

**IMAGES OF PEACE, CONFLICT AND DISPLACEMENT IN REFUGEE
CHILDREN'S NARRATIVES:
THE CASES OF NAIROBI AND KAKUMA**

by

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A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Literature

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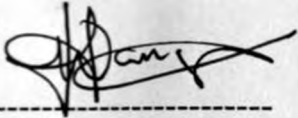
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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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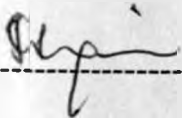


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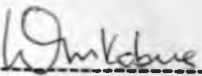
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DEDICATION

For Isaiah, my husband, whose faith in me is a great encouragement; and my sons, John and James, twin joys who always bring childhood back into my heart.

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Abstract

This study set out to analyze selected narratives of refugee children in order to achieve the following objectives: identify key issues addressed in refugee children's narratives, identify the images refugee children use to express themselves in their narratives and finally to establish refugee children's perception of peace, conflict and displacement as revealed through their narrative images. This was done by identifying, analyzing and interpreting recurrent images and themes in selected narratives of refugee children collected in Nairobi and its suburbs and Kakuma Refugee Camp.

The research was conducted in refugee schools and communities in Nairobi and Kakuma Refugee Camp. At least one teacher and one community member in each location was interviewed. This was followed by focus group discussions and recording of narratives from refugee children. The data analysis tools were derived from grounded theory and structuralism. Each narrative was coded using an adapted version of grounded theory procedure which consisted of open and axial/selective coding. Each narrative was then analysed according to Greimas' structural model which involved identifying the actants and the enunciation- spectacle. Through this process the researcher was able to identify key themes, main structural patterns and key images in the narratives.

The study used a theoretical framework derived from structuralism and sociological theory. Structuralism was productive because it enabled the analysis of the narratives in terms of their structural elements. The tenets of sociological theory, on the other hand, provided a context in which to investigate the narratives' response to and impact on social circumstances.

A key finding of the study was that refugee children's narratives addressed issues that are directly related to the conditions of their lives. This was expressed in the key themes which

were identified as food/resource management and distribution, relationship between children and adults and finally socio-economic relationships. Another major finding was that key images were directly linked to the central themes. Peace images were identified as availability and equitable sharing of food; friendship and absence of quarrels while images of conflict were identified as lack or inequitable distribution of food; destruction of friendship and quarrels. Images of displacement were seen to be both negative and positive. Key positive images were availability of food, water and security, while the negative ones were lack of enough/nutritious food; running away and separation from loved ones. That the children presented living in Kenya through both positive and negative images indicated that they had an ambivalent attitude towards displacement.

The main focus of this study was the use of narrative in the understanding of children's perception of peace, conflict and displacement, but the study findings indicate that refugee children's narrative is still a rich area for further research. One area that could be investigated further is how narrative could be used in conflict transformation. Yet another area that could be investigated is gender perspectives in the narratives of refugee children. Further study could also be done on narratives of adult refugees in comparison to those of refugee children. Such studies could help in the understanding of the response of narrative to social reality.

CHAPTER ONE

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

Background

Literature as a form of human artistic expression has over generations dealt with the themes of exile and displacement. From classical Greek times to the present, literature has addressed these themes. In *Oedipus the King* (1979) Sophocles addresses the theme of exile through the banishment of King Oedipus from the city state of Thebes, as a punishment for his sacrilegious action of killing his father and marrying his mother. Shakespeare in *King Richard the Second* (1994) also deals with the theme of exile where we see Bolingbroke and Mowbray exiled from England by the king, because of committing treason. Within the African context, one of the most memorable portraits of displacement is that of Okonkwo and his family in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1979). Okonkwo is banished for seven years and suffers the pain of being exiled from his homeland to the land of his mother because of committing a crime against the earth by killing a clansman, though inadvertently. Achebe's main focus in this exile experience is the social and psychological disruption of Okonkwo's life, through which the author portrays the devastating effects of displacement.

Other African literary texts that deal with exile and displacement include *The Promised Land* (1989) by Grace Ogot and *Two Thousand Seasons* (2000) by Ayi Kwei Armah. *Two Thousand Seasons* is set during the period of the Atlantic slave trade and focuses on the exile of a group of young initiates, who are sold into slavery by a collaborator king. Contrasting slavery with the past era of peace, Armah asserts, "From that long, forgetful peace, our exile has been harsh, and steep has been our descent" (23).

Exile seems to be always a part of the human condition and so creative artists see themselves inevitably returning to this theme. One way through which creative literature engages this pertinent human issue is through narrative. One of the earliest expressions of exile recorded in literature is that of Odysseus, the hero in Homer's *The Odyssey* (1986). He is exiled in a remote island after the Trojan war and is prevented from returning home to his wife and people by Calypso, a very possessive goddess. *The Odyssey* is an epic narrative of exile which recounts the impact of exile both on the exiled and on those left behind.

Among the three major genres of literature- narrative, drama and poetry- narrative is the oldest and it may be argued that it expresses basic human urges such as fears, aspirations and dreams. Commenting on the universality of narrative, Roland Barthes points out that the narratives of the world are numberless and are present in myth, legend, fable, epic, history and even in conversations. According to Barthes, narrative begins with the very history of mankind (557). When people recount personal experiences, they create personal narratives, which largely present their perceptions and responses to life. Narrative may therefore be seen as a genre that can enable one to be in touch with one's feelings and thoughts towards experience. Consequently, an understanding of someone's narrative can lead to an understanding of that person.

Human beings are storytellers who participate in this activity not only because it is pleasurable but also because it enables them to make the inchoate content of their lives intelligible. Narration as an activity of human consciousness is a medium for understanding human experience since it articulates sequence, thereby placing events in a framing context. As Kerby (1991) argues, "It is through emplotment (creation of plot) that our lives and our selves attain meaning" (2). This closely relates to Peter Brooks' observation about narrative that:

Our lives are ceaselessly intertwined with narrative, with the stories we tell and hear told, those we dream or imagine or would like to tell, all of which are re-worked in that story of our own lives which we narrate to ourselves[...] (32).

Emplotment is thus much more than stringing events together. It is the process of figuring out the essential from the accidental, the universal from the particular, and the characteristic from the merely frequent.

In view of the above assumptions, this study focuses on the narratives of refugee children in Nairobi and its suburbs and Kakuma Refugee Camp and by analyzing them, investigates the children's perception of peace, conflict and displacement. The study is based on the assumption that literary creativity is a major avenue through which people express their worldviews and feelings towards experience. It therefore analyses narratives told by refugee children with the broad aim of finding out what these narratives may reveal about the subjects' perception of their refugee experience.

This study is situated against the broad backdrop of worldwide forced displacement. Over generations, people have been forced to move from one place to another by varied natural and man-made factors including war, socio-political instability and famine among others. Displacement leads to the creation of groups of people referred to as displaced populations. This study deals with refugees, as a special category of displaced persons. The standard definition of "refugee" according to United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) is the one drafted by the 1951 United Nations Geneva Convention. It states that a refugee is:

a person who, owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality or membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality or owing to such fear, unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country (UNHCR, 1994).

The OAU expanded this definition to include special circumstances that affect African refugees.

The OAU definition therefore includes the following:

Any person who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge (OAU convention Art. 1).

Any refugee under the age of 18 is legally a refugee child. Refugee children constitute about 50% of the total refugee population in Africa (Population Data Unit, UNHCR, 2001). Being a refugee almost always puts one in very difficult circumstances, and being a refugee child exacerbates the situation. Refugee children are most likely to have their rights violated and when resources are scarce, they are usually the first to die. Refugee children benefit from the general assistance accorded to all refugees in respect to international protection, material assistance and durable solutions. Despite this, refugee children have special needs such as proper nutrition, protection from physical harm and education which must be identified and met. Consequently

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national and international principles on the treatment of children state that children deserve special treatment.

As part of the larger refugee population, refugee children are governed by the international refugee law. Kenya is a signatory to the United Nations (Geneva) Convention, relating to the status of refugees and the 1969 OAU convention which governs specific aspects of refugee problems. In November 2006, Kenya passed its own refugee law which guides all actors – refugees, the Refugee Affairs Department, the police, the Immigration Department, NGOs, civil society organizations and UN agencies – on how to handle refugee matters in Kenya (Kenya Gazette, 2006).

Despite the measures put in place to protect refugee children, they continue to face unique challenges due their vulnerability. In an article entitled *The Invisible Generation*, Ameratunga describes the situation of refugee children as “a desperate and moral vacuum, devoid of the most basic human values. This is the place inhabited by refugee children” (14). She asserts further that “If refugees are the most vulnerable group among the world’s downtrodden, then refugee children and their mothers are the most vulnerable of the vulnerable” (14). Some of the problems faced by refugee children include psychological trauma, disease, malnutrition, and exhaustion during flight, sexual exploitation and forced conscription. Another major problem faced by refugee children is inability to access legal and familial protection. As a result of all the problems they face, these children are not allowed to experience real childhood. As Jain observes, children are “forced to drop out of childhood” (15). By analyzing refugee children’s narratives, this study examines how the children perceive their experience of displacement.

Statement of the Problem

Due to its natural ability to capture experience, narrative is potentially able to reveal human nature and subjects' perception of the world. Consequently, many writers have used narrative to present different human issues. Various African writers have used narrative to deal with the experience of exile. Whereas this literature captures the phenomena of exile/displacement with its attendant impact on the family and society, it has largely focused on adults' experiences. This has left out children, whose innocence and vulnerability make them prone to the adverse effects of forced displacement. This omission leaves a gap in terms of the impact of forced displacement on children. This gap raises key questions in regard to refugee children: What are the key issues addressed in refugee children's narratives? What images do refugee children use to express themselves in their narratives? What is the refugee children's perception of peace, conflict and displacement as revealed through their narrative images? This study therefore addresses the above questions by analyzing images in selected narratives of refugee children, with specific focus on the images of peace, conflict and displacement.

Objectives of the Study

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

- a. Identify the key themes addressed in the narratives of refugee children in Nairobi and its suburbs and Kakuma Refugee Camp.
- b. Identify and describe the images of peace, conflict and displacement in selected refugee children's narratives.
- c. Determine what the images reveal about refugee children's perception of peace, conflict and displacement.

Hypotheses of the Study

This study was guided by the following hypotheses:

- a. Refugee children's narratives reflect the key issues affecting the children's lives.
- b. Refugee children's narratives contain images that reveal their perception of issues pertinent to them such as peace, conflict, and displacement.
- c. Refugee children perceive peace, conflict and displacement in concrete terms which they express in literary images.

Justification of the Study

This study finds its place in the fact that peace, conflict and displacement are key issues in the world in general and in Africa in particular, where internal conflicts have torn whole countries apart. The peace endeavor should therefore not only be a political concern but also an academic one. At the personal and interpersonal levels, the pursuit of peace and the constant transformation of conflict define human discourse. This justifies the academic endeavor that seeks a clearer understanding of peace and conflict.

There is a relationship between literature and conflict due to the fact that periods of great difficulty and conflict tend to produce great literature as pointed out by Leo Trotsky. This can be observed throughout history as seen in the case of the African-American literature that rose out of the experience of slavery for example, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) by Harriet B. Stowe and the writings of the Harlem renaissance. Another case that can be cited is the apartheid experience in South Africa which led to a great literary movement which produced works such as Alex La Guma's *In the Fog of the Season's End* (1986). This study proceeds on the assumption that human beings use art to deal with difficult circumstances. Refugee children are in difficult

circumstances due to their experience of conflict and displacement. This study thus seeks to investigate how the children express life experiences through the art of narrative.

The study also finds its scholarly niche in that although different authors have dealt with the themes of peace, conflict and displacement, most of them focus on adults rather than children. Since this study focuses on the narratives of refugee children, it provides a good opportunity to observe and understand children's experiences of exile as perceived and presented by themselves. Understanding children is important because children represent the future of society. Traumatic experiences such as conflict and displacement affect children in ways that could have a detrimental impact on their future. It is therefore important to study how children perceive such experiences.

Literature illuminates by creatively imitating life, that is, by selecting and re-ordering the facts of life and therefore making truth/ life clearer. Literature clarifies life not only through selecting and re-ordering the facts of life but also through creating images. The process of giving images to situations and ideas is like the process of giving names to things, which is a fundamental and essential step in the process of creating understanding. Literature therefore enables our understanding of the world by naming and defining it. This means that an understanding of how literature names the world through the assigning of images to phenomena is crucial in understanding ourselves and the world in which we live. This study consequently focuses on the narratives of refugee children, assuming that these artistic creations demonstrate the children's way of naming their world through the images they create. The study therefore identifies and analyzes the literary images in the narratives and draws conclusions about refugee children's perception of peace, conflict and displacement.

The study focuses on both urban and encamped refugee children to facilitate a wider perspective of refugee children's narratives. Research work on refugees has tended to focus more on encamped as opposed to urban refugees. This study addresses the problem implied in the above discrepancy: the paradoxical problem of urban refugee invisibility. This problem is paradoxical because the encamped refugees who are physically out of sight from most people of the host community are more visible because there is media and humanitarian focus on them, while the urban refugees who live among the citizens remain invisible due to silence about them.

Review of Related Literature

This section is organized according to the key concepts of the study. It starts by presenting an overview of children's literature in order to contextualize the study. This is followed by a discussion of the concepts of peace and conflict as presented in literature. The third sub-section deals with childhood and displacement in African literature, while the final sub-section focuses on studies on refugee narratives.

Childhood and Children's Literature

Theoretical views on children's literature reveal a lot of adult assumptions about the nature of childhood and therefore of children's literature. Some of the assumptions about children are that they are naïve and inherently good. Another assumption is that because they are impressionable and prone to experimentation, children imitate what they read and therefore become what they read. Those who hold this view argue that children's literature should not describe negative behaviour but instead should contain role models for children to imitate.

Such assumptions reveal an ideology of the adult world concerning the world of children and point to Thorne's view that "the experiences of children are filtered through adult concerns" (89). Some scholars of children's literature argue that adult assumptions about children and children's literature are dangerous because they are self-fulfilling prophecies because they teach children to conform to the prevailing adult concept of childhood. Children therefore learn to be (or pretend to be) childlike (Nodelman and Reime 95).

Most prevailing assumptions about children and by extension children's literature are informed by Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development in which he argues that the normal development of children follows certain identifiable stages. (Hoffman et al. 38). This theoretical perspective and adult's general assumptions about children result in children being subjected to the "tyranny of the norm". Children who are different from this norm are seen as deviant or deficient. Piaget and Kolberg see the stages through which childhood thinking develops as imperfect approximations of an ideal adult standard of mental functioning and assume that the worlds children invent at earlier stages of development are false and deficient versions of an objective truth available only to adults. Some post- Piagetian critics argue to the contrary: "What we take to be primitive however may actually be more reflective than the adult norm[...]" (Mathews 53). This means that what adults generally consider to be simplistic child behaviour may tell us a lot not only about children but also about human nature. This study takes the position that children's seeming simplistic presentation of the world is reflective and instructive. In light of this, the study focuses on refugee children's narratives to find out what they may reveal about their perception of peace, conflict and displacement. One of the contexts in which the world of children is richly revealed is in the stories they tell. This study taps into this rich

resource and investigates the children's presentation and perception of themselves and their worlds as brought out through their own stories.

Another dominant assumption about childhood is that the child is "other" from adult. "Adults use children to define themselves in an ideological process of domination analogous to the way in which...colonialists have defined those they colonized" (Nodelman and Reime 93). In response to such a perception of children, this study focuses on children themselves by listening to their voices as expressed through their narratives. A number of scholars argue that there is much of value in children's literature in general and narratives in particular. Wasamba argues that there is a gap between reality as captured by children's folklore and as it is captured by adult writers for children. He holds that while there is a lot of optimism in children's story-telling, in adult story-telling there is a lot of pessimism (66).

On the role of children's literature in psychological development of children, Chesaina (2007) argues that, children's voices as heard in their narratives and other forms such as songs display a lot of intelligence. She holds that children are the future of society and the custodians of society's mores, values and heritage (2). Since literature is one of the key means of socialization, she argues further that children's literature should be given a central place in the lives of children.

Although a substantial amount of research has been done on narrative literature in Kenya, there is hardly any research on narrative literature in respect to refugee children. However available studies on Oral Literature and children's literature in general shed light on this study and help to situate it. In her study on images of women in Gikuyu oral narratives, Kabira (1993) points out that storytelling is an integral part of the socialization process especially for children. She views oral narratives as works produced by society, reflecting its values and norms and

simultaneously influencing it. She analyses the images of women in Gikuyu oral narratives and what they reveal about the perception of women in this community. She also goes further to investigate how these images influence how women perceive themselves. This is based on the assumption that the representation of human action even when known to be fictional may have influence on people's beliefs and social behaviour. Kabira's work relates to the current study in that both deal with oral narratives. This study however departs from Kabira's in that it focuses on children and how their perception of peace, conflict and displacement is revealed in the images of their narratives.

Mwanzi (1995) carried out a study on the style of the short story in Kenya. Her scope is the written short story focusing only on style. She cites symbolism as one key device that gives the short story its efficacy since it "enhances brevity and intensity, because it allows for interpretation and hence active participation by the reader" (268). This study deals with images of peace, conflict and displacement as presented in refugee children's narratives.

Peace and Conflict in Literature

Creative literature deals extensively with the themes of peace and conflict. Life's characteristic process of conflict transformation in the pursuit of peace is captured in varied ways in creative literature. One of the great works of literature that deals with peace and conflict is *War and Peace* (1978) by Leo Tolstoy, which is based on the Napoleonic wars, specifically the Moscow campaign. Tolstoy used the historical scenes as a background for the personal dramas of those who took part in them. In this way, he was able to use historically significant moments to reveal human nature.

In Africa, conflict has also been seen to produce a specific body of literature, for example in Kenya where the struggle for independence produced a significant body of literature dealing with the fight for independence, including texts such as Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat* (1988) and Meja Mwangi's *Carcase for Hounds* (1987). The Biafran war in Nigeria also produced a lot of literature including Festus Iyayi's *Heroes* (1986) and Okpewho Isidore's *The Last Duty* (1989). In the ordinary perception, peace denotes the absence of conflict. However there is a distinction between positive peace and negative peace. Negative peace refers to the absence of war, but different scholars assert that though it is good, the absence of war isn't enough in the peace endeavor. Such scholars see war not merely as a state of hostility but an inclination thereto.

According to Howard, peace is a balance between order and justice (4). It should be noted here that this balance is an ideal which individuals and societies strive towards. Human beings are therefore constantly consciously or unconsciously balancing between how much injustice they are prepared to tolerate in the interest of order and how much disorder they are prepared to provoke in the interest of justice. Macquarrie emphasizes the centrality of justice in the pursuit of peace by asserting that there cannot be wholeness where injustice persists (43).

Macquarrie's view is demonstrated in Ayi Kweyi Armah's novel *The Healers* (1978), in which he engages the question of peace from the perspective of wholeness. According to Armah, in *The Healers*, wholeness goes beyond mere unity. It embraces connectedness and integration of different peoples and different aspects of human life and the ecosystem. This vision is articulated through the voices of particular characters called the healers such as Damfo and Densu, who are dedicated to the pursuit of wholeness. Their work is to heal the community of the disease of fragmentation at the social, psychological and physical levels. Armah shows that the work of

healing is greatly hampered by manipulators who try to gain power over others through guile, trickery, blackmail or force.

In his novel *Matigari* (1987), Ngugi wa Thiong'o demonstrates the delicate balance between order and justice in the pursuit of peace. In this novel we see Matigari, the main character, coming back home from the forest where he has fought and defeated his adversary, settler Williams, who had previously taken possession of his house. He now returns to reclaim his house and family. Now that the war is over, Matigari girds his waist with a belt of peace and buries his gun and sword, a symbolic indication that the era of violence or disorder is over. To his dismay, he finds that his house is now occupied by John Boy, Williams' house boy's son. The novel records Matigari's epic and mythical search for his wives and children, a search which eventually becomes the search for truth and justice. We see Matigari's great predicament because every time he wants to use force in his quest, he reaches out for his gun but only feels the belt of peace around his waist. Eventually we see that peace remains elusive to him despite having symbolically girded his waist with it. Through Matigari, Ngugi makes the statement that there cannot be peace where truth and justice are absent. Significantly, the novel ends with Muriuki, Matigari's young companion, taking up the arms which Matigari had buried to continue with the struggle for justice which would lead to peace.

Bansikiza (2004) argues that peace is both a gift from God and a product of people's efforts. He argues further that peace must be constructed on the basis of central human moral values, which include justice, truth, freedom and love (4). According to him, peace is not an event; it has to be continually sought after. "Its dynamism implies building bridges that unite divided people, heal inflicted wounds and remove bitterness harboured" (4). From the foregoing, it is clear that peace is a complex concept, which is best understood by focusing on its varied

attributes including order, justice, love, and balance between individual good and collective good.

A discussion of peace necessarily subsumes the concept of conflict. A basic definition of conflict is “the pursuit of incompatible goals”. This can be at various levels including personal, interpersonal, national and international. Hall (1969) defines conflict as “power struggles over differences: differing beliefs, interests, values or abilities to secure needed resources” Lederach (1996) deals with conflict from a Social Constructionist point of view and argues that conflicts emerge and develop on the basis of the meanings and interpretations people attach to actions and events (8). Lederach argues further that conflicts do not just happen; the people concerned are active participants in creating them. What emerges from the foregoing arguments is that conflict is greatly influenced by differences in perceptions and interpretations.

Howard also sees conflict as part of life, but not as something unnecessary, arising from extraordinary pathological conditions. “Conflict bubbles up naturally, almost necessarily, within societies” (13). He therefore asserts the need to understand the sources of conflict, the hidden roots and dynamics, which create conflicts whether they erupt into wars, or not. He holds that peace isn’t natural to humans and therefore has to be constructed through the constant transformation of conflict. Howard’s view of the dynamics of peace and conflict is clearly captured in the nature of literature. The very structure of a literary work is built around the emergence, development, culmination and the resolution of conflicts. Through the structural tensions in the plot, the creative writer is able to deal with social issues. Different literary texts deal with different types of conflict for example Richard Wright’s *Native Son* (1987) and Athol Fugard’s *The Blood Knot* (1983) deal with racial conflict while Buchi Emecheta’s, *The Joys of Motherhood* deals with social conflict.

From the foregoing discussion, three factors emerge as the key drivers of conflict: pursuit of incompatible goals, differences of perception and interpretation and disagreements about sharing of resources. One factor which is not brought out in the foregoing arguments but which, in the researcher's view, is an underlying factor in fuelling conflict is self perception. A perception of self which largely excludes "the other" has a great potential for the creation of conflict. The us/ other dynamics in sociopolitical relations usually produce conflicts that are self-perpetrating. This is because as Lederach has observed, "conflict transforms perceptions of self, others and the issue. This usually leads to reduced accuracy in understanding the other's intentions and decreased ability to clearly articulate one's own intentions" (18). It should however be noted that in itself, conflict is not necessarily bad. What is detrimental is if it is transformed negatively thus causing destructive behavior. On the other hand, if positively transformed, conflict can produce positive energy thus leading to growth within society.

When conflict is not positively transformed, it may eventually erupt into physical violence, which in many cases leads people to seek safety by fleeing their homes. When such people cross an international border, they become refugees.

Displacement and Childhood in African Literature

Several African literary artists have dealt with the themes of displacement and childhood. Eldred Jones observes that "the recurrence of the theme of exile in the literary traditions of many societies is not surprising since it is the 'internal distancing of the individual from the environment that frequently produces art'" (2000, viii).

African writers present exile at two levels: psychological and physical. One striking example of psychological exile is presented in Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones are not yet Born* (1996). In this novel of post-colonial disillusionment in Africa, we see the two main characters, the man and the teacher, psychologically exiled from their society which is decaying because of corruption. These two characters seek to escape from the social rot in their society by distancing themselves from it both socially and psychologically. The teacher has disengaged from his family and friends. The only person he associates with is the man because he feels that the rest of society has nothing to offer him and he has already offered everything he could to society to no avail. For this reason he has reached a state of despair. Although the man lives with his family (the loved ones), he has disconnected from them emotionally because he feels that their demands, which he cannot meet, accuse him and remind him of his social and economic impotence.

Physical exile is dealt with by a number of African writers. One key example is that of Okonkwo in *Things Fall Apart*. Okonkwo compares his exile to being cast out "like a fish onto a dry, sandy beach, panting" (92). Of interest to this study is the fact that *Things Fall Apart* is silent on the impact of the exile on Okonkwo's wives and children. Indeed when Okonkwo's children are mentioned, it is only in connection with their father's lost glory. His son Nwoye is portrayed as a disappointment because he never grows to embrace the masculine values of his father. Instead, exile provides an opportunity for him to release himself from his father's control, an action that causes Okonkwo to disown him. Okonkwo's daughters, Ezinma and Obiageli, are only mentioned in connection with the glory their marriages will bring to their father. The two spend the greater part of their childhood in exile, but Achebe does not make any mention of the impact of exile on their childhood.

Things Fall Apart deals with the exile of a single family within a limited geographical context. However, exile as experienced in Africa especially in the post colonial period, is at a much wider scope due to mass displacements as a result of political instability in many countries. Although the mass displacements that Africa has experienced in the last several decades have not yet produced a significant body of literature, exiled peoples have produced patriotic songs, skits and reflections which may eventually evolve into abiding literature (Jones, vii). A survey of refugee studies reveals that there has not been a lot of focus on literary studies on refugee issues. At a time when international attention on refugee children is very high, the little attention given to the role of creativity in their lives is quite striking. In recognition of this gap, this study focuses on the narratives told by refugee children themselves and, by analyzing their images, finds out how these children perceive the key issues of peace, conflict and displacement.

Other African writers who have dealt with exile include Nurrudin Farah, Buchi Emecheta and Ike Oguine. Nurrudin Farah deals with the fate of exiled Somali in his novel, *Sardines*. Buchi Emecheta in *Kehindi* deals with the experiences of a migrant woman returning “home” after a long stay in England. In *A Squatter's Tale*, Ike Oguine deals with the experiences of African economic refugees who go to America in pursuit of an elusive dream. A survey of African literature reveals that although African literature has dealt widely with displacement, it has not given specific focus on refugee children.

Childhood is a key subject in African literature. There emerges two broad perspectives in the treatment of the theme of childhood. The first is nostalgic, and is epitomized by Camara Laye's *The African Child*, where childhood is presented as an enchanted magical period which holds a vital clue to the understanding of the black soul. The second perspective is sordid, as epitomized by the poem “The Child Who was Shot Dead by Soldiers at Nyanga” by Ingrid

Jonker. The poem presents the horrors visited upon children in apartheid South Africa. Okpewho Isidore in his novel *The Last Duty* deals with the effects of armed conflict on childhood. Set in the context of the Biafran war, the novel presents the ravages of war through the eyes of a child protagonist. The harrowing experience of childhood is expressed by Eldred Jones, who argues that,

Far from being merely nostalgic yearnings for a lost paradise, many of the treatments of childhood have exposed a grim reality of cruelty, harshness [. . .] and extraordinary bruising of the vulnerable child psyche (7).

From the foregoing, one observes that although creative writers and critics have dealt with displacement and childhood in Africa, there has not been much direct focus on refugee children. This study therefore focuses on the narratives of refugee children, with the aim of analyzing them to see what these oral literature materials may reveal about the children's perception of peace, conflict and displacement.

Studies on Refugee Narratives

Although there is a sizeable amount of research done on refugee narratives, most of these studies were done outside Kenya and do not focus on children. A review of the available literature shows the need for such studies in the Kenyan context. One study is by Pavlish (2007) who carried out a narrative inquiry into the life and experiences of refugee women and men. The aim of the research was to examine life experiences of refugees by analyzing their personal narratives. The study focused on Congolese refugees in a refugee camp in Rwanda. Two in-depth interviews were

conducted with 15 refugee men and 14 refugee women and the data analyzed separately by gender. According to this study, women's experiences revealed themes of leaving the good life behind, worrying about their daughters, feeling ambivalent about marriage and lacking hope. Men's experiences revealed themes of leaving the good life behind, having no peace and fearing the future. Pavlish arrives at the general conclusion that "listening to refugee voices in narrated life experiences provides an opportunity ...to create programs and services that pertain closely to refugees' life experiences" (29).

Kreitzer (2002) and Halabi (2005) assert the value of qualitative research among refugee populations. According to these scholars, qualitative research is valuable because it allows participants to describe their own experiences. Hatch and Wisniewski state that narratives "reveal experiences of real people, in real situations, struggling with real problems" (127). They also assert that narrative research results offer practical knowledge, useful for problem solving. According to Pavlish, "nestled in life experiences are human fears, hopes, regrets, injustices, successes, ideas, innovations, values, plans, frailties and resilience" (32).

In a paper on co-existence education among conflicting groups, Salomon (2004) raises a number of pertinent issues regarding the place of narrative in peace, co-existence and conflict. The context of Salomon's paper is the Jewish- Arab conflict but a lot of his ideas are applicable to other situations of conflict. In the article, he argues that the collective narratives of groups in conflict play a central role in feeding the conflict and thus can play an equally central role in facilitating co-existence. He defines collective narrative as the socio-psychological aspect of a community consisting of its "sense of identity, the way it perceives itself, the story it tells about itself, its history, the way it portrays its role in the conflict, and its views of its adversary" (273). Collective narratives are key devices that provide the foundation of a group's sense of shared

identity and thus provide an individual's sense of social identity (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). This indicates the importance of collective narrative in individual and social stability. The collective narrative, arguably, expresses the communities' forces and aspirations and so may contain archetypal images that express these basic urges.

In dealing with the nature of narrative, Polkinghorne (1988) emphasizes its meaning-providing feature and asserts, "Narrative is a scheme by means of which human beings give meaning to their experience of temporary and personal actions' (11). Salomon asserts that the importance of the role played by historically rooted collective narratives in a community's sense of identity and way of interpreting reality can be seen in the way that new nations contrive new narratives or change old ones. Thus it not only provides the root for collective narratives, but is coloured by it. Arguably, the collective narrative is more fundamental than historical facts in creating a nation's sense of identity.

Salomon argues that collective narratives appear to play a particularly important role in difficult times. During such times, the meaning – providing function of collective narratives serves to protect its members from the devastating impact of conflict, disaster or collective trauma and offers the means towards the healing process. In this sense, collective narratives serve as collective coping mechanisms. He asserts that the value of collective narratives is based on the underlying principle that "it helps to know who we are, what we are suffering for who are the despised 'others' and where does all this lead to" (277).

Salomon points out an aversive characteristic of collective narratives in inter group conflict:

By necessity, the collective narratives of groups in conflict contradict each other... thus, whereas a group's collective narrative bolsters the group's self identity and justifies its role in the conflict, it also, invalidates the other side's collective narrative and its role in the conflict: if "we" are right, "they" are surely wrong, and if "we" are victims, "they" are obviously the perpetrators (277).

The foregoing means that there is a deliberate attempt on each side to invalidate the collective narrative of the other side. To enable a real dialogue and coexistence, each side will have to assimilate the history of the other and attain a deep understanding of their collective narrative. Different scholars, including Salomon 2004; Bar-on 2002; Weick,1979, acknowledge that accepting the other's collective narrative does not mean agreeing with it or abandoning one's own; it means only the acknowledgment of its right to exist, and then moving on slowly to progressive stages of legitimization. Personal narratives may help this process. This is especially at the point of possible convergence between personal stories and collective narratives. The gradual legitimization of the other's collective narrative may lead not to a weakened adherence to the narrative of one's group but to a more complex and less monolithic narrative to which one adheres. According to Rouhana and Bar-tal, peaceful resolution of intractable conflict requires not only changes of conflictive ethos but also an active construction of a new ethos consistent with a peaceful resolution relationship (768).

The use of narrative for the creation of a new ethos is observed in a project carried out by Pharp (peace building, healing and reconciliation programme, an NGO working among refugees in Nairobi. The project involved the collection of oral narratives from refugee children from The

Great Lakes Region. The result was an anthology with fifteen stories entitled *Do you Know What Happened to Me?* (Nemeyimana, 2006). At the end of every story there are questions which have the broad perspective of peace building. The objective of this project was to provide a tool which teachers and care givers dealing with children traumatized by conflict could use in the pursuit of healing, reconciliation and peace. The Pharp project is based on the assumption that storytelling is therapeutic and that stories can be used as tools for dealing with conflict. One of the stories in the anthology entitled *The Lion and the Leopard* tells of how Leopard stole Lion's property and what ensued after he was found out. Lion swore to tear Leopard into pieces, but soon the other animals intervened and pleaded with him to seek another solution because "we do not want bloodshed [...] we all need to live in peace." (8) Lion agreed to forgive Leopard and peace was soon restored.

In the review of the relevant literature, I have endeavored to show how literature has dealt with the issues of peace, conflict and displacement. It is observed that literature over different generations and locales has dealt with the broad theme of exile. Further, it is observed that conflict is central to literature because as an artistic creation, literature is based on conflict as a structuring principle. The review thus helps to contextualize and justify the study.

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by structuralism and sociological theory. Structuralism is a theoretical approach which is mainly associated with Linguistics and Anthropology. However, its methodology renders itself useful in the study of literary phenomena and therefore several

literary critics have developed their theoretical approaches on the ideas of structuralism. Some of these critics include Claude Levi-Strauss, Vladimir Propp, Roland Barthes, Jonathan Culler and Gerard Genette (Bressler 96-8). Structuralism is associated with the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure who advanced the basic argument that all languages are governed by their own internal rules. Saussure made a fundamental argument that has become the basis of the study of linguistics. This is the argument that a native speaker of a language has an internalized understanding of the structure and rules that govern his/her language. This is what he called *langue*. The native speaker draws from *langue* for actual language use. Saussure called the native speaker's actual speech in real language situations, *parole*. Although acclaimed as the father of structuralism, Saussure did not use the term; it other critics who coined the term.

One such critic is A. Schaff who defines structure as "The way elements are interconnected within a given system, i.e. the totality of the relations among elements in a whole system" (Assiter 4). Further he defines system as 'a whole consisting of elements bearing such a relation to one another that a change in the position of one results in a change in the position of the rest' (ibid). Consequently, there could be no structure without a system and vice versa.

Schaff identifies the following characteristics, which according to him are basic to structuralism. First, structuralists approach a phenomenon as a specific whole which dominates all its elements. The whole, according to the structuralist, forms a system whose elements are interconnected and where the structure of the whole determines the position of each element. Second, structuralists believe that every system has a structure: the task of the analyst is to find out what that structure is. And third, structuralists are interested in 'morphological' or 'structural' laws, that is, the internal organization of the phenomena being studied (Assiter 4).

Structuralism as an approach to the study of phenomena presents the basic thesis that humans are not able to understand things in isolation; they understand by recognizing or creating structures. Human beings do not therefore observe an absolute universe but on the contrary they create one of their own. Structuralism has been described as a way of looking for reality not in individual things but in the relationships among them. C. Sumner identifies the above as a defining feature of structuralism. According to him, "Structuralism is a method which examines phenomena as the outward expressions of their inner, invisible structures" (qtd. In. Assiter 5).

According to Jean Piaget, a structure embodies three fundamental properties. The first one is wholeness or a sense of internal coherence. The second one is transformation. This is the capacity for structuring or transforming material, for example, language has the capacity to transform a sentence into many varieties without changing the basic form. The third one is self-regulation which means that a structure does not appeal to factors outside of itself in order to make meaning. For example a story relies on its own internal nature and not on actuality for it to make meaning. (Hawkes 16).

Literary structuralist critics argue that just as in language there are two levels (*langue* and *parole*), literature too has two levels: *poetics* and individual creative works. *Poetics*, the basic literary structure that enables the creation of individual works, is compared to *langue*- the underlying language structure that enables the generation of intelligible discourse. Individual creative works are compared to *parole*- the specific utterances as produced by the speaker of a specific language.

In this study, a structuralist model adopted from ideas of A.J. Greimas is used. (Hawkes 1989, 87). This model has been adapted to this study because it focuses on the relationships between various elements in narrative and how these relationships help to generate meaning. For

the purposes of this study, a model based on two key concepts advocated by Greimas has been developed. The first concept is Greimas' view that all narratives contain a common grammar or structure which he gives the technical term "enunciation-spectacle". The meaning of a narrative is therefore in its structure. The second concept is that the fictional personages in the narrative operate on the level of function rather than content. The characters are therefore not important as individuals but as agents of particular functions. These agents, he calls *actants*. Consequently, a character in a narrative may perform more than one function in which case he would be more than one *actant*. Conversely two or more characters may be used to articulate one function making them one *actant*. The actantual roles of different characters in the narratives were analyzed in order to elucidate the relationship between actantual roles and the key images being investigated.

