a global development framework beyond 2015. Despite the MDGs being obsolete, this chapter is interested in finding out how much the MDGs are captured as the thematic issues of literary materials in East Africa thus demonstrating how literature relies on the epoch within which it is produced. This study focuses only on goal number one, two, five and six, which are classified into the health related MDGs and the Economic related MDGs.

It is worth noting that acquisition of knowledge is a central developmental key in attaining the Millennium Development Goals, and is one of the most powerful tools in helping to eradicate ignorance and improve the well-being of individuals and nations. Literature comes in handy in disseminating information and reaching wider audience thus an important tool in ensuring proper sensitization on key issues of the MDGs.

The chapter is guided both by the narratology and Post-colonial theories and begins with analyzing how the health related MDG might have been captured as themes in the selected short stories, then moves on to analyze how the Economic related MDGs shaped the thematic concerns of the selected stories. The chapter concludes that the MDGs being a 21st Century phenomenon must have contributed to the thematic issues in the East African Short story form showing that the post-millennial short story writers are not blind to the occurrences in their immediate society.

5.2 Health Related MDGs and their Influence on the Post Millennial Literature

This section examines the thematic concerns of the selected short stories in relation to the MDGs. The focus is directed on the three short stories: Mbekomize's 'The Stone Baby,' Onjerika's, 'Fanta Blackcurrant,' and Owuor's 'Weight of Whispers' since they are texts that emerged during the time when the MDGs were operational and their setting is in a society that the MDGs are meant to elevate. The study starts by examining how poverty, ignorance and maternal health are treated as thematic issues in the selected short stories in relation to the millennium development goal 5. The second section explores the relationship between the MDG 6 and the thematic issues addressed in Kamau's 'When The Sun Goes Down.' Basing on the assumption that literature is shaped by historical occurrences, this examination implies that the short stories selected are therefore, creative reaction to and reflection of the socio-cultural, political and economic environments in which they are produced. It focuses on thematic issues like poverty, ignorance and HIV/AIDs as some of the issues captured in the selected short stories which might have been influenced by the MDGs.

5.2.1 Maternal Health in Post Millennial Literature

Mbekomize in her story 'The Stone Baby,' portrays a society that suffers poverty and ignorance which are issues that have diverse effects on maternal health. The story is set in a post-millennial society at a time when many people still believe on religious dogmas and archaic traditional practices that are detrimental to the reproductive health of mothers. It is during this time that the Millennium Development Goals were operational and attempted to ease the challenges of humanity in the third-world countries. MDGs were designed to find solution to problems related to maternal health and diseases. Some of these issues are treated as themes in the selected short stories; an indication that literature and the society are interlinked.

The United Nations Millennium Development Goals Report (2015) indicates that cases of Maternal deaths are high in the Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia, which together accounted for 87 per cent of such deaths globally in 2008. Southern Asia recorded steady progress in improving maternal health. Between 1990 and 2008, the region had achieved a 53 per cent decline in maternal mortality. In contrary, sub-Saharan Africa recorded 26 per cent decline. Majority of maternal deaths in these

regions of the world can be avoided in that, the largest proportion of such deaths are caused by obstetric haemorrhage, mostly during or just after delivery, followed by eclampsia, sepsis, complications of unsafe abortion and indirect causes, such as malaria and HIV. Poverty and ignorance are the major factors limiting the achievement of improved maternal health.

The report further indicates that the chances of maternal death increases among women who are poorly educated, have many children, are either very young or very old, and who are subjected to gender discrimination. This observation therefore indicates that factors limiting the achievement of reduced maternal death include but not limited to ignorance, age and gender discrimination.

In 'The Stone Baby' Mbekomize exposes how maternal health is still an issue of concern in the contemporary East African community. The story demonstrates how many people in the society believe in traditions and religion to cure their reproductive related ailments. The characters in the text are shown to be ignorant of modern ways of curing diseases, and instead, they resort to prayers and private meetings with men of cloth despite the life-threatening nature of their health burden. The narrator, a teenage girl, is suffering from unknown disease which is threatening her reproductive health. All her mother does is to attend to prayers for months and pray feverishly for healing. The reader learns about these prayers through the following quote:

My mama and I have been attending the Saturday prayers for about four months now. From ten in the morning to four in the afternoon we feverishly beseech God for a miracle. And while our mustard seed faith has not driven my sickness away, it's filled us with confidence that the things we pray for shall come to pass. With my hands on my stomach, I swallow another draught of air (p.2).

The narrator and her mother believe in divine healing and have so much hope in miracles that they have not gone for any medical checkup, which points to the extent of ignorance evident in the society where the story is set. The narrator needs proper health care but is blinded by religion which does not reveal the nature of her sickness. During the church service, the narrator gulps draught of air and shouts, "Blood of Jesus, heal me! Heal me! Take this sickness from my body and this darkness from my womb!" (p.2) but the healing does not come forth. After the church services, the narrator and

her mother book further appointment with the pastor only to find the room filled to capacity, mostly by barren women who fill the pastor's office in need of prayers and redemption. The women believe that bareness and their reproductive health can be restored through prayers and consider going to the hospital when it is a little too late for cure. Like the proverbial hyena which tried to attend two different feasts at the same time and ended up dying, the narrator's mother is not sure on what to do. She wants to follow religion, go to the hospital and take traditional remedies at the same time; a concept Bhabha (1990) termed as double vision. The characters want to be part of both cultures; their native culture and the new cultures thus find themselves in a conflicting situation. The study argues that since this story emerged at a time when the world was in a campaign to end ignorance and improve maternal health, it captured issues that ail the society as elucidated in the Millennium Development Goals. The authors are therefore considered to be sensitive of issues that bedevil the society they live in.

In this narrative Andelina Mbekomize reveals that superstition, religion and ignorance are some of the societal setbacks to improved maternal care as projected in the MDG 5. Upendo and her mother in this story later realize that the narrator is suffering from Fibroid but they are still opposed to hospital surgery. The narrator says:

And although the two fibroid tumours engulfing my uterus are benign, they are anything but friendly. Together the tumours have created an entire veined community, gripping and tugging at my womb. For a few days each month they have a sword fight with my entire abdomen, grabbing at vital organs and bleeding out my endometrium. (p.4)

From the above quotation, it is evident that fibroid is killing the narrator but the pastor still believes that it is an evil spirit that is troubling her. The pastor says that Upendo got infected with evil spirit through their illicit relationship with a Muslim boyfriend, "That is the door, That was the door the devil used to enter your life." (p.3) With this belief, the narrator's healing is delayed thus endangering her life. Even after the diagnosis, the narrator's mama is still ignorant enough to subject the narrator into taking concoctions as a remedy to her sickness. She gives Upendo a glass of bitter juice made from blended Papaya leaves, ginger and garlic. The narrator struggles to take this concoction which she believes will heal her but nothing changes: "I close my eyes and gulp the bile down as quickly as I can." (p.8). Overreliance on religious beliefs and

traditions is hurting the reproductive health of the narrator. Mama ignores the doctors advise as she states: “We can’t go to the hospital,” Mama repeats to herself for the third time. “It is not the solution.” (p.8). Mama Upendo is depicted to be in a state Bhabha (1990) terms as ambivalence, she takes Upendo to a witch doctor for treatment. The story ends as the Narrator is subjected to some rituals in the name of treatment. Basing on the Information on the time of production of ‘The Stone Baby,’ the study focuses on not only to explore the interplay between literature and society in the short story, but also to decrypt what Mbekomize is passing to her audience. Mbekomize’s story, ‘The Stone Baby,’ thus treats themes of ignorance in that Upendo, the mother and the priest are ignorant of what is ailing Upendo thus endangers her maternal health. Upendo’s mother is superstitious in that she believes that Upendo’s condition is caused by some spiritual force and religion is demonstrated as an issue affecting the attainment of maternal health.