The third principle is binary opposition which is based on the view that the world takes shape because of the human ability to perceive difference. The world is comprised of mighty opposites which give it order and meaning. Applied to literature, it means that a narrative contains two *actants* whose relationship must either be oppositional or its reverse. This will therefore generate fundamental oppositional actions such as disjunction and conjunction; separation and union; conflict and peace among others.

Structuralism rejects the view that there is an objective and absolute centre from which reality is viewed. This basic structuralist assumption is helpful in this study because it justifies the investigations of refugee children's perceptions as presented through their narratives. Children are often perceived as 'other' from adults in a relationship that arrogates power to the adult. In addition, refugee children are also generally perceived as 'other' both from adults and

from citizen children. This us/other binary opposition which is likely to affect the refugee children's perception of their lives is investigated through the use of structuralism.

Sociological criticism was also applied in this study in the analysis of the narratives. Sociological criticism as a literary is based on the wider sociological theory which is itself based on social constructionism. Social constructionism focuses on how social phenomena or objects of consciousness develop within social contexts. Sociological literary criticism is directed to understanding literature in its social context. The rise of this approach is associated with the Kenneth Burke, a 20th century literary and critical theorist, whose article "Literature as Equipment for Living". Sociological criticism analyzes both how the social reality is reflected in literature and how literature works in society. According to Kenneth Burke, works of art, including literature, are strategic namings of situations that allow the reader to better understand, and gain a sort of control over societal happenings through the work of art (Adams 542).

From the foregoing, it is clear that the underlying concept of sociological criticism is the relationship between literature and society. This relationship is often expressed in the statement, "Literature is a mirror of life". This statement implies that if one intends to understand a particular society, one can do so by studying its literature. Literature provides readers with a variety of commentaries on human life in society and so we can regard it as social evidence and testimony. The sociological view of literature proceeds from the assumption that literature plays the social function of storing, interpreting and transmitting social values.

It should however be noted that the relationship between literature and society is two way: literature is not only a product of society but also a force within society (Kabira 1993, 30). Pointing out the relationship between literature and society, Odetola and Ademola put it that

“literature is not only the effect of social causes but also the cause of social effects” (54). This means that literature not only responds to what is happening within society but often it is an active agent, influencing and shaping society in particular ways.

The interrelationship between literature and society is captured clearly by two critics whose assertions are quite pertinent to the study. The first is Hermeren who argues that “works of art are not created in a vacuum. Every work of art is surrounded by what might be its artistic field... political and social structure. All these may influence the creation of works of art” (3). Rosenblatt, on the other hand, focuses on the influence of literature on society and asserts that literature is not a mere mirror of life, but is itself an integral part of a culture and has its own complex relationship to the cultural setting (83). In view of the above, this study hopes to analyze the narratives of refugee children in order to find out how the stories as artistic creations relate to the actual lives of the children.

These two positions of sociological literary theory will guide my analysis of the refugee children’s narratives at two levels. The first will be to show to what extent the narratives reflect/reveal the realities of the children’s lives. The second will be to investigate how the children use narrative to try and influence or shape their lives in desired ways.

Scope and Limitation

The study focuses on refugee children in Nairobi City and its suburbs and Kakuma Refugee Camp. The reason for this was to enable a broad view of the issues faced by refugees both in urban and camp settings. Basing the study on the two settings was envisioned to facilitate an understanding of the extent to which location and social setting influences the children’s perception of their status.

The study is particularly interested in the child perception of the world of displacement and rootlessness. The focus was on children between the ages of 10-16 years. The reason for the choice of this age group was to enable focus on children who are old enough to clearly express themselves and also to include children who had lived in their home countries for part of their lives. Before the actual data collection, the researcher conducted a pilot study where children as young as six years were included in the focus groups. The pilot study revealed that the younger children were not able to give constructive information in the focus groups and they were also not able to narrate comprehensively partly due to inadequate language skills and partly due to poor concentration and interruptions from other young children in the focus group. Consequently, the researcher was able to arrive at the age bracket that would best suit the objectives of the study.

Controversy still rages over the nature of the developmental process of children and theories that present development in the form of stages such as Erickson's and Piaget's theories have been challenged. Nevertheless, children still tend to exhibit particular characteristics at particular ages. This study therefore focuses on this particular age bracket in order to examine what kind of images children at this age create and what these images reveal about children's self perception and worldview.

The study involved the collection of both fictional and personal narratives from the refugee children. In terms of narrative analysis the study focused on the identification, classification and interpretation of themes and images in the selected narratives.

Methodology of the Study

Research Design

This study was based on refugee schools and communities in Nairobi and its suburbs and Kakuma Refugee Camp. It employed three main methods: descriptive survey, narrative inquiry and content analysis. The survey method was used in interviewing a sample of teachers in the refugee schools and community contacts in the refugee communities. The information from the interviews was helpful in helping the researcher gain some understanding of the situation before the actual collection of narratives from the refugee children. Narrative inquiry was then applied as the main method of data collection. This is the process of gathering information for the purpose of research through storytelling. This was based on the assumption that storytelling is a basic human activity through which aspects of human nature are revealed. It was also based on the assumption that storytelling is a pleasurable activity and most children enjoy telling and listening to stories. The recording of narratives was done in the schools and communities in specially created focus groups. The narratives were then analyzed as literary entities using grounded theory and structuralism. The theoretical tools of analysis are presented under data interpretation.

Study Area, Population and Sample

The population of this study was refugee children in Nairobi and Kakuma between 10-16 years of age. The children were in two broad categories: those from the Great Lakes Region (Rwanda, Burundi and DRC) and those from the Horn of Africa (Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia). The sample was arrived at through purposive disproportionate sampling technique using the different countries of origin as the strata. This means pupils were sampled from each country, but the sample size was not proportional to the population of the children from that particular country.

The narratives collected were from a sample of refugee children from refugee schools and communities in Nairobi and Kakuma Refugee camp. In Nairobi, three refugee schools were visited: Sudanese Academy and St. Kizito Academy both in Dagorretti constituency and Ondiri Academy in Kikuyu constituency. Two refugee communities were also visited: Kangemi in Westlands constituency and Eastleigh in Starehehe constituency. Five teachers, four community members and 43 children (20 girls and 23 boys) were interviewed. In total, 24 personal narratives and 19 fictional narratives were collected from Nairobi refugee children. In Kakuma Refugee Camp the following three refugee schools were visited: Angelina Jolie Girls' Boarding Primary School, Jabel Marra Primary School and Mogadishu Primary School. Two refugee communities were visited: Burundi community and Rwanda community. In total, 3 teachers, 5 community members and 28 refugee children (15 girls and 13 boys) were interviewed. In Kakuma, 23 personal narratives and 27 fictional narratives were collected.

Data Collection

The process of data collection in the refugee communities and schools in Nairobi was basically similar, but with a few logistical adjustments. It began with making a phone call to establish contact and fix an appointment with a teacher in a refugee school/ refugee community contact. These contacts were introduced to the researcher through snowballing. This was followed by a preliminary meeting with the teacher/ refugee community contact. Where possible, the interview of the teacher/community contact was carried out during this meeting and then a request made for him/her to find children to be interviewed. The community contact/teacher identified the children and fixed an appointment for the researcher to meet the children for the performances in his/her home or in the school. This was followed by a visit to the home/school to meet the children and hold the focus group discussions and performances. The data collection

in Kakuma was also similar except that the research assistant had made all the arrangements in advance so only one visit was made to each location for the interviews, focus group discussions and performances.

A structured interview guide was used to interview the community contacts and teachers. The researcher filled out the interview guide as the informants answered the questions. The purpose of interviewing community members and teachers was to give the researcher a general picture about the children in order to help the researcher establish rapport with them.

Data Analysis

The process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of information collected involved the key steps of data organization, collation, and coding as discussed below.

Data Organization

The process of data organization had four major steps as explained below. The first step in the data organization was the typing of the field notes which was done immediately after every field visit. The second step was reading through all the responses from the teachers and community contacts as captured in the field interview guide. This was followed by entering the information into an MS Access data base form for ease of reference. (See appendix i and appendix ii) The third step was entering the responses from the focus group discussions with children into an MS Access form. The fourth step was listening to all the narratives then transcribing each of them.

Data Collation

The data in this study were in three forms: narratives, field notes and interview notes. The process of data collation involved close study of each set of data and comparing the different types of data in order to identify significant issues and emerging patterns especially in regard to the research questions. During the process of organization, data were screened to remove any material that was not directly relevant to the research.

Data Coding

The study employed the procedure advocated by grounded theory methodology in the coding of data. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), Robson (2002), Nueman (2006) three key steps should be followed in grounded theory methodology. These are open coding, axial coding and selective coding. In this study however, the steps were collapsed into two as indicated below:

i) Open Coding.

This is the first step in the grounded theory procedure. It involves identifying, naming and categorizing phenomena found in the data. In this step, data are first broken down into specific units or parts. This is followed by assigning the units/parts a label or a code. This was done for each narrative and then where applicable, the code was identified as a specific image of peace, conflict or displacement.

ii) Axial/ Selective Coding

The second step was a combination of axial and selective coding in which the key phenomena/ central category was identified from the list of open codes. 'Phenomena' refers to the main concepts that emerge from the data. For the identified key phenomenon, the following

details were specified: causal conditions, context, intervening conditions, action strategies and consequences. According to Strauss and Corbin, *causal conditions* are the events or variables that lead to the occurrence or development of the phenomenon, that is, a set of causes and their properties. *Context* is the background variables that influence the phenomenon while *intervening conditions* are mediating variables or circumstances that link action strategies with the phenomenon. *Action strategies* are the purposeful, goal-oriented activities that agents engage in as a way of responding to the phenomenon and intervening conditions. Finally, *consequences* refer to the intended and unintended outcomes of action strategies (78).

Grounded theory holds that a central category always exists in any set of data. The focus on a central category in selective coding makes grounded theory productively applicable in the analysis of narratives because the central category usually coincides with the central conflict around which all other elements in a narrative drape. This means that in the analysis presented in chapter four and five, what was identified as the central category is roughly the same as the central conflict in the narratives. It is well acknowledged that plot in narrative is propelled by the conflict that is presented in the story (Scholles and Kellog, 2005, Herman and Vervaeck, 2005). Conflict is therefore essential to the creation and analysis of narrative.

Data Interpretation

Data coding was followed by data interpretation which involved relating emergent patterns and themes from the coded data to the research questions and hypotheses in order to draw general observations and conclusions in order to address the research problem. This process was guided by key tools abstracted from structuralism and sociological theory. Structuralism was applied according to a model derived from Greimas' ideas as presented below:

i) Enunciation- spectacle

According to Greimas, all narratives have a common grammar which he calls enunciation-spectacle. The meaning of narrative is in its structure since all narratives have a common grammar. Using the above principle, the structure of the narratives was analyzed. This enabled the researcher to identify the “grammar” of the refugee narratives.

ii) Actants

According to Greimas, fictional personages operate as agents of particular functions and are not important as individuals but as performers of particular functions within the narrative; they are therefore actants. Greimas identifies six actants: subject, object, sender, helper, opponent and receiver. Using the above model, the researcher analyzed different elements in the narratives according to the functions they perform and related them to the key images being investigated.

iii) Binary Opposition

Greimas emphasizes on binary opposition as a fundamental principle of structuralism. This principle was used in the analysis of images in the narratives. After identifying different images, they were analyzed according to the concepts of difference, contrast and reversal. The study therefore focused on the following key opposing images: friend/enemy, child/adult, refugee/ citizen and inside/outside among others.

The application of sociological theory in data interpretation was based on the two principles below that indicate the interdependent relationship between literature and society

i) Literature as a mirror of life.

Literature reflects society and clarifies life by creating images. This principle guided the interpretation of refugee children's perception of life by focusing on their narratives. In this regard, the narratives were seen as social evidence and testimony.

ii) Literature as an active social agent.

This is the sociological view of literature as a cause of events and as an active force in influencing consciousness. Using this principle the researcher examined how the refugee children use narratives to understand, influence and shape their world.

Conclusion

In this chapter the problem of the research has been delineated and its setting spelt out by giving a general overview of children's literature. In order to create the necessary context for the investigation of the images of peace, conflict and displacement in refugee children's narratives, the following areas were reviewed: peace and conflict in literary texts; displacement and childhood in African literature and studies on refugee narratives. The chapter also presented the theoretical framework and methodology for the study.

CHAPTER TWO

NATURE AND FUNCTIONS OF CHILDREN'S NARRATIVE

The introductory chapter of this study presented the research problem and its setting by giving a general overview of the treatment of peace, conflict and displacement in literature. This was by way of creating the background for the study of refugee children's narratives. It also reviewed the following areas: peace and conflict in literary texts; displacement and childhood in African literature. The theoretical framework and methodology for the study were also presented.

The current chapter contextualizes the study on refugee children's narratives by giving an analysis of the nature and functions of children's narrative in general. It explores the defining characteristics of children's narratives such as simple and straight forward plot, action-oriented plot, fantasy, structural repetition and the home-away-home motif. Further, the chapter deals with recurrent themes and key functions of children's narratives. Among the themes discussed are childhood, conflict between the familiar and the unfamiliar, the outwitting of the big by the small and the triumph of good over evil. The final section of the chapter discusses psycho-social functions of children's literature including the provision of multi-generational pleasure, provision of vicarious experience, meeting of emotional needs and didacticism.

In the context of this study, children's literature is defined as works of creative imagination including prose narratives, poetry and drama that are enjoyed by children even if not originally written or created for children and even if they can also be read and enjoyed by adults. Children's literature also refers to works of verbal art created by children.

Two broad categories into which children's literature may be divided are the written and the oral. Oral literature is a major component of children's literature since children's first

experience of literature is oral. Oral literature can be further categorized into traditional and conventional. Traditional literature is made up of several sub-genres including myth, legend, fable, fairytale, ballad, song, poetry, drama, and short forms. Among these genres, some appeal to children more than adults, for example riddles and tongue-twisters. Dramatic forms such as role-play are also dominated more by children than adults. Others such as proverbs appeal to adults more than children. Still others cut across different generations, for example oral narratives which are narrated mainly by adults while the audience is mainly children.

The term conventional oral literature is here used to mean verbal art forms that are created spontaneously such as anecdotes, tongue-twisters and personal narratives. Such forms are considered literary due to their creative use of language and adhering to literary conventions, for example plot development in the case of personal narratives, and use of condensed language and symbolism in the case of anecdotes. This study focuses on oral literature, specifically fictional and historical oral narratives told by refugee children both in Nairobi city and suburbs and Kakuma Refugee Camp. In this sense, this study cuts across traditional and conventional oral narratives. The narratives were analyzed as literary entities and specific literary images identified and studied to identify what they reveal about refugee children's perception of peace, conflict and displacement.

The centrality of oral literature in the study of children's literature is emphasized by two basic factors: firstly, children's initial encounter with literature is oral. In early childhood, children participate in oral as opposed to written literature since it does not require the skills of reading and writing which they are yet to learn. This means that as early as when children acquire language, they can participate in oral literature as is attested to by the songs children sing and also in their general love for stories. Consequently, it may be argued that children's literature

finds its basic expression in orality. Secondly, conventional oral literature gives children an avenue through which to exercise their originality and creativity in a way that written literature does not. This is due to the elements of spontaneity, and flexibility which enable it to capture the moment.

Yet conventional oral literature has remained in the margins of literary scholarship despite being an area where children's literature thrives. One study that is indicative of the richness of this area in the study of children's literature is a study by Otieno (2006) on *Mchongoano*. *Mchongoano*, which is prevalent in Kenyan urban areas, is a spontaneous short form performed between two people that consists of short teasing statements whose main objective is to amuse. The challenger makes a teasing statement that ridicules the target individual, who also immediately gets a chance to reply in similar fashion (105). *Mchongoano* is mainly performed by children and youth in urban settings and it employs Sheng as the main mode of communication. In his paper, Otieno observes that short forms in oral literature have not received a lot of critical attention.

There is yet another reason for the centrality of oral literature which is especially important in predominantly oral cultures as in the case of many African communities. In Africa the place of oral literature among children is crucial because as Irele observes, "oral literature is the fundamental reference of discourse and of imaginative mode" (11). Despite the impact of print and electronic media, orality still remains a dominant mode in Africa. The concept of orality has been studied by various African scholars including Chesaina (2007), Mutahi and Kabira (1993), Okot p'Bitek (1986) and Miruka (1997). European scholars who have studied orality include Propp (1968), Lord (2000), and Ong (1982). According to Irele, some of the characteristics of orality identified by these scholars include speaker/listener interaction, textual

transience, direct social control and homeostasis in memory. On the other hand, literacy is associated with characteristics such as textual permanence, isolation, individualist liberalism, cumulative narrativity and introspective analysis (Irele, 25).

As mentioned earlier, the immediacy and spontaneity in thought expression give orality a lot of power. This observation is of special interest in this study because the study population is African refugee children from countries that have been ravaged by war. As a result of growing up in conflictive situations or in exile, these children's opportunity for education is greatly hampered; consequently, their ability to write is compromised. Oral expression is therefore important because through this mode they are able to give voice to their thoughts in the stories they tell.

Certain scholars including Irele (2001) and Finnegan (1976) argue for the efficacy of orality by pointing out some of its characteristics. Finnegan argues that oral literature has a lot of power because of the close connection between the words and the performative and social contexts (15). According to Irele, "writing is a secondary form, a representation at a remove from the vital immediacy of spoken language itself" (27). He argues further that the impermanence of orality, which is often seen as a great weakness from a literate perspective, is actually a strength within African oral literature because it leads to creativity. The textual elements in oral literature act as an outline of a verbal structure and as reference for the development of ideas. This outline is in the mind of the performer which he/she expands fully when the occasion arises for actualization.

A brief mention of the characteristics of the oral narrative will help to contextualise the later analysis of oral narratives. One major characteristic of the oral narrative is the element of performance. The oral narrative is dependent on a performer who actualizes it through words and

actions at a specific occasion. This means that there is a close link between the creation, transmission and the very existence of oral narratives. Performance goes with other associated factors such as facial expression, voice modulation, gestures, dance, and use of dramatic pause, among others. Performative elements vary from culture to culture, from genre to genre and performer to performer. In certain genres such as the traditional historical myths, the style is astute and aloof in keeping with the intellectual superiority associated with the performer. On the other hand, oral fables are more relaxed and the narrator may even involve the audience in the narration. In this study, one key performative element that was observed was children breaking down and crying as they were telling or listening to personal narratives. This indicated that although the children were narrating about past events, these events still bore a painful link to the present.

Another element of oral literature is improvisation and originality. The performer may improvise within a well known motif or come up with original elements. This enables oral literature to have vital relevance and a capacity for perpetual modernity. A narrator may tell a story with a plot and motif that are well known to the audience, but introduce different characters and locales in order to make it more relevant to the current performance situation. This element was observed in several of the narratives presented by refugee children and is discussed in chapters four and chapter five.

Verbal variability is yet another element of the oral narrative. This is very common in folktales where the different renderings of the same narrative by the same performer can never be identical. The variability results from many factors including the psychological state of the performer, the atmosphere of the performance, the mood of the audience and the purpose for performance. The presence of a live audience is a vital element in oral narratives. The audience

may be involved either directly or indirectly. In direct involvement the narrator may ask the audience questions or may invite the audience to respond in song. The indirect involvement is more subtle and has a lot to do with the psychological connection between performer and audience. If the audience is receptive, the performer is likely to be encouraged in his/her performance and therefore do better, which will in turn elicit more positive response from the audience in a cycle that feeds on itself to produce a rewarding performance. The reverse is also true, whereby poor audience response leads to poor performance. It should however be mentioned that a good performer should be able to create, to a large extent, the desired response from the audience.

The characteristics discussed above show that oral narratives have an organic mode of existence because they do not exist in isolation; they are always linked to the conditions of their realization. According to Irele, “orality proposes a dynamic conception of literature, one that envisages literature as text in situation” (37). The elements identified in the above discussion provide a useful context for the analysis of the oral narratives of refugee children presented in chapter four and chapter five. The next part of this chapter discusses the nature of children’s narrative.

At the level of structure, one main characteristic of children’s narratives is a simple and straight forward plot. Most plots in children’s texts are single and linear. This doesn’t mean that the story is overly simplistic or that the style is choppy and flat; it means that they follow a single storyline and timeline; there are often no sub-plots and time-shifts. Most children’s stories present a beginning, middle and end in that order. The plot begins by setting the stage then sets the story in motion by creating momentum. This is done by establishing a clear conflict or problem which intensifies through complications as the plot rises towards a climax. The climax is

the point at which the key opposing forces come together in a final clash that determines the 'winner'. The climax in most children's literature has a clear resolution.

The oral narrative entitled *The Story of a Girl and her Mother* (Kabira and Karega, 1993) can be used to illustrate the above point. This is a Gikuyu oral narrative which has a simple and straightforward plot. The story begins by telling of a girl who lived with her mother, who had been sick for a very long time. The mother tried to get a cure by sending elders to the diviner, but the prescribed remedies did not work. Every time the elders returned from the diviner's, they said that they had been instructed to slaughter one of the woman's goats, which they would proceed to do and eat but the woman's wound would not heal. The story picks its momentum when the daughter decides to secretly follow the elders and hear for herself what the diviner would say. Her suspicion that the elders have been lying is confirmed as the diviner prescribes the cure, which is that her mother would only be healed by the wool which is found "between ogres".

This complicates the plot further because while she now knows the true remedy, there are major obstacles to be overcome in order for her to acquire the much needed cure. The plot progresses in a linear fashion as the girl decides to go for the cure herself. The action rises with greater momentum as the girl climbs the ogre's *Mūgumo* tree and gets the much needed wool, but as she comes down, the ogre hears her and starts running after her, threatening to slash her "ng'we ng'we and again ng'we ng'we". The climax of the story is the point when Kamau, the girl's brother, whom she has called to rescue her, comes and engages the ogre in a spear fight until the ogre dies. The story ends with the solution to the problem which is the resolution of the conflict: the girl applies the wool to the wound and it heals and so the family lives happily ever after.

Related to the simple and straightforward plot is the fact that most narratives for children are short and end shortly after the point at which the child protagonist gains wisdom. This helps sustain the interest of the story. An example of this is the story of the girl who goes to pick berries with her friends and out of the child-like desire to have bigger and better berries than her companions, wanders deep into the forest, where she is captured by an ogre, but somehow manages to escape and run for her life. The story ends as soon as she is rescued by her brother by which time she is the wiser, as a result of getting into trouble due to indulging her child's impulse of going into the unknown.

The home-away- home motif is a main structuring device in children's narratives. In this pattern, the child protagonist usually wanders away from home, feels threatened by the outer world, and then eventually comes back home with a much greater appreciation of the security of home. The narrative referred to above is a good example of this motif. This motif also allows the child audience to encounter and enjoy unfamiliar experiences he/she would not enjoy in real life. It is interesting to observe that children will thoroughly enjoy a narrative because it presents frightening experiences for example appearance of ogres and dangerous animals. Paradoxically, the pleasure produced by such narratives is in the form of fear. Children would certainly not enjoy being visited by ogres in real life, but they can enjoy it within the safety of the fictional world. By presenting the unfamiliar, the home-away-home motif gives children's narratives a captivating sense of adventure.

Children's narratives are action oriented; they usually focus on physical action. This is unlike adult literature where we may have a text in which very little happens. Instead of physical action, there is the presentation of psychological action through devices such as interior monologue and stream of consciousness. In children's literature, subtle psychological states are

often presented through narration and comment on actions. Children like an interesting story, where characters have obstacles to overcome, conflicts to settle, mysteries to solve and difficult goals to win. What holds children's interest is the desire to find out how the central character performs different types of interesting actions in pursuit of his/her goal.

The Story of the Twin Boys can be used to illustrate this. This is a narrative told among the Dan people of Liberia (Othello, 2009). It tells of twin boys named Gaye and Zaii. One day Gaye went to the forest to look for fruits and berries. While in the forest he saw an ogre outside a big anthill. The ogre said to him, "Take this drum and beat it for me while I dance. If I get tired, I will be your slave, but if you get tired, you will be my slave." So Gaye beat the drum and the ogre danced and danced as he went round the anthill without getting tired. What Gaye did not know is that there were many ogres inside the anthill and so at every round a new ogre came out to continue with the dance. By afternoon Gaye was so tired that he collapsed and the ogre took him as a slave as per their agreement. Meanwhile Zaii was looking for his brother without success. The following day he too saw the ogre, who told him what he had told Gaye. Zaii accepted the challenge. He took the drum and put the straps around his shoulders. He started drumming and the ogre started dancing around the anthill. Zaii followed the ogre around the anthill. After several rounds the ogre realized that he would not be able to trick Zaii so he started singing as he danced around:

Zaii bhaka tume

Zaii follows your path

Gblopea, Gaye bhaka

But Gaye stands in one place

Duene dinei

When Gaye heard this he realized that his brother was outside. Zaii continued beating the drum until the ogre was too tired to dance. He collapsed and Zaii was going to kill him but the ogre begged for mercy. Zaii refused, but the ogre told him that if he spared his life, he would show him where his brother was and release him. Zaii accepted this deal and Gaye was released. The two of them went home happily together.

The appeal in this story has a lot to do with the fact that it has a lot of interesting action. From the onset, when the ogre challenges Gaye to the contest, we wonder what will transpire. When Gaye loses, we fear that he will not leave the ogre's den alive, but our hope is renewed when his brother comes in search of him. The hope however is mixed with fear that Zaii too may fall into the same trap. The tempo of the story goes up when Zaii cleverly decides to follow the ogre around the anthill. The story ends on a happy note when Zaii wins and the ogre has no choice but to release Gaye in exchange of his own life.

Another common aspect of children's narratives is the element of fantasy. Fantasy is defined as an element that transcends the bounds of known reality. Fantasy often implies a symbolic defiance of our knowledge of reality, and represents the potential that lies below the surface of consciousness. This kind of story gratifies the child's wish for a world where nothing is impossible. There has been a lot of controversy over the place of fantasy in children's literature, with some arguing that it should be shunned because it distorts reality and is therefore deceptive. This view shows an apprehension which is based on literalism- the assumption that a text directly means what it says. Hillman argues that literalism is limiting because it "blocks emotional growth and causes us to lose 'the imaginative metaphorical perspective to ourselves and our world'" (qtd. In Cech 83). According to Hillman, adults need myths, legends and fairytales in order to be initiated into psychic reality through images of universal intelligibility.

Based on this argument, children's literature is important because it enhances development of the imagination itself. Cech defines this imagination as a poetic breeding ground for an individual's poetic process- a poetic unconscious that is the source of all the conscious poetic creations of the individual (ibid). Fantasy can be used for interpretative purposes because the communication of human truth rather than fidelity to fact is the main purpose of literary art.

The Story of Two Girls will be used to illustrate this (Othello 2009). This is a narrative from the Dan community in Liberia. It is about two girls by the names Leamon and Keema. Leamon was an orphan while Keema had both parents. Leamon lived in Keema's home. One day as she was washing dishes in a well, one plate slipped from her hand and fell down the well. When she told her foster mother what had happened, she was furious and ordered Leamon to go down to the bottom of the well and get the plate. So Leamon went into the well and got to the bottom. When she got there she discovered there was a long corridor leading to a big city. She walked along this corridor and when she got to the city, she found a woman sitting by the road. The girl told her that she had come to look for her lost plate. The woman told her that she would give her the plate after three days, but first she must serve her (the woman). For the three days, Leamon served the woman diligently. On the third night she had a dream in which she saw a woman who resembled the woman she was serving. The woman told her that the following day she would be released, but before being released she would be asked to choose one box from many boxes. The woman advised her to pick the oldest and dirtiest box. The following morning it happened just as in the dream and so she chose the dirtiest and most ugly box.

When she got home she opened the box and found treasures of gold and other precious things and instantaneously became rich. When the foster mother saw this, she advised her own daughter to go and drop her plate and do as her foster sister had done. Everything happened

exactly the same way except that during the three days she stayed with the woman, she was very rude and was always complaining. In the dream the woman told her to choose the clean and shiny box, which she did and was released. When she got home the mother told her to get into the house and they both locked and barricaded the door. When they opened the box, ferocious bees came out and stung the two of them mercilessly. Because the door was locked and barricaded, it was almost impossible for them to get out. They were stung nearly to death before they managed to open the door.

The above narrative, just like the others discussed earlier, makes use of fantasy for communicative purposes. The aspect of a girl going down a well and finding herself in a land other than the real world in which she lives adds flavour into the narrative because it introduces something that goes beyond the bounds of known reality. This adds to the element of adventure in the narrative which functions under the home-away-home motif. The fact that the two girls go to the same fantasy world and yet end with different fortunes underscores the element of poetic justice through which we see good and deserving people rewarded while the bad undeserving people are punished.

Repetition is a common feature especially in traditional oral narratives for children. This could be repetition of words, phrases, actions and narrative patterns among others. Repetition creates not only emphasis but also a rhythm in the story that makes it enjoyable and easy to remember. In African traditional literary forms such as narrative and song, repetition is a common element and it functions as a structuring device in plot development and also for underscoring the key theme in the oral text. The Kiswahili oral narrative *Binti Baharaza* (Daudi 2002) uses repetition to create pattern and to advance the plot. In this narrative, a young princess who lives alone with slaves in the top floor of her seven storied mansion is attacked by a genie.

Every night the genie breaks a door in one floor, until he breaks the door to the seventh floor and the princess runs away. Commenting on this story, Park argues that the narrator uses repetition of the action of the genie's visit and the breaking of a door every night to develop structurally tight images that play a crucial role in developing the plot from conflict to resolution (66). According to Walter Ong, repetition enables ready oral recurrence and memory. He argues further that children's stories that were first created and transmitted orally tend to be heavily rhythmic, and balanced through pattern and repetition (34).

The next section will discuss themes that are recurrent in children's narrative. As would be expected, a key theme in children's narrative is childhood. Children's literature presents adults' attempt to capture and understand the brief and transitory phase of human development we know as childhood. According to Stahl, Children's literature searches "a primordially unified realm of experience, whether it be unity of nature, family, friendship or self. Thus the fundamental theme of children's literature is growth both away from and towards this unity" (17). Griswold looks at children's narratives in terms of the themes about childhood that recur in both classic and popular works for children. He identifies the following as prominent themes: snugness, smallness, scariness, lightness, and aliveness. According to him these themes express feelings and sensations prevalent in childhood (3).

Most children's narratives present childhood as idyllic; they celebrate the joys and innocence of rural life and tend to equate childhood with idyllic nature while the unidyllic life is presented from an innocent point of view. Most narratives present childhood as utopia, that is "...places where you get what you childishly want and by getting it, learn not to want it so much any more" (Nodelman 2000, 9). Through the idyllic presentation, children's literature indulges children's and adult's desire for the innocent and unspoilt rustic life, while at the same time

showing the need to grow from that longing towards embracing the real life of adult responsibilities. Camara Laye's *The African Child* is a good example of the idyllic presentation of childhood.

Commenting on Gabrielle Roy's *Children of my Heart* (2000), Gatungo also identifies universal characteristics of childhood that to a great extent echo Griswold's observation. She points out that Roy in *Children of my Heart* presents childhood as a period of vulnerability, innocence, victimization by socioeconomic realities, but also a period which is a source of immense joy for humanity in general and the old in particular (Gatungo, 2-5). Set in the Canadian prairie, *Children of my Heart* is a novel of childhood, narrated in the first person by a young female teacher, who is fondly referred to by her pupils as Mamzelle. At eighteen, Mamzelle is almost a child herself and perhaps precisely because she is on the verge of losing her own childhood, she has a keen insight into the nature of this period. As she watches the tiny silhouettes of 'her' children, "... she felt the vulnerability, the fragility of the children of the world, and how it was, nevertheless, on their frail shoulders that were loaded the weight of our weary hopes and eternal new beginnings (Roy, 73). By using Mamzelle as the narrator, the author is able to give an incisive treatment to the theme of childhood. According to Roy, children and childhood are what make the world go round. The implicit hope that the adults place on children makes the study of how children narrate their experiences valuable to humanity. The concept children as an embodiment of hope plays out in a significant way as will be discussed in later chapters.

Conflict between the familiar and the unfamiliar is a prominent theme in children's narrative and is mainly presented through the home-away-home motif. Through this structuring motif, creators of children's narrative investigate the themes of the ordinary vs. the adventurous,

safety vs danger, boredom vs excitement among other binary oppositions. This can be exemplified by the narrative which was referred to earlier of the girls who went to pick berries. They had been strongly warned by their mothers against going deep into the forest. In this story we see one of the girls forgetting her mother's warning because at the critical moment, the lure of adventure and the prospect of outdoing her friends in her quality and quantity of berries is stronger than sound parental advice. She follows the allure and gets choice berries but ends up in unfamiliar territory and of course in grave danger.

The home-away-home motif presents a conflict between children's desire for autonomy and the realisation that they must remain dependent on, and subject to structures of society such as parents, family and school. This conflict is often presented through the child-protagonist moving away from a familiar environment (home) to an unfamiliar one (away), a movement that leads to a sense of excitement, coupled with instability and fear. Exposure to the unfamiliar leads the child-protagonist to appreciate the security of home more. The pattern ends with the child-protagonist returning home with increased knowledge about the self and the world.

An enduring theme in children's narrative is the triumph of good over evil. This strong sense of poetic justice in children's narratives underscores their enduring optimism. Children's narratives often present conflicts in which the good people are rewarded while the evil ones are punished thus helping children to embrace the values of fairness and justice through which hope and optimism are strengthened. Poetic justice is well illustrated in African ogre narratives, in which the ogre terrorizes the people, sometimes to the extent of swallowing up everyone and everything in the village except one child who eventually grows up and kills the ogre thereby rescuing the entire village.

Another major theme in children's narrative is the aspect of the small out-witting the big. In many children's texts, the main protagonist is a child or a child-like character, for example a young/small/weak animal pitted against a mature/ big/ strong animal. The child or child-like character wins over the strong through the use of simple natural intelligence and wit, underscoring the value of children in society. The trickster narratives where a small animal such as the hare always outwits the big and strong animals such as the elephant and the lion clearly illustrate this.

Having discussed the major characteristics of children's narrative, the next section will look at the functions of this genre. At the beginning of this chapter, pleasure and instruction were pointed out as the two basic functions of all creative literature. Nodelman argues that these two basic functions have produced two types of literary texts for children: the didactic text and the wish fulfillment text. The didactic text implies that children are weak, fallible or mistaken and therefore need instruction on how to become better people, which is mainly interpreted to mean more adult-like. The wish fulfillment text implies that children are not only fine as they are but also that what they wish for in their childish egocentric way is what ought to be. He argues that the most effective children's literary texts are those that combine the above two elements. "As didactic fables, they want to urge children to stop being childish[...]As wish fulfillment fantasies, they want children to stay as they wonderfully are" (2). In such texts, the child protagonist moves from a pleasurable self-involved wish-fulfilling fantasy to an experience that leaves him presumably wiser and more mature. The pleasure element in children's literature serves the aesthetic function while the didactic element serves the psychosocial functions as discussed below.

Pleasure is a fundamental and enduring purpose of creative literature of all kinds, but especially in children's narrative. One way through which children's literature produces pleasure for the child-reader is by indulging the child's desire for a world with limitless possibilities; a world where magic and fantasy are possible within ordinary everyday life. Such artistic creations intrigue the child's creative and imaginative mind. The story of Cinderella, where a poor girl is turned into a princess overnight and a pumpkin into a horse chariot does please the sensibilities of the child. In the African context, the narrative of the boy who rescues the entire village from the belly of an ogre by slitting it open, celebrates heroic acts and is pleasurable to the listener due to the sheer incredibility of the events it narrates.

As observed earlier, many children's narratives have the home-away-home motif. Through such texts, the child vicariously takes part in adventures which he would probably wish for, but which are not possible in real life. He is able to experience the sense of escape, adventure and experimentation but all in a safe fictional environment. In this way, literature creates a world where children can blissfully indulge their curiosity, innocence and ignorance and this results in a lot of pleasure for them. The two examples already mentioned to illustrate this motif, present stories in which the child reader/listener can enjoy the adventure of going into the unknown, getting the adrenaline rush and goose bumps of flight and fright but all from the safety of the performance environment.

Since narrative involves the selection and re-ordering of events to create a plot, it could be argued that children's narrative gives children the pleasure of experiencing situations that are similar to theirs, yet more intriguing and interesting because they are more 'orderly' than real life permits. At the level of language, the child experiences the pleasure of listening to a child-

protagonist who is like him/her in terms of level of experience and yet unlike him /her because he is more articulate due to the fact that the author has carefully selected his dialogue and discourse.

It may be argued further that because of the aesthetic value of children's narrative, it is possible for readers of different ages to enjoy it. One source of this multigenerational pleasure is the ambivalence of children's literature in general; it tells more than it claims to tell. A story that is on the surface simple and childish may contain pertinent mature themes that require an adult mind and a mature reading ability to explicate. Shavit refers to narratives with such dual or sometimes multiple appeals as diffuse texts (75). He cites Carroll's, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* as an example of a diffuse text. Although marketed as a children's text, it has many features that make it enjoyable to adult readership. Shavit cites Carroll's departure from conventional models of children's literature of his time such as moral didacticism as an indication that the text is diffuse. This kind of text has both a pseudo-addressee and a real one. "[...] the child appears to be much more an excuse for the text rather than its genuine addressee" (79).

Another source of pleasure for adults as they listen to children's narratives is the tension created by the discrepancy between what an adult reader knows and what the child protagonist knows or doesn't know. Naturally, the adult reader due to wider life experience knows much more than the child-protagonist. An adult reader thus experiences the pleasure of participating in the child-protagonist's innocent and sometimes foolish escapades, yet simultaneously standing back to watch from a point of knowledge and superiority.

Perhaps the greatest pleasure experienced by adults when they listen to children's narratives is due to the narrative's ability to play out the drama of growing up. "It allows us to indulge repeatedly in a ritual reenactment of the move from childhood to maturity; innocence to knowledge" (Nodelman, 5). Adults generally look back to childhood with sentimental nostalgia

and so any activity that allows them to reach backwards to this experience is in most cases pleasurable. Because children's narrative takes the child-protagonist from ignorance to knowledge; innocence to wisdom, then by reading it as adults we can be ever again young and innocent, ever again older and wiser.

This pull between ignorance and knowledge plays out in a very significant way for the child. Although the child may not start off as any more knowledgeable or wiser than the child-protagonist in the narrative, by the end of the narrative, he/she will have gained some new wisdom. However at the time of another experience in a new narrative, he/she goes through the experience of passing from ignorance to knowledge yet again. Literature thus becomes for him/her an avenue through which he/she reenacts the ritual of growing up repeatedly. This provides pleasure while at the same time expanding his/her life experience therefore making him/her wiser in reality. The next section deals with the psychosocial functions of children's narrative.

Didacticism is a major function of children's literature, including the narrative. As observed in chapter one, the traditional role of children's literature in both Western and African cultures was the inculcating of morals and social values. Children's literature was seen to have the key role of educating, socializing and instructing children. In African cultures, traditional oral literature was used and continues to be used by adults as a means of socializing children. One key genre that is employed by adults to achieve this goal is the narrative. Other genres through which culturally relevant messages are passed on to children include songs and proverbs.

The psychosocial functions of children's narrative have been discussed by many scholars including Kabira and Mutahi(1993), Chesaina(2007), Kipury(1996), Miruka (1997), Wasamba(2006) and Finnegan(1994). Although not all these scholars focus specifically on

children's narratives, they nevertheless highlight some of the didactic functions of children's oral narratives.

A major psychological function of children's literature is meeting of emotional needs. Due to their performative and interactive nature, children's oral genres fulfill children's need for companionship and sense of belonging. When children engage in riddles, role-play or tongue twisters, they interact with one another and this way they cement friendships and strengthen social bonds. Oral narratives provide opportunities for children and adults to be together in an interactive social set up. Some narratives call for the direct participation of the audience either by answering or asking questions or by singing.

Narrative also meets children's need for comfort in times of distress. There are many situations that may distress children, including death of a loved one, loss of a cherished possession and separation from family. A child undergoing a distressful situation can draw comfort from listening to a narrative of wish fulfillment, in which the distressful situation is overcome by the fulfillment of his/her desire. As observed earlier, most children's narratives have happy endings. Telling and listening to such stories enables children to have hope and this can bring relief from their stressful situations. Chesaina argues that in traditional African societies, this function of meeting children's emotional needs began at birth, with the infant being received into the world with song and dance (8). Although all children go through distress, it is an acknowledged fact that refugee children go through situations that are particularly stressful emotionally and socially. It is therefore beneficial to examine how they employ narratives to express the psychosocial challenges resulting from conflict and displacement.

Children's narrative serves the function of keeping hope alive in society. Wasamba (2006) argues that there is a gap between reality as captured by children's folklore and as

captured by adult writers for children. While there is a lot of optimism in children's story-telling, in adult story-telling there is a lot of pessimism (66). This is because hope is an important dimension of children's perception and when they project it through their narratives, they create a positive atmosphere in the world around them. As we saw earlier, *Children of my Heart* is a good portrait of the role of children in inspiring hope and giving joy.

The development of social cognition through wide exposure is a key function played by children's narrative. According to Schema Theory, exposure to a wide range of literature increases critical and social skills because of the exposure it provides to a broad knowledge base and different scenarios (Smith 1991). Children's narrative can also help children deal with social issues such as violence, discrimination and drug abuse. Exposure to narratives which deals with such negative social realities will enable children to experience danger vicariously and therefore safely and hopefully help them to evade the pitfalls that the fictional characters get into. This emphasizes the view that literature deepens and broadens our awareness of life by enabling us to vicariously go through situations we may never experience in real life.

At the psychological level, narrative gives children an avenue through which to express themselves. Through narrative, children express their fears, hopes and aspirations. This can enable them develop creativity and engender the ability to deal with their emotions in a constructive manner. Pardeck and Pardeck (1989) argue that literature can function as a form of therapy termed as bibliotherapy. This study investigates how refugee children use narrative as an avenue of self expression and further how they use this form of literature to express their perceptions of the peace, conflict and displacement.

Heroes and heroines in children's narrative can be used to exemplify universally appreciated character traits such as courage, selflessness and optimism. Through children's

narrative, children can see heroes and heroines respond to social issues such as conflict, racism, ethnicity and displacement and thereby learn to be accommodating and to deal with conflicts. Through literature children can vicariously enter the minds and hearts of other people and this can enable them appreciate others by becoming aware of human differences and similarities. Literature enables children to be what C. S. Lewis expressed as “a thousand different people and yet remain ourselves” (qtd. In. Tomlinson, 3).

This chapter has dealt with the nature and functions of children’s narrative. The nature was dealt with by focusing on children’s narrative’s structural characteristics and recurrent themes. The key structural characteristics were identified as a simple and straightforward plot; action –oriented plot; quick endings; the home-away-home motif; fantasy and the use of pattern through repetition. Recurrent themes that were discussed are childhood; conflict between the familiar and the unfamiliar; idyllic life; triumph of good over evil and the triumph of small over big characters.

The chapter also dealt with key functions of children’s narrative which were divided into two broad categories: aesthetic and psychosocial. The aesthetic functions discussed are the provision of pleasure through fantasy; the indulging of children’s love for adventure through the home-away-home motif; provisional of multigenerational pleasure through the diffuse text and the pleasure produced by children’s literature’s ability to help both children and adults repeatedly reenact the ritual of growing up. The following were discussed as the key psychosocial functions: meeting children’s emotional needs; keeping hope alive in society; acting as a custodian of societal mores and values; and finally enabling a broader and deeper understanding of life by providing the opportunity to vicariously experience diverse situations.

Children's narrative is both multigenerational and multifunctional, making it a versatile art form. Narratives composed by adults often reveal society's prevailing perception of children and childhood and therefore directly or indirectly present adult expectations of childhood, in essence, society's ideological inscriptions. In this regard, we see that children's narrative, especially its application to instructional and psychosocial situations, means that it is a vital tool of socialization, an overarching function that presents children's narrative as culturally formative, and of great importance educationally, intellectually and socially. It reflects society as it wishes to be, as it wishes to be seen and as it unconsciously reveals itself to be. One of the most important functions of narrative is to situate particular events against a larger horizon of human concerns. The power to interface self and society renders narrative an effective medium of perception and expression. Through the organizing principles of narrative, one is able to perceive life more clearly and conversely through narrated experience, one is able to express one's perception of experience.

The personal and fictional narratives composed by children reveal children's perception of themselves and reality and are therefore useful in investigating children's worldviews. Through narrative, refugee children not only express their perception of reality, but also navigate through the reality of their displacement. The next chapter presents the field experience, the research context and the general findings from the interviews and focus group discussions.

CHAPTER THREE

THE RESEARCH CONTEXT AND FIELD EXPERIENCE

The previous chapter created a theoretical and analytical context for refugee children's narratives by discussing the nature and functions of children's narratives in general. This chapter contextualizes the research further by giving the geographical and social descriptions of the locations where the research was conducted. Further, the chapter gives a summary of the actual field experience and general findings from the focus group discussions and interviews.

The research was carried out in two locations: Kakuma Refugee Camp in Turkana and Nairobi City and its suburbs. The first part of the field research was carried out in Nairobi city and its suburbs. According to the UNHCR office in Nairobi, urban refugees, unlike encamped refugees, are not as easy to characterize since they are scattered among host communities (Karanja 2008). Until 2005, UNHCR did not officially recognize urban refugees and therefore had no active programme to cater for them. Nairobi was seen as a transit point where refugees stayed as their status was being determined and their movement to refugee camps being organized. However after 2005, the government changed this approach and started recognizing refugees in Nairobi. In 2007, the Kenya National Assembly passed the refugee law which made clear provision for the recognition, protection and management of refugees and connected persons (Kenya Gazette Supplement 2006, 438).

In 2006, UNHCR started actual assistance to urban refugees in Kenya. The assistance is provided in the form of support to community based refugee projects. Support is also given by encouraging refugee-friendly environments such as government schools that admit refugee students. As a way of providing necessary services to refugees, UNHCR undertakes the training

of government officials dealing with refugees, including immigration officers, police officers, magistrates who deal with refugee issues and peace keepers.

According to the UNHCR Nairobi office, refugee populations in Nairobi are distributed according to countries of origin. The refugees from the Horn of Africa are generally distributed as follows: Ethiopia, Somalia and Eritrea - mainly in Eastleigh and Pangani; Sudan – mainly in Kawangware, Githurai and Zimmerman. Those from the Great Lakes Region are generally distributed as follows: DRC- Kayole, Kangemi, Kabiria and Kasarani-Mwiki; Rwanda and Burundi- Kangemi, Kabiria, Kawangware and Kayole. (see Appendix iii). Refugees tend to occupy the low income residential areas of the city and its suburbs as a natural consequence of the fact that refugees typically have no steady or adequate income and so they are forced by market forces to live in the easier to afford areas. As indicated above, different nationalities tend to live in specific locations. This is mainly as result of social net-working. When people arrive in the country as asylum seekers, they tend to link up with people from their countries and so they end up forming patterns of settlement along countries of origin. Due to the fluidity of urban refugees, information about them and data regarding their population is not definite, but according to a mapping organized by Refugee Consortium of Kenya and UNHCR, it is estimated that there are about 133700 refugees, asylum seekers and unregistered migrants in Nairobi (2005).

The second part of the field research was carried out in Kakuma Refugee Camp which is roughly 1000 kilometres North-west of Nairobi city. It is located in Kakuma town, in Turkana County of the northwestern region of Kenya. It is situated along the Lodwar- Lokichoggio highway, 120 kilometers from Lodwar town and 95 kilometers from the Kenya-Sudan border town of Lokichoggio. (see Appendix iv) Kakuma Refugee Camp was established in 1992 to

shelter 16,000 Sudanese refugee children who had fled the conflict in Southern Sudan and undertaken a five year epic journey in search of safety. The camp has since expanded to serve refugees from other African countries. During the time of data collection, the population of the camp was 44943, but slightly over a year later the population had grown to 77474, as shown in the table below.

Table 3.1 *Kakuma Refugee Camp: Population*

Country of Origin	Population	
	7 th , July 2009	4 th October, 2010
Somalia	21869	42654
Sudan	16222	23896
Democratic Republic of Congo	1027	3158
Ethiopia	4642	6054
Uganda	421	515
Burundi	349	657
Rwanda	334	389
Eritrea	77	100
Namibia	1	1
Zimbabwe	1	1
Congo Brazzaville		34
Tanzania		14
Djibouti		1
Total	44943	77474

(UNHCR Factsheet. October 4, 2010).

The camp is divided into four settlement areas: Kakuma I (mixed nationalities), Kakuma II (predominantly Somali), Kakuma III (mixed nationalities) and Kakuma IV (predominantly Somali Bantu and Dafurians). The settlement pattern is due to arrival patterns of the refugees. However within each settlement area each nationality occupies its own specific location. Once refugees arrive at the camp, they are hosted in a department called Reception Centre, where they are given accommodation and food. They are then required to construct their own houses within designated areas in the camp according to their nationalities. They construct their houses using

locally available materials such as mud, twigs and home-made bricks. Once newly arrived refugees complete the structures of their houses the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) assists them with iron sheets for roofing. Each home has a perimeter hedge around the compound made of locally available bushes known in the Turkana language as *etiral*, but widely known by the nickname *mathenge*.

The entire camp has the appearance of an expansive shanty town. The main streets in the camp have names, the most populous and famous being Mogadishu Street. There is a joke among the refugees that whatever one can buy in Eastleigh in Nairobi can be found in Mogadishu Street, Kakuma. After taking several walks along this street, the researcher concluded that there was a lot of truth in the joke.

The refugees in Kakuma Refugee Camp live in separate neighbourhoods, according to their different countries of origin. This means that even in settlement areas like Kakuma I which has mixed nationalities, these different nationalities live in separate neighbourhoods. Specific neighbourhoods are referred to as communities. Each neighbourhood is clearly demarcated and fenced with a similar perimeter hedge as that fencing off homesteads. There is only one gate to each community neighbourhood. This is a security measure as a result of the frequent attacks by warriors from the Turkana host community. The insecurity faced by the refugees has made them security conscious. The researcher observed that the research assistant in Kakuma was quick to notice anything unusual in his environment and when asked why he said that as a refugee one has to be always alert because “anything may happen at any time” (Wondafrash 2009). The researcher noticed too that most refugees are very keen on current affairs and consequently several homes own dstv and satellite dishes. Residents watch channels such as Al Jazeera and CNN. According to the research assistant, staying abreast with world current affairs is necessary

for refugees because what happens in the world ultimately affects their lives. Coupled with this, refugees also have to keep in touch with the political situations in their home countries.

Kakuma Refugee Camp is managed by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) which works with and through partner organizations in order to deliver its protection mandate. Together with partners, UNHCR provides food, water, clothing and assistance in construction of houses among other services for encamped refugees. The partners are in three categories: Government of Kenya (GoK), Implementing Partners and Operational Partners. The GoK and UNHCR ensure the protection of refugees, asylum-seekers, and all partner staff. The implementing partners work under UNHCR to play specific roles in implementing particular aspects of UNHCR's protection mandate. The implementation partners are Lutheran World Federation (LWF), International Rescue Committee (IRC), German Development Co-operation (GTZ), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK). The Operational/ cooperating Partners, on the other hand, work alongside UNHCR in serving the refugees. Operational partners are not funded by UNHCR but they cooperate with it to serve refugees in various ways. They include United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), Don Bosco, Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS), Windle Trust- Kenya (WTK), Film Aid International (FAI), Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) and Kakuma Mission Hospital (KMH) (UNHCR 2009). LWF is the main implementing partner, handling camp management; food distribution; education – pre-school, primary and secondary; adult literacy; peace education; water and community services. Since this research involved talking to children in schools, the researcher had to get clearance from the LWF offices in Nairobi and Kakuma.

In the following section, the field experience in Nairobi and Kakuma is presented. In Nairobi, an initial visit was made to each school during which the researcher introduced herself and requested to be allowed to hold focus group discussions. During the initial visit, a contact teacher who would help select the children to participate was identified. During the second visit, the contact teacher was interviewed and focus group discussions with the children conducted. The interviews with the teachers were for the purpose of understanding the refugee children's situation. The questions posed to the teachers revolved around three key themes. The first was whether the refugee children engage in storytelling and whether they tell about experiences in their home countries. The second was the impact of home country conflict on the refugee children. The third theme was the effects of displacement on the refugee children. In order to elicit responses for the above, a number of different questions were posed. (See appendix v). The teacher interview process involved sitting together with the teacher and chatting in a semi-formal way. The researcher used the interview guide to direct the discussions. The teacher's responses were recorded in the interview guide for future analysis.

The focus groups with the children involved sitting together in a circle of about 4-6 children as the researcher took them through a semi-structured discussion. The questions were on four key themes: What is peace? What is conflict? What do you think about your home country? How do you feel about living in a foreign country? The questions were paraphrased and adjusted depending on individual interviewee's level of understanding. The questions were aimed at helping the researcher understand the refugee children's perception of peace, conflict and displacement. The answers to these questions were put down in a grid for ease of analysis (See appendix vi). The children were also asked general questions such as family background

information and how long they had been in Kenya, to enable the researcher understand their backgrounds better.

These discussions were followed by a storytelling session during which everyone took turns telling stories. The researcher started by telling the children a story in order to help the children relax and to stimulate creativity. In some cases the researcher used pictures to draw the children out. This technique has been employed successfully by Sybella Wilkes in a narrative research on refugee children sponsored by UNHCR and Save the Children Fund. Wilkes found that while asking children direct questions produced choppy responses, storytelling enabled them to express themselves more freely and authentically. She discovered that using pictures and drawings to make storytelling fun and relaxed helped the children to be more expressive (9). Each child was requested to tell two narratives, one personal/historical and the other fictional/traditional, but not all the children were able to tell two narratives each. The narratives were recorded using a digital voice recorder. Pictures of the children as they narrated and brief video shots of the performances were taken. In some cases it was not possible to complete the recording during the second visit so it was necessary to make a third visit.

The school that was visited first was Sudanese Academy. The school is situated in Kawangware along Naivasha Road. All the buildings in the school had walls and roofs made of corrugated iron sheets. The compound was of bare earth and got very muddy and very dusty depending on the weather. The researcher experienced both extremes of weather during the visits. The classrooms were minimally furnished with a narrow table in front and benches that were attached to long and narrow desks used by 4-5 pupils. The appearance of the school indicated great financial difficulty, but despite this, the children were exuberant and keen to

learn. The student population at the time of data collection comprised of Sudanese (74%), Kenyans (24%) other nationalities (2%). Three visits were made to this school.

The researcher interviewed the head teacher who provided general information about the school and the children. He then referred the researcher to one of the teachers who could help to identify specific children for the focus group discussions and performances. Both the head teacher and the contact teacher were very cooperative. The contact teacher identified the children whom he thought were fluent enough in English to be able to tell comprehensive narratives. On the third visit, focus group discussions and performances were conducted in the head teacher's office while he did his work from the general staff room.

The researcher observed that the pupils were very free with their teachers including the head teacher. The head teacher explained that the background of struggle and deprivation that the children had gone through, forced them to be assertive and fearless in interacting with others and in expressing their needs. He added that the members of staff in the school also treated the children almost as adults or as equals, thus encouraging these qualities in them. Both the contact teacher and the head teacher informed the researcher that the children were generally fearless and forthright. When interpersonal conflicts arose, they openly expressed their emotions whether of anger or disappointment. According to the head teacher, the children were not given to pretending and so they also tended to get easily embroiled in violent fights. The researcher asked how the school administration dealt with this and the response from the head teacher was that sometimes children were allowed space to purge their emotions through fighting as long as it did not go out of hand. According to the head teacher, this is better than forcing them to suppress their emotions (Mayiik 2008). Although there is a positive element in encouraging children to be honest about their feelings, this view sounded alarming because of its potential to encourage the

children to propagate the cycle of violence. Perhaps a compromise between the two extremes of silence and repression on the one hand and outrage and violence on the other could be sought. In such a compromise, the children could be encouraged to use language to dialogue and thus get the chance to express their hurt in a way that lends dignity to both parties and also curbs the possibility of escalation of the conflict.

Two focus group discussions were held with a total of eleven children (5 boys and 6 girls). The first group had children between 10-13 years of age and the second one had children between 14-16 years of age. During the interviews and performances, the researcher noticed that the children were generally expressive and confident although their level of English was average or below average. However there was a marked difference between the two age groups in terms of readiness to share stories. The lower age group was open and narrated with excitement although a number of their narratives were rather disjointed. The higher age group was more reserved and less willing to talk. The researcher attributed this to the fact that as adolescents, they were already beginning to form their identities. They were also more emotional because they were at an age where they could question the circumstances of their lives. Two boys (age 16) specifically requested not to be recorded as they narrated about their experiences in the war in Sudan. Another boy (age 16) insisted that he could narrate his experience only if the researcher was alone and did not record his narrative, so the session with him alone was off the record. He narrated about his experiences in the war as a child soldier and how he left Sudan and came to Kenya.

These three Sudanese boys exhibited the characteristics of adolescents struggling to discover their individual selves (identity) and their place in society. Hoffman et al define identity as "a coherent sense of individuality formed out of the individual's traits and circumstances"

(350). According to the psychologist Erik Erickson (1980), identity formation is a life-long process which begins in early childhood, but doesn't become central until adolescence. At this stage, adolescents are striving for autonomy as they deal with issues such as politics, religion and ethics among others. They are past the stage of dos and don'ts and have to make choices based on their self concept and concept of the world. They speculate about what might be instead of merely accepting what is. This is what the psychologist Jean Piaget referred to as the Formal operational stage of development. The personal narratives of these three boys contained many questions which indicated that the boys were consciously questioning the circumstances of their lives. They raised questions such as "We are told that there is now peace in Sudan but when people go home they still get shot. What is that now? Why do we have to fight and we are all Sudanese? Why?"

One girl specifically said that she wanted to talk about her father. She broke down as she narrated about how her father was killed in the war. The narrator expressed bitter emotions as she questioned why her father had to die. It was observed that the children were more expressive in the personal rather than the fictional narratives.

The school that was visited next was St. Kizito Academy which is located off Naivasha Road in an area called Kabiria in Dagoretti Constituency. It has both primary school and secondary school sections. The students in this school are from the Great Lakes region. At the time of the interview, the population distribution was: Rwanda -80%, DRC - 15%, Burundi - 5%. The researcher made two visits to this school. Nine children participated in two focus groups. The children were friendly, outgoing, and generally self-confident. They were fluent in English and were able to tell comprehensive narratives. This was impressive considering that this school uses French as the language of instruction. The younger children were particularly free

and they comfortably told personal and fictional narratives. They all easily and enthusiastically answered questions during the group discussions. One girl (age 13) narrated about how her father died. She broke down and was inconsolable for quite some time. This was the second girl to talk pointedly about the death of a father.

Although confident, the older children were reserved in comparison to the younger ones. They were more comfortable narrating fictional rather than personal narratives. However there was one girl (age 15) who did not narrate anything at all. She said she knew no fictional narrative and had nothing to narrate about herself. The researcher asked her to talk about a time in her life when she was sad, but she said she had never been sad. The rest of the children expressed surprise and a few made mildly sarcastic comments such as “Lucky girl”. The researcher noted however, that the girl had a very sad and withdrawn countenance. Perhaps she may have been in denial about some pain she had or had been through, or there was some emotional experience which was still too fresh in her mind. Since this girl did not give any information about her background, the above thoughts remain speculative. Regardless, the absence of a narrative in the case of this girl is still significant at the level of narrative analysis because this absence or silence could point to the subject’s inability or unwillingness to talk about herself. In narrative, techniques such as ellipses and pause reveal the relationship between the narrating self and the content of the narrative. In the case of the girl mentioned here, the situation goes beyond an ellipsis and a pause and becomes a complete “absence” since she did not narrate anything at all. According to Herman and Vervaeck, events which remain unsaid can be essential because they may point to repressed or dismissed traumas (61).

The last school to be visited was Ondiri Academy situated in Kikuyu town. The population distribution in the school according to nationality at the time of the interview was:

Kenyans (67%) and Sudanese (33%). In this school, two focus group discussions were held. Each group had five children according to the specified age groups. The children were not fluent in English so both English and Kiswahili were used. The researcher made three visits to the school, two for planning and the last one for the focus group discussions and recording of performances. The researcher observed that the pupils in this school were also free with their teachers. The contact teacher made a comment that the children are free to the point of appearing ill-mannered. According to the contact-teacher, the children could also be very violent and they had the tendency to resolve their conflicts by fighting on the spot. She attributed this to their violent backgrounds. This comment is similar to the one made by the head teacher of Sudanese Academy which brought out the on-going cycle of violence in sharp relief and raised disturbing questions regarding how to deal with effects of conflict and violence. A response to this is attempted at the end of this chapter.

After visiting schools, the researcher held focus group discussions with refugee children in families in two refugee residential communities. The two communities were selected according to the general distribution of refugee populations by nationality of origin. The researcher therefore went to Eastleigh area to record performances by refugee children from the Horn of Africa (Somalia and Ethiopia) and Kangemi area to record performances by refugee children from the Great Lakes Region (Burundi and DRC). A community contact from each of these locations was interviewed to help the researcher familiarize herself with the children's situation. An interview guide was used. (see appendix vii).

In Eastleigh, the performances were held in two homes. The first was the home of the community contact, an Ethiopian refugee man and the second was in the home of his friend. A total of 11 children participated (6 Somalis and 5 Ethiopians) (6 boys and 5 girls). Two visits

were made to Eastleigh. A significant observation about the Somali refugee children interviewed is that most of them came to Kenya as unaccompanied minors. According to the children, their parents either died in the war in Somalia or went missing. There was a marked difference between the children from Sudan on the one hand and those from Ethiopia and Somalia on the other in that while the former expressed longing to go back home to their country, the latter expressed loathing and vowed never to go back. Despite their resolve never to go back to their countries, they still acknowledged that life in exile was far from smooth due to the problems they faced as a result of their refugee status which include lack of food and money and constant police harassment.

During one of the visits to Eastleigh, the researcher witnessed the demolition of kiosks. The community contact explained that some wealthy Somalis had bought land and buildings in that area and so were clearing the poor people by pulling down kiosks and old buildings in order to put up modern high rise buildings. He sadly observed that the only old structure still standing in his neighbourhood was the tenement building in which was the single room that he and his family occupied. He wondered where he would take his family when this building was finally demolished like so many others before it. That experience illuminated the paradox of exile/displacement where some thrived and flexed their economic might in buying out the poor while others constantly struggled for survival with daily uncertainties regarding basic necessities such as food and shelter.

In Kangemi, the focus groups were held in the home of a Rwandese refugee woman, who was the community contact for the refugees from the Great Lakes Region. One visit was made in which two children (one boy from Burundi and one girl from DRC) were talked to. The boy was initially shy and self-effacing, insisting that he knew neither English nor Kiswahili. The

researcher therefore had to get an interpreter so that the boy could narrate in Kirundi. However after a short while the researcher discovered that he was fluent in Kiswahili, therefore he was encouraged to narrate in Kiswahili which he did and all went well. The girl was articulate and confident right from the beginning.

After completing data collection in Nairobi, the researcher embarked on data collection in Kakuma Refugee Camp. Upon arrival at the camp, the researcher reported to the Kakuma Refugee Camp Manager as required by the Government of Kenya (The Refugees Act, 2006). The Camp Manager is a government official who must clear all visitors entering the refugee camp. The researcher presented the research permit from the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MOEST) and the letter from Department of Refugee Affairs which the camp manager endorsed and gave the necessary permission to enter the camp.

The next office to report to was LWF- Kakuma Office where the researcher presented the letter from LWF- Nairobi, for endorsement. This allowed the researcher to visit schools within the camp. The researcher interviewed the LWF Peace Officer at Kakuma in order to get official information regarding refugee children and the issue of peace and conflict. From the interview, the researcher learnt that the LWF Peace Office carries out 3 main functions that work towards peace building. The first one is conducting peace education workshops targeting community members including youth, women and community leaders. The second function is organizing and managing peace committees in the camp. Each zone in the camp has a peace committee. There is one special committee comprising of refugee representatives and members of the host community. The role of peace committees is to report signs of impending conflict and also to facilitate conflict resolution. Thirdly, the Peace Office organizes and oversees community

governance structures. This function deals with elections, making of constitutions and training of leaders among other governance functions (Namuya 2009).

The researcher asked about the involvement of children in the peace initiatives of the LWF Peace Office and gathered that children are not actively involved in the above three key functions. The Peace Officer informed the researcher that while in the past Peace Education was taught as a subject in the primary school syllabus, it was removed from the syllabus due to budget deficit and also due to congestion in the syllabus. Further, the peace workshops that conduct peace training in the communities do not include children. Children are however involved in peace awareness campaign by participating in drama and poetry but not storytelling. The following section presents details of the field experience in specific locations within Kakuma Refugee Camp.

The first station to be visited was Angelina Jolie Girls Boarding Primary School. The school is named after the American actress, Angelina Jolie, who donated the funds for its construction and who is its main sponsor. The population of the school at the time of data collection was: 15% host community and 85% refugees. It has children from DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda. The research assistant had already done the ground work so when the researcher got to the school she was received well by the head teacher. The girls were ready for the interviews and this made everything to run smoothly.

All the children were co-operative and clear in their expression. A few of them were not fluent enough in English and so they used Kiswahili. The researcher noted that the two Somali children interviewed were very clear in their expression, sense of focus and self-confidence. This contrasts sharply with the Somali children interviewed in Eastleigh, Nairobi. The Nairobi children sounded despondent and were rather incoherent and inconsistent in their narratives. The

researcher attributed this difference partly to lack of education among the Nairobi Somali refugee children since none of the Somali children interviewed in Nairobi were attending school, and partly to the instability of their social life in Nairobi. In contrast to this, the girls at Angelina Jolie Girls Boarding Primary School were receiving quality education and had a comfortable life in the donor sponsored boarding school.

The second school to be visited was Jebel Marra Primary School. A total of 5 boys from this school participated (2 from Sudan, 2 from Somalia, 1 from Ethiopia) The researcher started by interviewing the head teacher, a young Sudanese man, who came to Kenya as an unaccompanied minor at the age of 12. He said that his village was attacked one day, causing him to run away from home and since then he has never seen his family again. He had his primary and secondary education in Kakuma. He is a former pupil of Jebel Mara Primary School. After completing Form Four, he came back to head the school. One of the issues he sees as a major challenge facing refugee children is lack of qualified teachers. He said he would like to receive teacher training, but cannot, due to lack of money. His dream is to go to college to get education and a certificate to enable him develop his career. He would like to go back to his country but with “something”. “Something” for him meant education and a career. His experience, aspirations and feelings towards his country were strikingly similar to those of the Sudanese children, the only difference being that his aspirations were tempered by maturity. He also told the researcher that one key problem the exiles face when they return to Sudan is that those who never left see them as cowards. They despise them because of “hiding” instead of taking part in the war through actual fighting. This sentiment is close to the view expressed by Kaiser that Sudanese refugees who remain in exile in order to complete education are sometimes perceived as unpatriotic (56).

The last school to be visited was Mogadishu Primary School, where 3 boys participated (2 from DRC, 1 from Ethiopia). The boys were cooperative and friendly. One of the Congolese boys (age 15) made a significant comment when asked to tell a fictional narrative. He said that he did not know any stories because life in the camp forces one to think only about daily survival. He also said that children who knew stories were those who grew up with their parents in the villages and therefore had the opportunity to be told stories by relatives or parents. The narrative he eventually told is one he had read in a book. This comment is similar to the observations made by Somali and Sudanese refugee children in Nairobi.

The Ethiopian boy (age 16) was not able to come up with a fictional story. He came to Kenya at the age of six months and was 16 years old at the time of the data collection which meant he has been a refugee all his life. He said he did not know any fictional story. The researcher prompted him to talk about the great kings of his country and he narrated about Haile Sellasie, whom he said was the greatest king who ever lived. He was fairly consistent and even quoted dates. He said he had read the story in a book which his mother bought for him at Ksh 400, which according to him, was very expensive. It struck the researcher as quite significant that the mother bought him such an expensive book; perhaps the reason was that she wanted her son to have some connection with his home country through reading its history.

Apart from schools, the researcher also visited and had focus group discussions in two residential communities within Kakuma Refugee Camp. These were Rwanda and Burundi communities. Six children from Burundi community participated: four boys and two girls. They were all fairly co-operative and expressive except one girl (age 11) who told no story and answered the questions scantily. She remained taciturn throughout the discussion and

performance session. This was quite similar to the case of the girl in Nairobi who also did not tell any narrative or make any significant contribution to the discussions.

In Rwanda Community, three children participated: two boys (ages 15 and 16) and one girl (age 16). The children were rather shy at the beginning, insisting that they did not know any stories but eventually they gained confidence and narrated well. The girl was a Form One student in a Kenyan boarding school in Koibatek District. She gave a political interpretation to her own fictional narrative. She even used the narrative to comment on the 2009 conflict between Kenya and Uganda over the ownership of Migingo Island, which she likened to fighting over a tiny piece of meat. According to her “that small piece of island called Migingo” was not worth sacrificing the good neighbourly relationship between Kenya and Uganda. She said she preferred school to home because life in boarding school was better than life in the refugee camp. This comment was similar to one made by the head teacher of Angelina Jolie Girls’ Boarding School that the girls in her school preferred school to home because at home (camp community) life was difficult due to factors such as lack of food and sexual harassment, among others.

The interviews with contact teachers and community contacts helped the researcher to familiarize herself with the refugee children’s situation before holding the performances. On the other hand, the information gathered from the focus groups with the children helped the researcher gain understanding regarding the lives of refugee children and thus helped to understand their narratives within context. From the children’s responses, the following emerged about their personal lives: out of the 71 children interviewed, 53 were born in their home countries; 12 were born in Kenya and 6 in a third country where the mothers were living as refugees. 53 out of the 71 children interviewed were living without fathers. The reasons given for

the absence of fathers were death, disappearance or that the fathers were still back in the home country. Out of the 71 children who were interviewed, 13 came to Kenya as unaccompanied minors. Of these unaccompanied minors, some were living with foster families while others were living together in family - groups of minors. One of the girls who said she came to Kenya as an unaccompanied minor told the researcher that she had to leave her foster family because they tried to force her into marriage. At the time of the interview she was living with a family-group of other minors.

The interviews with teachers and community contacts were organized around three broad themes: *the children's involvement in storytelling, effects of home country conflict on the children* and *aspects of living in displacement*. Below is a presentation of the summary of the information gathered through interviews with teachers and community contacts.

Regarding children's involvement in storytelling, this is what was gathered from the respondents: Of the 13 teachers and community contacts interviewed, 11 said that children in their school/neighbourhood engaged in storytelling; only 2 said that the children did not engage in story telling. Those who said that children engaged in storytelling mostly rated their storytelling ability as average. Asked whether children liked to tell stories about their home countries, most of the respondents answered in the negative. The main reasons given were that children want to integrate so they preferred not to talk about their past lives. Secondly, parents don't like to talk about their home countries and so the children had no model. The third reason was that some children were too young to know anything about their home countries as can be seen in the fact that a good number of them were born in exile while others arrived in Kenya as babies.

Twelve of the respondents said that the children had been negatively affected by conflict in their home countries and only 1 said they had not been negatively affected. When this particular respondent was prodded further, it emerged that he was thinking more in terms of the benefits the children have received as a result of being in a peaceful country which enable them to go on with their lives in a normal way. The respondents from Nairobi cited the following as the key negative effects of conflict on refugee children: psychological trauma; internalized violence and not wanting to go back to their home countries. The respondents from Kakuma cited the following: psychological trauma; loss of parents and other family members; internalized violence; loss of cultural values and not wanting to go back to their home countries. All the adults interviewed except the Sudanese said that most children did not want to go back to their countries. The Somali community contact was particularly emphatic and said this in response to the question whether Somali refugee children would like to go back to Somalia, "No. Completely. Completely no!" (Yasim 2009). The Rwandese community contact had this to say when asked whether he thinks Rwandese children would like to go back to their countries. "Kenya is Kenya... You do not know the milk you are milking ... *Uwambaye ikirezi ntamenya ko cyera*" (Tiboruhanga 2009). translation: "The one who wears a shining cloth does not know it is shining" These two comments are instructive of the refugees' perception of Kenya and the opportunities it has to offer.