Poverty is another theme in the selected short stories that we can argue has been adopted from the MDGs based on the setting of the stories. In Onjerika’s ‘Fanta Blackcurrant,’ poverty is treated as the main issue contributing to poor maternal health which is a setback to socio-cultural and economic resurgence. According to Kenya Millennium Development Goals Status Report (2011), the rising cost of living resulting from the high fuel and food prices has negatively affected the individual’s ability to cover medical expenses. Mothers would rather spend the money on food than spend it on health related needs. This is likely to contribute negatively to utilization of maternal health services. Onjerika (2019) seems to pick the strand of narration in, ‘Fanta Blackcurrant’, which demonstrates how poverty leads young girls into early/pre-marital sex which may in turn endanger their lives. In this story, Meri, a street girl, together with other girls suffer many challenges and lack basic needs in a harsh slum environment where they live. They grow up in very hostile conditions and live on begging to survive. Things toughen as they grow up into mature ladies and they have to find ways to adapt to the changes:

Days followed days and years followed years. But no one came to save Meri. We finished being totos and blood started coming out between our legs. And Meri, from staying in the sun every day, she changed from colour brown to colour black just like us. Jiggers entered her toes. Her teeth came out leaving ten spaces in her mouth. Breathing glue, she forgot her father’s

name and her mother's name. Every day her head went bad: she removed her clothes and washed herself with soil until we chased her. We caught her. We sat on her. We pinched her. We beat her slaps. We pulled her hair. We didn't stop until tears came out of her eyes (p.2)

According to Diaw (2005) "As literary works are rooted, to a large extent, in a precise setting, at a given time, literary critics tend to take into consideration the space, the time, the political, cultural, social and economic background of any work of art to better interpret it." (p.17). the story captures the struggles of street girls in the society at a time when the MDGs are operational thus showing how literature connects to the society and the notable occurrences. The young girls, do not feel anything wrong with their begging for survival. From desperations, police brutality and killings they face, they pray and hope someone may come and save them from all the suffering someday but they are wrong. They become adolescents and their suffering worsen. The stage comes with more responsibilities and need for much better nutrition which the street family do not get. Life's challenges and frustrations push the teenage girls into prostitution. They become too shy to continue begging on the street, life becomes tougher and tougher but they cannot go on begging for money as they did when they were young. The narrator recounts:

All of us were now big mamas. When we prayed people for money in the streets, they looked how we had big *matiti* hanging on our chests like ripe mangoes. We felt shame because they were seeing we were useless. In the end, all of us stopped praying people in the streets, even Meri. She followed us at night when we went to see the Watchman at the bank (p.3)

The social status of the street girls has changed but their economic level cannot cater for their needs. According to the societal constructs, at their age, they are too big to beg on the streets, they should find something to do with their lives. Begging is left for lazy people. With no education, they cannot land any good job so the adolescent girls end up in prostitution which exposes them to more challenges like early pregnancy. Meri becomes pregnant at an age that she is unable to take care of herself and the developing baby. In as much as the fellow street girls try to support her both morally and financially, they get tired and advise her to try prostitution in her pregnant state. Through this episode, Onjerika (2019) highlights the risky sexual behavior that the poor girls engage in while trying to make a living. With no roof over her head and poor diet, Meri gets more addicted to drugs to an extent of failing to remember her parents' names

who made her pregnant. The story thus shades some light on the need to eradicate poverty as one of the main goals of the MDGs that still lower the living standards of the society.

Considering the advice from her fellow girls, Meri tries her luck in prostitution again but no man is interested in sponsoring a pregnant lady. No help comes her way, any attempt to beg for food in her pregnant state earns her no mercy. While some people close their doors on seeing her, others look and walk away when she stretches hands to beg. Being unable to handle all the suffering brought by poverty, Meri resorts to theft. She steals and forces money out of people through dubious ways; an act that sends other criminals into envy, they beat her to near-death leading to the loss of her child. Onjerika uses this short story to highlight the challenges faced by the town dwellers in the post-colonial state where everyone sings civilization. Since poverty is one of the challenges that the MDGs is out to decimate, the short story becomes a better avenue to direct the audience towards achieving a society with zero or minimal poverty cases.

The street girls become children of a lesser god; a scenario Bhabha (1990) would call the inferior other. The poor have no value nor respect in the society, in as much as the girls are in desperate struggle to earn a living, the rich and the inconsiderate lot in the society pushes them back to poverty. In the post-colonial nation people are expected to be civilized but as Onjerika demonstrates, 'the normal' population contribute in increasing poverty level by impregnating the struggling street girls. According to Adisse (2003) poor maternal health of the mother may have an effect on the unborn child. It can therefore be noted that with their poor maternal health, the street girls may end up bringing forth mentally challenged children and that would be a challenge to the aim of MDGs of reducing poverty and poor maternal health which are threats to socio-cultural and economic development.

From the discussion, it is worth noting that poverty and maternal health are thematic concerns treated in Onjerika's 'Fanta Blackcurrant' that must have been influenced by Millennium development goal 5. The story reveals how poverty is an enemy to achieving improved maternal health just as highlighted in the MDG reports. The short

story thus sensitizes the readers that in order to achieve socio-cultural and economic resurgence, maternal health can be improved by eliminating poverty.

The Millennium Development Goals Report (2011) indicates that the world's population estimates that about 300 million women are age 15 to 19 with sub-Saharan Africa and the least developed countries expecting the fastest growth rate overall. In addition, the risks associated with pregnancy and childbearing are greatest in the said regions. Childbearing at a very early age brings with it, amplified risks of complications or even death in women. In almost all regions, the adolescent birth rate is on the rise with Sub-Saharan Africa taking the lead. Furthermore, Saharan Africa has recorded high maternal mortality with limited access to skilled care during pregnancy and at childbirth. As the number of women of reproductive age in developing regions continues to rise, increasing by nearly 50 per cent since 1990, family planning programmes and healthcare services are scant. There is need to invest more on contraceptives and better healthcare services to help keep pace with the growing number of women wishing to use contraception.