The comments are similar to one made by a Rwandese young man living in Nairobi who compared living in Nairobi to being in a college or university because of the exposure it provides. Although life in Kenya for the refugees has its fair share of difficulties, it still offers opportunities and expectations that give hope for a better future. For most refugees, a better future is to be attained through education and hopefully, resettlement in a third country. Of all

the different nationalities that were interviewed for this research, it was only the children from Sudan who were positive about going back to settle in and develop their home country. The refugee children from the others countries mostly preferred resettlement in Europe, Canada or Australia. A number of them wished they could be nationalized to become Kenyans because according to them, Kenya was now their home. However, they knew this was not possible considering that the Government of Kenya does not yet practise local integration of refugees.

The respondents were asked to say how displacement had impacted on refugee children and the response emerged as positive and negative. The respondents from Nairobi gave the following as the key positive aspects of living in Kenya: good education, peace, exposure and opportunity to learn many languages. The respondents from Kakuma cited peace, good education, provision of basic needs (food, clothing and shelter) and international interactions. It was noted that the respondents from Kakuma were the only ones who cited provision of basic needs as a positive aspect of living in Kenya. The reason for this is that as earlier mentioned, UNHCR provides basic needs such as food and water. It also assists in construction of houses for encamped refugees. This is unlike in the case of urban refugees who shoulder most of the responsibility of catering for their basic needs.

Notably, it is mainly the respondents from Nairobi who cited exposure as a key positive aspect of living in Kenya. The researcher talked informally to a refugee young man who had lived and gone to school in Kenya. He told the researcher that Kenya had provided for him great opportunity for education and exposure and even though he was jobless at the time, he would still rather be in Kenya than back in his home country, Rwanda. The community contact from Rwanda also observed that one major advantage about living in Kenya is the freedom that Kenya accords. She observed that it was in Kenya where for the first time she felt free as a human being

without the label of tribe. The respondents from Kakuma mainly cited opportunity for international interactions as a key positive aspect of the refugee children living in Kakuma. The reason for this is that while urban refugees are exposed because of being in the capital city, the refugees in Kakuma live in a rural “international” town with people from all over Africa. In reference to this, the research assistant in Kakuma made the comment that if anyone wants to see Africa, he/she should go to Kakuma.

Concerning the negative aspects of displacement, there was a distinct difference in the emphasis given by the two groups of respondents. The respondents from Nairobi mostly cited police harassment and insecurity, separation from family and lack of food and unemployment. The respondents from Kakuma cited bandit attacks in the camp, cultural breakdown, harsh climate and lack of enough/ nutritious food.

As indicated earlier, children were asked questions around four key themes: *perception of peace, perception of conflict, perception of displacement and attitude towards their home countries*. From the children’s responses, the images of peace, conflict and displacement were inferred. The following emerged as images of peace as perceived by refugee children: absence of war/ fighting/ killing; love; friendship; living in Kenya; enough food and absence of quarrels. Images of conflict are fighting/ war/killing; forced displacement/separation from loved ones; disagreement/argument/misunderstanding; destruction of friendship and running away. The positive images of displacement are good education; peace; exposure; opportunity to learn many languages; provision of basic needs (food, clothing and shelter) and opportunity for international interactions. It should be noted that both the children and adults interviewed presented the positive aspects of displacement in relation to the conflict and attendant problems in the children’s home countries. The negative images of displacement that emerged are police

harassment; lack of food; lack of income/high cost of living; sadness due to loss of loved ones
back home: bandit attacks; harsh climate and lack of enough/nutritious food.

Conclusion

Interactions with refugee children through their narratives and focus group discussions enabled the researcher to make a number of observations about their situation. A key observation is that lack of stability in childhood, family and home has a negative impact on the development of children's narrative ability. According to most of the teachers and community contacts, the children's early years were characterized by violence and fear due to the conflict in their countries therefore most of them did not have a stable childhood and so they had not developed a storytelling tradition from their homes. It was observed that many among the children and adults interviewed associated the ability to tell stories with formal schooling. This means that in the absence of a stable home and family where storytelling could develop and thrive, the children relied on the school as the next best option. Displacement was also observed to have had a particular negative effect on children's narrative ability because as some children said, living as refugees forces one to think of nothing else but daily survival. Considering the real struggle for sustenance that most refugee children go through, it does not appear surprising that a good number of the fictional narratives they told were about food.

The refugee children saw education not merely as a need but mainly as a ladder out of their desperate situation. Opportunity for education was cited as one of the key positive aspects of living in Kenya. There was a distinct difference between the children who were attending school and those who were not. The children who were not attending school were generally despondent while those who were attending school were focused and hopeful even in the midst

of appalling conditions. This hope was best expressed by the Sudanese children who confidently asserted that they were going to go back to rebuild their country after completing their education.

The girls in Angelina Jolie Girls' Primary School also expressed a lot of optimism in education. It appeared that education had done two key things for them. Firstly, it had given them hope for the future; they expressed the belief that education is a passport to a better life. Secondly, it had increased their ability for self expression. This is a form of empowerment because the ability for expression enables them to concretize their thoughts and feelings and this is important in handling life issues. While the Somali refugee children in Nairobi spoke negatively about Kenya, those in Angelina Jolie spoke positively. The Somali refugee children interviewed in Nairobi seemed to find no hope in Kenya because they had no education, no employment, and no money. They also complained bitterly about police harassment. However, the Somali children in Angelina Jolie Boarding School were happy about Kenya; they expressed their happiness about receiving a good education and a good life. Another key observation that was made from the field experience is that girls tended to be more articulate and expressive than boys in both the focus group discussions and narratives. Girls told personal narratives that were more intimate than those told by boys. While there were three girls who told emotional narratives about sickness and death of a close family member, no boy told such a narrative.

The discussions and narratives of the children showed that conflict and violence has had far-reaching psychological and social effects on children. Some of the negative psychological effects are hopelessness, apathy and bitterness. At the social level, children were seen to experience loneliness, lack of personal and social identity and lack of social support. As observed earlier, some children were observed to have internalized violence thus seeing it as the only way of dealing with conflict. This is likely to have resulted from the models that they had

been exposed to from the political and social arena. This raises the question of how such children can be helped break the vicious circle of violence. Perhaps the answer lies in the use of narrative and dialogue. Encouraging the narrative tradition will help the children reclaim their childhood and by so doing possess again the essential hope that is associated with childhood. Most of the fictional narratives collected portrayed the origins and devastating effects of conflict. As they tell these narratives, refugee children become the agents who exercise some power over the tale. Arguably, this will help them understand situations of conflict by consciously or unconsciously reflecting on the conflicts played out in the narratives. Narrative also provides the much needed opportunity for self expression in a non-threatening environment and this will lead to tapping into inner reserves of energy and also provide new perspectives to issues. Speaking about the Israeli-Palestine conflict, David Grossman emphasizes on the power of writing in a situation of conflict arguing that writing works like a miracle because the moment a writer begins to write he or she moves out of the situation of enslavement and is no longer a slave of his private anxieties or of the official narrative of his country (92). Although Grossman's specifically refers to "writing" it could be argued that "narrating" has got similar power because of its power to give the narrator possibilities. Grossman's view on official narrative bears similarities with the Salmon's idea of collective narrative as discussed in chapter one. The ideas of Grossman and Salomon indicate that personal narratives can be used as tools for negotiating for space within the collective narrative and thus can help national/collective narratives less monolithic and threatening.

The attempt to repossess genuine childhood is rendered more significant when we consider the relationship between refugee children and adult refugees. The researcher's interaction with the refugee children in the context of their homes brought about an unusual

perspective about the position of refugee children as compared to adult refugees. Although refugee children are more vulnerable than their adult counterparts due to the former's innocence and limited experience, they have a kind of power that adults do not have due to the fact that they are more likely to be given assistance and also because they adjust more easily to life in exile. Consequently, many parents of refugee children look up to their children as their source of hope. It is therefore imperative that these children should not themselves slip into apathy and despondence.

The next chapter presents a thematic discussion of the fictional narratives collected from the children. The narratives are analysed using grounded theory and structuralism which enabled the identification of broad thematic categories.

CHAPTER FOUR

KEY THEMES IN REFUGEE CHILDREN'S NARRATIVES

While the previous chapter set the research context by focusing on refugee children's personal narratives, the information gathered from focus groups and interviews of adult refugees, this chapter focuses on the fictional narratives collected from the refugee children and presents their thematic analysis. Its main purpose is to provide a clear understanding of the narratives of refugee children before focusing specifically on the images of peace, conflict and displacement, which will be done in the next chapter. The chapter begins by expounding on the methodological procedure presented in chapter one then illustrates the methodology using one narrative. This is followed by a presentation of a tabular summary of the key themes in the fictional narratives collected in the field. The rest of the chapter is the discussion of three key thematic categories that emerged after the thematic analysis.

As indicated in the methodology section in chapter one, the fictional narratives are analysed using an approach comprising two key procedures. The first is an adapted version of grounded theory methodology which involves a systematic coding of all the elements of each narrative, while the second is A. J. Greimas' model of structural analysis which involves the identification of the enunciation-spectacle and actants in each narrative.

The grounded theory methodology has been adapted to this study to suit the analysis of the narratives as explained below. The three- step coding of grounded theory has been converted into two steps by collapsing axial and selective coding into one, leading to the following structure: step one - open coding and step two - axial/selective coding. Open coding is also adapted to include a third column instead of the usual two columns of grounded theory. Each narrative has therefore been subjected to a three column analysis: part/unit; label/code and

image. In each narrative, elements which make up a significant unit or part are identified then given a label/ code and finally, where applicable, identified with a particular image of peace, conflict or displacement.

Robson defines a *part* as whatever seems to be a complete unit in the data, for example an utterance, a sentence or a paragraph (493). Identification of part/unit involved reading through the narrative and highlighting whatever section of the data seemed to put across a complete thought within the narrative. After their identification, *parts* were labeled by asking the questions "What is this about? "What is being referred to by this *part/unit*?" "What is this piece of information an example of?" The answer to these questions was entered into the *label* column. The third step involved looking at the labels and asking the questions "How does this label relate to refugee children's understanding of peace, conflict and displacement?", "What image emerges from this label?" The answer to these questions was entered into the *image* column. After this, the central/key phenomenon was identified from the list of open codes and its relationship with all the other elements of the narrative highlighted through the process of axial/selective coding. This involved identifying the causal conditions, context, intervening conditions, action strategies and consequences.

The second approach of the analysis involved subjecting the narratives to a structural analysis based on Greimas' model as presented in the methodology section of this study. In this chapter, focus is given to two aspects of this model: *enunciation-spectacle* and *actants*. As mentioned in chapter one, enunciation- spectacle refers to the grammar of the narrative, which is arrived at by analyzing the components of narratives in order to identify characteristic elements in the structure. By identifying the enunciation-spectacle of the narratives, the study seeks not

only to highlight the themes, but also to show the relationship between the structure of narratives and their meanings.

The actants and their connection with the presentation of themes is also identified and discussed. In structuralist analysis, an *actant* is defined as “the specific role a character plays as an abstract agent in a network of roles...” (Herman and Vervaeck 52). Greimas’ model contains six actants: sender, subject, object, receiver, helper and opponent. The sender is the agent who provokes and inspires the subject towards action. The subject is the agent who carries out the action and strives for a specific object. The object is the focus of the action or what the subject wants to get or achieve. The receiver is the agent who benefits from the quest. The helper is the agent who assists in the quest while the opponent is the agent who thwarts the quest.

The above methodological process is illustrated below using the narrative *Lion and Hare* narrated by a Burundian boy living in Kangemi, Nairobi.

Lion and Hare by Ephraim Nduruma (13, M, Burundi) Recorded in Nairobi

Once there lived a Lion and a Hare. They were friends. They used to live well together, playing together. When Hare found something he would bring it home and share it with Lion, and Lion would also do the same. One time there came famine. Lion said, “Now my friend, what are we going to do? This place there is no food and there is no food anywhere. So what shall we do?”

Hare said, “Its ok, we shall look for food.”

They went round and round looking for food, but they didn’t find anything. Lion said, “Now am seeing we have failed to find anything, and I am not ready to starve to death. I suggest I should eat you up today, then another day, I shall also be eaten by someone else. We cannot all wait to die. Just let’s do that.”

“Now what?!” said Hare, “Why must you eat me? Let me eat you first, then I’ll also be eaten by someone else another day.”

Lion said, "If that's the way it is, then get away from my back. Never shall we again walk together with you." That's the reason why until today Lion does not get along well with any other animal. Whenever he sees another animal, he (the other animal) says, "Weeee! He just thinks of eating us up."

Table 4.1: Impact of Famine on Social Relations

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label/code	Image
Lion, Hare	Agents	
Friends	Good relationship	Peace
Live well together	Cooperation	Peace
Play together	Cooperation	Peace
Share everything	Cooperation	Peace
Famine	Problem/ lack of food	Potential for conflict
What are we going to do?	Consultation/ good relationship	Peace
Went round and round looking for food	Search for solution, effort, working together	Peace
Lion suggests to eat Hare	Selfishness	Conflict
Someone else will eat me another day	Buying time; justification, selfishness	Conflict
Why should you eat me? Let me eat you now	Assertiveness; insight	Conflict
Someone else will eat me another day	Reversal	Conflict
Never shall we walk together again	Enmity	Conflict, displacement
Lion does not get along with anyone	Isolation	Conflict, displacement
He just thinks of eating others	Selfishness, violence	Conflict

Table 4.1: Impact of Famine on Social Relations

Axial / Selective Coding

Key Phenomenon	Lion suggests to Hare that he (Lion) should eat him (Hare)
Causal conditions	Lion is very hungry
Context	There is famine in the land and they have searched for food unsuccessfully
Intervening conditions	Lion says that it is okay because he too will be eaten by another person another day.
Action strategies	Hare asks why he should be the one to be eaten first Hare says he should eat Lion first and then be eaten by another animal another day Both animals refuse to be eaten first
Consequences	Lion says he will never walk with Hare again

Lion said, "If that's the way it is, then get away from my back. Never shall we again walk together with you." That's the reason why until today Lion does not get along well with any other animal. Whenever he sees another animal, he (the other animal) says, "Weeee! He just thinks of eating us up."

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Consequences	Lion says he will never walk with Hare again

The two become enemies; The two animals separate
 Lion becomes isolated from other animals because they don't trust him and
 all he thinks about is how he can eat them.

Table 4.3: Actants

Subject	Lion	Hare
Object	Food	Food
Sender	Hunger	Hunger
Helper	Hare	Lion
Opponent	Hare	Lion
Receiver	-----	-----

The two friends Hare and Hyena act as the subjects because they both go out on a quest to look for food, which is the object of their quest. Hunger is the sender because it is the one that motivates the two friends to start looking for food. Both Hare and Lion are helpers because each cooperates with the other as they both engage in the mutual search for food. The two are also the (potential) receivers because in the earlier stage of the narrative we expect that they will find something to eat and share with each other as they have always done. However this does not happen because they fail to get any food at all and in Lion's desperation, he treacherously begins to look at his helper as the object of his quest. At this point the two friends acquire new actantual roles with each becoming the opponent to the other. After analyzing the narratives, it was observed that certain actants seemed to coincide with certain images for example; hunger in most of the narratives plays the role of sender while food plays the role of object.

In this narrative scarcity and subsequent lack of food is seen as a great potential for conflict. Here we see the two animals living in friendship and cooperation until resources become too scarce and eventually completely absent. The stronger of the two turns on the weaker and suggests that he should eat him in order to survive and justifies this by saying that he will in turn be eaten by someone else in the future. Hare, though the weaker of the two, is too clever to

be deceived and turns Lion's logic against him. Lion, of course, knows his logic is unjust and therefore refuses to be eaten first, leading to a conflict and subsequent enmity and separation. The enunciation-spectacle of this narrative is as follows: Friendship and peaceful co-existence → problem arises (scarcity or lack of resources) → betrayal of friendship and trust (let me eat you first then I will be eaten by someone else another day) → conflict arises (why should you eat me first? Let me eat you first) → enmity begins → separation (displacement).

This methodology was used in analyzing all the fictional narratives. The analysis led to the identification of key themes and key images in the narratives. The summary of the themes identified in the narratives is presented in the table below.

Table 4.4 Tabulation of Themes in the Collected Narratives

Theme	Narrative		Frequency	
	Nairobi	Kakuma	Nbi	Kak
Food/ Sustenance /Resources	Hen and Hawk, The story of Crocodile, Camel and Hawk, Lion and Hyena, Mother and her Ten Children, Monkey and Hippo, Lion and Hare, Hare and Hyena, Hyena and Man, The Story of Cat and Rat, Tortoise and Hare, The Story of Lion and Cat, Hare and Chameleon, Fox and Crow, Hare and Elephant,	The story of Hyena, Hare and Monkey, The Man and the Snake, Hare and Tortoise, Cock and Hawk, Sinyaburoho, Hare and Hyena, Hyena and Hen, Hyena and Hare 2, The Shopkeeper and the Mad man, The Farmer and the Hare, Hen and Cat, Barmuriat	15	13
Friendship	Lion and Hare, Hyena and Man, The Story of Crocodile, Hare and Hyena, Camel and Hawk, Lion and Hyena, The Story of Cat and Rat, The Story of Lion and Cat, Hen and Hawk,	Hare and Hyena, Hare and Monkey, Hen and Bat, Cock and Hawk, Hyena and Hen, Hare and Elephant, Hyena and Hare 2, Hen and Cat	8	8
Greed	The Hyena and the Man, The Story of Lion and Cat	The Story of Hyena, The Man and the Snake, Sinyaburoho, Hare and Hyena, Hare and Hyena 2, Hen and Cat, Big Stomach and Thin Legs	2	7
Jealousy	Hyena and Man	Hare and Leopard,	1	1
Betrayal/Deception	Tortoise and Hare, Hen and Hawk, Hyena and Man, The Story of Crocodile, Camel and Hawk, Hare and Hyena, The Story of Lion and Cat, Fox and Crow, Lion and Hyena, Lion and Hare	Hare and Hyena, Hare and Spider, Hare and Monkey, Hen and Bat, Cock and Hawk, Sinyaburoho, Hyena and Hen, Hare and Elephant, Hare and Hyena 2, Hen and Cat	10	10
Gullibility	Fox and Crow, Hen and Hawk, The Story of Crocodile, Hare and Hyena, The Story of Lion and Cat	Cock and Hawk, Hyena and Hen, Hare and Elephant, The Farmer and the Hare, Hen and Cat	5	5
Selfishness	Cat and rat, Monkey and Hippo, The Story of Crocodile, Fox and Crow, Hen and Hawk, The Story of Crocodile, Hare	Sinyaburoho, Hare and Hyena, The Farmer and the Hare, The rude couple	8	4

	and Hyena, The Story of Lion and Cat			
Revenge	Cat and Rat, Monkey and Hippo, Hyena and Man	Hare and Elephant	3	1
Justice	Fox and Crow, Hare and Elephant, Lion and Hyena, Mother with Ten Children	Hare and Leopard, Hen and Bat, Shopkeeper and the Mad Man, The rude couple	4	4
Pride	Tortoise and hare, Fox and Crow, Hare and Tortoise 2	Beautiful Nyakio, Hare and Elephant, The rude couple	3	3
True vs False victory	Tortoise and hare, Hare and Chameleon	Barmuriat	2	1
Division of labour/ exploitation	Hare and Hyena, Hare and Elephant, Cat and Rat	Hare and Tortoise, The Farmer and the Hare, Barmuriat, Hyena and Hare 2,	3	3
Of Adults and children	Hare and Hyena, The story of Crocodile, Mother with Ten Children, Hare and Elephant, The Story of Lion and Cat, Monkey and Hippo, Hen and Hawk	The story of Mary and pumpkin, Grandma and Girl, Hare and Leopard, Hen and Bat, The story of the Twins, Hare and Hyena, Hare and Elephant, The Rude Couple, The Shopkeeper and the madman	7	9

Below is a detailed discussion of themes using selected narratives for illustration. The discussion of themes attempts to address a key objective of this study which is to identify and discuss the significant themes addressed in the narratives of refugee children. After analysis of the narratives, three broad thematic categories emerged. These are: *food/ resource distribution and management; the relationship between children and adults* and *socio-economic relationships*. The discussion of these thematic categories forms the rest of this chapter. Four narratives (two from Kakuma and two from Nairobi) are used to illustrate each thematic category.

Food and Resource Distribution

This was the most recurrent thematic category both in Nairobi and Kakuma. The narratives dealing with the above theme have food, and/or other resources such as land, houses, sheep, goats and riches as the main sources of conflict. In some of the narratives, food is mentioned as a

general category, while in others, specific foods are mentioned which include ugali, meat, fruits, cereals, fish and sugarcane among others. Most of the narratives in this category contain the following enunciation-spectacle: the two main protagonists begin as friends then they are faced with a problem - usually lack of food. They therefore come together to decide what to do. Mostly, they decide to go hunting. When they catch their prey or get some food, one deceives the other leading to the end of their friendship and the beginning of lasting enmity which results in separation or displacement.

The first narrative that will be analyzed to illustrate the above theme is *Hen and Hawk*.

Hen and Hawk by Cesse (14, M Congo) Recorded in Nairobi

Once upon a time there was two animals. A Hawk and a Hen. They were very friends, and one day Hen was eating some cereals. Hawk came, asked Hen where him was find...some cereals. Then Hen told him that to find cereals your leg has to be cut off. Because Hen was walking like this {demonstrates by walking on one leg.}. So Hen was lying. Then, Hawk, because it is very stupid, it went and cut off its leg. Then he was given a very big sack of cereals, but it was not able to carry the sack because it was heavy and the leg was broken. Then Hawk left the sack there and returned where Hen was and asked her how she has carried that sack because she had only one leg. Then Hen said, "You are very stupid, how can you go and cut your leg when you know that you cannot be able to...to walk on one?" Then Hen put her other leg down. Then Hawk was very very surprised. Then from that day there was a conflict because Hen has...cheated Hawk. Then Hawk said, "Because you are very big I cannot do anything bad for you, but always when I see your chicks I will eat them."

Table 4.5 Negotiating for Resources

Open Coding

Hawk, Hen	Agents	
They were friends	Friendship	Peace
Hen was eating cereals	Availability of food	Peace
Hawk asked where Hen had got cereals from	Search for sustenance	Potential for peace/conflict

To get cereals your leg has to be cut	Deception	Conflict
Hen was lying	Deception	Conflict
Hawk cut its leg	Gullibility	Potential for conflict
Hawk could not carry cereals because his leg was cut	Consequence of gullibility	Conflict
Hen showed Hawk both her legs	Betrayal	Conflict
I will always eat your chicks	Destruction friendship	Conflict; displacement

Table 4.6: Negotiation for Resources and the Potential for Conflict

Axial/Selective Coding

Key Phenomenon	Hawk cuts off her leg
Causal conditions	Hen has deceived her to do so in order to get cereals
Context	Hawk is desperate to get some food
Intervening conditions	Hen and Hawk are friends so Hawk trusts her
Action strategies	Hawk goes and gets cereals; she is unable to carry so she comes for help from Hen; Hen shows both legs and laughs at Hawk for her stupidity
Consequences	Hen and Hawk become enemies; the children of Hen are endangered

Table 4.7: Actants

Subject	Hawk	Hen
Object	Cereals (food)	To have Hen cut her leg
Sender	Hunger/ need for sustenance	To assert superiority
Helper	Hen	Hawk's gullibility
Opponent	Hen	-----
Receiver	-----	Hen

The narrative has an enunciation-spectacle as indicated earlier: the two main protagonists (Hen and Hawk) begin as friends, then one of them is faced with the problem of lack of food. He finds his friend with food and asks how he can get some. His friend deceives him, leading to the end of their friendship and the beginning of lasting enmity and subsequent separation. The enunciation- spectacle can be perceived more clearly by looking at the actants in the narrative. Hawk is the subject who is striving for the object of food in the form of cereals. Hunger plays the role of sender because it is the desire to eat and have enough to spare that propels Hawk into

action. It is interesting to note that Hen plays the role of both helper and opponent. She is the helper because she is the one who tells Hawk where to get cereals yet at the same time she is the opponent because she is the same one who deceives Hawk to cut his leg, making it impossible for him to carry the food home. Hawk is the potential receiver who never really receives because his quest is thwarted by his supposed helper. We notice that when the actual roles of helper and opponent are played by the same character, then the character who is in that role is a traitor.

Through this narrative we see that food as represented by cereals is a potential source of conflict. The friendship between Hen and Hawk ends because Hen is too selfish to share the food: instead she goes a step further to play a cruel practical joke on Hawk. Hawk, on the other hand, is gullible enough to be deceived by Hen's evil genius. He becomes maimed after cutting off his own leg and this makes it impossible for him to carry food for himself. Hawk ends up getting into a deal that leaves him maimed while with a little more thought he could still have got the cereals without having to lose his leg. Sadly, he is so focused on getting food that he forgets to use common sense and question why one must lose a leg in order to get cereals. We can argue that losing a leg was not a prerequisite to getting cereals because according to the narrative, when he went for the cereals he was not asked if he had cut off his leg.

The above narrative indicates how individuals, communities or countries in vulnerable positions face challenges as they negotiate for space in socio-economic relations. Being in a desperately needy position puts them in a position similar to the one Hawk finds himself in, that is, negotiating a deal while in dire need and therefore being unable to exercise discretion. Some African countries have signed agreements that have maimed them simply because at the time of the negotiation, all that seemed important was to get the immediate problem solved. Like Hawk who loses his leg in the process of negotiation, such countries find themselves in a position

where they cannot enjoy the benefits of the deal because they give too much away during the negotiation.

Although this narrative is a fairly common oral narrative, this particular rendering by a refugee child portrays elements that are unique to the refugee experience. In traditional renderings, the reason for the enmity between Hen and Hawk is the fact of Hen losing Hawk's pair of scissors. The aspect of being given cereals is characteristic of the refugees' lives. Most of the children in the focus group discussions talked about the food ration they receive from UNHCR, which they simply referred to as 'ration'. The main component of this ration is maize meal (cereal) and their livelihood in the refugee camp seems to revolve around the two week cycle of the ration distribution. Arguably, this narrative has adapted to the situation of refugee children and is able to reflect circumstances that are unique to them.

Among the narratives collected for this study, this narrative occurred four times. Although the details in terms of specific characters, locations and type of food changed, the enunciation –spectacle in the four narratives remained the same. The key phenomenon in the four narratives was one animal deceiving another to cut off a leg or legs (limbs) in order to get food. The other three narratives are *Cock and Hawk*, narrated by a Rwandese boy in Nairobi, *Hen and Cat* narrated by a Rwandese boy in Kakuma and *Hyena and Hen*, narrated by a Sudanese boy in Kakuma.

The frequency in the recurrence of this narrative could also point to the brutalized past that characterizes refugee children's lives. A number of the children especially those from Sudan and Somalia have physical scars on their bodies. Two boys in particular deliberately showed their scars to the researcher and used them as important reference points of their personal narratives. One of the boys was from Sudan and he had a big scar on the shin of his leg which he

aid was the result of a gunshot. The other was a Somali boy who had scared and deformed hands which he said was the result of severe burns sustained when their family house was set on fire.

The second narrative that illustrates the theme of food and resource distribution is entitled

1 Mother and her Ten Children.

A Mother and her Ten Children by Zabibah (10, F, Ethiopia). Recorded in Nairobi

There was once a mother with ten children. Now that mother went and bought some milk. She put the milk in a bucket. You know inside a bucket. When she went away, one child came and drank the milk. The other children were playing and they did not see. When the mother came back she asked, "Where is the milk?" The other children replied, "I don't know." The one who had drunk the milk also said, "I don't know." Later the mother said, "Go to that place where there is water. If you have told a lie, you will fall inside." She tied a rope and told them to climb there and if anyone falls inside that is the person who drank the milk. The first child climbed and did not fall. then the next one, then the next. Finally the last one who is the one who had drunk the milk climbed and fell inside. Then they knew she is the one who had drunk the milk. She fell inside the water and died. That is the end of the story.

Table 4.8: Scarcity of Resources and Self Preservation

Open Coding

Unit/part	label	Image
Mother	Nurturer/protector	Peace
Ten children	Family, high demand for resources	Potential for conflict
Mother went to buy milk	Object/food	Potential for peace/ conflict
One child drank all the milk	Selfishness/ scarcity of resources	Potential for conflict
Where is the milk?	Problem	Conflict
I don't know	Complication	Potential for conflict
If you are lying you will fall in hole	Punishment	Conflict
Nine children did not fall	Innocence	Potential for peace
The last child fell	Guilt/ punishment	Conflict
She fell and died	Justice/ disrupted family	Conflict

Table 4.9: Inequitable Distribution of Resources as a Source of Conflict

Axial /selective Coding

Key Phenomenon	One child drinks all the milk alone
Causal conditions	Hunger
Context	The children are very many and the milk too little
Intervening conditions	He/she had the chance because he/she was alone as the rest of the children were playing and the mother was out
Action strategies	Mother asks the guilty person to own up. Nobody owns up. Mother sets a test: all the children to walk across a water hole. The child who drank milk will fall into the hole
Consequences	The guilty child discovered. The child dies. The family is disrupted.

Table 4.10: Actants

Subject	mother
Object	Milk (food)/
Sender	Need to feed family
Helper	Mother's determination
Opponent	The child who drinks the milk alone
Receiver	The child who drinks the milk

In this narrative, the mother is the subject who goes to buy milk which is the object of her quest. The sender is her need to feed her family. Consequently, all the children are supposed to be receivers of the milk. In the end, only one child receives the object because she drinks the milk alone and by so doing she thwarts the other children's chance of attaining the object of the quest thus she doubles up as an opponent. From this narrative, we observe that a character who plays the roles of both receiver and opponent is an exploiter.

This narrative shows that scarcity and unequal distribution of resources is a potential cause of conflict, since the mother causes the death of one of her own children in an attempt to

safeguard family resources. This sounds rather extreme, yet such incidents have been known to happen whereby parents have meted out extreme punishments to their own children for misuse of family resources. The mother's drastic action could be as a result of the stress of handling such a big family with all its material and emotional demands as is indicated by having to share one packet of milk between ten children. The mother's problem is exacerbated by the fact that she seems to be a single parent since there is no mention of the father of the children through out the narrative. We can therefore assume that she provides for the children alone and also deals with any conflicts alone. The thematic concern emerging from this narrative reflects the "absent father" situation of a number of refugee children. As observed in chapter three, 53 out the 71 (74.6 %) children who participated in this study were living without their fathers. Most of the fictional narratives collected that dealt with the family presented families with single mothers. This could be due to refugee children being largely exposed to single parent families.

There could be two possible interpretations to the mother's severe response to the problem. One is that she lacks constructive conflict transformation skills and so in the process of trying to solve one problem she ends up creating a bigger one by causing the death of her child. The other is that the punishment is not meted out by her, but befalls the guilty child as a logical consequence of his/her selfishness. It should be noted that the mother does not push the child into the hole; the child falls on his/her own just as the mother had predicted would happen to the guilty person. This makes us to come to the conclusion that the narrative could be underscoring the injustice of keeping resources to one person or group while the majority starve. The narrative also clearly shows the severe impact of scarcity of resources on human relationships; there cannot be peace unless resources are adequate and equitably distributed. The centrality of food in the pursuit of peace is pointed out by Macharia Mwangi in an article entitled "The basic human

needs as a prerequisite for peace” in which he argues that for there to be peace basic human needs such as food and adequate shelter must be met (80).

Focus is now given to two narratives collected from Kakuma as further illustration of the theme of food and resource distribution. These are *Hare and Hyena I (Somalia)* and *Hare and Monkey I (DRC)*.

Hare and Hyena I by Halima, (13, F Somali). Recorded in Kakuma

Once upon a time there lived Hare and Hyena. Hare and Hyena were best friends, and they were big friends. One day Hare told Hyena “Lets go and carry the food.

Hyena say, “Yes we can go.”

Hyena have his mother, and Hare have his mother. Hare’s mother was very old.

They went and found a hen at the road.

Hare said, “Look at that hen. Let us run and catch that hen and then we go with it.”

They go and catch that hen. “Hyena said, “You take one piece and I take one piece.”

Then Hyena said, “Me I want to eat the half I have.”

Hare said, “I cannot eat but I want to go and eat with my mum.”

Then Hyena eat his piece of hen, and Hare go and eat with his mother. That is my story.

Table 4.11: Selfishness vs Selflessness in Resource Distribution

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label/code	Image
Hare, Hyena	Agents	
Big friends	Friendship	Peace
Lets go carry food	Looking for sustenance	Peace
Hare and Hyena have their mothers	Family	Peace
Hare’s mother was very old	Vulnerability/ dependence	Potential for conflict/peace
Hen	Food/ resource	Potential for peace/conflict
You take one piece I take one piece	Sharing/ fairness	Peace
I want to eat the half I have	Gluttony/ selfishness	Potential for conflict
I want to eat with my mother	Sharing/ concern/ responsibility	Peace

Hyena eats alone	Selfishness	Conflict
Hare shares with his mother	Selflessness	Peace

Table 4.12: Resource Distribution and the Potential for Peace/Conflict

Avial/Selective Coding

Key phenomenon	Search for food
Causal conditions	Hunger
Intervening conditions	Hyena is greedy
Context	Sustenance, providing for family (Hare)
Action strategies	Hare and Hyena go to hunt; They catch a hen
Consequences	Hyena eats and gets full; his mother remains hungry. Hare delays his own satisfaction, shares with his mother, both are satisfied.
Opponent	Hyena

Table 4.13: Actants

Subject	Hare	Hyena
Object	Food	Food/ search for sustenance
Sender	Hunger/ search for sustenance	Hunger / search for sustenance
Helper	Hyena	Hare
Opponent	Hyena	
Receiver	Hare	Hyena

From the above analysis, it can be observed that the central category is food or search for sustenance; it is therefore the object of the quest. Hunger is the natural sender in this quest. The narrative emphasizes the need for cooperation in the search for daily sustenance as is seen in the cooperation between Hare and Hyena. For this reason Hare's and Hyena's actantual roles overlap. They play the roles of subject, helper and receiver. The two friends share their catch equally without any one trying to trick the other. In addition, Hyena plays the role of opponent because he thwarts his mother's chance of getting a meal due to his selfishness.

Trouble comes as a result of the social necessity to share one's well earned portion with someone who did not participate in looking for the food, which acts as the test that distinguishes

between selfish Hyena and selfless Hare. Since Hare knows that his mother is very old and therefore weak and needing protection and support, he decides to delay his own satisfaction in order to take care of his mother's needs first. It is important to note that the narrative clearly states that Hyena too has a mother, which means that he has someone to provide for. The girl who narrated this story gave comments that showed that she identified with Hare because of his thoughtfulness and sensitivity. She said she would like to be like Hare "because even if he was hungry, he remembered his mother".

A number of the refugee children who were part of this research told personal narratives about their experiences of looking for food. They, for instance, narrated about going to the scrubland outside the refugee camp to look for wild berries and fruits. One Sudanese child in Nairobi narrated about going to look for guavas and another narrated about going hunting for rabbits. The children said that they took the food they foraged to their mothers and they (the mothers) were very happy. Under normal circumstances, it is not children but adults who look for food to provide for the family, but refugeehood tends to reverse this situation.

The theme of food and distribution of resources is elucidated further in the narrative below:

Hare and Monkey II by Francine Chandja (12, F, Congo) Recorded in Kakuma

A long time ago, there was a hare and a monkey. They were very good friends. One day, Monkey told the Hare, "Let's go to the river to fish". So they went to the river and fished. They came and prepared a meal, putting in some tomatoes and *royco*...the meal became so delicious. Then they agreed they would go and take a bath, then come back to make ugali before they could eat. Then Hare said to his friend that they should go on a race and whoever wins would eat more fish. Monkey raced but lost. Hare raced ahead, went in and ate all the fish. Then put his faeces in the cooking pot and covered it. On coming back, Hare said to Monkey, "Make ugali...put water to boil for ugali, am going out I'll be back in a while." He went out and put on police uniform, he

looked like a police officer. Then he ordered Monkey to make ugali using his hand without a cooking stick. Monkey began to make ugali with his hand. He was fearful, for Hare had a gun. But Monkey never knew the 'police officer' was Hare. So he made the ugali. When he looked into the pot, he found faeces. Hare said, "That is impossible, you must make for me some more food!" So Monkey cut off his buttocks and cooked it for Hare, who ate it and left.

Hare went and took off the police uniform. He came back and started laughing at Monkey. My story ends there. That's why you see Monkey's hand red as if burnt and his buttocks are also bare and red.

Table 4.14 Power Play in Socio-economic Relations

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label/code	Image
Hare	Agent, trickster	
Monkey	Agent	
Friends	Good relationship	Peace
Fishing	Looking for food, cooperation	Peace
Delicious meal	Accomplishment	Peace
Win/ lose race	Competition	Potential for conflict
More fish	Prize	Potential for conflict
Faeces	Insult	Conflict
Police uniform	Deception, power, violence	Conflict
Gun, police uniform	Violence, police harassment	Conflict
Cut and cooked buttocks	Violation, violence	Conflict
Laughing	Humiliation	Conflict

Table 4.15: Violence and Violation in Socio-economic Relations

Axial/ Selective Coding

Key Phenomenon	Hare eats all the fish alone
Causal conditions	Hunger, selfishness, spite
Context	The two are friends therefore Monkey does not suspect Hare
Intervening conditions	Hare wants more than his share of the food
Action strategies	Hare pretends to be a policeman and deceives Monkey
Consequences	Burnt hand and bare buttocks; violence and violation; end of friendship

Table 4.16: Actants

Subject	Hare	Monkey
Object	Fish (food)	Fish (food)
Sender	Hunger/ search for sustenance	Hunger / search for sustenance
Helper	Monkey	Hare
Opponent		Hare
Receiver	Hare	Hyena

Hare and Monkey are both the subjects who go out fishing together. The object of their quest is food in the form of fish and the sender is hunger or need for sustenance. Both of them play the role of helpers because they work together and they are also the potential receivers, but in reality only Hare receives the object of the quest. By tricking his friend, Monkey, Hare ends up playing the roles of both the helper and the opponent. In other words, Hare initially pretends to be in cooperation with Monkey only for it to turn out that he is serving his own interests. Following the actantual analysis, we conclude that a character who calculatingly plays the roles of helper and opponent is a traitor.

In this narrative, the peaceful co-existence between two friends is destroyed not by scarcity of resources, but by the selfishness, treachery and exploitative nature of one of the partners as is seen through Hare employing different tricks to ensure that he is the only one who gets the food. First he suggests that they should go swimming, then that they should have a race, later he excretes in the pot and finally he pretends to be a police officer. Commenting on this narrative, the narrator observed that both Hare and Monkey contribute towards the deterioration of their relationship. According to her, it is neither good to deceive others like Hare does nor is it good to allow oneself to be easily deceived like Monkey.

It is significant to note that Hare dons the garb of power, as symbolised by the gun and the police uniform, in order to coerce Monkey into doing his bidding. This points to the life circumstances of refugee children in that their lives are characterized by the presence of

uniformed force. In the personal narratives and focus group discussions, there was frequent mention of unpleasant and sometimes harrowing experiences with the police and soldiers. The refugee children in Nairobi especially said that when they are arrested by police, they have to buy their way out with some money even though they are innocent. In reference to experiences in their countries, a number of children especially from Somalia and Sudan presented lives that were going reasonably well “until the soldiers came”.

It is noted also that children bring in new elements into the narratives as indicated by the reference to *royco*, a commonly used Kenyan food spice. The reference to such elements indicates that the narratives reflect different aspects of social reality. Chesaina (1997) argues that oral literature is dynamic and thus oral narratives are always being recreated (ix). The analysis of the narratives of refugee children in this study has demonstrated that narrative is a versatile artistic form which is able to respond to the lived experiences of a people at any given historical period. This element of narrative gives this artistic mode the capacity to maintain perpetual modernity.

The discussion will now shift to the next key thematic category, but before delving into the discussion, an important point needs to be made: although the rest of the narratives in this chapter are discussed under the themes of *the relationship between children and adults* and *socio-economic relationships*, food/resource management and distribution remains a key phenomenon in the narratives and influences the relationship between children and adults as well as socio-economic relationships.

The Relationship between Children and Adults

From the narrative *Hen and Hawk* discussed earlier, it is also observed that the problem between adults has an adverse effect on children (chicks). Although they are not involved in the selfishness, deceptiveness and gullibility of the parents, the children of Hen bear the brunt of the ruined relationship between these two former friends. This is similar to what happens in political situations where children get caught up in conflicts whose origins they do not know. They bear the consequences of these conflicts and unfortunately, grow up to perpetuate these same conflicts just like in the case between Hawk and Hen.

Most of the refugee children the researcher interacted with during the course of this research could be said to be in a situation similar to that of the children of Hen because they did not fully understand the exact nature of the conflicts that had made them flee their countries. A good number of the refugee children interviewed were born in exile and so had never experienced the conflicts first hand, but nevertheless they continue to be affected by these conflicts.

The following two narratives from Nairobi will be used to illustrate the relationship between children and adults: *The Story of Crocodile* and *Monkey and Hippo*

The Story of Crocodile by Simon Kiir (13, M) Sudan. Recorded in Nairobi

Once upon a time there was a crocodile living in a river bank. There were no cows or goats coming to drink water and it cannot catch fish, and so the crocodile is very hungry. He saw an ostrich coming to drink water. And he told him, "Hi, friend. Come, look the tooth on the left side, it hurts,"

The ostrich said, "Which tooth, the left one? Okay, let me look at it." And he...the crocodile catch the head of the ostrich and ostrich started pulling out his head. And it cannot make it, and the crocodile release the head of the ostrich.

And the ostrich say, "You are not a good friend again. I will leave you now". And Crocodile say, "Uhh, just go, I don't want to be your friend again. I want to eat you but you...you cannot dead. Okay, just go." And the neck of the ostrich become long.

And next Hare come to greet Crocodile, and Crocodile say, "Lets go to my house and drink beer."

Hare Said "Okay, let's go". They go and drink but Hare does not drink very much, but the crocodile drunk very much and started sleeping.

And Hare told Crocodile, "I am going to sleep on the river bank."

Crocodile replied, "Go on." Hare saw the eggs of crocodile and ate them then he woke Crocodile, "Wake up, wake up."

Crocodile said, "What are you saying?"

"Wake up. I want to go home, but I can't swim across the river".

Crocodile said, "Let's go," and carried Hare on his back.

The son of crocodile told his father, "Father, Father, Hare has our eggs in his stomach."

Crocodile asked Hare, "What did my son say?"

"He say swim quickly; your wife is waiting for you." And the crocodile swim quickly.

And the son of crocodile told his father again, "Father, Father, Hare has our egg in his stomach." And he asked Hare again, "What did my son say?"

"He said swim faster, your wife is waiting for you." And he swam faster. And then the son of crocodile told his father the same thing again. They went...they reach on the river bank, and Crocodile catch the leg of Hare. And Hare told him, "that's not my leg; that is a reed." And Crocodile released the leg of Hare. And Hare told Crocodile, "You are very funny. That was my leg." That's where my story ends.

Table 4.17: Parents' Gullibility and its Impact on Children

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label/code	Image
Crocodile, Ostrich, Hare	Agents	
No cow, goat or fish	No food	Potential for conflict
Catch the head of ostrich	Object/ food	Conflict
Crocodile is hungry	Need for food	Potential for conflict
I want to eat you	Violence	Conflict
Drinking beer	Indulgence	Potential for conflict
Eggs	Children, posterity, hope	Peace
Hare eats crocodile's eggs	Theft/ betrayal	Conflict

crocodile fails to listen to son, but listens to Hare instead.	Adult's disregard for children	Conflict
crocodile carries Hare to safety	Gullibility	Potential for conflict
that is a reed not my leg	Deception, trickery	Conflict
crocodile releases Hare's leg	Gullibility	Potential for conflict

Table 4.18: Parental Neglect as a Form of Child Abuse

Axial coding/ Selective Coding

Key Phenomenon	Hare eats Crocodile's eggs.
Causal conditions	He is hungry, he likes to indulge
Context	Hare and Croc are friends so Croc is not suspicious
Intervening conditions	Crocodile's over-indulgence, negligence and gullibility Hare's cunning ways
Action strategies	Hare tricks Crocodile to carry him to safety, lies about what Crocodile's son is saying, Hare tricks Crocodile into letting go of his leg
Consequences	Break of friendship between Ostrich and crocodile Conflict between Hare and Crocodile

Table 4.19: Actants

Subject	Crocodile	Hare
Object	Ostrich (food)	Crocodile's eggs (food); beer (indulgence)
Sender	Hunger/ search for sustenance	Hunger / search for sustenance
Helper	Hare	Crocodile's indulgence and negligence
Opponent	Hare	Crocodile's son
Receiver	Hare	Hare

Hunger drives Crocodile to strive towards the object of food by trying to trick Ostrich. Unfortunately, Ostrich's alertness is the opponent that prevents Crocodile from achieving his object because he realizes that he is literally in the enemy's mouth and manages to pull himself out in the nick of time. After failing to get some food, Crocodile decides to drink beer with his friend, Hare. Hare is equally on a quest for food and he in turn tricks Crocodile. While Crocodile is drunk, Hare goes and eats Crocodile's eggs. Crocodile's indulgence, negligence and gullibility become Hare's helper because through them Hare is not only able to eat the eggs, but also to trick Crocodile into giving him a ride to safety.

Lack of food (hunger) sparks off the dramatic action that leads to the conflict in this narrative. Later Hare perpetuates the conflict due to his selfishness. He tricks his friend crocodile into drinking too much while he himself drinks moderately and remains sober. He eats crocodile's eggs while he (crocodile) is in a drunken stupor. To make the situation worse, Crocodile loses the chance to deal with Hare for this injustice because he ignores his son who keeps warning him that Hare has eaten their eggs. Due to his foolishness, Crocodile listens to his enemy instead of listening to his child. This narrative points to the prevailing attitude of adults towards children whereby children are often ignored and yet they could have ideas that could contribute positively towards societal/ family well being. Crocodile's son was his father's genuine helper, but by refusing to listen to him, Crocodile ends up helping his enemy to sabotage him further.

Another key observation that can be made from this narrative is that the eggs of Crocodile represent the next generation and therefore they may be seen as the children of Crocodile. At the symbolic level, they are the future and the potential of this family. By not guarding the eggs against the predatory Hare, Crocodile as a parent is negligent at two levels.

Firstly, he exposes his children to mortal danger by focusing on his pleasure and absconding his parental responsibilities. Secondly, he is too engrossed in trying to please his carousing friend to grasp the simple sense of his son's warning. In this narrative, Crocodile behaves like an irresponsible child while his son behaves like a vigilant and responsible parent. By reversing the roles of Crocodile and his son, this narrative offers a fresh look at the place of children in family and society and suggests the need to listen to children for the betterment of society.

The second narrative under this category is *Monkey and Hippo*.

Monkey and Hippo by Aiheji (14, M, Rwanda) Recorded in Nairobi

Once upon a time there was a monkey and a hippopotamus. Monkey lived in a very big tree which had so many good fruits. Hippopotamus lived in the river nearby the tree. Hippopotamus had two children and Monkey had many children, so one day...one day Hippopotamus asked Monkey to...to give her some fruits that she may give to her children. And Monkey said that she hasn't more fruits to give because she has many children. Hippopotamus kept asking for many times but Monkey refused and when Monkey refused, the children of Hippopotamus began to cry. And one day there was a big rain and water began to come up. The water come up come up and it reach the tree. And then Hippopotamus began to eat. They eat all the fruits and the fruits got finished. And the water began to come down. When the water come down, there was nothing for Monkey to eat. And they asked...they asked mother Hippopotamus to find something for them to eat. And she refused, she said that when there was plenty of fruits Monkey refused to give them. And that is the end of the story.

Table 4.20: Resource Availability and Conservation

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label/code	Image
Hippopotamus, Monkey	agents	
Big tree	Home /security	Peace
Good fruits	Food/ resources	Peace
Hippo had two children	Family	

Monkey had many children	Family/value of children	Peace
Rain	Providence	Peace/ conflict
Hippo begs for fruits for her children	Need	Potential for conflict
Monkey refuses	Selfishness	Potential for conflict
Hippo's children cry	Suffering	Conflict
Heavy rain falls	Natural providence/ justice	Peace
Water begins to rise	Natural providence/justice	Potential for peace/conflict
Hippo and children eat all the fruits	Providence/ revenge	Conflict
Nothing for monkey to eat	Lack of food/ poetic justice	Conflict
Monkey asks mother Hippo for something to eat	Reversal	Conflict
Hippo refuses	Justice/ revenge	Conflict

Table 4.21: Failure to Conserve and Diversify Resources as Forms of Child Abuse

Axial /Selective coding

Key Phenomenon	Monkey refuses to share fruits (food) with Hippo's children
Causal conditions	Monkey's selfishness, fear that the food will get depleted
Context	Failure to share limited resources with those in need
Intervening conditions	Monkey in advantaged position up the tree. Hippo in disadvantaged position.
Action strategies	Hippo takes advantage of the rising water to access the fruits. Hippo turns down monkey's plea for food in revenge for monkey's prior decline to assist him in his time of need
Consequences	Monkey and family starve Hippo and family have plenty to eat Possible compromise of friendly co-existence.

Table 4.22: Actants

Subject	Hippo
Object	Fruits (food)

Sender	Hunger/ search for sustenance
Helper	Floods (providence)
Opponent	Monkey
Receiver	Hippo

Mother Hippo plays the role of subject in this narrative. The fruits up the tree are the object of her quest and the sender is hunger and the need to feed her children. Monkey plays the role of opponent because she refuses to give Hippo fruits. In the end, the hand of providence in the form of floods becomes Hippo's true helper. Hippo and her children are the happy recipients of the fruits.

In this narrative we see the two main characters acting in a selfish manner. Although they are immediate neighbours, they do not share the resources available to them and this leads to conflict. Monkey lives up a tree which has many fruits but she does not want to share the fruits with crocodile. Monkey hordes the resources to ensure her children are amply provided for while Hippo has nothing. Hippo gets more desperate as her children begin to cry until finally the hand of providence comes to her rescue by providing a flood that propels her and her children within reach of the fruits. Hippo is thus able to feed all her children who eat until all the fruits get finished.

This narrative presents two ostensibly responsible parents since they are both devoted to their children's welfare especially regarding the provision of food. This notwithstanding, the narrative presents a subtle level of irresponsibility which is masked by the parents' devotion. Failure of the parents to harness and utilize varied resources leading to the stretching of the available resources is a form of irresponsibility that leads to conflict. Why, for example, does Monkey remain on this one tree and not look for food anywhere else. Similarly, why does Hippo remain confined to the river while she could move out of the water to look for food elsewhere?

Although the narrative does not directly raise the issue, it alludes to a disturbing question regarding what happens to the children of both Monkey and Hippo after all the fruits are finished. The narrative clearly points to the need to be consciously aware that resources are finite there will not always be more- and therefore it is imperative to conserve them for posterity. There is need to conserve natural resources in order to ensure continued supply of food, clean water, and other necessities such as safe habitats. The narrative *Hippo and Monkey* also makes the case for the need not only to conserve resources, but also to diversify their utilization. Such an attitude would contribute towards a peaceful life for children and coming generations.

It should be noted also that another contributory factor to the conflict between these two neighbours is simply selfishness. Monkey refuses to share fruits with Hippo and takes advantages of his natural ability to climb trees which puts him in an advantaged position of "owning" or territorializing the fruit tree. The relationship between these two neighbours is indicative of the relationship between conflicting groups in most African countries as has been observed by Garret, Sergion and Vlassenroot that "natural resources have shaped the power strategies pursued by warring parties who aim at territorialization of sovereignty around valuable resources" (2).

At this point attention will be given to two narratives collected in Kakuma: *The Shopkeeper and the Mad Man* (Somalia) and *Hare and Leopard* (Rwanda).

The Shopkeeper and the Madman by Abdizani Alani (16, M, Somalia) Recorded in Kakuma.

I want to tell a story about a shopkeeper and a madman. That madman is coming everyday and asking for chapatti from a shopkeeper Mama. When he ask for chapatti, mama she give chapatti. Everyday...everyday he come, he ask chapatti and the shopkeeper gives him. Then she found it difficult everyday to give chapatti. She decided one day to kill him. Yeah. She took chapatti, she put some drug inside, and then she wait him. Yes. He come in. Early in the

orning. when he came, the mama welcome him. She give the chapatti. Then he take, he take the chapatti. He go outside and play with the mama's children. He was playing, he was playing every day. And then when he take chapatti, he go out to the children. He give half of chapatti. He said. "Come...come...take. I have chapatti, I have chapatti."

But he did not know the chapatti had poison. So he give it all. Then mama she look at the children. She saw all the children feel bad, they are crying...and mama she feel very sad. And then she call the doctor. Then she said, 'Help me, help me...' They take them to the hospital, but was too late. They all died. And then, mother she...she was sad. She was very sad.

Table 4.23: The Backlash of Self Preservation

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label/code	Image
Shopkeeper, mad man	Agents	
Asking for chapatti daily	Daily sustenance, begging	Potential for conflict
Shopkeeper gives chapatti for many days	Generosity	Peace
Shopkeeper finds it difficult to give chapatti daily	Donor fatigue	Potential for conflict
He decides to kill mad man	Apparent solution	Conflict
He puts drug (poison) into chapatti	Betrayal	Conflict
Mad man goes to play with shopkeeper's children	Goodwill	
Offers them chapatti	Generosity	
All the children eat chapatti and get sick	Consequence	
They are taken to hospital	Intervention	
They all die	Reversal/ justice	Conflict
Mother is very sad	Consequence of evil actions	Conflict

Table 4.24: The Insider/ Outsider Dichotomy

Axial/Selective Coding

Key phenomenon	Shopkeeper unwilling to continue giving chapatti to madman (outsider)
Causal conditions	Donor fatigue

Context	Need to protect family resources for the children (insiders)
Intervening conditions	The begging perceived as an endless problem because the madman begs daily.
Action strategies	Shopkeeper poisons chapatti and gives it to the madman.
Consequences	Madman gives poisoned chapatti to the shopkeeper's children; the children die; the mother is very sad

Table 4.25: Actants

Subject	Madman	Woman
Object	Chapatti (food)/ sustenance	Providing for the family
Sender	Hunger/ search for sustenance	Hunger / search for sustenance
Helper	Woman	-----
Opponent	Woman	Madman
Receiver	Madman; woman's children	-----

The madman in this narrative is the subject who engages in a daily quest for food in the form of chapatti. The woman shopkeeper acts as his helper for a long time until she feels that her family's well-being is threatened by the constant sharing of family resources with an outsider. She sees the madman as a threat to her children because of his habitual borrowing of food. She gives him chapatti for many days, but at some point she develops donor fatigue and decides to solve the problem decisively by killing the madman. She therefore turns to be his opponent in order to safe-guard the interests of her children. Unfortunately for her, in a cruel ironic twist, the poisoned chapatti which were meant for the madman end up being eaten by her own children leading to the calamitous death of all of them. As observed earlier, when a character plays both the roles of helper and opponent then he or she is a traitor which is what the shopkeeper turns out to be, with catastrophic results for herself.

In this narrative, justice is meted out in a fast and harsh manner which is reminiscent of *The Story of the Mother and her Ten Children*. The two narratives indicate the extents to which parents may go in an attempt to protect children and in the process end up causing harm to the

ry children they are trying to protect. The boy who narrated this narrative gave it a brief interpretation which indicated his perception of displacement. According to him, the narrative reaches against being bad to “outside people”. He emphasized that if “outside people” beg for something, the owners should give. Another child in the audience added that we should not treat as enemies the people who come to beg because they are hungry. According to this child, such people are sent by God and we should respect them and treat them well.

The inside/outside dichotomy as a frame used by refugee children is quite significant to this study. Clearly the refugee children identified with the madman whom they labeled the ‘outside’ person. The children saw themselves in the place of this outside person because of their status as displaced people. Like the madman who begs for chapatti daily, they too are forced to rely, for their survival, on the Government of Kenya, UNHCR, the host community and the other players in the refugee regime. This narrative may be read as a metaphor of the relationship between displaced people and host communities. Co-existence between the two may lead to problems over the sharing of resources and this may lead to further conflict. In the case of Kenya, there have been conflicts especially between encamped refugees and host communities. Many refugee children who participated in the focus groups narrated about such conflicts between the refugees in Kakuma and members of the Turkana community.

The narrator of the above narrative clearly indicates through the details he includes that his sympathy is with the madman. An example of this is the fact that he clearly states that the madman used to share chapatti with the shopkeeper woman’s children everyday. We also note that according to the narrator, the madman did not know that the chapatti was poisoned and so he gives it to the children out of generosity and a good heart. Through these details, the narrative establishes an internal logic that exonerates the madman from wrong even though he is the one

he actually hands the poisoned chapatti to the children. The narrative asserts the truth of Habira's statement that "[...] the artist shapes the philosophy of the narrative, determines what people are going to feel and generally directs the sympathy of the audience (1997, 34).

The second Kakuma narrative that is used to illustrate this theme is *Hare and Leopard*

Hare and Leopard by Margaret (13, F, Rwanda) Recorded in Kakuma

Once upon a time, there was two animals: Hare and Leopard. Leopard has three children, Hare has five children. Then Leopard she feel jealous. She took children of Hare, she put them in bucket. And then she carry it on her head then go to visit her friend, Hyena with Hare. They go when Leopard carry that bucket. When they reach at Hyena's home Hare fear to enter into the house of Hyena. Then leopard he enter. She go tell Hyena she has bring animals.

Hare know that that children in the bucket are her children; she took her children and she put them in a house, then she took the children of Leopard and put them in the bucket. Yes, she exchanged it. Then Hyena took that bucket in the kitchen. She opened that bucket, and she get three children of Leopard, and start smiling. Then she start...she take knife then she cut...she cut...the children of Leopard. Then she cooked lunch.

She say, "Oh, come. Let us eat." Hare refused. She knows if she enters into this house, they will eat her also. Then leopard see the bones. It is bones of her children. She felt like, she felt very cold and went out and say to Hare, "Where are my children?" Hare said she don't know. He start chasing Hare. Hare get a hole, a small hole, he get inside. Then Leopard come and start putting his head, but hole is too small. Hare sit there around three hours. Leopard go and stay in a tree. Hare run quickly and go to bush. That is the end of my story.

Table 4.26: Effect of Parents' Jealousy on Children

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label/code	Image
Hare, Leopard, Hyena	Agents	
Hare has five children. Leopard has three children	Inequality	Potential for conflict
Leopard puts Hare's children in bucket and takes them to Hyena so they can eat them	Betrayal	Conflict
Hare fears to enter Hyena's house	Alertness	

Hare exchanges her children with Leopard's	Ingenuity	
Leopard eats his own children	Reversal/justice	Conflict
Leopard tries to kill Hare	Enmity, violence	Conflict
Hare escapes	Separation	Displacement

Table 4.27: Child Slaughter as an extreme Form of Abuse

axial/selective Coding

Key phenomenon	Leopard steals Hare's children
Causal conditions	He wants to eat them
Context	Leopard is jealous because Hare has more children
Intervening conditions	Leopard wants to entertain Hyena
Action strategies	Hare exchanges his children with Leopard's
Consequences	Leopard unknowingly eats his own children

Table 4.28: Actants

Subject	Leopard
Object	Hare's children (food)
Sender	Leopard's jealousy
Helper	Hare
Opponent	Hare
Receiver	Leopard; Hyena

The subject of this narrative is Leopard and the object is the children of his friend, Hare, whom he plans to eat. The sender is Leopard's jealousy as a result of Hare having more children than him. Hare is initially an unwitting helper in the plan because he agrees to accompany Leopard to go to visit Hyena and have a feast. However, Hare later becomes the opponent due to his alertness and ingenuity which make it possible for him to thwart Leopard's evil plan.

In this narrative we see two friends whose friendship is ruined by the jealousy of one. Leopard is dissatisfied because he has fewer children than his friend, Hare and so devises the cruel plan of cooking and eating Hare's children. The cruelty and callousness of Leopard is seen that he makes Hare to be part of his evil plan. However Hare is alert and therefore realizes that something is wrong before the evil plot fully unfolds; he thus manages to rescue his own children

om death. This story dramatizes retributive justice because in an ironic reversal, it is Leopard who ends up eating his own children. The ironic twist at the end of this narrative is reminiscent of *The Shopkeeper and the Madman* where a plan hatched to hurt another person unexpectedly turns around to hurt the very person who came up with it.

The above narratives present children as important members of family and society. The narrative demonstrates that as parents try to provide for and protect children, conflict with others may arise. Children are also seen as symbols of status as in *Hare and Lepoard* and in such cases the more children one has, the more prestigious he or she appears to be. Ironically, it is also observed from these narratives that having very many children can also cause challenges as in the examples of *The Mother with her Ten Children* and the Monkey who had ten children in *Monkey and Hippo*. In those two narratives it was observed that the big number of children put a significant strain on resources and this resulted in conflict among family members and among neighbours. In such conflicts it is members of the family who were seen to bear the brunt of the consequences of the scarcity of resources and the resultant conflict.

Socio-economic Relationships

The next major thematic category is socio-economic relationships. The two narratives collected in Nairobi which are used to discuss this theme are *Hyena and Man* and *The Story of Cat and Rat*

Hyena and Man by Angeline (13, F, Sudan) Recorded in Nairobi

Once upon a time there is Hyena and Man. They were best friends. They do everything together. They do their work together, they hunting together...they...they walk in the garden together. they take their supper together and then they each goes to sleep in his own house. Now Man has more sheep than hyena. Hyena has only one black goat and man has more goats and

death. This story dramatizes retributive justice because in an ironic reversal, it is the man who ends up eating his own children. The ironic twist at the end of this narrative is reminiscent of *The Shopkeeper and the Madman* where a plan hatched to hurt another person eventually comes around to hurt the very person who came up with it.

The above narratives present children as important members of family and society. The narrative demonstrates that as parents try to provide for and protect children, conflict with others arises. Children are also seen as symbols of status as in *Have and Lapwood* and in such cases the more children one has, the more prestigious he or she appears to be. Inevitably, it is derived from these narratives that having very many children can also cause challenges as in the examples of *The Mother with her Ten Children* and the Monkey who had ten children in *Monkey and Hippo*. In those two narratives it was observed that the big number of children put a significant strain on resources and this resulted in conflict among family members and among neighbours. In such conflicts it is members of the family who were seen to bear the brunt of the consequences of the scarcity of resources and the resultant conflict.

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Hyena and Man by Angeline (13, F. Sudan) Recorded in Nairobi

Once upon a time there is Hyena and Man. They were best friends. They do everything together. They do their work together, they hunting together... they... they walk in the grass together, they take their supper together and then they each goes to sleep in his own house. The man has more sheep than hyena. Hyena has only one black goat and some few more goats and

step. Hyena became jealous of his friend because Hyena likes goats so much. One day Hyena goes to taste one of Man's goat and eats it. Then Hyena told his friend man that he is sick. And man goes to call witchdoctor, the witchdoctor came, but Hyena tells witchdoctor, "I am not sick". And then witchdoctor says, "You will pay me something." Then Hyena says, "which goat?" Then he say, "I want your goat." Then Hyena said, "Foolish witchdoctor, you can't take my goat" Then the witchdoctor and Man killed Hyena. That is the ends of my story. Thank you.

Table 4.29: Betrayal and Deception in Socio-economic Relations

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label/code	Image
Hyena, Man	Agents	
Hyena and Man do everything together	Cooperation	Peace
Hyena, man, best friends, home	Community, friendship	Peace
Goats, sheep, garden	Resources/wealth	Peace/ potential for conflict
Man has more sheep than hyena	Inequitable distribution of resources	Conflict
Hyena has one goat	Inequitable distribution of resources	Conflict
Hyena is jealous	Jealousy	Conflict
Hyena eats one goat and says he is sick	Betrayal and deception	Conflict
Man calls witchdoctor	Remedy	Potential for conflict
Witchdoctor asks for pay	Justice	Potential for conflict
Hyena refuses to pay	Selfishness	Conflict
Witchdoctor and man kill Hyena	Violence, death	Conflict

Table 4.30: Impact of Unequal Socio-economic Partnerships

Axial coding/selective coding

Key Phenomenon	Hyena eats man's goat
Causal conditions	Jealousy

Context	Greed
Intervening conditions	Man having more livestock than Hyena
Action strategies	Man calls witchdoctor; Hyena is asked to pay
Consequences	Hyena's exasperation against Man and witchdoctor's manner of justice; he abuses the witchdoctor as a result. Man and witchdoctor kill Hyena; end of friendship and cooperation.

Table 4.31: Actants

Subject	Hyena
Object	Man's goats (food)
Sender	Hyena's jealousy and desire for wealth
Helper	Friendship between Hyena and Hare
Opponent	Man's alertness; witchdoctor
Receiver	Hyena

The subject of this narrative is Hyena and the object is Man's goats which Hyena wants to eat. The sender is Hyena's jealousy and desire for more wealth. Hyena is the receiver and the role of opponent is played by both Man and witchdoctor. This narrative presents a socio-economic relationship between the two friends Hyena and Man. At the social level they are the best of friends, but we discover that at the economic level they are not getting along well at all because Hyena is jealous of Man due to his many sheep and goats. Wealth and resources as represented by sheep and goats is therefore a source of conflict. Hyena is jealous of his friend because he has a lot of sheep while he has only one goat. The story does not tell us how the wealth came to be so unequally distributed; perhaps it is due to Hyena's laziness and Man's enterprising nature or it is due to an unfair advantage on the part of the Man. Whatever the cause, the consequences are dire; it results in the loss of not only friendship, but also life.

Hyena's behavior and Man's reaction raises the question whether this friendship was genuine right from the start. It is a friendship characterized by jealousy, betrayal and revenge. A question that this narrative raises is why Man is in friendship with Hyena. It looks like the partnership between the two friends is flawed right from the start due to Hyena's predatory nature.

The next narrative is *The Story of Cat and Rat*.

The Story of Cat and Rat by Marie Airis Kuitonda (13, F, Rwanda) Collected in Nairobi

Once upon a time, there was a cat and a rat. The two were so big friends. Cat go to look for food and...and Rat look after house. Cat go to the forest and one day she found a big hen and she catch that hen and come home and eat that hen alone. Yes, and she don't give Rat. Another day Cat went again to the forest to look for food. She saw another bigger hen. She caught her and took that hen to the house. After the hen was taken home, Rat ate it alone although it did not belong to him. When Cat came, she saw his hen...was eaten. So Cat say, "From this time we are enemies. If I catch you I will eat you. And that is how Cat and Rat became enemies and they are enemies up to now."

Table 4.32: Socio-Economic Impact of Poor Division of Labour

Open Coding

Part/unit	Label/code	Image
Cat, Rat, big friends	Friendship/family	Peace
Cat goes to look for food Rat looks after house	Division of labour	Peace
Forest	Habitat, environment	Peace
Big hen	Object/ a lot of food	Peace, potential for conflict
Cat catches hen	Object/hen/ food	Peace, potential for conflict
Cat eats hen alone	Selfishness	Conflict
Cat catches another big hen	Object/food	Peace
Rat eats the second hen	Revenge/ justice	Revenge/ conflict
Cat gets angry	Ruined friendship	Conflict

two become enemies	Ruined friendship	Conflict, Displacement
"From now if I catch you I will eat you"	Violence/ potential death	Conflict

Table 4.33: Inequitable Distribution of Resources

Axial coding/ Selective

Key Phenomenon	-Cat catches hen and eats alone
Causal condition	Cat's selfishness
Context	Division of labour which made Rat to stay home while Cat went hunting
Intervening condition	Cat leaving behind his food in custody of rat even after previously failing to share his meal with him.
Action strategies	Rat eats up cat's hen in his absence (revenge)
Consequences	Cat vowing to eat Rat whenever he shall find him Enmity between Cat and the Rat

Table 4.34: Actants

Subject	Cat	Rat
Object	Hen (food)	Hen (food)
Sender	Hunger/ need for sustenance	Hunger/ need for sustenance
Helper	-----	Rat
Opponent	Rat	Cat
Receiver	Cat	Rat

Cat and Rat are both the subjects in this narrative and they are both after the object of food. Hunger is the sender, but later revenge becomes the sender in the case of Rat. Both Rat and Cat are opponents to each other because they both thwart each other's chances of getting food. In this narrative we see two friends whose friendship is ruined by unequal socio-economic partnerships. They decide that Cat will go out to hunt for food while Rat is to stay behind

looking after the house. When Cat returns with the catch, he does not share with his friend, but eats everything alone. This is a breach of contract because they had agreed on shared responsibilities. Although Rat does not say anything to protest this breach of contract, the injustice does not go unnoticed; he binds his time until an appropriate moment and strikes back in revenge. When Cat brings home more bounty in the form of a bigger hen, Rat eats it alone while Cat is out. This story posits two problems. The first is the unclear division of labour and benefits between the two partners. Perhaps Cat feels that since he is the one bringing in the food, then he has the right to eat alone. Cat does not seem to value the work of looking after the house which is done by Rat. It may be argued that according to this narrative, domestic responsibilities are not as highly valued as outside work. The other problem that is posed by this narrative is the lack of negotiation skills between the two friends. Rat certainly felt it was unjust for Cat to eat alone, but he never voiced his displeasure. Arguably, if he had brought the matter up, there would have been a solution and the conflict that follows may have been avoided.

The narratives from Kakuma used in the discussion of the theme of socio-economic relations are *Hen and Bat* and *The Story of Barmurial*

Hen and Bat by Susan Paul (15, F Sudan) Recorded in Kakuma.

Once upon a time, Hen and Bat were great friends. One day Bat invited Hen to her party. At the party, Bat took her chick and slaughtered it for Hen, but Hen was not aware that he had eaten a chick of Bat. When the party ended, Bat escorted Hen to her home. Another day Hen invited Bat to come to her home so that they could celebrate. When they were there, Hen went and bought meat of a cow and came and cooked it. When Bat saw it he was very angry. Because she wanted to eat a chick of Hen because she had also slaughtered her own. So they started quarrelling and said they will go to God and the case will be judged there. So they flew to the sky and went there. God said, "What is your problem Bat?"

Bat said, "I slaughtered my chick to Hen and when I went to her house, he didn't slaughter for me."

God said, "I have listened to your case. So Hen, what's your case?"

Hen said, "I was not aware that Bat had slaughtered her chick for me, so I went and bought meat for a cow but when I brought the food to the table she refused to eat it."

God said to Bat, "You are the one who is guilty. From today do not quarrel again. And you will not live together again". Hen and Bat quarreled and came back to earth. From that day, Bat

said, "You God, you are not a good judge. I will not see you again until the end of my life." But

Hen said, "God I thank you for judging our case, and from this day when I drink water, I'll thank you."

That is why you see Bat is not looking at the sky her head is always down. And that is why when Hen is drinking water, he is always looking at the sky. That is the end of my story.

Table 4.35: Vulnerability of Children in Adult's Socio-economic Relations

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label/code	Image
Hen, Bat	Agents	
They were great friends	Friendship	Peace
Party	Celebration	Peace
Chick	Child	Potential for conflict
Bat slaughtered her chick for Hen	Violation of child, folly	Potential for conflict
Hen serves cow meat	Wisdom	Potential for conflict
Bat got very angry	Strain in friendship	conflict
God	Judge, justice	Conflict transformation
God declares Bat guilty	Verdict, justice	Potential for conflict
God orders the two never to be together again	Separation	Displacement
Bat says that God is not a good judge and swears never to see him again	Bitterness	Conflict
Hen declares God a good judge and promises to always look at him and thank him	Satisfaction	Peace

Table 4.36: The Sacrifice of the Weak in Socio-economic Relations

Axial/ Selective Coding

Phenomenon	Bat slaughters his chick for Hen
Causal conditions	He wants to entertain her
Context	The two are great friends
Intervening conditions	Bat wants them to celebrate together.
Action strategies	Bat decides they should take the case before God after Hen refuses to slaughter her chick
Consequences	God declares Bat guilty; God orders them to separate; Bat declares enmity with God; Bat declares friendship with God

Table 4.37: Actants

Subject	Bat	Hen
Object	Bat's chick, Hen's chick	Beef
Sender	To entertain and impress her friend, Hen	To celebrate with her friend, Bat
Helper	Bat's foolishness; Hen's innocence	Hen's sensitivity; God
Opponent	Hen; God	Bat
Receiver	Bat, Hen	Hen

The narrative deals with relations at the family and societal levels. Hen and Bat are great friends and in the spirit of this friendship, Bat decides to entertain Hen to a feast in her house. What Hen does not know is that the main delicacy in the menu is Bat's chick. Naturally, Bat expects a reciprocation of her generosity by a celebration of equal caliber where he expects Hen to slaughter her chick for him. To her chagrin, Hen entertains her with beef. The matter between them is so grave that Bat feels only God can resolve it. This narrative raises pertinent social issues. One key issue is the relationship between parents and children. Here we see the ultimate violation of the child's rights by a parent in that the parent slaughters her own child for the flippant reason of entertaining a friend. This story may be read as a metaphor of socio-economic/political relationships where the slaughtered chick may be seen to represent the weak- especially the economically poor who are sacrificed by the economically or politically powerful either for

own amusement or for purposes of gaining more power and control. This narrative however has a twist that makes a statement in favour of the weak and defenseless. This is seen in that the judgment given by God is decisively against Bat, the violator of the rights of the weak and helpless.