The report further indicates that in sub-Saharan Africa, the use of contraceptives among adolescents is significantly lower than that of all women of reproductive age. Thus, the percentage of adolescents who have the demand for contraceptive is high but their satisfaction is much lower than that of all women aged 15 to 49. It is therefore evident that the scant progress in improving access to reproductive health care for adolescents puts them to risks of maternal deaths. Short story genre, becomes a conduit that disseminates the challenges facing the society to the wider audience that consumes them. The selected short stories have captured such challenges as espoused in the MDGs as discussed herein.

Mititelu (2011), states that the setting of a text has overriding significance in the analysis of the text because it brings out the societal realities of the text. Fanta Blackcurrant having been set in the post-colonial society captures issues affecting the society in the post-millennial era thus getting influence from the MDGs. In 'Fanta Blackcurrant,' Onjerika (2019) points out how the teenage girls living in poverty and slum areas are at risk of endangering their lives due to their inability to access the

contraceptives they may need. Not only do the teenagers lack access to the contraceptives but they also lack knowledge on their proper use. Meri, after becoming pregnant with unidentified father contemplates abortion but has no knowledge on how it can be done. Together with her friends they seek help from a watchman – unskilled person – who chases them away and calls them devils. After failing to get help from various people, they resort to very dangerous methods of family planning which can lead them to excessive bleeding and eventually death. The narrator says:

All of us felt mercy for Meri. Maybe one time after a customer finished, she had forgotten to wash herself down there with salt water. Some of us said we knew a way to remove the toto using wires; some of us knew a way using leaves from a tree in Jevanje gardens; some of us started crying, fearing even us we had a toto inside our stomachs (p.1).

The use of these uncertified methods of procuring abortion leads young and poor mothers to their early grave. Poverty and ignorance, superstition, and religion are some of the themes covered in the selected stories that must have had their root in the millennium development goal. The selected authors identify the challenges affecting their community and sensitize the readers about them with the aim of achieving socio-cultural and economic resurgence.

5.2.2 Diseases in Post Millennial Literature

HIV/AIDS is another issue reflected in the short stories under discussion. It is a health related issue that relates to the goals of the MDGs. Often HIV is seen as a postcolonial issue as it affects mostly the poor in post –colonial societies as they struggle to survive in a harsh environment. Literature functioning as a tool to give direction to the society, captures issues affecting the immediate environment thus gets their root in the Millennium Development Goals.

HIV/AIDS is an issue that Goro Wa Kamau adopted from the Millennium Development Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases. Many nations have suffered the ravaging effect of HIV/AIDS. According to the World Bank's Global Monitoring Report (2007), about 39.5 million people world over were living with HIV by end-2006, and an estimate of three million people had died from AIDS. According to the Millennium Development Goal Report (2015), new HIV infections are on a steady

decline with the sub-Saharan Africa leading in the fight. In 2009, newly infected with HIV was estimated at 2.6 million people – a 21 per cent drop since 1997, when new infections were at the peak. Increased funding on the fight against new infection and the expansion of major programmes, has received positive results. People receiving antiretroviral therapy for HIV or AIDS has increased in number considerably from 2004 to 2009. By the end of 2009, about 5.25 million people were on ARV treatment in the low - and middle- income countries. Consequently, over the same period, the number of AIDS-related deaths dropped by 19 per cent.

A number of African countries including Botswana, and Rwanda, have already achieved universal access to antiretroviral therapy. In 2009, the WHO reviewed its guidelines for treatment of pregnant women, adults and adolescents with HIV. As a result, the number of people considered to be in need of antiretroviral therapy grew from 10.1 million to about 14.6 million at the end of the year 2009.

Based on the statistics given on the MDG report (2015), Many nations strived to achieve the millennium development goal of combating HIV/AIDs, Malaria and other diseases, whereby improved health care services and changed behavior among the masses contribute largely in combating the spread of the disease. The report also shows that a number of people have accepted to take HIV tests, accept their status and live a responsible lifestyle. Even though there are other challenges hindering its achievement. Notable strides have been made to free the world of this menace.

Boutayeb (2010) point out that any form of disease adversely affects development of a society, nation or a region. A case in point, human suffering, the cost of management, and its effect on different sectors of economy can negatively change the development gains made over the years. In the recent past, communicable diseases have become a matter of concern world over. A Country under a diseases infestation cannot tackle the problem on its own, thus, the response to the outbreak has to be coordinated and contained jointly.

‘When the Sun Goes Down’ depicts a society that is struggling to live with HIV/AIDs by taking appropriate measures to curb related deaths and minimize new infections. The story highlights how stigmatization affects HIV patients in the post millennial East Africa. The characters in the story depict a people aware of what they are facing and their responsibility to take ARV thus preventing mother to child transmission too. The story thus sensitizes the society that HIV/AIDS stigmatization is a threat to socio-cultural and economic development and should be eliminated, borrowing largely from the MDGs which are aiming to reduce HIV/AIDs related deaths.

Kamau uses ‘When The Sun Goes Down,’ to highlight the strides made in the post millennial Africa to curb the spread of HIV/AIDs. Steve and Maureen are taking ARVs after Maureen is infected by her first husband then she infects Steve. Because of guilt, Maureen stops observing the diet and taking her drugs all together and she dies. On the other hand, Steve has accepted his status and takes ARVs therefore lives on to take care of his son.

The short story shows that in as much as people still die of AIDs, the number of deaths have greatly reduced. Steve and his family however become the “demonic other” (Bhabha 1990); friends disappear from them despite his wealth status. His family is alienated because of AIDs but he remains strong and steadfast to beat the disease and stigmatization. Steve represents the world’s population that has come to terms with the reality of AIDS and are in need of ARVs. Such people have accepted to live on drugs and proper diet hence portraying the extent to which the author of the text is on a mission to rid the society of this menace so does the MDG 6 hence the relationship between the society, MDGs and literature. Steve does not care how many friends he loses but ready to go it alone despite the loneliness. In addition, Kamau uses Steve to sensitize the readers that the HIV/AIDS patients deserve love and friendship too. Steve says:

Kanja has no idea how good it was for him to come. When you are suffering from AIDS, one good friend is all you need to make life less suffocating. A person is only a person through other persons.’ (p.19)

Steve feels good when he and Maureen can joke and laugh about their HIV status, an indication that they have accepted it and have accepted the life on ARVs. 'When the sun Goes Down' goes ahead to sensitize the community on how to live a positive life. When Maureen stops feeding and observing proper diet, Steve advises her: 'You must eat and take your drugs every day.' (p.26) Maureen therefore dies, not because she has no knowledge nor access to ARVs, but because she has decided not to follow the given guidelines to live:

...Steve did not ask what had transpired. They carried Maureen out and sat her in the front seat. She was limp and heavy but her pulse was okay. The hospital was only twenty minutes away and they arrived within no time. Steve explained what had happened. "She is HIV-positive and of late she has refused to take her drugs." (p.28)

The theme of HIV/AIDS is an umbrella concern that covers the modes of transmission as a sub theme that was adopted from the MDGS since transmission is one of the issues tackled in MDG 6 and echoed in the short story, 'When the Sun Goes Down.' On mother to child transmission, the Millennium Development Goal Report (2015) indicates that without treatment, roughly one third of children born to women living with HIV/AIDS have high chances of becoming infected with the virus in the womb, at birth or through breastfeeding. A decline in this risk can be significantly achieved by treating expectant mothers with antiretroviral therapy. According to the report, an estimated 53 per cent of pregnant women living with HIV received antiretroviral medicines in 2009, an increase from 45 per cent in 2008. Sub-Saharan Africa hosts about 91 per cent of the 1.4 million pregnant women who are in need of ARVs; an indicator that mother-to-child transmission is curtailed. Kamau captures the same in his short story to demonstrate how much the society has made strides in preventing mother-to-child transmission.