The last narrative that will be discussed is entitled *Barmuriat*.

Barmuriat by Salim Bosco (16, M, Burundi) Recorded in Kakuma

There was once a guy called Barmuriat. Barmuriat he was a lazy guy...he was a lazy person. So one day he saw a very beautiful girl, Naquin. So Barmuriat wanted to marry that girl. The girl told Barmuriat that she cannot marry a man who is not hard working. And not having more than ten thousand cattle. So Barmuriat went at home and sat and thought how he could get Naquin, the most beautiful girl in the village. So he saw there were a lot of cattle where cattle usually go to take water. He also saw the neighboring village had a lot of cattle. So he decided to plan how to steal the cattle. So he went to the iron smith he made very big shoes, big like for the giant and big spears. So the following morning he woke up and told his fellow brother. he was going for a journey. A journey which could take 40 days.

So Barmuriat went and hid in the nearby forest, near the neighboring village. So at night, he attacked and stole all the cattle in the village. The king woke up and called the warriors to follow the trail of those thieves. Others said they were ten thieves, others said it was just one, others said they were giants, when the warriors were following. They were brave warriors. They followed, they followed. Where Barmuriat camped and slept, he usually beat the grass to lay the force so they could think it was a giant who slept there. So he left many sandals...big sandals so it could look like big giants were sleeping there. When the warriors arrived at that place, they saw the big sandals. Their commander told them, 'even if it was a giant, we have to follow him.' But other warriors they were frightened, they said, 'How can we defeat a big giant. May be it could be five giants or ten giants. So we are going back; we don't want to die in the forest. We don't want to be killed by these giants.'

So other five brave warriors continued following and then Barmuriat camped again. After camping in that bush he left five spears, and he left three pairs of sandals, there were 3 sandals, big ones. So that morning, the other 5 warriors arrived there. They saw those spears and sandals.

They said, "There must be 5 giants. Because there we have found a pair of sandals and here we have found 3 sandals, meaning there are 4 and there must be another one. So it must be 5 giants. So we are not going to be killed by giants. We are going to the king and say that they were giants."

So the warriors arrived in the village and they told the king that the people who stole the cattle were giants, and they don't want to be killed by the giants. Barmuriat went away with the cattle. Reaching the village in the morning. People were surprised to see in his compound were a herd of cattle just lying there. And then after a few seconds, Naquin, the beautiful girl in the village arrived and then she told him, 'Am going to marry you. You see now I have become rich.'

But during the process, the king of the neighboring community was asking, investigating if there was anybody who saw any strange cows. So people said. 'We see Barmuriat with many cows. How could he get so many cows within a day?'

So the neighboring village became advised and asked Barmuriat, "Where did you get these cows?"

And then they arrested him. And when they arrested him he confessed that he had stolen the cattle from the neighboring village, and then they took the cattle. And then they were having peace between those two communities. And then Barmuriat was told that there's no person who can become rich in one second and then Barmuriat said I wish I knew. And that is the end of the story.

Table 4.38: Deception and the Acquisition of Wealth

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label/code	Image
Barmuriat,	Agent	
Naquin, the beautiful girl	Prize	
Barmuriat wanted to marry the beautiful girl		Peace
Naquin refuses to marry a man without a 10.000 cattle	Test	Potential for conflict
He decided to steal cattle	False solution	Conflict
He pretends to be a giant	Trick, strategy	
He stole all the cattle in the neighboring village	False victory	Conflict
The warriors followed and followed	Threat	Conflict
Barmuriat beat the grass and left big sandals outside	Trick	
The warriors go back and tell the king the cattle	Success of trick	

... were stolen by giants		
Barmuriat goes away with all the cattle	False victory	Conflict
Naquin agrees to marry him	Gets the prize, false victory	False peace
People question Barmuriat's wealth	Doubt	Potential for conflict
He confesses that he stole	Acceptance of wrong doing	Peace
He returns the cows	Restitution	Peace
No person can become rich in one day	Need for hard work	Peace
Barmuriat said "I wish I knew"	Realization and regret	Potential for peace

Table 4.39: Deception as a Shaky Socio-economic Foundation

Axial/ selective coding

Phenomenon	Naquin refuses to marry Barmuriat
Causal conditions	Barmuriat is lazy and owns nothing
Context	Social expectations, Naquin is realistic- she wants someone who will be able to take care of the family.
Action strategies	Barmuriat pretends to be a giant and steals a lot cattle from the neighbouring villagr.
Consequences	Naquin agrees to marry him. Stolen cattle are recovered and he is left destitute again. He probably loses Naquin. He realizes his folly.

Table 4.40: Actants

Subject	Barmuriat	Naquin
Object	Naquin, the most beautiful girl in the village	To get married to a hard working and rich man
Sender	Social expectations, need for a wife	Social expectations; need to become rich
Helper	Barmuriat's ingenuity; warriors' fear	Narquin's forthrightness; Barmuriat's ingenuity; warriors' fear
Opponent	Impracticability of Barmuriat's plan; injustice of his get- rich plan; social expectations	Impracticability of Barmuriat's plan; injustice of his get- rich plan; social expectaions
Receiver	-----	-----

As the subject, Barmuriat has the desire to marry the beautiful Naquin, the object of his quest. The warriors' gullibility and his own ingenuity act as his helper, enabling him to make away with all the cattle from the neighbouring village. His opponent is the socially unacceptable way of acquiring wealth, which eventually leads him to being as poor as he was at the beginning.

This narrative reads like a trickster narrative. Like the Hare in traditional trickster narratives, Barmuriat refuses to follow conventional and socially acceptable ways of fulfilling his needs. Notably, however, this narrative does not celebrate the exploits of the trickster as is normally the case with traditional trickster narratives where the trickster is always pitted against a bigger, stronger but less intelligent animal. While such narratives normally celebrate the intelligence and creativity of the trickster by celebrating his victory, *The Story of Barmuriat* reverses this traditional ending. The ending given to the narrative is here interpreted as the narratives adaptation to the refugee situation. The exploits of Barmuriat, the trickster, are quite admirable because he is able to steal all the cattle of an entire village and then trick the whole army in order to make away with the loot. Despite this, the narrative does not hold him up for admiration. Commenting on the narrative, the narrator said that what Barmuriat does is taboo. According to the narrator, Barmuriat should have worked hard for example in farming or business in order to get wealth. The narrator said that the narrative can teach members of the Kenyan communities who raid each others' cattle to stop doing it because this kind of raiding leads to conflict between villages and also to death.

The Story of Barmuriat focuses on socio-economic relationships. The main protagonist in the narrative wants to marry the village beauty queen without fulfilling the required societal obligations. Being a lazy man, Barmuriat decides to get the object of his desire through trickery but just when he is beginning to savour his success, his plan collapses and all the cattle he had

are recovered. Although Barmuriat ends up as poor as he was in the beginning and we can therefore conclude that he loses the girl as well, he undergoes character growth because he comes to the realization that no one can become rich overnight. Although the narrative does not state what happens to Barmuriat after this realization, it can logically be inferred that he is likely to abandon his laziness and embrace hard work. From this narrative we can argue that wealth which is acquired unjustly leads to social disruption.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be pointed out that "hunger" is a key motivation for action as was observed in the fact that in most of the narratives, it played the role of sender. Hunger is read as a metaphor for the need for daily sustenance and the desire for the control of resources. This emphasizes the place of food in socio-economic and political interactions. The centrality of food sounds disturbingly close to what in Kenyan and African politics is derogatorily referred to as "the politics of the stomach" which refers to the making of decisions and policies by leaders in order to ensure direct material benefits to them and their clique. It should be noted, however, that as discussed here, hunger refers to the genuine motivation of subjects to pursue daily sustenance for a livelihood. It was however noted from the narratives that this genuine pursuit is often corrupted by the entry of greed into the equation and once this happens then the quest is

transformed into "politics of the stomach" where one friend undercuts and betrays the other in order to get more than his/her fair share of the food or any other resource.

Scarcity of resources was seen to lead to conflict as a result of competition, hoarding and territorialization. Clearly, the scarcity of resources leads to problems of territorial boundaries whereby the powerful claim ownership of areas that are rich in resources of different kinds while pushing the less powerful to peripheral positions. Territory control leads to the displacement of the weak, who end up occupying unproductive areas. While scarcity emerges as a major cause of conflict, it is clear from the narratives that even in situations where the resources are adequate, conflict can still be driven by other factors, chief of which is inequitable distribution, whose main causes are selfishness and greed. Inequitable distribution is a form of injustice which leads to disgruntlement and eventually to conflict. Scarcity or lack of resources seems to have a direct detrimental impact on children. Two narratives that bring out this clearly are *The Story of the Mother with Ten Children* and *The Shopkeeper and the Madman*. The natural instinct for self-preservation during threat lead the two mothers in these narratives to take actions that hit at the very core of the family they are trying to preserve.

Although as observed in this chapter a variety of themes are dealt with in the narratives of refugee children including food, resources, friendship, greed, jealousy, betrayal, deception, guilt, guiltibility, revenge and justice among others, the human situations represented by the above themes are mainly influenced by food and resource distribution. Food and resource distribution are therefore central themes that run through all the narratives. In the children's personal narratives and focus group discussions, lack of enough and nutritious food was expressed as one of the major challenges that they face. The presence of food and resources as key drivers of the central dramatic conflict is a defining characteristic of refugee children's narratives. This

...ates not only how the narrative as a form of artistic expression reflects the social economic
...tions of the refugee children as vulnerable and always uncertain of their daily sustenance,
...also how life circumstances influence the narrative as a form of artistic expression. Although
...number of the narratives told by the children are derived from traditional narratives that are
...mon in many African communities, there was something unique about the choice of
...natives. It is thus significant that out of the whole repertoire of traditional narratives, most
...ren chose to tell narratives whose main conflict was based on food. This reality as observed
...the field is in line with a statement made by Kabira that "[...] every artist reflects, in one way
...another, the values, hopes and aspirations of [...] a people" (1997, 34). In the case of the
...ree children, it can be argued that the choice of their narratives reflects the issues they
...ngle with, chief of which are challenges in meeting their need for food and safety.

The next chapter will focus specifically on the images of peace, conflict and displacement
...the narratives of refugee children. The images have already been identified in the current
...pter and so in the next chapter they will be analyzed and interpreted. The images will be
...ied as a form of representation of the reality of the refugee children's lives and their
...ception of peace, conflict and displacement. They will therefore be interpreted to show what
...ey reveal about this reality and also how the narrative genre has adapted to the refugee
...ren's situation.

CHAPTER FIVE

PEACE AND CONFLICT: THE AMBIVALENCE OF DISPLACEMENT

In the previous chapter, key themes in refugee children's narratives were identified and most recurrent themes discussed. The discussion focused on *food/resource management and distribution, the relationship between children and adults, and social economic relationships*. The current chapter focuses on the images of peace, conflict and displacement in the narratives. The main purpose of the chapter is to give an analysis of these images as they appear in selected narratives in order to elucidate the children's perception of peace, conflict and displacement as key phenomena in their experience as refugees.

From the analysis presented in Chapter Three, the conclusion was arrived at that refugee children do not understand the reality of their situation from an abstract theoretical perspective. Rather, they perceive their situation from the point of view of how they are directly affected by the circumstances of their lives. The underlying principle in the identification of images of peace, conflict and displacement in this study is based on Paulo Freire's view that *thematics exist in people and their relationships to the world and in reference to concrete facts (87)*. In this regard, refugee children are seen as people existing within specific spatio-temporal circumstances which act upon them and upon which they act. Consequently, their perception of peace, conflict and displacement is influenced by the real life conditions present in their specific spatio-temporal setting. As observed from the responses in the focus groups, most of the children did not express a clear understanding of the causes and nature of conflicts in their home countries. From their responses it was concluded that their perception of peace, conflict and displacement is expressed in terms of practical day to day experiences out of which the images are inferred.

As pointed out in chapter three, the following emerged as the images of peace as perceived by refugee children: enough food; absence of war; absence of quarrels/ fights/ killing; friendship and living in Kenya. Images of conflict are war/killing/fights; gun; forced placement/separation from loved ones; disagreement/argument/quarrels; destruction of friendship and running away. The positive images of displacement are provision of basic needs (food, clothing and shelter); good education; exposure; opportunity to learn many languages and opportunity for international interactions. It should be noted that both the children and adults interviewed presented the positive aspects of displacement in relation to the conflicts and attendant problems in the children's home countries. Seen in the light of the conflict, danger and chaos that they had fled from, living in Kenya (displacement) was seen to provide needed refuge despite the challenges it posed. The negative images of displacement that emerged are lack of enough/nutritious food; lack of income/high cost of living; sadness due to loss of loved ones; bandit attacks; police harassment and harsh climate. In this chapter, the most recurrent images are discussed in detail, beginning with the images of peace and conflict and later the images of displacement.

This chapter applies the same methodological procedure as that used in Chapter Four which involves open coding at which stage images in the narratives are identified. This is followed by axial/selective coding then the identification of actants and discussion of the images.

Images of Peace and Conflict

Images of peace and conflict are discussed together because from the analysis of children's focus group responses and the narratives, it emerged that there was a converse relationship between the images of peace and conflict. Three key images of peace and conflict are discussed in detail

four narratives for illustration (two from Nairobi and two from Kakuma). The images are friendship, food and quarrels.

Friendship as an Image of Peace and its Destruction as an Image of Conflict

From the refugee children's responses, living together as friends was identified as a key image of peace. As an image of peace, friendship is a relationship characterized by trust, security, co-operation, understanding, sharing and support among other qualities that make for wholesome living. When friendship is sound, the fictional characters are at peace. Most of the narratives present a situation where characters begin as friends, but the friendship does not survive the onslaught of dispute over resources as presented in the Enunciation-spectacle presented in Chapter Four. The centrality of friendship as an image of peace is demonstrated by the fact that many of the fictional narratives have main characters who are good friends at the beginning of the dramatic action. Some of the friendship phrases used in the narratives include the following: "They were like brother and sister" (*Hare and Hyena*), "was so big friends" (*Cat and Rat*), "...were very best friends" (*Hyena and Man*), "The hawk was camel's friend" (*Camel and Hawk*), "They were friends. They used to live well together, playing together" (*Lion and Hare*), "they were very good friends" (*Hare and Monkey*), "they were great friends" (*Hen and Bat*) and "they were friends" (*Hyena and Hen*).

The narratives discussed below demonstrate friendship as an image of peace and conversely its destruction as an image of conflict.

Hare and Hyena I by Lau Chantal (11, F, DR Congo) Recorded in Nairobi

My story is about Hare and Hyena. They used to stay together like a brother and a sister. Hyena had three children, and Hare too had three children.

One time there was famine in their land. There was no food for them to feed their children. Hyena told Hare, "If we just stay this way, our children will die of hunger. We need to go to distant lands to look for food."

Hyena suggested, "Hare, you go first, as I remain behind looking after the children. then see if you can be lucky to get us some food." So Hare left and later arrived in the far away land. Hyena remained at home with Hare's children. She noticed that the famine had become worse and more. She gave her own children platefuls of food, and gave Hare's children nothing. When Hare came back, she noticed Hyena's children were looking healthy, and were playing out in the fields. She asked Hyena's children, "Where are my children?"

"We don't know," they replied.

"And where is your mother?" she asked again.

"We don't know."

The children went on playing cheerfully. So she went to her place. She found her own children looking weak and tired. They were very hungry. When Hyena heard that Hare had come back, she came over to see her. Hare told her, "You see up there, in the sky? I am from up there. There is plenty of meat. I ate but I lacked a container to carry some in."

When Hyena heard that, she salivated. Hare said, "But now it's your turn to go get us some food." Hyena planned the journey. The day arrived. Hare worked a plan with Crow. She told Crow, "When you get up there, where Hyena will not even be seeing the earth, then you let go of her." Hyena called her children and asked them to carry pots. She held onto Crow's tail feathers, and the first child held on to her tail and the rest of the children held on to each other's tails in a line. They flew up to the sky. They went singing, 'We are going to eat meat, we are going to eat meat!' So when they finally arrived up there, Crow plucked off the feathers that Hyena was holding on to. Hyena and her children all came tumbling down. 'punglu!' That is why to this day the Hyena limps.

Table 5.1: Impact of Scarcity of Resources on Friendship

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label	Image
Hyena; Hare	Agents	
They were like brother and sister	Close friendship	Peace
Each had 3 children	Family	Peace

Famine, no food	Problem	Potential for conflict
Hare goes to another country to look for food	Strategy/division of labour, cooperation; separation	Peace; displacement potential for conflict
Hyena left at home with the children	Strategy/division of labour, Cooperation	Peace/ potential for conflict
Hyena feeds her children only	Selfishness	Conflict
Hyena children's children become healthy	Betrayal of friendship	Conflict
Hare's children become weak	Betrayal of friendship	Conflict
Hare returns and finds children weak and hungry	Moment of discovery	Potential for conflict
Hyena salivates	Gluttony	Potential for conflict
Hare tells Hyena there is plenty of meat in the sky	Strategy/plan for revenge	Potential for conflict
Hare makes plan with Crow	Helper/strategy	Conflict
Hyena go of Hyena from the sky	Plan	Conflict
Hare are going to eat meat	Hyena's gullibility	Potential for conflict
Crow plucked one of her feathers	Execution of plan/ revenge	Conflict
Hyena came tumbling down	/death Consequences of selfishness	Conflict

Table 5.2: Friendship as Peace/Conflict

Axial / selective Coding

Phenomenon	Hare goes to another country to look for food
Causal conditions	Need for food / sustenance for his children and those of his friend Hyena
Context	Severe famine in the land
Intervening conditions	Mutual decision that he should go while Hyena remains at home to look after the children
Action strategies	Hyena feeds her children only Hare comes back and finds his children emaciated Makes plan with Crow to avenge herself against Hyena Tells Hawk to drop Hyena from high in the sky The plan is carried out
Consequences	Hyena and children fall and break legs Hyena limps to this day End of friendship and separation (displacement)

Table 5.3: Actants

Subject	Hyena	Hare
Object	Food	Food; revenge
Sender	Hyena; need to feed children	Hunger; need to feed children; Hyena

Receiver	-----	-----
Helper	Hare	Crow; Hyena's gluttony
Opponent	Hyena's selfishness and foolishness	Hyena

Before the famine, Hare and Hyena are great friends. According to the narrative, they lived together "like a brother and a sister". This not only shows the depth of their friendship, but also indicates the narrator's value of family as indicated by the reference to brotherhood and sisterhood. Family and friendship are therefore images of peace. For as long as the friendship and the family are intact, a peaceful life is assured. Conversely, a disruption of family threatens peaceful life as is indicated by the departure of Mother Hare, which leaves her children vulnerable. At this point selfishness enters the relationship as indicated by Hyena refusing to honour her commitment to look after the children of Hare during their mother's absence. The consequences of Hyena's selfishness point to the importance of trust, commitment and loyalty as characteristics of true friendship. The lack of these qualities leads to a break of friendship and a disruption of emotional and social life, resulting in conflict.

This narrative is an adaptation of an African traditional oral narrative. It incorporates new elements which make it unique to the refugee children's situation. In the traditional version of this narrative, Hyena is invited to a party and he decides to have his anus sowed up so that he would never pass out the sweetness of the food. After a few hours he is in real trouble and fears that his stomach might burst. In desperation he goes to Crow and pleads with him to open up his anus. As soon as it is open, all the mess gushes out, to Hyena's great relief and he walks away, leaving Crow buried in a mountain of shit. A few days later, the shit is washed away by heavy rain and Crow is able to leave. Crow revenges by deceiving Hyena and dropping him from the sky.

Although both versions of the narrative end in a similar way, the motivating conflicts are different. The refugee narrative has elements that reflect the refugee children's situation. Chief among which is the lack of food (famine) as the element that sparks off the dramatic action and causes the main conflict in the plot. In the traditional version, the structuring motif is the conflict between Hyena and Crow which is caused by Hyena's greed and selfishness. Another significant element is the use of the friendship between Hare and Hyena as the backdrop against which the events unfold. In the narrative told by the refugee child, the friendship between the two is at stake and is the one major casualty of Hyena's betrayal. This is fairly different from the traditional motif which does not underscore the elements of friendship and betrayal. The presence of vulnerable children is yet another element introduced in this narrative which makes it reflect the place of refugee children. As observed earlier, a significant number of the refugee children who participated in this study were living either with a single parent or without parents. The narrative reflects the vulnerability of children when they are deprived of the protection of their parents as a result of conflict and displacement.

The breaking of the friendship between Hare and Hyena is an image of conflict because it is the culmination of the betrayal and selfishness of Hyena. Conflict as the pursuit of incompatible goals, is observed in this narrative since Hare finds herself in conflict with Hyena because she (Hare) is pursuing the incompatible goals of caring for her children and going far from home to look for food at the same time. To try and reconcile these two diametrically opposed goals the two friends decide to use division of labour as a remedy, on the basis of which they agree that Hare goes to look for food while Hyena remains at home looking after the children. This appears to be a sound and practical arrangement, but underlying the surface, the incompatibility of goals still affects the relationship and results in conflict. Hyena wants Hare to

go and look for food and yet does not want to undertake the responsibility of caring for her children in her absence. Motivated by selfishness, Hyena finds a way of feeding her own children while leaving those of Hare to go hungry.

There is a significant point to be noted in the narrative at this point: the setting of the narrative is in a time of famine and the narrator started by emphasizing that there was no food anywhere, she later says that once Mother Hare is gone, Mother Hyena gives her own children platefuls of food while she gives nothing to Hare's children. One may wonder where Hyena gets food to give her children and yet there is no food anywhere. There could be two possible explanations to this contradiction. The first is that perhaps Hyena was selfishly hiding the food all along, which would underscore her selfishness; while the second could be that the narrator unconsciously lays emphasis on Hyena's selfishness and betrayal of friendship as opposed to the problem of lack of food. Since the narrative does not explain this, we may not be conclusive in the interpretation, but one element that remains key is that selfishness and betrayal are at the centre of the break of the friendship and the subsequent conflict and displacement.

Friendship as an image of peace is a relationship based on cooperation and sacrifice. Conversely the destruction of friendship by selfishness and malice is an image of conflict. This is seen in the narrative *Camel and Hawk* which is discussed next.

Camel and Hawk by Martha (F, 14 Sudan). Recorded in Nairobi

Long time ago there was a camel and a hawk. Hawk was Camel's friend. Hawk asked camel to carry him and take him to a place where he could eat some sugarcane. So Hawk said, "I am your friend, I would like you to carry me across the river."

Camel put hawk on his back and they started across the river. They made it across and ate sugarcane. When Hawk was full, he began to shout in a loud voice that he was going to cause

Camel some trouble. Camel started crying. The owner of the cane farm heard Hawk and he said, "That hawk must be destroying my crops. Let me go out there and deal with him." So he went out to the place where sobs were coming from and found out that it was Camel. Hawk lay down and pretended to be dead.

The farm owner came up to Camel and asked him who it was who had been making noise. Camel said it was Hawk. The farmer said, "But he is already dead. Who else could it be?" He concluded it must have been Camel who was destroying his sugarcane, so he gave him a beating, until Camel got a hump on his back. The farmer then went back to his home. Then Hawk woke and told Camel that they should go back to the other side, yet there was a river in between. Camel accepted and asked Hawk to climb onto his back. When they got to the middle of the river, Camel said, "You caused me trouble, so it is my turn to also cause you some trouble."

Hawk tried to explain to Camel that he was his friend, and tried persuading him not to cause him trouble. Then Camel began to sink Hawk. Hawk began shouting in fear because he never knew how to swim. Then he sank and died and Camel came out. That's the end of my story.

Table 5.4: Betrayal and Deception in Friendship

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label	Image
Camel, Hawk	Agents	
Friends	Good relationship friendship	Peace
Sugarcane	Food	Potential for conflict
River	Obstacle	Potential for conflict
Hawk wanted Camel to carry him across the river	Helper; cooperation	Peace
Camel carried Hawk	Helper. cooperation	Peace
I will cause trouble for you	Betrayal of trust	Conflict
Hawk pretended to be dead	Deception ; selfishness; trickery	Potential for conflict
Camel beaten until he got a hump	Injustice; violence	Conflict
It is my turn to cause you trouble	Revenge; Retributive justice	Conflict

Camel drowned Hawk	Death/ revenge/violence	Conflict
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Table 5.5: Friendship as Peace/Conflict

Axial/ Selective Coding

Phenomenon	Hawk asks his friend Camel to carry him across river
Causal conditions	Hawk wants to go and eat sugarcane
Context	Hawk is not able to cross river on his own because he cant swim
Intervening conditions	The two are good friends
Action strategies	They cross the river; eat sugar cane; Hawk makes trouble for Camel Hawk pretends to be dead
Consequences	Farm owner comes; Camel is beaten; Camel drowns Hawk in revenge

Table 5.6: Actants

Subject	Hawk
Object	Sugarcane (food)
Sender	Hunger/ desire to eat sugarcane
Helper	Camel
Opponent	Farm owner
Receiver	Camel; Hawk

In the above narrative, we see Hawk requesting his friend Camel to help him cross the river in order to go and eat sugarcane. This models a good friendship where one friend compensates for the weaknesses of the other. This kind of friendship which is based on cooperation and sacrifice is an image of peace. But when Hawk eats his fill of sugarcane, he displays behavior that is counter to what has ensured their peaceful co-existence so far.

Hawk's betrayal brings their friendship to an end and results in a conflict that ends violently with Hawk paying with his life. Hawk's treachery marks the end of the friendship with Camel, demonstrating that, the destruction of friendship is an image of conflict. True friendship which ensures peace is one in which each party looks out for the interests of the other. If on the

other hand one party only looks out for one's own interests, then the relationship is no longer friendship but manipulation and this creates conflict.

Power struggle between friends can convert a peaceful relationship to a conflictive one. Struggle for power leads not only to the destruction of friendship, but in extreme cases could lead to death. The two narratives discussed below demonstrate this: *Hare and Elephant I* and *Hyena and Hen*.

Hare and Elephant I by Kuli Fortune (M, 15- Congo) Recorded in Kakuma.

A long time ago there lived Hare and Elephant. Hare and Elephant decided to be friends. They agreed, and they did so. Hare had a mother, so did Elephant. So Hare went to Elephant and told him, "Now we have our mothers, but this other friend of mine doesn't have a mother. So I suggest that we both kill our mothers so that we can all be the same."

He asked Elephant to kill his mother then bring her blood. The tricky Hare went and took some bricks and crushed them and added some water. It looked like blood. But Elephant went and actually killed his mother. He then took the blood and took it to Hare. It was time for everyone now to show their mother's blood. Elephant said, "Here is my mother's blood."

Hare said, "and my mother's blood is here." Elephant just took it to be real blood.

Time passed, then one day they quarreled and Hare told Elephant, "No wonder the other day I fooled you and you killed your own mother; I didn't kill my mother. She is very much alive. I just crushed some bricks and mixed with water, and you believed it was blood, but it wasn't. But you actually killed your mother. That's why I am better than you in everything. You are a grown up yet you don't have brains."

When elephant heard that he vowed, "From this day, I am no longer friends with you. You fooled me into killing my mother."

One day Elephant followed Hare until the place where he lived with his mother. Then one day he saw Hare leave, that's when he went in. Hare always had a way of calling out to his mother when he got home so she would come out to open up and let him in. Elephant tried calling in a similar voice, but Hare's mother realized that wasn't her son, she asked, "Who are you?" That's when Elephant went somewhere and prayed that his voice may become like Hare's.

Later he went up to Hare's home and called out to Hare's mother, who opened, thinking that was her own son. When she opened up, Elephant caught her and killed her. Then he left.

When Hare came back, he found his mother dead. Later when they met with Elephant, Elephant told him, "So you thought you were the clever one. So I have showed you that even me I am clever." They quarreled and up to this day the two are no longer friends. That's the end of my story.

Table 5.7: Power Contests in Friendship

Open coding

Unit/part	Label/code	Image
Hare, Elephant	Agents	
Friends	Good relationship	Peace
Crush bricks	Trick	Potential for conflict
I suggest we kill our mothers So we can be the same	Deception	Conflict
Elephant killed his mother	Gullibility	Potential for conflict
I fooled you into killing your mother	Gloating/ gullibility	Conflict
Elephant prayed for his voice to become like Hare's	Deception	Conflict
Elephant killed Hare's mother	Revenge	Conflict
So you thought you were the clever one. So I have showed you that even me I am clever."	Gloating, revenge	Conflict
Today they are no longer friends	Break of friendship	Conflict, displacement

Table 5.8: Friendship as Peace/Conflict

Axial/ selective Coding

Key phenomenon	Hare tells Elephant they should kill their mothers
Causal conditions	Hare wants to trick him by playing a cruel practical joke
Context	To display his superior intelligence
Intervening conditions	Elephant is too trusting and therefore gullible
Action strategies	Elephant kills his mother and brings her blood; Hare crushes bricks, mixes with water and brings the red solution.

Consequences	Elephant becomes motherless; the two become enemies; Elephant kills Hare's mother; both Hare and Elephant end up motherless.
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Table 5.9: Actants

Subject	Hare	Elephant
Object	To have Elephant's mother killed	To kill Hare's mother
Sender	Pride; To prove superiority of intellect	To avenge Elephant mother's death
Helper	Elephant's gullibility	Hare's pride; divine providence
Opponent	-----	Elephant's voice
Receiver	Hare	Elephant

The above narrative has a conflict that emanates from Hare's attempt to occupy a more powerful position in his friendship with Elephant. He seeks to do this by proving his intellectual superiority over Elephant. There is no indication from the narrative that there was a disagreement of any kind between the two protagonists prior to Hare's decision to play the cruel practical joke on his friend. It appears that all Hare wants to do is to test his intellectual muscle using his friend as the butt. Hare is proud of himself after managing to trick Elephant because he thinks that his position of superior intellect and therefore power has now been established. The behavior of Hare presents a pitiable picture of friendship because it is expected that true friendship should not be used as an avenue for testing one's abilities by undermining the other friend. When Hare does this, he betrays the basis of true friendship which is trust and acceptance. This means that theirs is no longer friendship, but a form of contest or competition. On the other hand however, Elephant displays a lot of gullibility which is not good in any friendship or partnership. A key question which emerges from Elephant's behavior is why he would accept to kill his mother simply to be the same with the supposed motherless friend. By highlighting the folly of blindly following the demands of an unreasonable friend, the narrative indicates the need to establish boundaries to govern human relations. If Elephant had questioned Hare on the logic behind

killing mothers, none of them would have been left without a mother and the friendship may have continued.

What then does this narrative say about friendship as an image of peace and conversely its destruction as an image of conflict? The narrator gave some comments as his own interpretation. According to the narrator, what Hare does is not acceptable because it is wrong to fool a friend into killing his own mother just for fun. He told of an incident he witnessed back in Congo where a grown up tricked a child to go to someone's house and pick shoes and take to him. When the child went, he was almost beaten by the owner of the house because the man who had sent him was a thief and they thought the child was his accomplice. According to the narrator, it is sad that the child was branded a thief and yet he was just obeying a grown up, who was tricking him. In this narrative power struggle is seen as a threat to genuine friendship and once one friend succumbs to the power game then the friendship is destroyed and conflict ensues.

This narrative shows a reversal in the relationships between adults and children. In most traditional oral narratives, it is adults who go out to look for food while children remain at home. The home-away motif is a recurrent organizing principal in children's narratives. In narratives with this motif, we see parents/adults leaving children at home and going out to perform adult duties such as looking for food for the family. Upon their departure, they leave strict instructions to children not to open the door for anyone else except the parents, whose return is signaled by singing or calling in a particular way. Usually the children are deceived and they end up opening for the wrong person, in most cases an ogre, who devours them. In the above narrative, it is the mother who is alone at home while the child (Hare) is out and has given instructions to his mother to open only for him after hearing him call in a specific way. This narrative presents the

child in the role of protector and bread winner. This portrayal underscores the nature of refugee children's lives as shown earlier, that they play certain adult roles such as looking for food and that adults tend to look up to them as a form of protection and a means to a better future. This is a clear indication of the narrative genre's adaptation to the social conditions in which it is created.

Yet another indication of the adaptation of the narrative genre to its social conditions is the violent ending of this narrative. This violent ending demonstrates the point made above that the struggle for power leads not only to the destruction of friendship, but in extreme cases could lead to death, but further to this it points to violence as a central element in the lives of refugee children. Most traditional narratives with the "home-away" motif end happily either with the rescuer coming just in time to kill the ogre before it devours the child or more dramatically still, with the rescuer slaughtering the ogre and rescuing the child together with all the other people whom the ogre has swallowed over time. The narrative *Hare and Elephant I* ends on a sad and violent note with both the protagonists being left motherless – and perhaps orphaned because there is no mention of a father in the narrative. This narrative captures the situation of most refugee children who live either with a single parent or without any parents at all.

The narrative below like the one discussed above underscores how friendship can translate from an image of peace to an image of conflict due to power contests. It thus brings out friendship as an image of peace and its destruction as an image of conflict.

Hyena and Hen by Richard Nyeko (M, 14- Sudan) Recorded in Kakuma.

Once upon a time, during the animal time, there lived Hen and Hyena. The two were friends. One day they decided to go and pick fruits from the forest because there was drought in that area. They started the journey in the morning and they reach something like four o'clock.

When they reach there, the fruit was up on the tree but they can't climb. So they decided to throw stones at the fruits. They collect many stones to throw, but soon the stones got finished and Hen decided to trick Hyena. She pick one stick and hold it against her leg and then she threw the stick on the tree and told Hyena that she had cut her leg then use it to bring down the fruits. Then when they have collected all the fruit then she also told the Hyena to cut his leg and throw it on the tree, then they pick the fruits. Hyena did as he was told.

Then Hen again folded the second leg then threw another stick on the tree then the fruit fall down then they picked. Then she told Hyena to cut his leg and throw so that they can pick more fruit. When Hyena cut his leg and threw, they picked a lot of fruits and then suddenly it started raining. It rained heavily, that Hyena was not having leg, he limped, he walk using the abdomen, because he cut legs and threw them. But when the rain got so heavy Hen showed Hyena her legs and flew away. She was proud that Hyena's legs were cut and she went away and when she reached the river, she flew over the river. She was proud that Hyena's legs were cut and she went away but Hyena was not able to walk because his legs were cut, and when he reached the river he drowned.

And when Hen reached home, she was asked, 'Where is Hyena?'

She said, 'I left him there because rain was so heavy.' She tried to cheat Hyena's wife and children. Since that day the hyena is no longer there.

Table 5.10: Power Contests in Friendship

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label/code	Image
Hen: Hyena	Agents	
Friends	Good relationship	Peace
Pick fruits in forest	Looking for food	Potential for conflict
Drought	Lack of food	Conflict
Fruit was high and they could not climb	Obstacle	Potential for conflict
They threw stones	Strategy; cooperation	Peace
Hen told Hyena he had cut his leg	Deception	Potential for conflict
Hen told Hyena cut his legs	Deception	Conflict
Hyena cut his legs	Gullibility	Conflict
They picked a lot of fruits	Food	Peace/conflict
It started raining	Complication	Potential for conflict
Hen showed Hyena his leg and ran away	Cruelty	Conflict

Hyena crawled on abdomen	Consequence of gullibility	Conflict
Hen flew away	Betrayal; separation	Displacement
Hyena was proud that Hyena's leg was cut	Betrayal; cruelty; power	Conflict
Hyena drowned in the river	Consequence	Conflict
Where is Hyena	Moral question	Displacement/conflict
Hen left him because the rain was heavy	Further deception	Displacement
Since that day the hyena is no longer there	Resolution	Displacement

Table 5.11: Friendship as Peace/Conflict

Actantial/selective Coding

Key phenomenon	Hen tells Hyena to cut his leg
Causal conditions	To trick him to hit the fruits with the leg
Context	The fruits are high up in the tree
Intervening conditions	They want to pick many fruits because there is drought
Action strategies	Hen pretends to have cut her legs, but throws sticks instead
Consequences	Hyena loses legs; Hyena drowns; Hyena's family is disrupted; Hare bears the moral responsibility for Hyena's death.

Table 5.12: Actants

Subject	Hyena	Hen
Object	Fruits(food)	Fruits (food)
Sender	Hunger; drought; need for sustenance	Hunger; drought; need for sustenance
Helper	Hen	Hyena
Opponent	Hen; The fruits being high up in the tree	The fruits being high up in the tree
Receiver	Hen	Hen

The two protagonists set out together as good friends as they go to look for food in the forest, but in the process of looking for sustenance one of them tricks the other and this results in a break up in their friendship. By the end of the narrative not only are they enemies, but one of them is dead. This narrative shows an extreme case whereby the break-up of friendship causes not only conflict and separation, but violence which leads to death.

Hen's motivation in tricking Hyena is a combination of selfishness and power struggle. Hen is said to have "felt proud that Hyena's legs were cut". This indicates that she is gloating over Hyena's plight and celebrating her own intellectual superiority which enables her to trick

Hyena to cut off his legs. With Hyena's legs cut off, Hen can exercise a lot of power over him because he is now virtually immobile. Selfishness as a motivating factor is seen in that Hen tricks Hyena to cut and throw his legs to bring down fruits ostensibly so that they can have more fruits to take home, yet we later realize that Hen plans to have all the fruits to herself.

Gullibility and lack of negotiation skills make one prone to exploitation and oppression as demonstrated by Hyena's pitiable fate. Like Elephant in *Hare and Elephant I*, Hyena does not question what the friend suggests, but simply goes ahead and mutilates himself just as Elephant goes ahead and kills his own mother to please a friend. From the situations dramatized in these two narratives, it appears both the agents contribute to the translation of friendship from peace to conflict. In each narrative, the first agent contributes through trickery and manipulation and the second through gullibility, thus the second agent in both narratives ends up playing the actantual role of helper, in their own exploitation, oppression and violation.

Friendship takes place within specific social contexts which, together with the characters' inner natures, impact on relationships either to enhance it or undermine it. One key social factor that has a major impact on friendship is the search for sustenance. Many of the characters interact within the context of looking for food or sharing it. The next section therefore deals with different aspects of food as images of peace and conflict.

Food as an Image of Peace and Conflict

As already demonstrated in the previous chapter, food plays the actantual role of object in most of the narratives while hunger mainly plays the actantual role of sender. The search for sustenance is therefore the key motivation for characters' actions. They often set out to look for food to assuage normal hunger or to stave off starvation during drought or famine. Since food is

basic need for survival, its availability is key in its perception as an image of peace. The centrality of food in human interactions is captured in a number of African proverbs. A good example is a proverb from the Yoruba people of Nigeria which puts it rather bluntly: *There cannot be peace unless the owner of food is allowed to eat his own food.* Among the Gikũyũ people of Kenya, the proverb *ng'aragu ndihoyagwo ũhoro* which literally translates into "hunger is not asked to give stories or information" also expresses the centrality of food in human interactions. This proverb means that before any business is transacted, people must first be given food because they cannot effectively conduct any business on an empty stomach. The serving of food even during sad occasions such as burials is an affirmation of life in the midst of death or hardship. The Luo of Kenya have the following proverb: *A hungry person can sit on water.* This proverb also captures the fundamental place of food as a basic human need in that when one is hungry or starving, his/ her most important need is survival and not "trivial" matters such as avoiding discomfort as metaphorically suggested by "sitting on water".

Most of the narratives discussed in this study present situations in which the main protagonists are living peacefully as long as there is enough food. The peaceful life is however disrupted by lack or scarcity of food. The narratives *Hare and Lion* as discussed in Chapter Four and *Hare and Hyena* which is discussed earlier in this chapter demonstrates this. In *Hare and Lion* lack of food causes Lion to come up with a plan of survival which threatens the very life of his friend, Hare, since he wants to eat him. In *Hare and Hyena* the lack of food causes Hyena to abandon the peaceful relationship in which they lived with Hare "like a brother and a sister" and focus on ensuring her own children's survival even though she had promised to look after Hare's children as well. In both narratives, lack of food marks the end of a peaceful life and the entry into a phase of conflict and displacement since in both cases the protagonists become enemies

and separate. If availability of food is, in most cases, an image of peace, then lack of food is an image of conflict because it leads to hunger, causing imbalance and distress to the subjects and in extreme cases, life itself is threatened. As observed in Chapter Three, many refugee children identified lack of food as a problem facing them as refugees.

Although availability of food is central in engendering a peaceful life, it does not in itself guarantee peace, because as demonstrated in the two narratives below, other factors have to be in place for peace to be assured. Although availability of food is an image of peace, it is also paradoxical that food harbours potential for conflict and therefore certain aspects of food are images of conflict. As demonstrated in Chapter Four, many of the fictional narratives have conflicts that are mainly sparked off by different aspects regarding food including lack and scarcity, searching for it and sharing/ distributing it.

A number of the narratives collected present situations where food is available, but conflicts still arise over how to resource and/or distribute it. This is exemplified in the narratives *The Story of Lion and Cat* and *Hare and Elephant II*.

The Story of Lion and Cat by Elize (F, 12, Rwanda) collected in Nairobi

One day there lived a Lion and a Cat. Lion caught a buffalo and took it home and said he will eat with his friend Cat. Then they went to the shamba. Then they started to work but Cat wanted to eat the meat alone so he said to Lion, "Lion, my cousins told me that I go to see their child. They want me to be there so that when they die I can be the parent." Then Cat went in the house, ate some buffalo meat and returned to the shamba.

Then Lion asked, "What is the name of that baby?"

"First born," replied Cat. Then Cat continued working then he told Lion, "They also told me to go to see their second child." And he went to the house again and ate some more meat then returned to the shamba.

Then Lion asked, "What is the name of the child?"

“Second born,” Cat replied. And then they continued working. Then Cat said that the cousins had told him to go and see another child. He went back to the house and ate the last piece of meat and finished everything. Then he returned to the shamba.

“What is the name of the child?” asked Lion.

“His name is last born,” replied Cat.

Then Lion returned home and looked for carrots to cook with the meat. When he finished cutting the carrots, he checked on the meat and found it was not there. Cat jumped. Lion now knew why Cat told him the first child was first born, the second child was second born and the last one was last born. And Lion ran to catch Cat and kill him. Cat climbed a tree and Lion could not get him because he could not climb. Then from that day Lion and Cat became enemies.

Table 5.13: Resources and Exploitation

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label	Image
Lion, Cat	Agents	
Home	Family, comfort	Peace
Lion wanted to eat with Cat	Sharing, cooperation	Peace
Shamba	Resource	Peace
Cat wanted to eat alone	Selfishness	Conflict
Cat lied to lion (am going to check on my cousin's children)	Deception/ betrayal of friendship	Conflict
Cat eats the whole buffalo alone	Selfishness, gluttony	Conflict
Lion discovers the meat is finished	Injustice	Conflict
Lion runs to kill the Cat	Revenge	Conflict
Cats jumps up a tree	Hiding, separation	Conflict, displacement
Lion unable to jump	Limitation	Potential for conflict
The two become enemies	Consequence of selfishness- destruction of friendship	Conflict, displacement

Table 5.14: Food as Peace/Conflict

axial/selective coding

Phenomenon	-Cat deceives Lion and eats buffalo alone
Causal conditions	Cat's selfishness and laziness.
Context	Lion too trusting while cat cunning and selfish
Intervening conditions	Lion being away out in the shamba
Action strategies	Cat jumps away Lion attempts to get hold of cat
Consequences	Conflict between lion and cat Enmity between the two Separation/ displacement

Table 5.15: Actants

Subject	Lion	Cat
Object	Buffalo meat (food)	Buffalo meat (food)
Sender	Need for daily sustenance; to share with his friend, Cat	Greed and selfishness
Helper	-----	Cat's evil genius; Lion's trusting nature
Opponent	Lion's trusting nature	Lion
Receiver	Cat	Cat

Although the dramatic conflict in this narrative centres on food, the narrative is distinctly different from the narratives in which availability of food is an images of peace. In this narrative, the actual cause of the disagreement between the two friends is not scarcity or lack of food, but the sharing of the food. Lion hunts alone and brings the carcass of a buffalo home and says that he will share it with Cat. There is no problem at the level of harnessing and distribution of resources. We note also that there is no scarcity of food as Lion is able to easily catch prey and also the two are working comfortably in the farm and other food seems to be easily available as is suggested by Lion making a carrot stew to go with the meat. The details in the narrative indicate that the times are good and everything is going well for the protagonists. Why then does Cat decide to act as he does? Greed and selfishness propel Cat into action, causing him to come up with a devious plan of deceiving his friend who was willing to share the food with him in the

first place. Cat wants to have more than his share of the kill and therefore undercuts Lion and leaves him with nothing to eat.

The fact that such a small animal as a cat can eat and finish a whole buffalo, could point to how a minority in society hoards resources while the majority as represented by Lion go hungry. This narrative makes a symbolic statement about the situation that creates refugees in most countries. This is the lack of food and other resources experienced by some members of society not due to scarcity of resources, but as a result of the inequitable distribution of resources. It is significant that the hunter is the one who eventually goes without food while the one who did not participate in the hunting eats everything.

Although cat in this narrative may be seen as a trickster who uses his ingenuity to get what he wants, the logic of the narrative shows that his exploits are not celebrated because they are motivated by greed and selfishness and result in the destruction of friendship and eventual conflict. Cat's ingenuity and dexterity are reminiscent of what Oyo, the man's wife in Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful ones are not yet Born* calls 'driving' and 'swimming'. She chides her husband that the world belongs to those who are courageous enough to drive and swim towards what they want: "Everybody is swimming towards what he wants. Who wants to remain on the beach asking the wind 'How...How...How?'" (44). Cat, like the 'drivers' and 'swimmers' referred to by Oyo, gets what he wants, but at the expense of integrity, social cohesion and peace.

It should also be noted that Lion is gullible and too trusting which makes it easy for Cat to trick him. Lion has the strength, the stamina and bravery required to hunt, but is outdone by the small Cat because he lacks the ingenuity needed to protect the resources. This could be interpreted to mean how the majority's strength and ability to harness resources are exploited by

running and exploitative minority in society. This kind of exploitation in turn leads to conflict between the exploiters and the exploited and may eventually lead to displacement.

The second narrative that will be considered in discussing food as an image of conflict is

Hare and Elephant II.

Hare and Elephant II by Feysal Mohammed (M, 10- Ethiopia) Recorded in Nairobi.

A long time ago there lived Elephant, and Hare. Hare had a cabbage farm. Then Elephant would come to eat cabbages from Hare's farm. Then one day Hare hid himself inside a cabbage. Elephant came to eat. He swallowed Hare together with the cabbage. Hare started blowing a whistle inside elephant's stomach. Elephant felt pain in his stomach. He hurt a lot and then he had a lot of diarrhea. Hare came out with elephant's excrement. My story ends there.

Table 5.16: Resources and Indolence

Open Coding

Part/unit	Label	Image
Hare. Flephant	Agents	
Hare had a cabbage farm	Hardworking; resources; food	Peace
Elephant eats hare's cabbages	Transgression; theft; exploitation	Potential for conflict
Hare hides inside a cabbage	Strategy; Defense of resources	Potential for conflict
Elephant swallows Hare	Elephant's gluttony	Potential for conflict.
Hare blows whistle in Elephant's tummy	Strategy	Conflict
Elephant feels pain and diarrheas	Punishment; consequence	Conflict
Hare comes out in elephants excrement	Hare back to his normal life	Peace

Table 5.17: Food as Peace/Conflict

Axial Coding/Selective

Phenomenon	-Elephant eats Hare's cabbages
Causal conditions	He is hungry and exploitative
Context	-Hare has a big farm the cabbages are

	enticing
Harvesting conditions	-Elephant is big and so doesn't fear Hare who is small.
Action strategies	-Hare hides inside a cabbage – Elephant swallows Hare - Hare blows whistle inside Elephant's tummy.
Consequences	-Elephant feels pain and diarrheas - Hare gets out of Elephant's tummy -Life goes back to normal

Table 5.18: Actants

Subject	Hare	Elephant
Object	To punish Elephant	Cabbages (food)
Sender	Need for justice because Elephant has been stealing Hare's cabbages	Hunger, laziness (desire to exploit others)
Helper	Hare's ingenuity	Elephant's big size
Opponent	-----	Hare
Receiver	Elephant	Elephant

Food is at the centre of the conflict in this narrative, but once again it should be noted that the problem is not scarcity or lack of food instead it is the element of exploitation in the use of food. Elephant does not want to work despite being the bigger and stronger of the two protagonists. He chooses to sit back and exploit Hare's labour by invading his cabbage farm. There is no drought or famine, but despite this, Elephant has no food because he has not taken the trouble to look for it or to harness resources in order to get something to eat. This causes trouble between him and Hare until Hare decides to take action by hiding inside a cabbage. Elephant swallows Hare and this causes him to diarrhea and hopefully never to eat Hare's cabbages again

In this narrative, food emerges as an image of conflict since it causes disruption in the relationship between Hare and Elephant. The narrative underscores the point made earlier that availability of food does not in itself guarantee peace. Other factors such as fairness in

ing it and equitability in its distribution are crucial in engendering peace. This narrative
economic exploitation through the images of eating and defecation (diarrhea).

Unfairness in the harnessing of food and inequality in its distribution converts food from
image of peace to an image of conflict. This is demonstrated in the narrative *Hare and Hyena*

Hare and Hyena II by Tuishimire Sarafina (F, 16- Rwanda) Recorded in Kakuma.

I'd like to tell you a story about two animals, it is a trickster story. I was told by my
grandmother back in Rwanda. It is about Hyena and Hare. Once upon a time Hare and Hyena
were good friends and they lived together in a place called Hong Kong. They were best friends;
they used to stay in one house. They hunted together and cooked in one pot. They were very
good friends and lived in one house.

So one early morning they woke up and they went for hunting. Now because Hare was
very tricky man, he did not want to go for hunting. He went under a tree and hid there. Now
Hyena went hunting. After going for hunting he caught an antelope. And Hare because of
trickiness he did not go for hunting. After Hyena had left, he came back home and slept and
pretended he was sick. Hyena came from hunting and after reaching home, he found that Hare
was asleep. So he woke him up. He told him that he had brought something for him to eat. Now
after Hare saw that his friend had brought something to eat, he accepted to wake up.

He told Hyena, "You are very tired my friend; I'll let you rest, then am the one who is
going to prepare the food for supper." Now Hyena because he was very tired after running after
the antelope, he accepted and went to sleep. Now the friend, Hare, he went, he lit the fire and
now he took a pot and he cooked the antelope. As he was cooking, he took a big stone and put it
under the fire, inside now the fire. He heated it very strongly until now it became very red. Now,
when the food was ready, he called the friend hyena and said, "The food is ready, wake up."

When Hyena was ready he told him to sit in the sitting room. They had a very good
sitting room. And he kept the red stone in a bowl and took it to hyena. And he told Hyena to
open his mouth so that he could feed him just like a baby because he was very tired. And yes of
course hyena did not refuse. He accepted. He opened his mouth. Now Hare took the red stone
and put it in Hyena's mouth. But Hyena could not spit it out again, and he could not swallow it.

he is trying to remove it but it is impossible, so it burnt his mouth plus the throat; then he ended up...he fell down and he died.

Now Hare feasted on the whole antelope Hyena had hunted alone. That is when Hyena and Hare became enemies. Whenever a hyena gets a hare, he just tears him away and kills him. And that's why Hare he is very tricky. He really cheats people. So you people if you don't take care, he will also cheat you. Yeah. That's the end of the story.

Table 5.19: Resources and Deception

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label/code	Image
Hare, Hyena	Agents	
Best friends	Good relationship	peace
Hongkong	Exotic setting; adaptation	
One house; one pot; hunted together	Friendship; trust; cooperation	Peace
Hare hid under a tree	Exploitation	Potential for conflict
Hyena caught antelope	Food	Peace/ potential for conflict
Hare pretended to be sick	Deception	Potential for conflict
Hare woke up when Hyena brought food	Opportunism	Potential for conflict
You rest, I will prepare the food	Hypocrisy; deception	Potential for conflict
Hare heats big stone, tells Hyena to open his mouth so he can feed him like a baby	Betrayal	Conflict
Hyena did not refuse	Gullibility	Potential for conflict
Hyena's throat is burnt and he dies	Consequences; violence	Conflict
Hare ate the whole antelope	Selfishness, exploitation	Conflict
Hare and Hyena became enemies	Consequences	Conflict
If you don't take care Hare will also cheat you	Moral	

Table 5.20: Food as Peace/Conflict

Qualitative Coding

Key phenomenon	Hare hides while Hyena goes hunting
Contextual conditions	Hare does not want to go hunting
Context	He is a trickster and wants to eat without working
Intervening conditions	Hyena is not very keen and does not do anything to ensure Hare goes hunting
Action strategies	Hare sleeps; pretends to be sick; offers to prepare the food when Hyena returns
Consequences	Hyena hunts alone; Hare tricks and kills Hyena; he eats alone; Hare and Hyena become enemies.

Table 5.21: Actants

Subject	Hare
Object	Antelope (food)
Sender	Hunger ; greed
Helper	Hyena
Opponent	-----
Receiver	Hare

The two protagonists start off as good friends; they do not have a problem of lack of food because from the narrative, Hyena does not have any trouble hunting the antelope. We see them relating well with each other and their relationship is based on cooperation and sharing. Hyena brings food home and generously agrees to share with his friend Hare. Out of greed and trickery, Hare decides to cheat Hyena so that he can have all the food to himself. Hare exploits his friend Hyena by not only failing to go to look for food, but by making sure that he gets the whole share of the food. In this narrative, the conflict over food leads to death of one of the protagonists. Hyena in this narrative is similar to Lion in *The Story of Lion and Cat* in that both of them are laid back and gullible, qualities that play the actantual role of helper to the exploitative Hare and Cat.

In this narrative, food emerges as an image of conflict because it separates good friends leads to violence and death. The narrative presents a combination of the two factors that food from an image of peace to an image of conflict. These are on the one hand fairness in harnessing food and on the other, inequity in its distribution. Hare contravenes the principle of fairness and equity thus transforming the previously peaceful relationship with Hyena into a conflictive and violent one leading to death.

The girl who narrated this story said it was narrated to her by her grandmother back in Rwanda. She compared Hare to an untrustworthy friend. According to the narrator, the lesson to be learned from this narrative is "watch your friend because your friend could be your enemy". She added that friends like Hare are not genuine friends because they are jealous and should therefore be watched and not followed blindly. The narrator was asked what her expectation of a genuine friend was and she said that she expects genuine friends to share ideas; to share small things or big things and to love one another. She also added that this applies not only to interpersonal relationships, but also to interstate relationships: a certain country may be a friend to another country and if that country is more developed than the other, then the less developed country may find a way to attack the other country in order to take away its wealth. At this point she related her story to the conflict between Kenya and Uganda over Migingo Island. According to her it was a pity that Kenya and Uganda who are friends should fight over "that small piece of island called Migingo".

Migingo Island, derogatorily referred to by a Ugandan government official as a piece of rock, came into public discussion in Kenya in early 2009. The dispute was over who owns Migingo, a small rocky island about an acre in size, situated in Lake Victoria ten kilometres off the Kenyan mainland and about 100 kilometres off the Ugandan mainland. Investigating the

Migingi controversy and the acrimony it brought between Kenya and Uganda, P.W.Wekesa poses the following question:

[...]why should two countries with very warm relations in recent years... who are both members of several regional multilateral organizations including COMESA and IGAD... find themselves drawn into an escalating border dispute of this kind? (332).

The answer he gives to this question indicates the centrality of resources – their harnessing, management, exploitation and distribution: “The Migingoni confrontation is all about fisheries and specifically about the cause of the lake’s declining fish stocks” (ibid). Lake Victoria happens to be a crucial natural resource for Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, the three East African countries that share its waters. Although the lake has a lot of fish and is a source of livelihood for many East Africans, the Migingoni controversy points to the potential for conflict that the lake harbours. Mismanagement, pollution and overexploitation have worked together over the years to lead to fish scarcity and the attendant threat to food security and livelihoods. In such a situation, the stage seems set for conflict. Narratives which present conflicts emanating from the harnessing and sharing of food represent socio-political conflicts which originate from the exploitation and sharing of resources. This is in line with Hall’s definition of conflict as “power struggles over differences: differing beliefs, interests, values or abilities to secure needed resources” (10).

Differing interests and abilities to access needed resources lead to disagreements which manifest at levels ranging from mild to violent. In refugee children’s narratives, such disagreements are presented as quarrels, fights or killing, which constitute images of conflict. The concept of quarrels will be considered next.

Quarrels as an Image of Conflict and their Absence as an Image of Peace

The refugee children interviewed used different terms to refer to “disagreements” which included quarrels, fights or killing. These therefore capture various aspects of conflict and are seen as images of conflict, while the absence of quarrels/fights/killing are images of peace. From the narratives told by the refugee children, it was clear that quarrels and fights were the result of certain ways of interacting that did not follow the expectations of sound friendship discussed in the section on friendship. Relationships characterized by fairness, selflessness, genuineness and trust result in the absence of quarrels and fights. Even when fights occur in such relationships, they are resolved in an amicable manner. Conversely, relationships characterized by selfishness, greed and manipulation lead to quarrels and fights and eventually to separation of friends (displacement). Two narratives that clearly illustrate this are *Hare and Hyena I* and *Lion and Hare*.

The narrative *Hare and Hyena I* has already been referred to earlier in illustrating friendship as an image of peace and will therefore not be reproduced in full here. Here we note that when the two friends, Hyena and Hare relate in mutual respect, cooperation and fairness there are no quarrels between them and so they live peacefully with one another. But when the problem of lack of food arises, they fail the test due to Hyena’s selfishness. Although Hyena ostensibly agrees to the division of labour which is suggested by Hare, she doesn’t honour it but instead betrays her friend by not looking after Hare’s children as per the agreement. This is a break of trust which leads the two friends to quarrel due to the failure of one party to honour her part of the agreement. This prompts Hare to come up with a plan of revenge by means of which she deceives Hyena and punishes him for his treachery. The quarrel between Hare and Hyena ends up involving Crow who agrees to be the executor of the revenge plan. Hare succeeds in

going back at Hyena, but at the expense of their friendship. In this narrative we see a situation that starts with cooperation and peace, but ends up in a quarrel which leads to the separation of the two friends.

Next we will consider the narrative *Lion and Hyena* to illustrate quarrels/ fights/ killing as images of conflict and their absence as images of peace.

Lion and Hyena by Zabibah (8, F Ethiopia) Recorded in Nairobi

Once there was a lion and a hyena. They were friends and they loved each other. So Lion was quite cunning. But the Hyena was rather foolish, never knew anything. So Lion went to buy some food. He bought some meat, then told Hyena, "Prepare a meal, so when I come back I should find it ready"

So Lion left. Hyena felt the meat tasted very nice. So he ate all of it, then wondered what he would do when Lion got back. So he picked some stones, and burnt them until they turned red like meat. Then he put them inside the cooking pot, covered them and then heated the pot. So when Lion came back and asked for the meal, Hyena told him the meat was inside the pot. When he opened and took a bite he noticed that it was a piece of stone. He said, "Hey you, what is this?"

Then Hyena said, "Come let's go to the tree and pick fruits."

As they were out to pick fruits, Lion told Hyena, "Close both eyes and I close mine too." Hyena closed both eyes, not knowing Lion had only closed one eye and picked all the nice, ripe fruits. Hyena picked only rotten and unripe ones. Then Hyena suggested, "Now let's open our eyes so we can see whose fruits are better".

Lion said, "No, let's get home first then we can open our eyes."

At home, they noticed that only Lion's fruits were good. So Hyena said, "Let me go back and pick some more fruits."

Lion cheated him, "There is a young man called 'mud' if he sees you there he'll beat you up. Don't go to that fruit tree." But Hyena went. Then Lion smeared mud all over himself and hid a cane. He whipped Hyena again and again, and then he went back and washed himself up quickly. When Hyena came home he asked him, "What's wrong?"

Hyena said, "I was whipped, I think you were right when you told me it would happen."

One day as they were together Lion told Hyena, "I closed only one eye as we picked the

And Hyena said, "It is me who ate all the meat and put hot stones in the pot."

The Lion said again, "It is me who smeared myself with mud and whipped you." After this they became friends again.

Table 5.22: Deception as a Source of Quarrels

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label	Image
Lion, Hyena	Agents	
Friends	Friendship	Peace
Loved each other	Relationship	Peace
Lion cunning	Devious	Potential for conflict
Hyena foolish	Gullibility	Potential for conflict thru exploitation
Lion buys food, meat	Food/sustenance	Peace/ potential for conflict
Hyena eats all the meat	Gluttony/selfishness	Conflict
Black stones	Deception	Conflict
Pick fruits	Food	Potential for conflict
Close both eyes	Trick/deception	Revenge/ conflict
Hyena closes both eyes	Gullibility	Potential for conflict
Lion closes only one eye	Deception/ trickery	Potential for conflict
Lion gets nice, ripe fruits	Object, success of plan	Potential for conflict
Hyena gets rotten fruits	Revenge	Conflict
Hyena whipped	Revenge	Conflict/ justice
Its me who closed one eye and picked the good fruits	Confession; truth	Peace
Its me who ate all the meat and put hot stones in the pot	Confession; truth	Peace
Its me who smeared myself and whipped you	Confession; truth	Peace
They become friends again	Restored friendship/reconciliation	Peace

Table 5.23: Quarrels as Conflict/ Resolution of Quarrel as Peace

Axial/ selective Coding

Phenomenon	Hyena eats all the meat, leaving nothing for Lion who is the one who had looked for it.
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Initial conditions	The meat is very sweet and thus (irresistible)
Context	Hyena is gluttonous and lacks self control
Intervening conditions	Lion has left Hyena to cook and be in charge of the meat while Lion was away all by himself, thus putting him in a tempting situation. No checks and balances. He is relying purely on Hyena's self control.
Action strategies	Hyena replaces meat with red hot stones Lion tricks hyena into picking rotten fruits Lion whips Hyena
Consequences	Hyena suffers Lion finally confesses Hyena also confesses Forgiveness takes place Friendship continues Peace is restored

Table 5.24: Actants

Subject	Lion	Hyena
Object	Meat, fruits (food)	Meat, fruits (food)
Sender	Hunger/ need for sustenance; revenge	Hunger; lack of self-control
Helper	Hyena: Lion's alertness and ingenuity	Lion's absence
Opponent	Hyena	Lion's alertness and ingenuity
Receiver	Hyena	Hyena

The two protagonists start as good friends then there is a break of trust when Hyena is left in charge of the food, and he decides to eat it alone. This plants the seed of a quarrel between them because even though Lion does not complain, he begins to hatch a plan of revenge. When they go to pick fruits, he tricks Hyena into closing both eyes while he closes only one. Consequently, he is able to pick ripe fruits while Hyena picks only the rotten and unripe ones. The closing of eyes while picking fruits is a fairly common motif in a number of African oral narratives whereby rival girls go to pick fruits and one is tricked to close the eyes while others conspire to open their eyes. The girl who is tricked usually insists on going back to pick good fruits, whereupon she is captured by an ogre. In this particular narrative, instead of a third

character (ogre), we see the same trickster going back to administer justice in the guise of a young man covered in mud.

In most versions of the narrative where the trick of closing eyes is applied, the reason behind the conspiracy between two girls to open their eyes is usually jealousy due to the third girl's beauty or charm. In other cases it is unfounded hatred because the third girl is a step-sister. The closing of eyes is thus a metaphor of isolation and exclusion. The difference that can be noted between the narrative *Lion and Hyena* and others with the eye-closing motif is the motive behind the trick to close eyes. In the case of the girls, the motive is jealousy and therefore the subsequent desire to exclude while in the refugee narrative, the motive is to settle a problem that arose out of a disagreement over the management and sharing of resources.

The quarrel between Lion and Hyena is as a result of a number of factors chief of which are selfishness and insensitivity on Lion's part and gluttony and lack of self-control on the part of Hyena. Lion does not offer to share the meat with Hyena, but simply orders him to prepare it. Under the circumstances presented in this narrative, this is asking too much because Lion does not employ any measures to reduce the possibility of Hyena eating the food in his absence; he relies purely on Hyena's self-control, which is quite deficient. The deficiencies of both characters work together to create the situation that brings a quarrel between them.

In the narrative *Hare and Hyena II* which was discussed under food as an image of peace and conflict, Hare tricks Hyena by giving him a red-hot stone instead of meat. Hyena foolishly allows Hare to put the stone into his mouth and this leads to his death. In the above narrative, Hyena plays the same trick, but Lion is alert and quickly recognizes the trap and so does not swallow the hot stone. This narrative is quite different from most of the others because it ends on a note of reconciliation and peace while most of the others end in enmity and conflict and

eration (displacement). Lion's alertness which helps him avoid swallowing the hot stones contributes to the reconciliation because he manages to avoid death and is able to think of an intelligent way of dealing with the problem which does not threaten life. Later he displays courage and integrity by revealing his tricks to Hyena who in turn owns up to his tricks and this leads to reconciliation.

It is important to note the process through which peace between Lion and Hyena is restored at the end. Hyena begins by betraying his friend who in turn tricks him and administers justice by whipping Hyena. Once justice is meted out and after the passage of time, Lion confesses to Hyena and Hyena in turn confesses to Lion after which the friendship is restored. The enunciation-spectacle for this narrative is as follows: friendship → betrayal/ injustice → punishment/ justice → truth (confession) → reconciliation. This narrative may be seen to express refugee children's desire for peace and the process through which they think it may be achieved.

It is noted from the two narratives used to illustrate the absence of quarrels as an image of peace that scarcity and lack of food act as natural triggers to quarrels. This shows that scarcity or lack of food puts significant strain on relationships which could lead to quarrels, fighting or full blown war. This is the point made by Achebe in a legend referred to in *Anthills of the Savanna* in an attempt to explain the plight facing the drought-stricken province of Abazon in the fictional country of Kangan:

[...] a man who deserts his town and shrine-house, who turns his face resolutely away from a mat shelter in the wilderness where his mother lies and cannot rise again (*due to starvation*) or his wife or child, must carry death in his eyes. Such was the man and such his remnant fellows who one night set upon the sleeping

inhabitants of the tiny village of Ose and wiped them out and drank the brown water in their wells and took their land and renamed it Abazon (33).

In the case of this legend, just as in the narratives above, the desperate instinct for survival in the face of starvation, causes people "to carry death in their eyes" leading to quarrels and violent conflict.

Unreasonable expectations and demands in interactions cause strain which leads to quarrels and in extreme cases violence and death. The following two narratives will be used to illustrate how unreasonable expectations and demands lead to quarrels/ fights /killing: *Hen and Bat* and *Hyena and Hare*.

The narrative *Hen and Bat* was presented in full and discussed in Chapter Four in the illustration of the theme of the relationship between adults and children. Here the focus is on the relationship between the two protagonists. They begin as good friends, but in the course of their interactions they quarrel and their friendship comes to an abrupt end. The reason for the quarrel is that one of the friends (Bat) has unrealistic and foolish expectations about the friendship. She decides to slaughter her own chick in order to impress and entertain her friend, Hen, expecting that when the time comes to reciprocate, Hen would also give a similar meal prepared from her own chick. When this does not happen, a quarrel between the two ensues which they eventually take before God, who declares Bat guilty. God's judgment aggravates the quarrel between the two, with Bat insisting that God is not a good judge and Hen thanking him for being a good judge. Bat remains as foolhardy as she was at the beginning and does not gain any realization that her action is anti-life and therefore anti-friendship because no true friendship can be based on principles that undermine the future of the friends. Bat's failure to realize her mistake and her

...ant holding on to her position as the one more sinned against than sinning is what makes
 ...quarrel to escalate and as they return to earth from the sky, they are more divided than they
 ...ere when they went.

The next narrative to be analysed as an illustration of quarrels/ fights/ killing as images
 of conflict is *Hare and Spider*.

Hare and Spider by Hamisi Chandja (M, 15 Congo). Collected in Kakuma

Long ago there was a hare and a spider. One day, spider planned to go to heaven to pay a
 visit to the daughter of king Solomon. He asked Hare to come with him. They went. They used
 the web of the spider. When they arrived, Hare said, "When we get up there, we'll say I am the
 visitor, and you are the thug. Everything mentioned about the visitor will be about me, and
 anything mentioned about the thug will be about you."

When they got up, the king's daughter came. She said, "Receive the visitors." They went,
 on reaching the house, she ordered seats for the visitors. Two seats were brought; Hare sat on
 both seats at the same time. Then food was brought for the visitors, and Hare ate all the food by
 himself. In the evening, beds were made for the visitors. Hare slept on a large bed, while Spider
 slept on the floor till morning. Spider didn't get as restful sleep as did Hare. Spider and Hare
 quarreled and from that day, Hare is always very tricky and the two have never been friends
 again. The story ends there.

Table 5.25: Quarrels and the Destruction of Friendship

Open Coding		
Unit/part	Label/ code	Image
Hare, Spider	Agents	
Go to heaven	Quest	Peace
King Solomon's daughter	Prize	Peace
Spider web	Means of transport	Potential for conflict
When we get there we will say I am the visitor and you are the thug	Deception	Potential for conflict
Visitor	The good person	Potential for conflict
Thug	The bad person	Potential for conflict

Food: seat; bed	Comfort/entertainment	Potential for conflict
Hare used the seat, bed and ate all the food alone	Selfishness	Conflict
Spider ate nothing ; slept on the floor	Deception	Conflict
Spider and Hare quarreled	Enmity	Conflict
The two have never been friends again.	Quarrel	Conflict; displacement

Table 5.26 Quarrels as Conflict/ Resolution of Quarrels as Peace

axial/ selective Coding

Key phenomenon	Hare tells Spider that he (Hare) is the visitor while Spider is the thug
Causal conditions	Hare wants to receive all the entertainment alone
Context	Hare is a trickster and wants to benefit without toil
Intervening conditions	Spider is foolish enough to accept Hare's plan
Action strategies	Hare sits on two chairs; eats all the food and sleeps alone on the big bed
Consequences	Hare and Spider quarrel; their friendship ends; they separate.

Table 5.27: Actants

Subject	Spider
Object	Visit to King Solomon's daughter in heaven
Sender	Desire to see the daughter of king Solomon
Helper	Hare
Opponent	Hare
Receiver	Hare

Although the narrative does not say so, it can reasonably be inferred that the purpose of the visit is for Spider to woo the daughter of King Solomon. This kind of visit requires ultimate care and only a trusted friend can be chosen to accompany the suitor. As they make the journey all is well and there is peace between them as they look forward to a successful visit. But all this changes when the friend turns into a competitor and by means of deception, arguably, takes the place of suitor.

In view of the background of their friendship, the severity of Hare's betrayal is cast in bold relief. Spider on the other hand displays monumental gullibility by accepting to take the role

ing while his companion takes the important role of visitor (and arguably, suitor). Naturally, deception and betrayal leads to a quarrel between the two friends, resulting in the end of their peaceful co-existence and the start of conflict and subsequent separation or displacement.

Refugee children are products of “quarrels” between different factions in their countries of origin. In most cases, the children have nothing to do with these quarrels and yet they find themselves in the middle of the conflict and consequently they are displaced from their countries. In the next section, displacement as captured in the children’s narrative images will be discussed.