In 'When the sun Goes Down' Kamau portrays how far the East African nations have sensitized the masses on mother-to-child transmission and the gains made this far. Pregnant women take proper care of their children and prevent them from getting HIV/AIDS by observing the proper guidelines given. Maureen after realizing that she is HIV- positive prays to God that her baby is not infected. She observes strict adherence to medication and at last saves her son from the disease. Steve says:

That's why for me it is such a good thing that Kimotho is free of the virus. When we are gone, he shall bring us back – you and me – to earth through his own children. Do you realize that in the next generation, we two shall be brother and sister? (P.22)

Despite being HIV – positive, Steve is optimistic that the coming generation will be free from this epidemic – HIV/AIDS. Goro Wa Kamau's short story, 'When the Sun Goes Down' therefore highlights themes of HIV/AIDS, its transmission, stigmatization and how to live with it responsibly. The story thus sensitizes the society on the measures to take in order to reduce the effects of HIV/AIDS on socio-cultural and economic development thus responding to the issues of concern as highlighted in the MDGs. After Maurine's burial, Steve walks away carrying his son Kimotho who waves to the backbiting crowd. The waving can be interpreted as a walk from the dark painful era of HIV/AIDS and stigmatization to a world free from the disease.

5.3 Economic Related MDGs and Post-Millennial Literature

The economic status of a community determines its wellbeing. Poverty and ignorance are some of the indicators of a good or poor economy. Some of the themes adopted from the MDG 1 and 2 are violence, plight of the refugees, poverty, extreme hunger, corruption and education. This section interrogates the extent to which the selected short stories responded to the issues in the writers' locality and how much the writers strive to achieve the socio-cultural and economic betterment.

Extreme poverty and hunger have been major issues of concern in African continent for long and the selected short stories are not left behind in highlighting them. Ngugi wa Thiongo (1972) opines that literature cannot be separated from socio-historical processes therefore, a writer's work cannot be divorced from the history of their society. The selected short stories were written at a point of history when the MDGs were operational hence the need to examine the extent to which the stories under study incorporated their issues of concern.

Millennium Development Goal 1 (Eradicate extreme Poverty and Hunger) had a target of halving, the percentage of people whose income is less than one dollar a day by 2015, and halve the number of people who suffer from hunger, between 1990 and 2015. The United Nations Millennium Development Goal Report (2015) states that however much

the nation has recorded significant progress in the achievement of the MDGs, there is general consensus that poverty remains a major challenge for Africa even after 2015. 'Weight of Whispers,' captures the theme of conflict as hindrance to eradicating extreme poverty and hunger thus not only shows the link between the short story and the MDGs but also sensitizes the society on the path to its betterment.

Owuor in her short story, 'Weight of Whispers,' captures the plight of refugees, both within the borders of their countries and in their host countries. She exposes how violence send refugees out of their nations and how corruption exposes them to extreme poverty and hunger. The narrator, Kuseremane, flees Rwanda together with his family after the outbreak of violence and seek refuge in Kenya with an aim of flying to Europe where they would stay until normalcy returns in their country. While in Kenya, things take a negative turn, as they are faced with a corrupt system that drains money out of them. The quote below is an evidence of a corrupt system forcing the asylum seekers into untold poverty:

“Aya! Toa kitu kidogo”. I did not understand the code. Something small, what could it be? A cigarette. One each. It was a chilly evening. The cigarettes were slapped out of my hand. I placed my hand up and the second policeman said: “Resisting arrest” (p.23)

Failing to offer bribe to the police officers, Kuseremane is manhandled and arrested for being and 'illegal alien' in a country that is supposed to offer refuge to him and his family. It thus demonstrates that corruption is among the threats of achieving MDG 1. He ends up using the little amount he has bribing the police and end up with no food to feed his own family.

The narrative demonstrates how the 1994 Rwandan genocide left several families displaced and many others killed or disintegrated. The tribal clash between the Hutu and the Tutsi in Rwanda led to loss of lives, separation and displacement of people. It left Rwandan and the East African economy shattered. The story thus portrays how conflict contributes to the high poverty rates in the Sub-Saharan Africa just as highlighted in the MDG 1.

Kuseremane and his family run out of money and their friends abandon them. The one-time diplomat with apartment in Paris, loses everything to war: his job, his bank account details, his academic papers and all his savings: “The bank? Burned down. The money? Missing from the safes. And once, the sound of a name accused, accursed.” (p.36). As their poverty levels escalate; the family sneaks out of Hilton hotel in Nairobi without paying so that they can acquire a cheaper house at River Road. With a family to feed, Kuseremane ends up selling his valuables to make ends meet. They survive on lean meals as revealed in the quotation below:

The anger with which the rain launches itself upon this land, the thunder which causes floors to creak sparks a strange foreboding in me. That night, while we were eating cold beans and maize dinner, Lune pushed her plate aside, looked at me, a gentle, graceful crane, her hands fluttering closed, a smile in her eyes. (p.33)

The once diplomat from a royal family is reduced to feeding on unimaginable meals. The family is exposed to extreme poverty and hunger indicating the level of suffering the refugees and the victims of war undergo in their host nations. In the refugee camps they are considered lesser beings. On Bhabha’s (1990) concept of otherness, the authority of the host nation considers themselves as the superior other while the asylum seekers are considered the “inferior other” thus do not enjoy the rights that the citizens of their host nations enjoy. They struggle to survive in a country where they know no one because of war. This reality, thus, hinders the struggle to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger and therefore, Owuor is enlightening the community to reconsider their participation on wars as it hurts the economy to diverse levels. It is echoing the needs of MDG 1 that aims to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.

With the hope of getting papers to travel overseas, Kuseremane seeks help from different embassies but fails. He uses fake names and fears producing his papers for the risk of being identified as one of the perpetrators of violence in their nation. However much he is struggling to survive, every attempt to get help proves futile. After leaving behind all the wealth and luxury, Kuseremane has no one to turn to, including friends he once supported out of some tough situations. With his new financial status, everybody avoids him:

Now whenever I approach Kenyatta Avenue, they, my people, disperse. Or disappear into shops. Or avert their eyes. If I open a conversation, there is always a meeting that one is late for. Once on the street a woman started wailing like an old and tired train when she saw me. Her fingers extended, like the tip of a sure spear, finding its mark. (p.17)

One wonders why a person in need help should be avoided like plague. Pradl (1984) puts it that Narratologists argue that plot helps to reveal the story by sometimes rearranging the timeline thus allowing the reader to rediscover the original events. Owuor uses suspense together with flashbacks and flash-forwards to reveal how Kuseremane participated in fueling the war in Rwanda thus explaining why everyone is avoiding him. He therefore gets to suffer poverty and hunger as the consequences of violence that he perpetrated.