Images of Displacement

Displacement is a daily reality for refugee children living in Kenya either as children of flight or as children born in exile. From the focus group discussions with refugee children, it emerged that refugee children have an ambivalent attitude towards displacement. Their responses showed two broad perceptions of displacement. The first is displacement as a “place” of refuge where they were relatively at peace and free from physical harm and war. The second is displacement as a condition of daily struggle for survival and a state of “life in limbo”. In between these two perceptions lie the children’s images of displacement which were highlighted in Chapter Three. On the positive side, images of displacement are: provision of basic needs (food, clothing, security and shelter); good education; exposure; opportunity to learn many languages and opportunity for international interactions. On the negative side, the images of displacement are: running away, lack of enough/nutritious food; lack of income/high cost of living; sadness due to loss of loved ones back home; bandit attacks; police harassment and harsh climate.

In this section three recurrent images of displacement are analyzed to demonstrate the metaphorical nature of the experience of displacement. The images are *food and water*, *running away* and *separation from loved ones*. Both personal and fictional narratives are used for illustration.

Food and Water as Images of Displacement

The provision of basic needs such as food, water and shelter was cited by most refugee children as a key positive aspect of living in Kenya. This was particularly the case for children in Kakuma Refugee Camp, who receive assistance in the provision of these basic necessities from UNHCR and its operational partners. One narrative that presents the provision of food and water as a positive image of displacement is *My Life as a Refugee*.

My Life as a Refugee: Richard Nyeko. (Boy, 14, Sudan). Collected in Kakuma

My name is Richard Nyeko. I am 14 years old. I was born in Uganda during the time of war. I was born in Uganda, but I am Sudanese. When my parents were there in Sudan, the war broke out and we ran from Sudan to Uganda. I was born there in Uganda. But in Uganda also there was war where by Ugandans used to fight the refugees. We came to Kenya, because my parents think there's peace here. But when we came here, we found that it was okay, and there was free food ration, but me I was just a child I didn't know what was happening. When I came of age...when I now come to be 14, I came to understand that in Kenya, there's peace but for refugees there's no peace as the locals used to attack people and rob things. Sometimes they even killed people. And also here they close secondary schools for Sudanese; they say Sudanese should go back to their country. They give free education to non-Sudanese, but for Sudanese, no secondary school. What makes me happy here is that there's free primary school and also there is water and some food.

Table 5.28: Search for Survival

Open Coding

Textpart	Label	Image
My name is Richard Nyeko. I am 14 years old	Personal details	Agent
I was born in Uganda during the time of war, but I am Sudanese	Background; identity	Conflict: displacement
Ugandans used to fight the refugees	War	conflict
We came to Kenya...my parents think there is peace here	Running away; Hope	Displacement
Free food ration in Kakuma	Provision of basic needs	Peace in displacement
The locals used to attack and rob	Violence; Insecurity	Conflict in displacement
Sometimes they even killed people	Violence; insecurity	Conflict in displacement
Closing of secondary schools for Sudanese	No learning opportunity	Conflict in displacement
What makes me happy is free primary education, water and some food	Provision of basic needs and educational needs	Peace in displacement.

Table 5.29: Food and Water as Positive images of Displacement

Axial/ Selective Coding

Phenomenon	Narrator's parents flee Sudan to Uganda
Causal conditions	War in Sudan
Context	General insecurity due to war
Intervening conditions	Ugandans started fighting Sudanese refugees in Uganda
Action strategies	Narrator and parents flee Uganda to Kenya
Consequences	Narrator and parents get basic needs met (food, water); free pry education; insecurity due to attacks from local people around the refugee camp

Table 5.30: Actants

Subject	Narrator and his parents
Object	Peace, safety
Sender	Danger due to war
Helper	Parents' determination and resilience
Opponent	Ugandans and the local community at Kakuma who were fighting them.
Receiver	Narrator and his parents

In this narrative it is observed that the narrator refers to himself as a Sudanese who was born in Uganda. Most refugee children who participated in this study tended to refer to the past – a remote and vague past- to define themselves. He calls himself a Sudanese due to his ancestry although he has no geographical connection with Sudan. Although he was not yet born when his parents left Sudan, he still sees himself as having participated in the flight from Sudan to Uganda as indicated by the words, “the war broke out and we ran from Sudan to Uganda”. Here we see this child crossing time and geographical borderlines and positioning himself in a time before his own birth in a country where he has never been and thus he sees himself as a child of flight living in displacement in Kenya.

This personal narrative shows the paradoxical nature of displacement in that the narrator expresses both sadness and happiness about being in Kenya. His happiness in displacement is as a result of the provision of basic needs as is seen in the words, “What makes me happy here is that there’s free primary school and also there is water and some food”. For the narrator, Kenya is a place of refuge because being in the country assures him of some food security which he did not have while outside Kenyan borders. As observed earlier in this chapter, availability of food is in most cases a key image of peace while lack of food is a key image of conflict. In human interactions, food is more than mere nutrients; it is at the core of people’s social beliefs and mores about what it means to nurture and be nurtured. The availability of food and water is an image of peace and therefore a positive image of displacement because it enables one to meet not only survival needs, but also psychological needs of love and belonging.

Away as an Image of Displacement

Refugee children use personal narratives as vehicles of experiential knowledge, since personal narratives are coherent, followable accounts of perceived past experience. Through narrative, refugee children create their identity by telling about their past, with its pains and triumphs. They also negotiate their relationship with the present and the future. According to Braid, Narrative is simultaneously born out of experience and gives shape to experience (20). This means that refugee children use their life experiences as material for their narratives and at the same time use narrative to concretize their experiences and to express their perception and place within this experience. Displacement as a major aspect of refugee children's experiences is captured in their personal narratives. The narrative entitled *My Story* can well illustrate this.

My Story by Elisee Nishimwe (M, 12, Rwanda) Recorded in Nairobi.

My name is Elize. I am from Rwanda. I want to present a story. One day we was in a refugee camp in Congo. My mother *ran from* her country and came in Congo. It was a sad day that my mother told me. And when she...wanted to, she wanted to have a child, other people wanted...was wanted to kill her, and so she *ran away*. And when she *ran away* she...she goes to another camp and...and...she born a child. And that child was me. And when we was there we *ran to* our country, and when we returned we found our grandfather only because other people *ran away* and police wanted to kill them. And one mother...mother took her son and threw him away and *ran away*. They killed the baby. Me, my mother took me we *ran away*. Other women told her to throw me but she couldn't and she *ran*. And then my father came and he gave her money to...to *run* here [Kenya].

Table 5.31: Search for Safety

Open Coding

Unit/part	Label/code	Image
We were in a refugee camp in Congo	Refugee camp	Displacement

My mother ran from her country	running	Displacement
She wanted to have a child	New life, hope	Potential for peace and conflict
Other people wanted to kill her	Killing	Conflict
She ran to another camp	Running, refugee camp	Displacement
Returned to our county, but found grandfather alone other people ran away	Home, running, alone	Conflict, displacement
A mother threw away her son and ran away. They killed the baby.	Running, killing	Conflict, displacement
women told my mother to throw me but she couldn't and she ran	Love, running	Conflict, displacement
My father came and he gave her money to come here.	Support, running	Displacement

Table 5.32: Running Away as a Negative Image of Displacement

Axial/ Selective Coding

Key phenomenon	Narrator is born in a refugee camp in Congo
Causal conditions	Mother is a Rwandese refugee in Congo due to fighting in her country, Rwanda
Context	General insecurity in Rwanda
Intervening conditions	Insecurity in the refugee camp
Action strategies	Mother and narrator return to Rwanda; they run away again due to insecurity; Father gives mother money to come to Kenya
Consequences	Narrator and mother come to Kenya: they have a relatively settled life.

Table 5.33: Actants

Subject	Narrator and mother
Object	Peace and security
Sender	War, fighting, insecurity
Opponent	Fighting and killing in Rwanda and Congo
Helper	Mother's determination, Father's support
Receiver	Narrator and mother

The narrator tells of how his mother ran from their home country, Rwanda, and gave birth to him in a refugee camp in Congo. Like Nyeko in *My Life as a Refugee*, Elisee begins his narrative before his own birth, but significantly, he narrates it as if he witnessed the events: “One day when *we* were in camp in Congo, my mother ran away from her country.... It was a sad day that my mother told me”. This narrative which was initially told to him by his mother enables him to recreate his past through the articulation of flight as a significant phenomenon in his own life even though it happened before his own birth. This aspect of the narrative shows the narrator’s attempt to figure out the enigmatic reality of displacement as a significant aspect of his life. The concept of crossing boundaries is important in the definition of a refugee. A person fleeing persecution has to have crossed an international boundary in order to be recognized as a refugee by UNHCR. *My Story* shows refugee children using spatio-temporal elements of narrative to define themselves as displaced people. This agrees with Carr’s argument that “Historical and fictional narratives ... reveal themselves to be not distortions of, denials of, or escapes from reality, but extensions and configurations of its primary features” (16).

The dominant image in this narrative is running away. The narrator records four different instances during which he and his mother run away: they *run* from Rwanda to camp I in Congo, then they *run* to camp II in Congo, then they *run* back to Rwanda and then finally they *run* to Kenya. In total, the verb “to run” appears nine times in this short narrative. The image of running embodies elements of fear, uncertainty, chaos and pandemonium all resulting from the insecurity posed by fighting and war. As observed earlier, the images of displacement expressed by refugee children revolve around basic human needs. In a time of fighting and war, the need for security is the most immediate and this causes the vulnerable to run or hide as we see the narrator and the mother doing.

Running away often means leaving behind the familiar and being separated from loved ones. The narrator points out that when they returned to Rwanda they found his grandfather alone because other family members had also either fled or been killed. The narrator therefore captures the reality of displacement through the images of running away and separation from loved ones. According to Braid, narrative mediates our involvement with the world. Personal narratives shape how we attend to and feel about events. They are partial representations and evocations of the world as we know it (21). Personal narratives are therefore not equal to one's personal experience, but the perception of one's experience. *My Story* is thus a presentation of the narrator's perception of his life experiences. Narrative enables the narrator to capture significant moments from life's mass of experiences and by articulating them one is better able to understand and cope with them. This idea is well captured by Musil, who argues that,

When one is overburdened and dreams of simplifying one's life' [...] the law one longs for is nothing other than that of narrative order, the simple order that permits one to say: 'first this happened and then that happened....' Lucky the man who can say 'when' 'before' and 'after'. Terrible things may have happened to him, he may have writhed in pain, but as soon as he can tell what happened in chronological order, he feels as contented as if the sun were warming his belly" (Musil 1995, 709).

In *My Story* the narrator uses phrases such as "one day", "when" and "and then" which indicate his attempt to reduce the experience of displacement to chronological and logical order. The experience he is narrating is certainly a difficult time for him, but the fact that he can tell

about it in the form of a narrative, indicates he has made strides in apprehending and comprehending this part of his past. Narrative activity attempts to resolve the discrepancy between what is expected and what has happened. Narrators try to identify life problems, how and why they emerge and their impact on the future. The conventionality of narrative structure itself normalizes life's unsettling events. This narrative does this by capturing the experience of displacement through the repetition of the image of running.

Separation from Loved Ones as Image of Displacement

Related to running away is the image of separation from loved ones. While running away is often a necessary measure in the face of attack, it has the negative consequence of causing families to break up as members run to different places and others are left behind. In *My Story*, we see the separation of loved ones through the narrator and also through the other people he mentions such as the woman who goes beyond this and throws her own baby boy away because it is impossible to run away with him.

In the narrative *Hare and Hyena I* which was discussed earlier in this chapter, we see Hare leaving home and going to a distant land to look for food. This displacement leads to the separation of family members similar to the kind most refugee children who participated in this study were experiencing. Commenting on the social impact of famine, Cuny points out that "when family members are forced to leave home in search of food, their ties with home, farm and even family members are weakened. Eventually, wandering bands of individuals seeking food begin to appear" (20). The need for survival leads to separation from loved ones, disconnection from the homeland and search for new settlements in exile, an odyssey that is captured by the refugee children through narrative and its images.

A number of the refugee children who participated in this study were separated from their parents for various reasons including death or disappearance of parents. Some children had been sent to Kenya by parents in order to receive education. Separation from loved ones as an image on the one hand, captures displacement as necessary for survival in cases where life is threatened either by hunger or insecurity and on the other hand, as an opportunity to invest for the future for example in the case of search for education opportunities. Conversely, this image also captures the dangers that displacement poses to refugee children and their families, thus underscoring the paradoxical nature of displacement.

A key structural element in the narratives is the use of binary oppositions to express the reality of displacement. Some of the binary oppositions that emerged as basic structuring elements in the narratives were home vs exile, inside vs outside and children vs adults. The inside vs outside bi-polar opposites are presented in refugee narrative's use of spatio-temporal setting as seen in the narratives *My Life as a Refugee* and *My Story*. In these two narratives, the narrators used temporal setting in a way that allowed them to situate themselves in a time before they were born meaning that the narrative expands its temporal boundaries to accommodate the conditions of the narrator's lives. This enabled the narrators to define themselves as displaced. Spatio setting is also used to underscore the children's perception of themselves as displaced people. This is observed in the two narratives mentioned above in which the spatio setting moves from country to country. In *My Life as a Refugee* the movement is from Sudan to Uganda and then to Kenya. In *My Story*, the setting moves from Rwanda to DRC and back to Rwanda and finally to Kenya.

Conclusion

Refugee children perceive displacement as a paradoxical experience which is both desirable and hateful; it is a necessary evil forced upon them by the conflicts in their countries. From the refugee children's personal and fictional narratives, it appears that their perception of displacement is needs based. Their perception of their situation is in line with Humanistic Psychology as advocated by Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. A key aspect of Humanistic Psychology is the assertion that human beings are motivated by the necessity to meet their needs which are in a hierarchy of five tiers, beginning from the lowest to the loftiest. At the lowest level are physiological/ survival needs which are fulfilled by provision of food, water and shelter. The second level is safety/ security needs, fulfilled by being in a relatively secure and predictable environment that is free from physical and psychological anxiety. At the third tier is the need for love and belonging which is fulfilled by being in supportive relationships and families. The fourth level is the need for esteem which includes respect from others and the development of self-confidence. The fifth and highest is the need for self-actualization which is the fulfillment of one's potential (Eysenck, 437-8).

The perception of displacement as expressed through the images used by the children presents refugee children as operating mainly at the lower three levels of need: survival, security and belonging. This means that the most dominant perception of displacement by refugee children revolves around basic needs, that is, food, water, security and shelter. To the degree that the experience of displacement contributes to a peaceful life by enabling them to meet their basic needs, it is a positive experience and conversely to the degree that it leads to a conflictive life by curtailing their meeting of these needs, it is a negative experience.

The higher needs of self esteem and self actualization were also expressed through images such as education, and exposure. However, as observed in Chapter Three, it was mainly children whose physiological and safety needs were met who were articulate about education and other aspects such as future career dreams as observed in the pupils at Angelina Jolie Girls' Boarding School in Kakuma. The analysis of the narratives therefore shows that refugee children tell narratives which deal with issues that are of direct and immediate interest to their lived experiences.

The analysis of images of peace, conflict and displacement indicate that refugees are part of a complex global migratory phenomenon because they are prompted to leave their own countries by a mixture of fears, hopes and aspirations. This is observed in the images they use to describe the experience of displacement thus casting it as complex experience whose main characteristic is an ambivalent search for balance.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzed selected narratives of refugee children from Nairobi and Kakuma with the aim of identifying central themes and key images in order to understand refugee children's perception of peace, conflict and displacement. The study was based on the assumption that due to narrative's natural ability to capture experience, it is potentially able to reveal human nature and subjects' perception of the world.

A general finding of the study is that although the narratives of refugee children dealt with a wide range of issues, they revolved around three core themes: food/resource management and distribution, the relationship between children and adults and finally socio-economic relationships. Children mostly told stories that reflected the daily social conditions of their lives such as food insecurity, physical insecurity, violence, lack of parents and children in adult roles. In this regard, the narratives of refugee children emerged as a mirror of the children's lives and may therefore be seen as social evidence and testimony.

Recurrent themes in refugee children's narratives reflect the key issues affecting the children's lives which are based on the fulfillment of the three human needs of survival, security/safety and belonging. Food as an image of both peace and conflict was interpreted as symbolic of consumables and other natural resources. From the narratives analysed in this study, it was clear that because food and natural resources are necessary for survival, they are a prerequisite for the achievement of peace yet at the same time they harbour great potential for bringing about conflict if not fairly harnessed and equitably distributed. The potential for conflict is compounded by the fact that natural resources are not inexhaustible, thus there is always a possibility of conflicts arising out of their misuse. This implies the need to conserve resources for

continued service to humanity. The depletion of natural resources was seen to be a major driver of the conflicts depicted in a number of the narratives.

Children's perception of socio-economic relationships was also observed through the narratives analysed in this study. Children perceived the thriving socio-economic relationships to be those based on equity and fairness. Most of the narratives presented situations where socio-economic relationships were ruined by inequality, exploitation and betrayal. Most refugee children are products of these kinds of socio-economic relationships due to historical injustices in their countries. In Sudan, for example, the relationship between the oil-rich South and the politically powerful north fuelled the protracted war that saw many children flee their country in search of safety and peace. In DRC, the conflict was largely caused by dispute over the sharing of the country's vast mineral resources. The analysis of the narrative showed that socio-economic relationships based on jealousy, competition and exploitation cannot thrive. Closely related to this is the conclusion that injustice and deception are shaky foundations on which to build wealth and to establish social relationships since honesty and hard work are necessary for the establishment of healthy socio-economic relationships.

Another conclusion arrived at from the analysis of themes is that failure to share resources with the weak, the needy and the defenseless impacts negatively on individuals in particular and society in general. This is because in society there will always be the weak and needy and therefore there is a social responsibility on the strong and productive members of society to take care of them as a prerequisite for peaceful living.

Narratives dealing with the relationship between children and adults showed the refugee children's perception of the place of children and the factors influencing their lives in society. A reversal was observed regarding the general perception of the relationship between children and

adults in society. Whereas in normal circumstances children are seen as vulnerable and in need of protection, the narratives and focus group discussions revealed that despite their vulnerability, refugee children play a special role in their families and within the refugee communities in general. It emerged that adults (in most cases parents and guardians) tended to exhibit dependence on children in subtle or direct ways.

Although as different authors have observed, children are associated with hope (Chesaina 2007, Gatungo 2007, Wasamba 2006, Nodelman 2003), the case of refugee children is rather unique because in many situations parents and guardians seem to look up to children for their very survival. Conventionally, children are perceived as dependants while parents/adults are perceived as providers, but the refugee situation tends to reverse this by putting parents/ adults in circumstances where they are stripped of a great deal of the power associated with being bigger, more mature and more experienced than children. Typically, parents of refugee children lack the means to provide for or even to protect their children. This changes the dynamics of the relationships between parents and children and this reality is captured in the narratives of refugee children.

A key finding made in regard to the place of children in society is that while it is somehow natural for parents and adults to relegate children to peripheral positions due to children's smallness of size and limited experience, this way of treating children may deny adults a vital contribution which emanates from children's creativity and intelligence. In addition, failure of adults to listen to children denies society children's beneficial contribution at the family, community or national levels.

Another finding from the analysis of the narratives is that a lot of the problems faced by children have their origin in the home. The relationship between parents and children as

presented in the narratives points to different forms of violation of children by the adult world. This violation is at varied levels of which the most extreme was represented by violent killing of children by parents. Another level of violation observed was parental neglect of children, while the most insidious form is the failure of parents and the adult world in general to engage in sustained conservation in the utilization of resources in order to ensure continued availability of these resources for posterity.

Regarding images, the study arrived at the conclusion that the narrative images used by refugee children to express the phenomena of peace, conflict and displacement were based on elements in the lives of the children that were related to the meeting of their survival, safety and belonging needs. Consequently different aspects of food, friendship and quarrels were the dominant images used to express peace and conflict. Availability of food, fairness in harnessing it and equitability in its distribution were the key elements that cast food as an image of peace. The reverse of this was also expressed in the narratives: scarcity/lack of food, unfairness in its harnessing and inequity in its distribution were the key factors that transformed food from an image of peace to an image of conflict. The conclusion arrived at was that peace can only occur when resources are adequate and equitably distributed

Friendship as a social relationship was also seen as an image of peace because it provided socio-economic and emotional support. Interpersonal and interstate friendships, however, suffer the onslaught of a variety of social-economic forces which often strain the relationships causing them to mutate to manipulative partnerships and eventually to full blown enmity. When the relationship goes through this mutation, true friendship is destroyed and conflict ensues thus the destruction of friendship is an image of conflict. This is similar to the central issue dealt with by Ayi Kwei Armah in his novel *The Healers* (1978), which focuses on the restoration of wholeness

among the black people. He gives this process of restoration the metaphorical and symbolic term *healing*. In this novel he demonstrates that the work of healing is greatly hampered by manipulators who try to gain power over others through guile, trickery, blackmail or force.

Quarrels or fights were also observed to be a key image of conflict while their absence was a key image of peace. The characters in the narratives were observed to quarrel over the division of labour or the sharing of food/ resources. Quarrels were seen to range from mild verbal exchanges to full fledged violence which led to severe injury or death. According to Howard, a key step in the pursuit of peace is the understanding of the hidden roots and dynamics which create conflicts whether they erupt into wars or not (13). In terms of narrative structure, this would mean identifying the person, people, emotion or circumstance playing the actantual role of *sender* in interactions that lead to conflict.

Images of displacement were seen to be directly and conversely related to the images of peace and conflict. The children expressed their perception of displacement in terms of how the experience of displacement engendered either peace or conflict. For that reason, images of displacement had both a positive and negative skew. The negative images were the expression of children's perception of displacement as a condition that contributes to a conflictive existence while the positive images were an expression of children's perception of displacement as a condition that contributes to a peaceful existence. The positive images of displacement therefore coincided with images of peace while the negative ones coincided with images of conflict. Key positive images of displacement were food and water while key negative images were running away and separation from loved ones. This led to the conclusion that refugee children had an ambivalent perception of displacement.

The study also revealed that refugee children attempt to influence their circumstances through narrative. This was observed in some narratives which deviated from the traditional motifs to introduce unique elements, one of which is the introduction of a happy ending. The conclusion arrived at through this is that some children used narrative to express their desire for a happy ending which further indicates the use of narrative to negotiate for what is desired even if only in the realm of imagination. This is an assertion of the place of art as an active social force, an aspect that is underscored by several critics including Kabira and Waita (2010) and Ndibe (2009). Okey Ndibe argues that although as a creative writer he often draws attention to the reality of a brutalized world, he also goes beyond it "...to point out the imperatives of humanistic enlargement" (28). A narrative which deviates from the traditional motif to present a happy ending could be said to be going beyond the realities of betrayal and brutalization to the creation of a larger world in which forgiveness and reconciliation are possible - perhaps what the children would like to see happen in their own world. In this case narrative functions as a social agent which does not merely reflect social reality but also seeks to influence it.

The scope of this study was the analysis of refugee children's narratives with a specific focus on images of peace, conflict and displacement. The research experience however revealed several areas that were outside the scope of the study which could be productive areas for further research. This study therefore makes its final statement by highlighting some of these areas as a way of indicating possible directions for further scholarly work.

One such area is the place of narrative in conflict transformation. Such research could be a build up on the current project which is a treatise of children's perception of peace, conflict and displacement as seen through their narrative images. The indication that this could form rich ground for further research is based on the fact that the enunciation-spectacle of the narratives

analyzed for this study revealed a particular "path" which led protagonists to conflict. It could therefore be hypothesized that there is a "path" that could lead to peace and this could be investigated through further study.

Yet another area that could be investigated is gender perspectives in the narratives of refugee children. Since this study had both boys and girls as the primary research subjects, the researcher observed gender differences in the focus group discussions and in the narratives. Boys mainly talked about war experiences and physical injury while girls raised issues such as sexual harassment and forced marriage, which indicated that conflict and displacement impact boys and girls in different ways. A direct focus on gender differences may therefore lead to conclusive remarks on this issue.

Although this study had adult refugees as part of its research subjects, they were involved only at the initial interview stage, but they did not tell any narratives. Most of them said that adult refugees hardly tell stories of their home countries to children for fear of re-traumatizing them and also because they would like the children to integrate by focusing on the future. Further study could be done on narratives of adult refugees in comparison to those of refugee children. This can help to find out whether there are significant differences and what such differences may indicate about generational perspectives among refugees.

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Appendix i Teachers' Responses Analysis Form

TEACHERS' ANALYSIS FORM

School JEBEL MAARA PRI SCHOOL-KAKUMA	Nationality of Students:			
Population 733	Kenya 0	Ethiopia 20	Somalia 200	Congo 0
Syllabus 8.4.4	Sudan 400	Rwanda 0	Burundi 0	Uganda 0

1. Are most of the children born in Kenya or in their home country?
 No

2. Do you have storytelling or other activities as part of the school curriculum?
 -Debates, Drama. Storytelling in class is done.

3. If so how do you rate the children's storytelling ability?
 -Reasonably good. Parents tell them stories at home.

4. Do children who were born in their home countries talk about experiences they had back home?
 Yes. Socially they talk about it positively. Politically they talk about it negatively e.g. fighting.

5 a) Do you think the children have been negatively affected by the conflict in their home country?
 Yes

5 b) If yes, how is this manifested?
 -Being forced to join the army. Lost parents, many social challenges. Future uncertain.

6. Do the children talk about:

Appendix ii
Community Contacts' Responses Analysis Form

Interview Guide for Contacts

ANALYSIS FORM FOR COMMUNITY CONTACTS

Community/Neighbourhood

Somalia Community, Kakuma

Nationality of refugee children in the community:

Country(1)

Country(2)

Country(3)

Country(4)

Country(5)

Dominant nationality in the neighbourhood

Somalia

1 a) Do you have any children below the age of

Yes

b) If yes, how many?

4

c) Were they born here in Kenya or back in your home country?

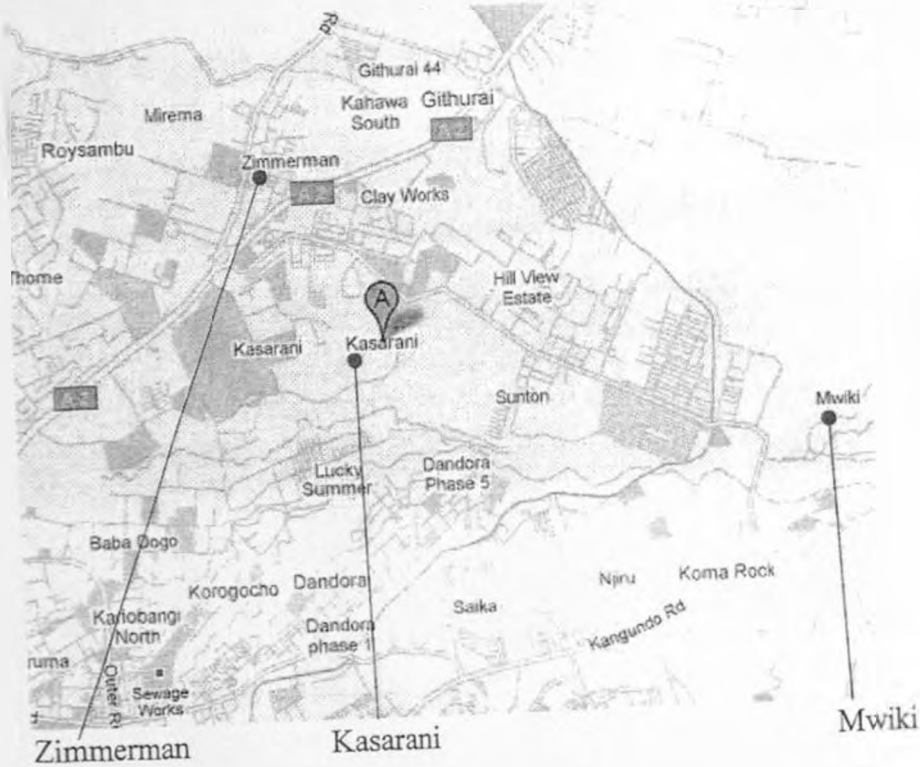
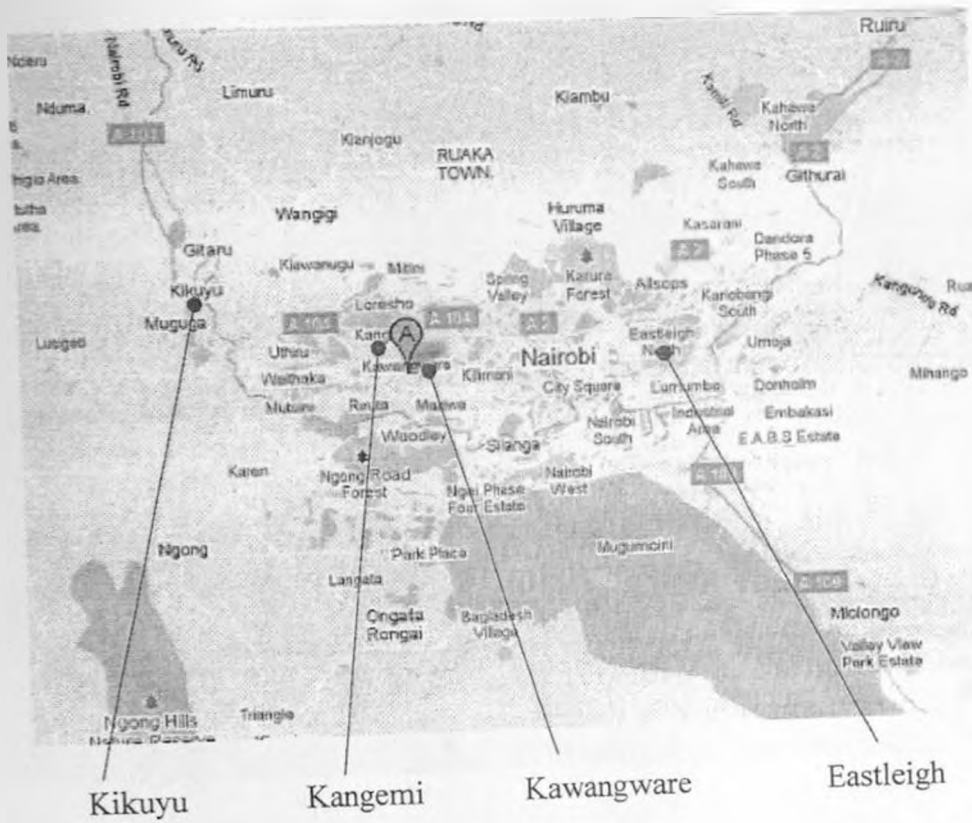
Kenya

2. To the best of your knowledge, were most of the refugee children in your neighbourhood born in Kenya or in their home country?

3 a) Do you do storytelling or other creative activities such as singing as a family? b) Why or why not?

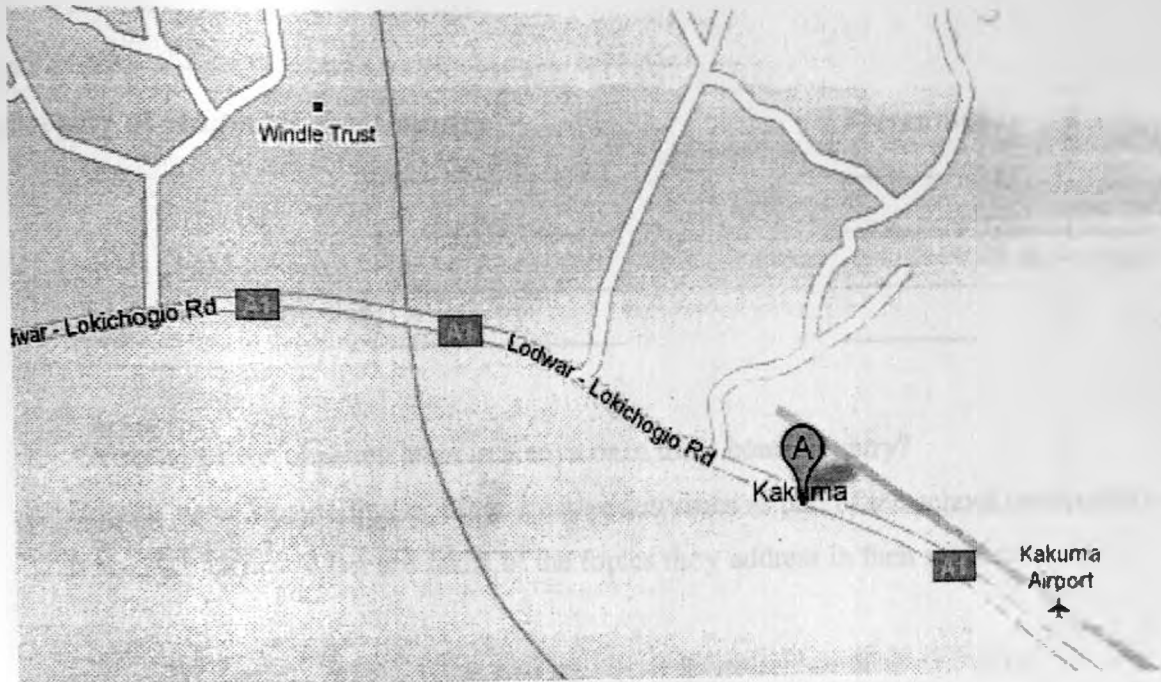
4. If yes, how do you rate the children's storytelling ability?

Appendix iii Areas in Nairobi where Most Refugees Live



Appendix iv

Location of Kakuma Refugee Camp



Appendix v
Interview Guide for Teachers

School: -----

Population: -----

Nationality of students:	Country	Percentage
	-----	-----
	-----	-----
	-----	-----
	-----	-----

1. Are most of the children born in Kenya or in their home country?
2. Do you have storytelling or other creative activities as part of the school curriculum? -----
3. If so, a) What are some of the topics they address in their stories?

a) What do they do make their stories interesting?

4. Do children who were born in their home countries talk about experiences they had back home?
5. Do you think the children have been negatively affected by the conflict in their home countries?

If yes, how is this manifested?

6. Do the children talk about any of the following?
 - a. Their home country.

b. Flight from home country.

c. The experience in of living in a foreign country.

7. Do you think the children have been positively or negatively affected by displacement?

How is this manifested?

8. Do they express hope or longing to return to their countries? If yes, how is this

expressed?

9. What do you think is the children's general attitude towards Kenya?

What do they like about Kenya?

What do they not like about Kenya?

Appendix vi

Children's Interview Grid and Questions

Name of School/ Community

Date of Interview

Age	Gender	Nationality	Born In	Period Away from Home	Family Info	Peace	Conflict	Home	Displacement

Questions posed to Children

1. Please tell me your name, age and nationality. In which country were you born?
2. Tell me about your family. Do you live with parents? Do you have brothers or sisters?
3. What is peace? Tell me anything which means peace to you.
4. What is conflict? Tell me anything which means conflict to you.
5. What do you like or not like about your home country? Would you like to go back?
6. What do like or not like about living in Kenya?

Appendix vii
Interview Guide for Community Contacts

Community/ Neighbourhood: _____

Nationality of refugee children in the community:

Country

Dominant nationality in the neighbourhood _____

1. To the best of your knowledge, were most of the refugee children in your neighbourhood born in Kenya or in their home countries? _____
2. Do you think that refugee families engage in storytelling or other activities such as singing? Yes----- No -----
3. Why or why not?

4. If yes how do you rate the children's storytelling ability?
Very good ---- Good ---- Average ---- Poor ----
5. If the children in your neighbourhood engage in storytelling, what topics do they normally deal with?

6. Do children who were born in their home countries talk about experiences they had back home? Yes ----- No -----.
7. a) Do you think the children have been negatively affected by the conflicts in their home countries? Yes ----- No -----
b) If yes, how is this manifested?

8. Do the refugee children in your neighbourhood talk about:
 - a. Their home country? Yes ----- No -----
 - b. Flight from home country? Yes ----- No -----
 - c. The experience in of living in a foreign country? Yes ----- No -----
9. If the answer to the above questions is yes, please tell me some of the things that the children talk about.

1. Do you think the children have been positively or negatively affected by displacement?
How is this manifested?

1. Do they express hope or longing to return to their countries? If yes, how?

2. a. What do the children like about Kenya?

b. What do they not like about Kenya?

1. Do you think the children have been positively or negatively affected by displacement?
How is this manifested?

11. Do they express hope or longing to return to their countries? If yes, how?

12. a. What do the children like about Kenya?

b. What do they not like about Kenya?