After trying all that is possible to make ends meet, Kuseremane decides to seek asylum at UNHCR in Nairobi. He and his family become part of the statistics of people living with poverty and hunger. The author, carefully settles on her settings to advance her thematic concerns. Moreover, Nairobi being at the centre of the UNHCR operations, Owuor has made a deliberate attempt to represent actual conditions of the refugees and the victims of war and their hunger stricken status. For instance, locating Kuseremane and his family in Nairobi and the harsh realities of life they face act as a hint towards making the reader desire to identify with her tribulations and the consequences of the choices. The readers get to learn the poverty level of these refugees and their inability to fit into their host nations both socially and economically. The challenges they face hinder the achievement of the MDGs as Kuseremane, the protagonist, states:

We woke up early, Agnethe, Chi-Chi, Lune and I. walked to Westlands, forty-five minutes walk away from our room just before River Road. We reached the gates of the UNHCR bureau at 10:00 a.m. We were much too late because the lists of those who would be allowed entry that day had been compiled. The rest of us would have to return the next day. We did, at 7:00 a.m. We were still too late because the lists of those who would be allowed entry had already been compiled. We returned at 4:00 a.m. But at 2:00 p.m. we discovered we were too late because the lists of those who would be allowed in had already been compiled. I decided to ask the guard at the gate, with long, black hair and an earring, a genuine sapphire (p.22).

The occurrences at the UNHCR are suspicious because however early Kuseremane and his family arrive they never make it to the list. They become victims of the corrupt systems in Kenya because in order to appear in the list one had to speak to the registration officers. Life becomes a double tragedy for the Kuseremenes because despite their poverty level, the corrupt officials still extort money from them so that the family can be registered as refugees. Such incidences demonstrate that the short story writer in East Africa is keen about the occurrences that take place in the society. Housing of refugees is a common occurrence in the Kenyan nation and the writer uses fiction to take the reader into the corruption that takes place even in the refugee camps where ironically run-aways are mistreated instead of being assisted. It can be deciphered that corruption is one of the issues that hinder the achievement of the MDGs since the society is not keen on carrying out its activities within the desired integrity.

Recent revisions made propose that the global poverty level may be as large as 900 million people, many of whom are Africans (MDG Report, 2011). Furthermore, the report indicates that about 443 million people (between 30 to 40 percent), who live in chronic poverty are in Sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore, it is clear that the present and future poverty reduction progress (after the MDGs have come and gone) will depend largely on what happens to this essential group living in sub Saharan Africa. In comparison to other developing countries, Sub-Saharan Africa is still lagging behind. Three quarters of the very poorest countries world over, many of them in Sub-Saharan Africa have recent history of conflict. Weak and waring states preoccupied with suppressing violence give less focus on the important development goals. Their concentration on violence deprives the nations notable economic gains. The war may end up destroying the financial and physical environment that the world needs to ensure sustainable development. Violence can also lead to displacement of people thus, exposing the displaced populations to hunger and disease. People end up abandoning their source of income, consequently, economic development is reversed.

On eradication of hunger, projections for the 2014–2016 period indicate a 23 per cent undernourishment rate in sub-Saharan Africa (MDG Report, 2011). In as much as the hunger rate has fallen, the number of undernourished people has risen by 44 million since 1990, in line with high population growth rate in the region. The situation varies

widely across the sub regions. The number of undernourished people in East Africa has doubled since 1990. The short story, 'Weight of Whispers,' shows that wars and clashes in the society are major contributors of hunger cases in African states. The displaced war victims are subjected to cruel conditions that they cannot get enough to eat. From the story the reader gets to learn the how hunger is biting on the refugees and the internally displaced:

I slept so deeply that when I woke up I thought I was at home in my bed and for a full minute I wondered why Roger had not come in with fresh orange juice, eggs and bacon, croissants and coffee. I wondered why mama was staring down at me, hands folded. Lune looks as if she has been crying. Her eyes are red rimmed. She has become thin, the bones of her neck jut out. Her fingers are no longer manicured. There! Chi-Chi. Her face has disappeared into her eyes which are large and black and deep. I look back at Agnethe-mama and see then that her entire hair front is grey. When did this happen? (p.18)

The royal family has been reduced to beggars and hunger stricken refugees due to wars. Mr. Kuseremane is nostalgic of the delicacies he could enjoy at the comfort of his bed which he no longer enjoys. He and his family are forced to feed on cold maize mixed with beans which is far from satisfying them. His account is drained that he has no money to feed his family on a proper diet. He is forced to feed on foreign meal; a misfortune that faces the asylum seekers and the writers of the selected short stories are keen enough to capture such. Owuor has therefore demonstrated to the reader the type of society they live in where the refugees are hunger stricken because of mistakes that can be avoided.

Voice, according to Genette's strand of narratology (1980), is a figure for agency in narration. In 'Fanta Blackcurrant,' the child narrator, who tells the story of their life in the streets as earlier discussed, helps the readers to learn the causes and the aftermath of domestic violence. It shows that conflict within the confines of the home largely contributes to a broken economy. Through the narrator the reader is made to realize that Meri, the protagonist, holds dear the knife that killed her father, making her run to the streets. The narrator says, '...she had lost the things she had bought when she came to the streets: her mother's *rothario*; the knife that killed her father...' (p.8). This revelation demonstrates how domestic violence leads to family breakages which further causes economic/financial challenges. Meri would not have found herself in the streets

were it not for the conflict between her parents. Other characters ended on the streets after the tribal clashes that left them orphans. “some of us were thinking how they would be if their mothers and fathers had not died in Molo clashes. (p.7). The story also enlightens the society on the effects of inter-tribal wars that weakens their socio-economic ties. Several challenges can arise from a broken family for instance, the street family becomes an economic burden to the society that entertains violence.

In the street the orphaned children face numerous challenges. For instance, the girls are attacked by their male folks and harassed by the council askaris who sometimes send them to prisons where the police sexually molest them. They also experience extreme poverty which leads them to share the most personal items like the toothbrush. Through the innocent –eye narrator, Onjerika demonstrates that the society is the chief contributor on the escalating street life. Thus if the society can stop tribal clashes and reduce domestic violence it can stand as one peaceful social unit that promotes economic stability and reduce the street problems. Onjerika therefore aspires for a society devoid of extreme poverty and violence thus capturing some of the issues advocated for in the Millennium Development Goals.

Religion is another factor highlighted as a threat to reduction of extreme poverty and hunger. Owuor in ‘Weight of Whispers’ shows how the poor and the hungry flock into the churches hopping for miracles for a better situation but they end up financially drained since the church collects whatever little they own. Kuseremane and his family attends a church service on a Sunday and observes the extent to which the church participates in making the poor poorer. He states:

Sunday is a day in which we breathe a little easier in this place. There are fewer policemen and diffident laughter hiding in hearts surface. It is simpler on Sunday to find our kind, my people in an African exile. We visit churches. Agnethe, ChiChi always go in. Lune sometimes joins them and sometimes joins me. I am usually seating beneath a tree, on a stone bench, walking the perimeter wall and if it is raining seating at the back of the church watching people struggling for words and rituals indicating allegiance to a God whose face they do not know. The hope peddlers become rich in a short while, singing, “Cheeeeesus!”. Even the devastated destitute will tithe to commodified gods, sure in the theatrics of frothing messengers, hope is being dolled out. Investing in an eternal future? I do not have a coin to spare. Not

now, maybe later, when all is quiet and normal, I will evaluate the idea of a Banker God created in the fearful image of man. (p.28)

As the congregation believe in working for the Lord and sacrificing the little they have, they end up in poverty and hunger. Owuor seems to have captured the situation in her community where such cases have been reported in the Television and The Dailies. The recent scenario was reported that a well-known pastor has been running a cult like prayer house where the congregants are forced to starve to death. According to the Kenyan newspaper, The Citizen, reported that by April 27, 2023 four people had died of starvation (a number that later grew to hundreds) while ten more were rescued in the forest at night. The authors of post-millennial short story are thus sensitive of the issues happening in their society and willing to propose better ways of improvement.

Education is another issue of concern that the selected short stories share with the MDGs. Millennium Development Goal 2 (Achieve Universal Primary Education) intended to improve the enrolment of children to school by 2015. Rutangye too, in her short story, 'Legal Alien' treats education as a theme and demonstrates the kind of education that is good for African children that can ensure proper growth and development.

Since the inception of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000, the rate of primary school net enrolment rose to 91 per cent in 2015 in the developing regions; a rise from 83 per cent in 2000 (MDG Report, 2015). The number of children of primary school age out-of-school has fallen by almost half globally. By 2015, the number was estimated at 57 million; a fall from 100 million in 2000. According to the report, Sub-Saharan Africa recorded the highest improvement in primary education worldwide.

Taking a look into East African literary field, Crystal Rutangye appears to have captured the events surrounding the enrolment of students in primary schools in East Africa in her short story, 'Legal Alien.' The narrator, a grade two pupil, enrolls in Nakasero Primary school in Kampala, Uganda only to realize that the school is over packed. Comparing it with his class in Australia, she finds it a bit strange for a school to be that big. Nakasero primary school hosts eight classes with five streams each. Each stream carries more than a hundred students. Comparing with Australia, the East

African Schools which represents the developing nations recorded a big number of primary school enrolment since the establishment of the Millennium development goals; an indicator that the author might have interacted with the aims of the MDGs. The narrator states:

The school was so big. The road from the main gate led up to a roundabout. On the left side of the road was the lower primary section, made of primary one and two (referred to as P.1 and P.2). The rest of the school was on the right side of the road. This included the school kitchen, administrative offices, main hall and staff room. Each class had five streams; N, P, S, K and U, derived from N-akasero P-rimary S-chool K-ampala U-ganda. When daddy and I had reported to the headmaster's office that morning, the headmaster asked which colour I liked best among yellow, blue, red, green and white. "Green", I had said, because I was in green house in my school in Australia. So he allocated me to P.3K because all the K classes were in the green building of Eland house. Whoever designed the school was very organized, because each block of classes had five classrooms for the five streams. And the classes were huge; accommodating over a hundred pupils per stream (p.27).

The narrator joining a new school opens a new avenue for learning. She gets to learn a lot more than the book knowledge could offer. Other than acquiring new language that is Luganda, she learns a new culture that brings her back to her roots. Through education she gets to socialize with a lot of new things that she might not have acquired if she remained in Australia. The contrast between Australian schools and Ugandan schools, as mentioned earlier through narratology theory, is an evidence of improved enrollment in the East African schools in the fight to achieve the MDGs. The post millennial East African writers are therefore in touch with their surrounding and report what affected the society during their historical epochs.

In as much as a Sub-Saharan Africa has made considerable progress in expanding primary education enrolment since 1990, mostly since the adoption of the MDGs in 2000, some developing countries still have many children of primary education age that do not attend school, and another good number of children who begin primary school but do not complete it. In the short story, 'Legal Alien,' Rutangye identifies some of the supposed causes of school drop out in the East African schools. The narrator finds her new school hostile and takes long to acclimatize. The English teacher is harsh and

insensitive to the narrator, and at one point slaps her for not doing homework- work that was given before she joined the school. The narrator recounts:

I thought I would find peace in Uganda like he said, but instead, the English teacher had just slapped me. I tried hard not to pee in my pants in terror of it all. I resolved never to come back to school again. But then, as soon as the teacher ended her class, the children sitting around me started saying sorry and offering me sweets and telling me how I'd get used to the beatings and all. Suddenly, I was making friends. The children were no longer scared of talking to me. This began my orientation into my country, Uganda. (p.29)

Peaceful and conducive environment is one of the factors necessary for a good learning environment. Hostile environment in schools deprives the learners free environment to learn and socialize thus the narrator feels displaced when she realizes that teachers in Uganda beat learners. Such hostility drive most of the learners away from school thus limiting the success of MDG 2.

Rutanye further identifies other challenges facing Sub-Saharan Africa, and hindering its progress in achieving the universal enrolment. One major challenge she identifies is the political instability, which is shown through numerous demonstrations against the sitting president. Everyone is on strike because of one reason or the other. There is a walk to work demonstration that leaves almost everything at a standstill. Because of unfavourable political environment, education sector is affected in that students do not get to stay in school for the stipulated time. Most of their time is wasted by the strikes. Some pupils also get injured during the demonstrations. As the report further indicates that Sub-Saharan Africa faces overwhelming challenges including high levels of poverty, rapid growth of the primary-school-age population (which has increased 86 per cent between 1990 and 2015), armed conflicts and other emergencies, so does Rutangye highlight how political instability affects education in the East African nations. 'Legal Alien' shows that political instability is one of the threats to poor enrolment in schools because it hinders smooth travels of students to school and at the same time encourages teachers' strike; lack of teachers in school means paralyzed education.

The short story further exposes the challenges that the Sub-Saharan Africa undergoes with the increased population. Among all developing regions, sub-Saharan Africa has made the greatest progress in primary school enrolment. Its enrolment rate rose from 52 per cent in 1990 to 78 per cent in 2012 (MDG Report, 2015). In absolute numbers the region's enrolment more than doubled over this period, from 62 million children to 149 million. This doubled enrollment put a strain on the school's infrastructure. Schools lack enough desks for the learners, the rooms are extremely packed. The narrator is surprised at the state of events once in Uganda. In Australia, they had enough room for the thirty-two learners, in Uganda, she lacks even space to hang her bag.

.... There were over a hundred children in there; at least seven pupils on each of the fifteen or so benches. The walls were dirty, and you could see where the blue paint had been chipped at by enthusiastic kids. There were no cupboards, no teacher's desk, no carpet, no sleeping corner, no tiles. The room held only children, benches, a cemented floor and a huge, old blackboard positioned at the front. Everything was so dated. It was as if the décor had been inspired by an Adams Family episode. At the back of the classroom, bags were sprawled all over the floor, since there were not enough hooks on the wall to carry them all (p.1).

The above quote shows the strides that Uganda made in registering double enrolment in primary school during the millennium development goal campaigns. The increased enrolment also came with its own challenges including in adequate infrastructure and teachers to accommodate the learners. It is therefore worth noting that the selected short story writers have responded to the occurrences that happened during their historical epoch by demonstrating how education is necessary to achieving economic resurgence as stated in the MDGs.

5.4 Conclusion

From the analysis, this chapter demonstrates that, like any other genre of literature, the short story is fashioned from the society and produced within a social environment and a historical period. It further proves that literature does not only reflect the experiences of the society but also seeks to influence the same society towards its betterment. The chapter has majored on demonstrating how the Millennium Development Goals shape the production of literature in the post millennium era. The post-colonial and narratology theories have been used as a guide in the study of socio-cultural and

economic resurgence as reflected in the five selected East African Short stories. The chapter thus shows that the selected authors' concerns have therefore greatly been influenced by the Millennium Development Goals and the need to transform the society to better.

On health related MDGs and the short stories, Mbekomize in 'The Stone Baby,' demonstrates how religion, superstition and ignorance affects maternal health and sensitizes the society on the need to improve maternal health as highlighted in the Millennium Development Goals. Despite her poor health, Upendo suffers the effects of Superstition, traditions, religion and ignorance in an attempt to get a cure. Onjerika's 'Fanta Blackcurrant too highlights how poverty contributes to poor maternal health in that the poor street children risk losing their life due to poor maternal health therefore hindering socio-cultural and economic development. 'The Stone Baby' and 'Fanta blackcurrant' therefore borrows from Millennium Development Goal 5: Improving Maternal Health by highlighting the possible challenges in meeting the goal like hunger and ignorance. It is thus, evident that societal occurrences influence literary texts and therefore a proof that literature, history and society are connected.

Most of the themes captured in the post millennial short stories have their roots in the MDGs. In 'When the Sun Goes Down,' Goro wa Kamau highlights themes of HIV/AIDs, stigmatization that comes with it and how the East African nations have adapted to the situation. The story is therefore influenced by Millennium Development Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDs, Malaria and other diseases since it demonstrates how the East African society has managed to curb the spread of AIDs through characters like Steve and Maureen who live with HIV/AIDs but take ARVs and have done the necessary to curb mother-to-child transmission.

On Economic related MDGs, the chapter also proves that the literary texts under study got influence from the MDGs which was a major occurrence in the society during the production of the texts under study. Owuor in 'Weight of Whispers,' displays the influence of the MDGs on the thematic concerns of the story by highlighting themes of poverty, hunger, corruption, violence and the plight of refugees. Using the Kuseremanes and their journey of suffering in Kenya, the reader identifies with the

misfortunes that bedevil the asylum seekers. The story, 'Weight of Whispers' is therefore used as an avenue to portray how civil wars affect the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 1: Eradicate extreme Poverty and Hunger which is among the major challenges on societal development in the 21st Century. Literature therefore proves to be a tool for guiding the society towards identifying its shortcomings.

In 'Legal Alien,' set in 2011 it is evident that Millennium Development Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education influenced the thematic concerns in the post-millennial texts. It highlights the theme of education with respect to societal needs in the 21st Century. It thus shows the extent to which Ugandan Schools received double enrolment of students in primary schools after the implementation of the MDGs. The discussion in this chapter thus maintains that the short stories under study borrows from the MDGs and seeks to address the societal issues affecting socio-cultural and economic development during their historical epoch.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

6.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings of the research, makes conclusion and gives recommendations and suggestions for further study.

6.2 Summary of Findings

This study set out to examine the socio-cultural and economic resurgence in selected short stories in East Africa produced after 2000. This concern was informed by the fact that many African authors have used different genres of art to reflect on historical occurrences in the society which have received significant criticism as compared to the 21st Century short story form. This study also aimed to contribute to the long standing debate on the relationship between literature and the society focusing on the function of literature as a corrective and guiding tool towards the betterment of the society.

The study was guided by two objectives: first, to examine how the selected short story writers utilize style to reveal socio-cultural and economic resurgence in short stories published after the year 2000 in East Africa, and second, to evaluate the extent to which the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) influenced the thematic concerns of the texts under study.

Chapter one of the thesis discusses the background of the study, locates the study gap, highlights the research question, give a justification to the study and definition to the terms follow. In this chapter, the purpose and objectives of the study are also outlined as well as the scope of the study defined.

Chapter two, traces the origin and development of short stories and reviews previous studies to show that literature has been used to address different issues that were related to given historical epochs. It underscores the substantial influence of literature and history on society. The reviews further indicate the long-established relationship between literature and society that continues to receive scholarly attention. In Africa today, it is evident that history and societal issues are the socio-political surroundings that make up the body of African literary works. Thus, this study examined how the

post millennial short stories respond to their period of production and how they strive to better the society by revealing occurrences in the society, some of which affect the society negatively. These revelations were read as terms of sensitization. Chapter two also discusses the theoretical frame-work that guided the study, while Chapter three presents the study methods.

The study was based on two theoretical perspectives: Narratology theory as espoused by Genette and Post-colonial literary theory as espoused by Homi Bhabha. Basing on Narratology theory, the study has demonstrated that different styles used in the selected stories highlight the writers need for a socio-cultural and economically sound society. Similarly, with the discourse premised on the selected tenets of post-colonial theory, the study has highlighted how the post-millennial writers are keen on their surrounding hence respond to their historical epoch. The two approaches guided the study in relation to the objectives envisioned at the beginning of the study.

Chapter Four analyzes different styles used to reveal social-cultural and economic resurgence in selected short stories. 'In Legal Alien,' Crystal Rutangye uses the first person narrator to help the reader understand the need to embrace diversity in language acquisition. The use of first person narrator is quite apt in that the narrator connects with the readers and makes them feel the need to struggle towards learning, mastering and practicing their native languages. The narrator – a Ugandan citizen aiming to study for her Masters in Australia – gives reliable details on the states of affairs as far as matters language are concerned. Her age and level of education makes her the best story-teller to narrate her experience for failing to learn her native language. The use of first person narrator therefore significantly voices the social change that the society needs regarding language acquisition and use.

Rutangye has also used contrast and juxtaposition as a style to reawaken the developing nations towards remodeling their education system to be more effective and accommodative to all learners. Teachers are advised to stop abusing the learners both physically and verbally as this interferes with their intended development and knowledge acquisition in schools.

In 'Weight of Whispers,' Owuor has used journey motif to demonstrate the plight of refugees in their host nations and the detriments of civil wars. The Kuseremanes physically relocate from Rwanda to Europe with Kenya as their route in search for peace. Kenya becomes their home since they cannot proceed with the journey. Their stay in Kenya further exposes the misfortunes the asylum seekers face in their host nations. The narrator in 'Legal Alien' first comes to Uganda with the hope that there is peaceful environment for development but finds the opposite. She takes another journey to Australia after a long stay in Uganda to escape the burrier brought by her inability to learn her native language and to find peace which she fails to get in Uganda thereby demonstrating how language and peace are vital elements in socio-economic development of a society. Onjerika, in 'Fanta Blackcurrant,' also uses sub-standard English in her work to expose the illiteracy level of the street children and also to demonstrate how they, on the street, struggle to use English to communicate to a wider audience; the global community to listen to them and feel their pain. Of all the street children, Meri is the one captured on TV since she can speak some little English which others cannot, she therefore exposes the need for a common language for international connectivity.

The study noted that proverbs and aphorisms, have been used in 'When the Sun Goes Down' and 'The Stone Baby' to propose socio-cultural and economic improvements. In 'When the Sun Goes Down,' Kamau uses proverbs and aphorism to sensitize the readers on the need to give the sick and the less fortunate some love and hope while in 'The Stone Baby,' Mbekomize uses proverbs and aphorisms to warn the society against religious fanaticism which in turn hinders the success of other social and economic institutions. The use of these styles does not only prove that the authors of the selected texts have managed to blend the form and contexts to achieve a desired meaning but also shows that they are aware of the factors hindering the socio-economic stability thereby proposing ways to solve them.

Flashback is another style used in the selected texts to demonstrate how immorality is spreading in the society. In 'Weight of Whispers,' Owuor shows how joblessness promotes moral decadence through a jobless west African man who has to do anything possible to survive. It is worth noting that the styles identified are instrumental in

examining the level of commitment of the post millennial fiction writers in proposing better ways of transforming their society.

Chapter five examines the relationship between the Millennium Development Goals, the society and the thematic concerns of the selected short stories. The chapter looks at how the selected short story writers infused the Millennium Development Goals in their creative works. For instance, the study reveals that 'Weight of Whispers' adopted some thematic concerns from the Millennium Development Goal 1 (Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger) thus highlights the challenges facing the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger in warring nations. The story further demonstrates how violence is the chief enemy to achieving a hunger free nation. Because of war, people lose their jobs and homes, as they flee to other countries to become refugees where they can barely take care of themselves. War also leads to death, leaving behind orphans and widows who find it hard to survive. In addition, the study has shown that 'Legal Alien,' borrows from Millennium Development Goal 2 by portraying the level of achievement of primary school education enrolment. It portrays how Ugandan Schools registered double numbers in primary school between 2000 and 2011 where the story is set and highlights the effect of increased population in schools, like poor infrastructure and inadequate teachers. It can therefore be argued that the short stories are not just for entertainment purposes but they also capture phenomena in their immediate society during their historical epochs.

Onjerika's short story 'Fanta Blackcurrant,' borrows issues from Millennium Development Goal 5 (improving maternal health) by showing how poverty drives street girls into early sex and pregnancy which in turn endangers their lives. Moreover, illiteracy is shown to deprive the girls knowledge on family planning methods and the use of contraceptives and they end up using uncouth methods in attempt to terminate pregnancy and in the process endangering their lives. Moreso, the study has shown that Mbekomize's 'The Stone Baby' highlights how the conflict between traditions, religion and science may have negative effect on the health of innocent and unsuspecting young mothers which may in turn send them to an early grave. Kamau's 'When the Sun Goes Down.' reveals how the masses have accepted to undertake HIV/AIDS tests and to live responsibly on ARVs and proper dieting thus showing how the story borrows from

Millennium Development Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDs, Malaria and other diseases. He further demonstrates how the preventions of mother to child infections has been achieved. Thus, literary works are used to enlighten the society on its shortcomings and give it direction towards betterment. The study in turn concludes that literature of short story genre stylistically captures societal experiences during their time of production therefore, the form and content of a literary work depends on the society and the time of production.

6.3 Conclusion

The examination of the texts' thematic concerns, mode of narration and narrative techniques done in this study demonstrates that the selected short stories shows that form and content work together to expose the socio-cultural and economic resurgence in the post-millennial East Africa. The short stories have been read as works of art that set out to stylistically recount and restructure the socio-cultural and economic realities of the post-millennial East Africa. The study therefore concludes that fiction can be used to propose ways through which a situation can be improved. For instance, the journey motif shows that moving away provides the characters with the opportunity to lead more settled lives filled with contentment, peace, fulfillment and a stable sense of belonging. The study further demonstrates that the choice of the narrator in the selected works and the use of appropriate language that fit their audience is instrumental in achieving the writers vision. The use of juxtaposition outlines the need to re-evaluate education system to achieve societal goals and the use of an innocent – eye (child) narrator reveals the place of religion in the society and how it can be used together with traditions and science to achieve a better society.

On objective two, the study concludes that the post-millennial short story writers, are, sensitive about issues around them and take part in lobbying for change. For example, the selected short story writers respond to their historical epoch in that the thematic concerns of their works are influenced by the occurrences that took place in the early 2000. Literature is also seen as an avenue where the society is molded and well-designed since it carries the needs of the society within it, and enables the society to reflect upon its behaviour and champion for necessary changes. Therefore, it is appropriate to conclude that the selected short stories are crucial in reflecting the reality

about the society and in the process, proposing actions that can help better the characters' lives.

The selected five short stories can therefore be considered eye openers and as historical, and social representations of their times of production. This is because they have not only enlightened the masses on the right cause of action for the socio-cultural and economic betterment but also revealed the historical occurrences in the society. This study has thus shown the literary value of these imaginative works of literature particularly when we consider the fact that literary elements like character and characterization, setting, style and language only acquire complete relevance and significance when they are viewed in their figurative nature.

6.4 Recommendations

For literature to remain a veritable tool and agent of social change, it must continue to reflect the conflicts and crises experienced in the society. By highlighting these views, it attempts to refocus the attention of contemporary writers, their readers and critics to the uncompleted task of ensuring a socio-cultural and economically healthy African continent free from social ills. One way to achieve this is through the production of a vibrant literature that not only identifies the source of the problems but also sensitizes its consumers to change the course of social development positively.

The problems facing East Africa, such as poverty and HIV/AIDS, can be better understood through examining East Africa literature which include culture. The findings of this study have presented the short story as a productive literary avenue just like the novel and drama. This study therefore recommends that critics, scholars and readers should give more literary attention to the short story genre especially the post-millennial works of art in order to understand the changes that are taking place not just in the creative pieces but also in the society as such short pieces can give a mirror of the society in a quick succinct manner.

6.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

Since the study was unable to capture all aspects of style in the analysis, further research can be carried out on the use of style and language for more appreciation and analysis of the short story form. These areas include: Graphological, phonological and syntactic aspects of style used in short stories produced in East Africa after 2000.

The selected stories (the post millennial short stories) can also be subjected to Marxist analysis in order to highlight how the gap between the rich and the poor may affect the socio-cultural and economic advancement since this study did not manage to do the analysis from that perspective.

In addition, since women characters feature prominently in the selected short stories, further research can be carried out using the feminist theoretical framework in order to evaluate how gender equity and disparity may affect the socio-cultural and economic betterment.

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